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Riots were a wake up call

Riots have rocked the nation and now that calm has been restored, the analysis begins and hopefully positive change will come. But decision-makers are putting forward analyses and solutions which tie in with their political persuasion, experience and personal views, meaning there's little consensus, so while it's obvious something's wrong, putting a finger on what exactly it is will prove difficult and finding an effective and enduring solution is going to be even more of a challenge.

But whatever the reasons – and there are doubtless many – no-one could argue that we were seeing a very large number of bored, directionless kids running amock and having – in their own minds – a great adventure, without any regard for the consequences whatsoever.

In seeking to present a balanced picture of life in the areas worst affected by the riots, journalists have looked for success stories as well as tales of desperation and it's been interesting that all the case studies I've read have involved young people being saved by sport in some way. There have been stories from kids about how coaches have acted as mentors – and in some cases de facto parents – encouraging them to stay out of trouble and to take a positive direction in their lives, how the challenge of sport has provided a focus and given them structure and direction, and how the comradeship has given them an alternative to the gang.

When I first started work in this industry in the early 80s these were all the messages we were promoting to government and it was well acknowledged that investment in sport kept kids off street corners, contributing to community cohesion and providing an outlet and channel for the restless energy of youth. Yet somehow this message has been let slip and just isn't championed enough any more. Maybe we started taking it for granted and feeling that it was 'job done' rather than being committed to welcoming each new generation into sport as they came along.

Legacy means sharing the benefits of sport as widely as possible. Preparing for London 2012 has inevitably meant a focus on elite sport, but have we overlooked community sport as a consequence?

And things have moved on since then, so although the message about the social benefits of sport is still a sound one and must be re-acknowledged, there are new reasons for this focus today, because sport has become a major employer in a way we could only have dreamed about 30 years ago. Many of these kids can now make a living in the world of sport, as well as enjoying the exercise and engagement.

I spoke to Florence Oban from SkillsActive yesterday. She's championing a new initiative designed to get young people from the Active Jobs Fund (AJF) out to work in the industry. Called www.activegraduates.com, it's a free online web portal where employers can search for and recruit young people who've been trained and are ready to work – and it's a free service. It's a terrible shame AJF was abandoned by this government, but at least we have the opportunity to welcome up to 1,500 graduates of the scheme into the industry, so I urge you to visit the website and see if you can find room in your organisation for one of them. As Oban said: "When these kids go to the Job Centre, they're told about jobs at the supermarket, but rarely about jobs in sport and active leisure – yet these are the areas which can often provide the most satisfying, rewarding careers for them."

We need to see the riots as a major wake up call – it's estimated they cost £200m and while we couldn't claim that sport can fix every problem, we need to look at the true cost benefit of engaging teenagers and keeping them healthy, motivated and living disciplined lives, both in and out of work.

Liz Terry, editor lizterry@leisuremedia.com twitter: elizterry

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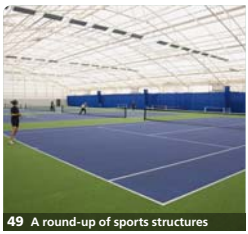

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Sports Management is the official magazine of the Sports and Play Construction Association (SAPCA), the trade body for the UK's sports facility construction industry. Sports Management and SAPCA work in partnership to promote high standards in the design, construction and maintenance of UK sports facilities

John Goodbody reports on

Ease of access to Olympic Games

There is less than a year to go to the opening of the London Olympics and the excitement is palpably mounting. This is only matched by the recognition and surprise that there are few major obstacles, apart from concern over the recent riots, to overcome before the Opening Ceremony on 27 July 2012.

With a year to go, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) gave an initial seal of approval when its president, Dr Jacques Rogge, toured the Stratford complex, which may be a building site but there are still sufficient venues existing to demonstrate what a success this has been for the British construction industry.

Much credit must go to the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), which has been responsible for building the stadia and Olympic Village, and especially to the chair, John Armitt, who ultimately has been taking responsibility.

The latest venue to be completed was the aquatic complex and the first swimmers were allowed to try out the 50m competition pool on 27 July. I was one of the lucky ones chosen and it was invigorating to look up at the banks of seating and realise that in a year's time the world's greatest swimmers, such as Michael Phelps, will be doing the same.

It appears that little can go wrong with the building of the facilities. The velodrome is ready and so is the £31m white water centre at Broxbourne, which was opened last December. It's true that the Village is incomplete and I remain concerned about the post-Games economic viability of the main stadium, but elsewhere the work seems to have restored the international standing of Britain, after the fiasco of Wembley, to finish major sports projects on budget and on time.

I recall laughing at *The Daily Telegraph* cartoon on the day after London got the Games. It showed a builder speaking into a mobile phone: "Lord Coe? Can we make that 2013?" He should have said 2011 given the way it has gone.

Many train lines go to Stratford, which allows for alternative routes to the Games

> **London organisers are keen to persuade as many spectators as possible to use trains and tubes to get to the venues**

The IOC could not be happier with the progress, especially after the worries over Athens in 2004 and the early criticism of the Sydney organisers in 2000. Apart from a recurrence of rioting, what could prevent these Games from being a massive success?

After all, Britain has enormous experience in staging major sports events, such as Wimbledon, the London Marathon, world championships in a wide number of sports and important football matches by the thousands.

At this stage, the IOC has only one significant worry – the road transport. The London organisers are keen to persuade as many spectators as possible to use trains and tubes to get to the Olympic Park, the Excel Centre and the other venues. Given the fact that there are so many different lines going into Stratford, if there is a problem, such as the breakdown of a train, it should be possible for alternative routes to be used.

At the Sydney Olympics, there was just one main railway line going to the main complex and if that had been closed, the Games might almost have come to a halt.

Travelling by road in London, which is how many athletes and officials will reach venues, is more tricky, even if the two biggest sports in numbers of competitors – athletics and swimming – are within walking distance of the Village. Denny Oswald, chair of the IOC inspectors, recently pointed out that traffic is difficult in every Olympic host city because thousands of extra people have to move from one part of the city to another but there is a bigger problem in London because, he accepts, "London is a difficult city for traffic anyway."

There will be Olympic lanes, which will be used by about 75,000 people, such as athletes, officials, the media and the sponsors and their guests, who will largely move around in buses and private cars. Some side-roads will be blocked off and traffic light sequences altered when necessary. Will all this work well? I do hope so. ●

John Goodbody has covered 11 successive Olympic Games for the Sunday Times

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PLAYING ON A DREAM

Morgan Sindall to build DMU leisure centre

Rugby-based construction firm Morgan Sindall has been awarded the contract to deliver De Montfort University's (DMU) new £8m leisure centre in Leicester.

Work has started on the S&P Architects-designed facility, which will boast a 25m pool; a climbing wall; eight racket courts; and studios for aerobics and Pilates.

The design incorporates metallic outer shells and cedar-lined interiors, which are to form towers and overhangs to filter natural light into the building when complete.

The funding will support grassroots projects

£2.6m funding boost for disability sport

Efforts to increase the number of disabled people participating in sport and to ensure grassroots sport is more inclusive has received a £2.6m boost.

Sport England revealed that five groups – British Blind Sport; Cerebral Palsy Sport; Dwarf Sport Association UK; UK Deaf Sport; and British Wheelchair Sport – will share £1.1m, which will be directly funded to advise and guide other organisations.

An additional £1.5m of Exchequer funding has been awarded to the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS).

Sport Wales launches new School Sport Survey

Sport Wales has announced that it is to launch the largest survey of school sport ever undertaken in Wales.

The *2011 School Sport Survey* consists of three questionnaires – one for school children from years seven to 11; one for children between years three and six; and a survey for teachers.

The children will be asked about their participation in sport while the teachers' questionnaire will explore the provision of PE and school sport across Wales.

Wolves plans new £6m academy

Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club (WWFC) is to develop a £6m Football Academy as part of a wider £50m investment earmarked for the Compton Park area.

The Premier League club is partnering with the University of Wolverhampton; St Edmund's Catholic School; the Archdiocese of Birmingham; and Redrow Homes to deliver the redevelopment plans.

WWFC plans to create its new facility – with new indoor and improved outdoor pitches – on the site of St Edmund's Catholic School, next to the club's existing training ground. The development of a new Football Academy for the club will ensure it meets requirements laid under new plans for Premier League academy football.

WWFC will develop the site after the school relocates to a vacated building at Compton Park Campus, which formerly housed the university's Business School, prior to the start of the 2010-11 academic year.

The club will also hand its £1m Indoor Academy Arena at Aldersley Leisure Village to Wolves Community Trust to benefit local disadvantaged and disabled young people.

WWFC is to build the venue on the site of St Edmund's Catholic School

Sportivate legacy scheme launches

A £32m project has launched in order to enable 300,000 young people to receive six to eight weeks of coaching in the sport of their choice.

Unveiled by Sport England, Sportivate will be funded using National Lottery cash and will target 14-to-25-year-olds, as well as young people who aren't currently playing sport in their own time.

Sportivate will be delivered by the network of 49 county sports partnerships, which will work with local providers and sports clubs. Meanwhile, Sporting Champions – a team of current and retired elite athletes – will visit Sportivate sessions to share their experiences and enthusiasm for sport. An additional incentive will see teenagers and young adults who stick with sport given the chance to enter a ballot for free London 2012 tickets, with hundreds of Olympic and Paralympic tickets available for participants via the London 2012 Ticketshare initiative.

The £32m Sportivate programme will look to target 14-to-25-year-olds

Wimbledon officials to consider Court One roof

The All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) is reportedly considering the possibility of constructing a roof over Wimbledon's Court One – the venue's second largest court.

A multi-million pound retractable roof was unveiled on Centre Court in 2009, which allows play to continue during adverse weather during the Wimbledon Championships.

However, the *Guardian* has reported that AELTC officials could now discuss the installation of roof on Court One, following this year's conclusion of its 15-year strategy.

National BMX Centre unveiled

The new £24m National BMX Centre – comprising the UK's first indoor permanent BMX track – has opened its doors to the public at the National Cycling Centre, Manchester.

Warrington-based Ellis Williams Architects are behind the design of the new 110,000sq ft (10,219sq m) venue, which was delivered by Sir Robert McAlpine and is to be run by The Velodrome Trust.

The new venue has been designed for both elite and community use

Facilities include permanent seating capacity for 2,000 spectators, with potential for a further 1,000 temporary seats for large events. Designed for elite and community use, the new National BMX Centre also features two start ramps - 5m and 8m high respectively - and 22 transponder timing loops. AFL Architects coordinated delivery of the centre's track. The cost of the building itself was £19m, with an additional £5m spent on public realm work surrounding the complex - including a footbridge to the new Metrolink stop.

Manchester City Council (MCC); Sport England; and the European Regional Development Agency through the Northwest Development Agency funded the project.

PwC: event attendances at record highs

Total attendances for the UK's largest sports events have reached "record" highs in 2011, according to analysis carried out by Pricewaterhouse-Coopers (PwC).

PwC has found that the total number of people attending the top four events – Wimbledon; the British F1 Grand Prix; Royal Ascot; and the Cheltenham Festival – increased this year.

Some of the major sports events have experienced their best ever year

Wimbledon and the British F1 Grand Prix – attracting nearly 495,000 and 315,000 visitors respectively – were both reported to have experienced their best ever years in 2011.

PwC has listed the top 10 sports events by attendance as part of its analysis, with the Open Championship; Moto GP; the Grand National; and the Epsom Derby also featuring. PwC UK head of sport Julie Clark said: "Despite uncertainties around the strength of the UK's economic recovery, these figures demonstrate the sustained appetite for live sport.

Sport England signs agreement with FIA

Sport England and the Fitness Industry Association (FIA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to grow participation in sport. The deal recognises that, both national governing bodies and operators have the ability to help encourage people to do sport.

Sport England and the FIA will offer support for operators to build beneficial relationships with sports' NGBs. A contribution to the digital legacy from the 2012 Games is also planned, by creating online capabilities to enable people to find their nearest sports facilities.

Delancey/Qatari Diar net Olympic Village

A joint venture comprising Delancey and Qatari Diar has signed an agreement worth £557m for the purchase and long-term management of London's Olympic Village. The Olympic Delivery Authority announced that the joint venture will now work in partnership with Triathlon Homes, which is managing the site's affordable housing.

Under plans for the Olympic Village after the 2012 Games, more than 2,800 new homes are to be made available - 1,439 of which will be managed by the joint venture.

The velodrome is the last surviving 1948 venue

Herne Hill Velodrome plans move forward

Efforts to re-establish London's Herne Hill Velodrome as a public cycling facility have moved forward with the appointment of consultancy Sports Solutions GB.

Herne Hill Velodrome Trust (HHVT) selected Sports Solutions to produce a business case for the revamp of the velodrome – the last surviving venue from the 1948 Olympic Games. Sports Solutions will also be tasked with identifying a 'deliverable' funding package for the scheme, which will help safeguard the site's future after years of limited investment.

Council votes against sports village scheme

Wycombe District Council's cabinet has voted not to proceed with the development of a proposed new community stadium and sports village at Wycombe Air Park.

The local authority has confirmed work on the project would now be halted, but is to explore alternative options for future sporting provision in the Wycombe area.

A 17,500-seat stadium and community sports village had been planned by Wycombe Sports Developments Limited (WSDL), which has expressed disappointment at the decision.

New swimming industry report published

The majority of the UK population (84 per cent) live within 2 miles (3.2km) of a swimming pool, according to the 2011 State of the UK Swimming Industry report.

Published by The Leisure Database Company, the study has found that the public is able to choose from 4,674 pool facilities across more than 3,300 public and private sites. In the year to 31 March 2011, there was a decrease in the number of pool facilities at private health clubs. However, this was offset by a rise in provision and public sector venues.

The ruling allows LCCC to progress its proposals

Derwent Holdings fails in Old Trafford appeal

Derwent Holdings' bid to block Lancashire County Cricket Club's (LCCC) redevelopment of Old Trafford cricket ground has been rejected by the Court of Appeal.

The property firm – owner of the White City retail park – brought the action despite a High Court ruling in March in favour of the multi-million pound scheme.

Two new grandstands and a refurbished pavilion accommodating 15,000 supporters will be part of the revamp, with the potential to increase capacity to 25,000 with temporary seating.

Council backs Bridgend sports village vision

Bridgend County Borough Council has backed plans for a new multi-million pound sports and leisure village on the site of a former prisoner of war camp.

The proposals – including a 15,000-seat rugby league stadium and a 2,000-seat football venue with two pitches – will now go to the Welsh Assembly Government.

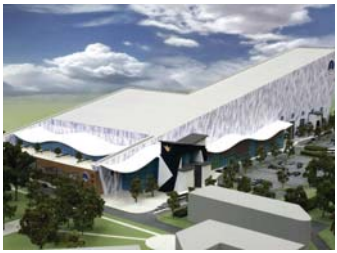
HD Limited is leading the Island Farm Sports Village development, which has been designed by PJ Lee Architects and will also feature an indoor 4G training pitch a sports hall and tennis facilities.

£50m Leisuredome plans

North Somerset Council (NSC) has backed plans for the £50m Leisuredome development, which will be located on a former Royal Air Force site near Weston-super-Mare.

The 12.7-acre (5.1-hectare) complex will feature a 210m (689ft) indoor real ski slope - one of the UK's largest; a 40m (131ft) climbing wall; and an indoor surfing centre.

A sky-diving facility is also proposed as part of the all-weather extreme sports development, which will form part of the Locking Parklands scheme being led by developer St Modwen.



Facilities at the complex will include a 210m indoor skiing slope

Other facilities earmarked for Leisuredome include a health club; a children's activity zone; and a crèche, with the proposals now due to go before the communities secretary. Leisuredome (UK) director Clive Hamilton-Davies said: "Our development will build on Weston's growing reputation as a leisure destination and the success of the Grand Pier, which reopened last year. We estimate it will attract 550,000 visitors in the first year, which will add to the £369m already generated by tourism in the local economy every year."

THFC seeks to kick-start stadium scheme

Tottenham Hotspur Football Club (THFC) has confirmed that it is seeking public funding towards its multi-million pound Northumberland Development Project (NDP) regeneration proposals.

The Premier League club had previously stated that the development – centered around a new 56,250-seat stadium and designed by KSS – was not financially viable.

However, THFC has now submitted an application for Round Two of the Regional Growth Fund in a bid to push forward the NDP.

THFC previously criticised a lack of public funding support for its plans

THFC chair Daniel Levy said: "[The NDP] would attract millions of pounds of additional expenditure in the local economy and lever further private investment into the area."

The proposals have already been approved by Haringey Council and London mayor Boris Johnson, and will also feature a new heritage square, a hotel and improved public spaces.

Bournemouth Cycling Centre officially opens

A celebratory event has marked the official opening of the new Bournemouth Cycling Centre – a 250m (820ft) Olympic-sized community facility at Slades Farm, Dorset.

Bournemouth Arrows Cycling Club will operate the facility, which offers an outdoor tarmac track that has been designed for use by local residents and elite competitors.

Work started on the £800,000 Bournemouth Cycling Centre in September 2010, with the banking constructed using materials sourced from Raymond Brown's recycling facility.

MCFC unveils campus plans

Jacob Wagner/Mccy

The academy will be located adjacent to the club's Etihad Stadium

Manchester City Football Club (MCFC) has launched a public consultation to gather views on its plans for a new youth development and training facility near its Etihad Stadium. Residents, supporters and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to share feedback on the Etihad Campus project, which will transform 80 acres (33 hectares) of brownfield land.

The key elements of the development include the construction of a youth development and first team training centre, which would meet new Premier League academy requirements.

It would feature an academy accommodating up to 400 young players; 16 football pitches – up to 12 dedicated for players aged between eight and 18; and a first team building. A 7,000-capacity stadium for youth matches; staff offices; and a dedicated media centre will also form part of the proposed new facility, which will be linked to the Etihad Stadium.

MCFC said the project will also allow it to expand its City in the Community project, while driving forward the regeneration of East Manchester.

New stadium planned by Bristol Rovers FC

Work will start on the venue in early 2012, subject to planning consent

Bristol Rovers Football Club (BRFC) has unveiled its plans to relocate to a new 20,000-seat stadium on land at the University of West England's (UWE) Frenchay campus.

The npower League Two club aims to sell its current Memorial Ground venue to Sainsbury's to fund the Arturus-designed project.

Both projects are expected to represent a combined investment of £60m, with the new BCFC venue to boast a large supporters' club bar; a club shop; and a banqueting and hospitality suite.

A crèche; a gym; a jogging track; and around 19,000sq ft (1,765sq m) of potential teaching space for UWE are also proposed. Work is set to start in early 2012 and it is hoped the venue will be ready for the 2013-14 season. BCFC has publicly offered Bristol Rugby Football Club the opportunity to share the stadium.

S&P Architects named for South London scheme

TOM WALKER

S&P Architects has been appointed by Southwark Council and Lend Lease to design a new leisure centre on part of a site occupied by an existing facility in South London. The firm, which is working alongside Zaha Hadid on the London 2012 Aquatics Centre, will draw up plans for the venue to the rear of the Elephant and Castle Leisure Centre site.

A six-lane, 25m swimming pool; a learner pool; a four-court sports hall; and a gym are to be included as part of the facility.

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New sports centre proposed for Camden

A new sports centre is among the facilities to be developed in King's Cross, London as part of a wider scheme by Camden Council to provide a range of public services in one location. Three Pancras Square is poised to house local authority-run operations - including a library and a customer contact centre - under LA Architects-designed proposals for the building.

Initial plans for the two-floor sports facility include a 25m, five-lane swimming pool with an adjustable floor and a small recreational lagoon-style pool for non-swimmers and families.

IMAGE: ROBERT CUTTS

Planning hurdles have made a revamp "unlikely"

LFC: Anfield renovation "increasingly unlikely"

Liverpool Football Club (LFC) has admitted that plans to renovate its existing Anfield home are looking "increasingly unlikely" due to the number of planning hurdles blocking the scheme.

Ian Ayre, managing director of the club, said that "significant changes" are required to overcome issues such as land/property acquisition and statutory requirements.

LFC has been examining its options, including a new-build stadium located in Stanley Park, but conceded that a revamp would present a "significantly lower cost".

£3m Bath sports hall plans submitted

Bath and North East Somerset Council (BANES) has submitted a new planning application for the construction of a £3m dual-use sports hall at the city's Wellsway School. Cardiff-based Boyes Rees Architects are behind the design of the facility, which forms part of the council's strategy to improve school buildings.

A site next to an existing synthetic turf pitch will house the 1,878sq m (20,215sq ft) facility, which will comprise a six-court sports hall; a 73sq m (786sq ft) gym; and an activity studio.

Work starts on Glasgow centre

A ceremony has taken place to mark the start of construction work at the £13.7m Tollcross Aquatics Centre in Glasgow, which is to be used for swimming events at the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

The scheme has been designed by an in-house team at Glasgow City Council, with Barr Construction appointed to deliver the development.

Work will include the creation of a new six-lane, 50m warm-up swimming pool to add to an existing 10-lane, 50m pool at the venue.

A new six-lane, 50m warm-up swimming pool is among the additions

Meanwhile, 1,000 permanent seats will be added to the 1,000-capacity spectator area, with an additional s3,000 temporary seats to be installed during the Games. A pool-side event control room; fitness and health suites; and an upgraded café are also proposed, along with extended changing facilities.

The facility will open in early 2013, with a new community venue also planned to replace the fire-damaged Shettleston Burgh Halls.

Scottish sport minister Shona Robison said: "[This venue] will help to showcase Scotland's world class facilities during the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games."

New £5.25m extreme sports facility opens

Dacorum Sports Trust (DST) has launched a new £5.25m extreme sports complex – XC – in Hemel Hempstead.

The majority of funding for the scheme (£5m) was provided through the government's myplace programme, which is administered by the Big Lottery Fund. DST contributed the remaining £250,000 towards the XC.

PICTURE COURTESY OF NICK MONAIR PHOTOGRAPHY

A high ropes course 12m (39ft) above the ground is among the facilities

Facilities include a Skate and BMX park with one of the only indoor concrete pool and bowl complexes in the UK; a 60m x 14m (197ft x 46ft) climbing wall with four individuals areas for all abilities; and a 206sq m (2,217sq ft) bouldering facility. XC – run by DST – also features an indoor caving system and a high ropes obstacle course.

GB Building Solutions built the facility, while Sportspace has worked with Dacorum Borough Council and the Youth Connexions service, which has a base in the new building.

SGL launches new CircadianTrust branding

South Gloucestershire Leisure (SGL), a social enterprise that operates leisure venues in the West County, has announced that it has rebranded as Circadian Trust.

The exercise forms part of the organisation's growth strategy over the coming years, with a briefing event on 8 July to mark the official launch of the new brand.

It comes five years after SGL was chosen by South Gloucestershire Council to run venues, with the Circadian Trust set to continue its partnership with the local authority.

School sport "revival" launched

More than 1,000 young people in Hertfordshire took part in the School Games on 17 June – part of a government bid to "revive" competitive school sport across the UK.

The event was one of nine pilot initiatives that are to carried out ahead of a new national School Games competition, which is scheduled to launch in September.

It is hoped that the competition will use the inspiration of next summer's London Games to increase the number of young people participating in competitive sport.

The government aims to 'revive' competitive school sports in the UK

Meanwhile, an action plan has been developed in order to boost disability sports in schools, which will see the participation rates of young disabled people measured.

The new action plan also aims to increase the number of sports currently on offer for disabled children; and more direct guidance and support for schools and teachers.

New ways to enhance chances for disabled youngsters will be pioneered by the top 50 'trailblazing schools', while a competition is also planned to enable disabled and able-bodied children to compete against each other.

Graham to build £12.8m Aberdeen venue

Proposals for a new £18.2m aquatics centre as part of the Aberdeen Sports Village development have taken a step forward after Graham Construction was appointed to build the complex.

FaulknerBrowns Architects are behind the design of the Aberdeen Aquatics Centre, which will incorporate a ten-lane, Olympic-size swimming pool with a dividing boom and a part-floating floor.

A 25m x 16.5m diving pool, with water cushioning systems and an adjustable floor is also planned, along with a timing and video analysis lab. Davis Langdon has been appointed to project manage the scheme, which builds on the success of the £28m regional sports centre opened in 2009.

FaulknerBrowns Architects are behind the design of the £18.2m venue

Planning permission has already been granted for the complex, which will be located on the site of the former Linksfield Academy. The construction process will take 112 weeks.

£12m boost for London grassroot sports

Grassroots sports projects across London are to benefit from more than £12m worth of investment announced by mayor Boris Johnson as part of a drive to increase participation.

A total of £4m is available through the Sports Legacy Fund, while the remaining £8m is match funding and takes the mayor's investment in sport to more than £10m.

Meanwhile, a further £20m match funding has been raised, which has been sourced from the private, public and charitable sectors – taking the mayor's total investment to £30m.

INDUSTRY COMMENT

Charles Johnston, Sport England director of property

Local sports clubs and facilities are the bedrock of grassroots sport. But many could do even more for their communities if they could carry out a simple upgrade to reduce running costs or make their facility more attractive to those people playing sport.

That's why we've launched the Inspired Facilities fund, part of our mass participation legacy programme *Places People Play*. We want people all over the country to be able to look back on 2012 as the year when their local sports facilities got better, especially sports or community groups who may not have received National Lottery funding before.

So we've done all we can to make applying for this £50m fund straightforward. We've kept the language simple and the process to a minimum through improvements such as a catalogue of typical facilities improvements, based on what sports clubs told us they need.

We've also pre-procured contractors who can carry out the work for successful applicants, thus cutting out the need for clubs and other community groups to go through a lengthy procurement process.

Of the overall funds, £35m has been ring-fenced for community and voluntary organisations, while the remaining money will be open to a wider group, including councils and schools.

The result of all this will be up to a thousand improved local facilities each displaying the 'London 2012 Inspire' mark – a physical legacy that local communities in every corner of England can feel proud of.

Moynihan gets further ANOC role

Colin Moynihan, current British Olympic Association chair and president of the Association of National Olympic Committees, has been appointed president of the Special Commission for Collaboration Between National Olympic Committees (NOC) and Governments.

The commission includes representatives from all five continents and Moynihan says the vision is for every NOC to have a "strategically collaborative working relationship with its government, while retaining its autonomy".

UK sports minister Hugh Robertson said Moynihan's role "reflects the influence of Britain in international sport".

Morton directs events at UK sport

Simon Morton has been appointed director of major events and international relations at UK Sport. This is a new post created following a realignment of the agency's senior team, after COO Tim Hollingsworth left to join the British Paralympic Association as CEO.

"We plan to use the opportunities made by London 2012 and Glasgow 2014 to establish the UK as a leading host of major international events. Our relationships with international sporting federations are extremely important, and we need to support the international community in promoting, governing and developing sport," Morton says.

Strange heads Glasgow 2014 competition

Vicky Strange, one of the key figures behind Scotland's medal success at the Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games, has been appointed head of sport competition at Glasgow 2014.

As well as playing a pivotal role in Team Scotland's second most successful Games performance ever as general team manager, Strange has also been involved in varying capacities at both the Manchester 2002 and Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games.

Her primary focus in her new role will be the establishment of a sport competition functional area, which will become the largest and most visible element of the sport department across all 17 Games sports.

Strange will also lead on sport-specific technical and operational planning, the development of officials and the recruitment and management of competition management teams.

ECB appoints four disability forum chairs

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has appointed Jeff Levick, Martyn Dobson, Paul Millman and Mahesh Patel as voluntary chairmen for the newly created four Regional Disability Cricket Development Forums.

These forums will provide strategic direction and relevant expertise to support County Cricket Boards in their delivery of growth, excellence and sustainability in disability cricket. The appointed chairmen will drive the development of a network of expertise and will work closely with both national disability cricket managers and the regional development managers, to support the delivery of the ECB's national strategy and objectives in their region.

Jeff Levick has been appointed as chair for the South and West Forum. He has been involved with cricket – as a player, coach, umpire and administrator – for 50 years. Nottingham County Cricket Club community development officer Martyn Dobson will chair the Midlands' forum. The London and East Forum will be chaired by Paul Millman who, from 1999 to 2009, held the role of chief executive of Kent County Cricket. Mahesh Patel has worked for 13 years at Sporting Equals and the English Federation of Disability Sport and will be chairing the North Disability Forum.

A similar position will be created following discussions between Cricket Wales and The Federation of Disability Sport Wales.

How the association ensures a supplier fits the bill

According to Chris Trickey, CEO of the Sport and Play Construction Association (SAPCA), in these uncertain economic times, buyers and operators of play and sports facilities need to have confidence in the credibility and financial stability of any chosen supplier.

"While clients should always undertake their own checks, choosing a contractor, consultant or supplier that is a member of SAPCA is a great starting point – thanks to the association's rigid membership requirements," he says.

"SAPCA was created by the industry as its trade body more than a decade ago to promote higher standards in the construction of play and sports facilities. Not only does the association insist that companies comply with strict membership criteria in order to gain admission to SAPCA, but it regulates its members in several ways."

Financial Stability: Financial strength has always been an important membership criterion for contractors, as part of SAPCA's application procedure, but the association has now introduced a new system to strengthen its requirements. To ensure that the assessment of a company's financial stability is impartial, SAPCA works closely with the credit reference specialist Experian, and bases its membership requirements on the Commercial Delphi Scoring System used within the Experian Risk Reports.

All SAPCA contractor and supplier applicants must have a minimum Commercial Delphi score of 40 out of 100, which means that, as a starting point, applicants must be in the top 70 per cent of UK businesses for financial stability. The association also monitors the financial stability of its members on an annual basis and requires that contractors and suppliers comply with requirements for financial stability in order to renew their membership at the start of each new membership year in January.

Quality Assurance: SAPCA has introduced an annual Technical Audit Programme through which it monitors the standards of members' workmanship and their continued compliance with the relevant membership criteria. Each year, a number of member companies are selected for this audit with inspections of completed projects being undertaken by an independent assessor.

Feedback on the companies' performance is also sought from clients, sports governing bodies and the wider industry.

Chris Tricky, chief executive of SAPCA

While there are potentially serious consequences should a company be seen to have performed below the expected standards, the overall process is designed to be constructive – providing valuable, informed feedback and encouraging companies to consider possible improvements. The benefit for clients is the reassurance that SAPCA members undergo quality assurance testing and, if an issue does arise, that SAPCA can undertake a mediation role in any dispute.

Setting Standards: SAPCA provides a valuable source of specialist companies that have the requisite expertise and experience for specific types of play and sports facility projects. Its on line database can be searched for appropriate suppliers and its Codes of Practice, education programmes and national events all ensure that the SAPCA marque is invaluable to anyone involved in specifying, buying or operating a play or sports facility.

SAPCA expands its technical team

SAPCA has expanded its technical team with the appointment of a new technical and training manager and a new technical assistant.

Commenting on the appointments, Chris Trickey, CEO of SAPCA says: "One of the most important areas of activity for SAPCA is its technical programme and the comprehensive qualifications and training structure it undertakes for the industry. These new appointments will reinforce and further develop these vital activities."

Marie has a strong background in the industry, having spent the last 11 years as, initially, one of the few female synthetic turf installers in the country and, latterly, as a contracts manager. She financed her way to an honours degree from Loughborough University in Sport and Leisure Management by installing pitches on a part-time basis and has since worked for several key companies in the sports construction industry.

Marie Cooksey is one of the few women involved in the construction of sports facilities

"I am very pleased to be a part of the SAPCA team. Since 2000, I've spent my entire career working within the industry, building pitches and specialising in synthetic turf systems. I am keen on raising standards for sport and play facilities and I'm particularly looking forward to providing the continued support and development of both technical and training structures for the industry," Marie says.

Marie will be joined for a year by Emma Townend, who will be working for SAPCA as part of her under-graduate studies at Loughborough University.

Free seminar and expo at Twickenham SAPCA event

SAPCA, supported by Sport England, is holding a Sports Facility Construction day at Twickenham Stadium, in West London, on Tuesday 29 November.

Ideal for those involved in the design, procurement, construction operation and maintenance of sports facilities, the day includes a series of seminars and workshops and is supported by an exhibition – featuring products and services from across the sports construction industry.

Attendance is free of charge.

For more information, visit www.sapca.org.uk or scan the QR code here with your smartphone.

Lillistone was an Olympic cyclist at the Seoul and Barcelona Games

London Prepares series

Simon Lillistone

LOCOG's sport competition manager for cycling

What's your career background?
I have been involved in cycling since an early age as a road and track cyclist in the late 1980s and 1990s – including representing GB at the Seoul and Barcelona Olympic Games. Since then I have remained involved professionally in the cycling industry with my most recent role, outside of LOCOG, of marketing director for British Cycling.

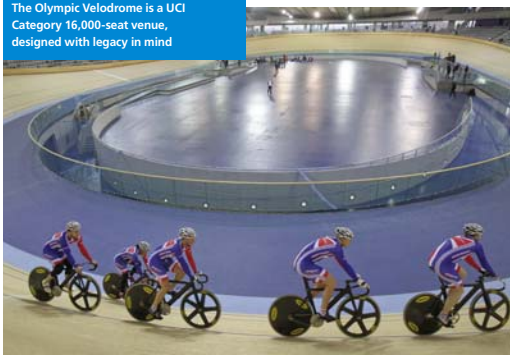
What does your competition manager role entail?
LOCOG is running a series of test events to help the organisation prepare for London 2012. I ensure the delivery of all competition elements of the events, across all four of the Olympic and two Paralympic cycling disciplines.

We've built a fantastic competition management team for cycling across all of the disciplines and we deal with everything that relates to the athletes and officials and cater to the international federation's needs and expectations.

Throughout the event planning, I'm managing and leading the cycling competition team to ensure we deliver on our responsibilities, and in particular that we get the input and approval from the International Federation the Union Cycliste International (UCI).

We also often find ourselves briefing other colleagues, who are specialists in their respective area, regarding the needs of the sport, to ensure the best possible understanding of the sport across the whole organisation in order to deliver the event effectively for all client groups.

The Olympic Velodrome is a UCI Category 16,000-seat venue, designed with legacy in mind

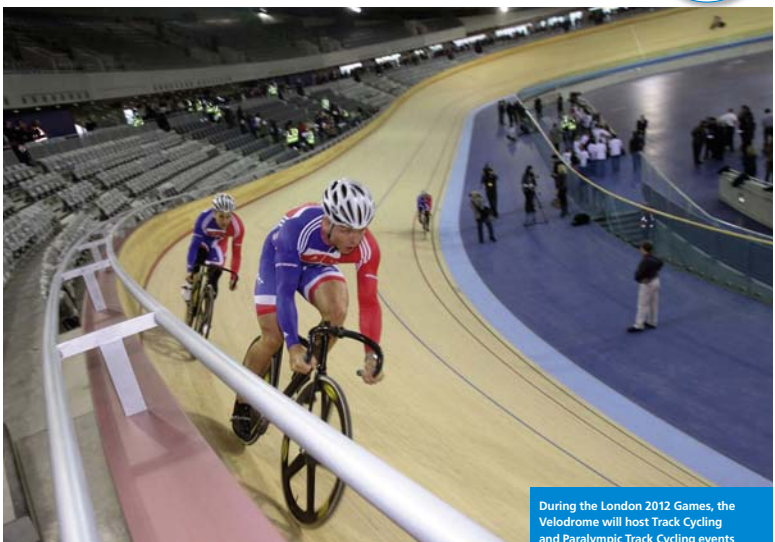


Why were specific events chosen for testing?
We discussed the format of each of the cycling test events with the UCI to ensure that, where necessary, the best international athletes had the opportunity to take part in the events. For example, BMX and Mountain Bike both have a technical element to the course that the riders would want to see as it directly impacts on their preparation for the Olympic events in 2012.

We also considered the constraints of the venues; whether they are completed in time for testing, capacity constraints and stakeholder issues.

Can you focus on an event that you were particularly involved in and explain the set-up process?
The 19-20 August was the date that the UCI BMX Supercross World Cup was held at the Olympic Park. The event was delivered at the same time as the basketball test event in the adjacent arena and therefore it created a mini cluster of events that tested us in delivering two events concurrently.

For this event and Games time, a purpose-built track was constructed by a UCI-appointed expert track designer and builder and was one of the most challenging tracks built to date. The men's track was 470m long and feature a berm jump, an S-bend transfer, a box jump and a rhythm section in the final straight. The women's track was 430m long and featured three jumps along the first straight, a tunnel, and a rhythm section in the final straight. There was a 4m height difference between the first and final straight.



During the London 2012 Games, the Velodrome will host Track Cycling and Paralympic Track Cycling events

An 8m-high start ramp was installed as well as temporary grandstands (3,000 capacity), event offices and spectator facilities, which were all in place in the weeks leading up to the test event.

The start ramp will remain in place but the temporary structures will be taken away until Games time when more extensive temporary overlay will be installed at the venue – including grandstands with a capacity of 6,000.

The UCI BMX Supercross World Cup was categorised as a full LOCOG test event, which meant that all relevant functional areas were provided close to full Games time service levels – to maximise our cross functional learning. This fits well with the profile of this event, which is significant in its own right on the world BMX racing calendar.

How did you tackle the challenges relating to this event?

We go through extensive planning cycles for each of the events to ensure that no major issues are discovered at the event time, however it is inevitable that there will be glitches from time to time which is accepted as a part of the process.

> **We gather information that can benefit other test events and ensure issues are addressed quickly**

From a ticketing and media interest perspective, cycling is on an all time high in the UK with great interest in the British athletes and the build up to 2012. Ticket sales have therefore been strong for the events that have gone on sale so far. Likewise the broadcast arrangements in place will showcase the sport well and also provide observer opportunities at brand new venues for OBS (Olympic Broadcast Service).

We developed detailed operational plans around each functional area of operation and have been working to overcome any identified challenges.

The events taking place on the Olympic Park presented unique challenges in that they were effectively held in the centre of one of Europe's largest construction sites. This had an impact on access routes, security levels and the general spectator experience that were all slightly different to an event held in an existing well-established sports venue.

How is the test event feedback used to benefit the hosting of next year's Olympic and Paralympic Games?

A debrief programme was in place to ensure that feedback and learnings were captured effectively. The first phase of this was to gather any information that is relevant and can be directly beneficial to other test events that are happening within the same cluster, and to ensure that issues are addressed as quickly as possible to improve other events.

The second phase of this is more reflective to ensure that all venue/event specific issues are logged, that the views of the UCI, athletes and other stakeholders are captured and worked through in preparation for London 2012. ●

Sir Philip Craven MBE

The president of the International Paralympic Committee tells Karen Maxwell why the Paralympic Games has the power to change the world and create a more equal society

Sir Philip Craven dislikes the word 'disability'. "The word is purely negative and there's no need for it," he says.

He admits that it's up to the individual sportsperson as to how they want their sport referred to when a situation needs to be described. But used glibly, he says, "it kicks everyone off on the wrong foot, which means we have to fight back towards a balanced position in the sporting spectrum, before we can even start to move forward."

A wheelchair user himself, Craven is president of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), the governing body of the international Paralympic Movement. His sentiment echoes the movement's vision, which he helped to author nearly 10 years ago. "'Enable' is the most important word in our mission statement," he says. "We're committed to empowering athletes – from beginner to elite – to do their own thing and to provide a stage for them to do it on."

The 'stage' refers to the IPC's role as organiser of the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games, in addition to world and regional championships and other competitions – associated with its role of international federation for nine Paralympic sports.

Raising the profile

Bringing parasport to world attention is a role Craven takes very seriously. Since the IPC's first Strategic Plan in early 2003, the organisation, together with the Paralympic Movement, has created a sound financial base and has transformed from a disability organisation into a sports organisation. The new Strategic Plan 2011-2014 focuses on the core business – Games, athletes and the IPC brand, as well as the tactical goals of funding, capacity and partnerships.

A five-time Paralympian, Paralympic swimmer and world champion in wheelchair basketball, Craven's administrative career includes performance director, CEO and three terms as chair of the Great Britain Wheelchair Basketball Association, before he was appointed president of the International Wheelchair Basketball Federation in 1998.

He also serves on several international boards – including the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the British Olympic Association and the London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG).

"I was involved with the IPC through my wheelchair basketball role and as such was a member of the IPC Sports Council," he explains. "At that time I thought a lot of work needed to be done to raise the profile of Paralympic sports. However, I clearly remember the Barcelona 1992 Paralympic Games as being the key event when I felt that things were about to change."

> **"At the Barcelona Olympics in 1992, the wheelchair basketball players suddenly found themselves in front of 12,500 people rather than the average 1,000"**

Credited as the largest showcase of elite Paralympic sport at that time, tens of thousands of Spanish supporters witnessed some exceptional performances during the 12 days of competition, including the USA's visually impaired swimmer Trischa Zorn, who won an impressive 10 Gold and two Silver medals.

According to Craven the event's success was partly because a number of Paralympic sports had become better organised, however, it was the combination of the sports-mad Spanish public and the support of the then IOC president, Spaniard Juan Antonio Samaranch – whose long-standing dream was that his city would host the Olympic and Paralympic Games side by side – that cemented its success.

Left: Team Canada 2010 Vancouver Wheelchair Rugby champions. Above: Goalball is played by visually impaired athletes. The ball has a bell in it to help the player locate it

"The wheelchair basketball players suddenly found themselves in front of crowds of up to 12,500 people rather than the average 1,000," he says, "Spanish TV raised its profile by broadcasting across the country and to other Spanish-speaking parts of the world.

"During these Games it became apparent to me that the Paralympic train had just left the station and I wanted to be on it," he says. "I went for the IPC presidency, at the age of 51, full of energy and enthusiasm – and 10 years' on, I'm still going strong."

According to Craven, dropping the term 'disability' has been key to parasports' increase in world recognition. "I think that if we've achieved one thing in my tenure as president it's that we've moved away from the term 'disability' into a sports' organisation. This equal profile has presented more opportunities for us in dealing with the International Sports Federations and the IOC – it had to be done and it's definitely paid off," he says.

Since Barcelona, Craven says Paralympic sports have increased in popularity. "After a successful Sydney Games, we were excited by the incredible swing of perception and genuine interest in Paralympic sports during the 2008 Beijing Games – and if you can do that in China you can do it anywhere," he says.

Paralympic legacy

While interest continued to grow in Canada during the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games, Craven's particularly excited about the role the Paralympic Games will play in London.

"When I'm visiting athletes and colleagues around the world, there's a palpable excitement about coming to visit London," he says. "It's a great city, a vibrant city and I'm sure that great things will happen at the Games and will continue to happen afterwards. When the legacy benefits continue thereafter, that's when you realise that a Games has been a great success.

"Barcelona is a brilliant example. The city is so accessible now. As a wheelchair user you wouldn't know that many areas formerly had obstacles – you can now go anywhere on the streets, no problem at all. And the city increased hugely in popularity as a visitor destination in recent years – such was the impact of the 1992 Games."

Regarding London's legacy, Craven says it's good to question genuine legacy. "It will be the only opportunity in the early 21st century for Britain to maximise the potential for more people to participate in sport and physical activity," he says. Adding that the term 'physical activity' is key as he believes the way sport has been taught in schools has put many off regular sports participation.

"The win, win win mentality, when only the best people are viewed as important happens in many schools across the country. Sport in school helps children to get to know each other and how to get on with other people in any situation – you don't necessarily do that sitting in a French or maths class. Continual interaction in a slightly competitive environment is key to making sure children acquire life skills, and the more they practice, the better they get."

Craven goes on to say that we shouldn't pigeonhole sports players either. "We shouldn't assume that a 6ft 6inch person is going to be a basketball player, when they may have a love for

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Above: Alpine Skiing at the 2010 Vancouver Games. Right: Craven with Paralympic swimmer Mallory Weggemann

lawn bowls. It's what drives someone's heart that's more important than having the right physique," he says. "We need to find out what activity individuals are excited by, as first and foremost sport, or physical activity, has got to be viewed as a fun thing to do."

Going forward

With the Sochi Paralympic Winter Games in 2014 in the IPC's sights, Craven believes that the event will have a similar impact on Russian society as it has had in China. "The CEO of Sochi 2014 has become a very good friend in recent years and he's somebody that I really do believe will see through change," he says. "When I met up with him at the Beijing 2008 Games he told me that he'd been checking out the Chinese intent to improve accessibility across the cities of China, to check that progress was in line with what was being achieved in Beijing.

"I was pleased to hear that his research had a positive outcome and that he's 100 per cent committed to achieving similar changes and working to spread these throughout Russia from the Sochi Games. I think the key here is that the Russian president, prime minister and the president of the Russia Olympic Committee are absolutely supportive of this intent. It's something that's still quite new for the Russian sports federations but it's exciting when a sports event has the power to bring about powerful and enduring cultural change in a country."

Regarding Rio 2016, Craven says that the IPC is fortunate that a leading member of the Paralympic governing board – Andrew Parsons – is president of the Brazilian Paralympic Committee. "He's worked extremely hard over the years to raise the profile of the Paralympics," Craven says. "Twelve years' ago just 20 to 30 Brazilian Paralympians attended major sporting events, but at each subsequent Games I've seen more and more yellow and green tracksuits. There's been tremendous support for Rio 2016 from the Federal, State and City governments and robust promises made by Rio 2016 president Carlos Nuzman, so I'm very confident that their pledges will be delivered before, during and after the Games."

Craven is also confident in Pyeongchang's ability to host a successful winter event in 2018, citing the fact that the Pyeongchang region and Korea as a whole, has a long history of staging sports events for athletes with a disability. "The bid featured a solid concept to boost the development of Paralympic Winter sport in the region, throughout Asia and internationally and the team committed considerable funds to support projects," he says. He adds that they have also committed to staging two sanctioned Paralympic sport events per year in each of the years leading up to 2018, which will help promote Paralympic sport in the area as well as training staff and testing the venues.

"The Games are the pinnacle of the career of Paralympic athletes and a motivation for many to participate or engage in Paralympic sports. Showcased to a worldwide audience they can act as a vehicle to change perceptions and leave tangible legacies," Craven says.

"Sport has the power to unite the world as 'one world – one people', and through their courage and determination Paralympians have the power to surprise and change perceptions on equality through their performances. We've got great athletes. Whether they have lost a leg, or can't see, spectators are genuinely surprised that they can offer a fantastic sporting spectacle, just like anyone else."

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LIVESTRONG SPORTING KANSAS CITY

Karen Maxwell looks into the soccer stadium's 'fan orientated' design and how its LIVE**STRONG** partnership could hail a new standard for professional sports engaging with worthwhile causes

Built at a cost of US$200m (£122.3m), Sporting Kansas City's new Livestrong Sporting Park heralds a unique partnership between the football club and the cancer-fighting charity. The leading edge design technologies embraced within its construction have gained it the reputation as one of the most advanced sports stadiums in the US.

Owned by five Kansas-based businessmen, the agreement between Sporting Club's Major League Soccer (MLS) stadium Sporting Kansas City and Livestrong – the brand name of the Lance Armstrong Foundation, created in 1997 by the cancer survivor and champion cyclist – was sealed in March this year. Since the opening match in mid June this year, between Kansas City and the Chicago Fire, the link up has already brought the charity to regional national and international attention. And the owners believe that a unique emphasis on technology and fan experience within the stadium will also help to raise football's profile too.

Ball in motion

Emblazoned with the bright yellow Livestrong livery in recognition of the partnership, the stadium is the result of Sporting Club's brief to Populous architects, which was to design an American version of a European football stadium, with a capability for hosting multi events.

"The owners wanted the stadium design to capture the essence of the 'beautiful game' so we looked at what that meant to a built environment – by focusing on the players' athleticism and masculinity and then translating this into a static environment," says principal Populous architect Jeff Spear.

The result is an exterior of repeating angular metal fins, which represent the players' athleticism and align across the length of the building façade to create an illusion of animated movement. The signature roof canopy derives its design from the floating arc of the ball as it's kicked across the field.

Fan-orientated design

Seating 18,467 for matches and 25,000 for concerts, this is Kansas City's first proper home in the team's 15-year history. The polycarbonate-paneled roof canopy enhances the intimate 'European' spectator experience. Ascending from 65ft (20m) off the ground up to 95ft (29m) high, it cantilevers out a further 95ft and covers every seat in the bowl – allowing spectators to breathe life into the structure during home games.

The fans were actually invited into the development process from the very beginning. In April 2010, the Kansas City players invited them to sign the first piece of steel put into place; the construction could be followed via the team's website and [season] ticket holders were invited to don hard hats and walk through the site during the building process.

"Every corner of the bowl has been designed to offer a different match experience for the fans," says Spear. "There's the members stand; the Victory Suite; and the opposing team's dedicated seating area. The field club seats are just 19ft (5.8m) from the field of play. While the 35 suites with adjacent lounges and floor-to-ceiling patio doors offer the fans an indoor/outdoor experience and the chance to interact with players," he explains.

The 2,000 bleacher-seat members' stand contains the heart and soul of the drum-banging soccer fanatics who turn up the tempo during games. Attached to this is a dedicated members' club – an 8,000sq ft (743sq m) sports bar that's

open to members' stand fans during Sporting Kansas City home games.

"Membership of this club allows for a lower priced ticket, a separate entrance to the stadium and access to the club on non-game days to watch English Premier League and European soccer matches," Spear explains.

The owners can't allow a stadium of this size to lie empty during the off season, so a retractable seating section has been designed to fit into the bowl's south end. This reveals a stage that can be used for concerts. "The stage was designed to be hidden below a section of removable seats and is separate from the turf," Spear explains.

Regarding the field of play, the 75-yard (68.5m) by 120-yard (110m) pitch has been sown with Kentuckey Bluegrass mix turf and the polycarbonate roof will allow 85 per cent of light to transmit through the panels to keep it in good condition. "A SubAir under-soil heating and cooling system has been installed to keep the turf at a constant temperature," Spear explains. Adding that the system can also "suck water from the turf after a particularly heavy downpour".

Right: Lance Armstrong, the champion cyclist and founder of the Livestrong charity at the Sporting Kansas City Stadium

Into the future

During the stadium opening ceremony in June this year, MLS commissioner Don Garber said he believed that the technological innovations within the stadium will provide fans with an experience that will set the standard for soccer and other sports as well.

Throughout the facility, 330 Cisco Connected Sports Solutions TV screens offer high-definition (HD) video, interactive fan services (such as weather, traffic and international news) and digital content (such as game stats).

WiFi can be accessed via 150 points, which accommodate mobile and hand-held devices allowing spectators to quickly access mobile applications such as social networking and sports-related and stadium-specific platforms. This will power the park's point-of-sale infrastructure for ticket sales, and also be used for devices in luxury suites running interactive Cisco StadiumVision applications which enable guests to choose video options via a table or smartphone.

The four-star locker rooms offer players power dock-equipped, US$5,000 (£3,000, €3,500), Spanish, reclining seats for easy access to information via their tablet or smartphone. The spacious media room, where post-game interviews are conducted, is next to a large bar and food area so fans will be able to look through the glass partition to see the interviews take place while the audio is piped to them.

> **We try to look for different ways to tell our story and this partnership gives us an innovative opportunity to advance the cancer fight in this region**

The Livestrong link

Regarding the mutual benefits of the Livestrong partnership, Sporting Kansas City has agreed to donate US$7.5m (£4.6m) to the Livestrong foundation over the next five years.

"A portion of all stadium revenues, whether it's a ticket, a box of popcorn or an online t-shirt purchase, will be used to help the fight against cancer during our multi-year agreement between Sporting Club and Livestrong," Sporting Club CEO and one of Sporting Kansas City's owners Robb Heineman explains.

Livestrong will provide US$1.75m (£1.1m) over the next five years for programmes that support people in the Kansas area who have been directly affected by cancer. The University of Kansas Cancer Centre and the Midwest Cancer Alliance will receive funding to establish cancer survivor programmes and support will be given to wellness programmes for people undergoing treatment at local YMCAs.

Speaking at the launch of the agreement, Livestrong founder and chair Lance Armstrong said: "One of the cool things that we try to do with this foundation is to look for different ways to tell our story. Livestrong's partnership with Sporting Club gives us an innovative opportunity to advance the cancer fight in this region. In particular, we have agreed on a completely tobacco-free setting, both inside and outside the stadium, which I think is unique." ●

SPORT COPING WITH THE CUTS

Sport faces unprecedented challenges from reductions in public spending, but Olympic legacy and the government's health agenda offer major opportunities. John Bell asks whether sport can rise to the challenge?

Sport – along with arts, libraries and museums, parks, play and tourism – is facing a decreasing public sector budget, which could be 25-40 per cent smaller in financial terms by 2014.

A recent survey by the Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers' Association (CCLOA) – aiming to provide a snapshot of the financial environment for culture and leisure services – was returned by 82 of the 200 councils the organisation represents in England and Wales.

The survey provided information on reductions in budgets for 2011/12 and looking ahead to 2012/13.

Around 40 per cent of authorities will be setting budgets for culture and leisure in line with the overall 21 per cent local government comprehensive spending review reduction. However, 16 authorities (20 per cent of respondents) are making savings of more than 15 per cent across consecutive financial years, which combines to reductions of around 30 per cent. The message is that culture and leisure budgets are being hit by a greater proportion of cuts in around 20 per cent of authorities.

From what we know of our sector it can be suggested that savings of this level and speed are rarely achieved through 'back office' functions: the quality and the range of frontline service provisions are being affected. It also seems likely that charges are being increased, thus increasing the barrier to participation.

New ways of working

More than 50 per cent of the authorities which responds to the CLOA survey stated they were currently undertaking or considering alternative delivery models. In 27 councils, transformation of the delivery of culture or sport services was already underway.

The main alternative delivery models are:

- Externalising service delivery through a private contractor or trust
- Sharing services with another local authority
- Transferring assets to a community group
- Sharing assets with another service provider (i.e. co-location)

While private sector externalisation was cited as a priority option for consideration in 28 per cent of local authorities responding to this question, the trust model is favoured and is currently being planned or is underway in 41 per cent of local authorities.

Sharing services with another local authority is underway for 13 per cent of respondents with another 24 per cent considering it as an option. Transferring assets to community groups and sharing locations with other service providers are also being considered as viable options by around 39 per cent and 36 per cent of local authorities respectively.

In summary, it would appear that all options for transformation are being considered by authorities; only one responding local authority was not proactively reviewing at least one alternative delivery model.

Sector-led improvement

As part of the localism and accountability agenda, sport will no longer have to achieve success through measures such as National Indicators. Accountability will be to communities and customers and the emphasis will be on delivering better outcomes more efficiently.

Support is available to assist sector-led improvement through:

- CCLOA
- Local Government Improvement and Development
- Local Cultural Improvement Network
- County Sports Partnership Network

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

So what opportunities will be available for sport over the next few years, while

CSPs can play a key role in finding new ways of encouraging school sport after the large cut in funding through the YST

the sector responds to the challenge of reducing costs and increasing productivity?

- Less national policy, prescription and inspection with more opportunity for local priorities and self improvement
- Opportunity to position culture and sport in place-based budgeting and strategic partnership working to contribute to delivering better outcomes
- Opportunity for the sector to be commissioned to deliver better outcomes:
  - For health
  - For older people and those in need of support
  - For children and young people
- But a need to reduce cost and increase productivity by:
  - Reducing cost and increasing income
  - New ways of delivering services (trust, private, community)
  - Sharing services across council boundaries (two-tier working)
  - Working with the third sector – volunteers and communities

So how are sports managers planning to meet these opportunities?

Skills and competencies

The new Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (IMSPA), and the Skills Protocol Employer Leadership Group (SPELG) are addressing the need for a number of changes:

- A single qualification structure which meets the needs of staff and employers
- A skills passport with regular updates
- Quality assured training
- All courses (ie lifeguarding, pool plant and First Aid) to be provided by any accredited training provider

SPELG recognised that the existing pattern of training, funded through Skills Active and employers, needs to change and that education providers in higher and further education must equip students with the relevant skills for employment. The SPELG work was launched, in June this year, at the House of Commons, with government endorsement so progress is being made – but more remains to be done.

Sport and strategic planning, and partnership working

In local government, leaders and chief executives will only prioritise sport and culture if they contribute to the key aims and objectives of the council and its strategic partners in business, health and other local service providers.

An example of this in practice was given by the leader and chief executive of Somerset County Council at the Culture, Tourism and Sport conference, held earlier this year in York. Councillor Ken Maddock and Sheila Wheeler explained how all services were examined for their contribution to the key outcomes of economic development and wellbeing.

Sports managers need to consider how sport and physical activity can be positioned in the strategic plans of their councils and give evidence of how sport is contributing to these plans.

Commissioning

Commissioners of services for children and young people, older adults and people needing support, are looking for new ways of meeting needs (particularly since the recent riots). Sport and physical activity have been used in many local authorities to meet health needs through community based health programmes. An example is the 'Refresh' programme in Blackburn and Darwen, which has received £6m of health funding to transform the health of local people.

However, our sector is not always seen as easy to deal with by commissioners.

A Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID) survey of children's services commissioners revealed that sport and culture were not aligned to the requirements of the commissioning system and consequently opportunities were being lost. It is not enough to say "we are here – use us". Sports managers need to seek out the commissioning process and those who are in charge of that process.

Reducing costs and increasing productivity

It's clear that the subsidy available to sport and leisure, whether promoted directly by a council or through a trust or private sector provider, is being reduced – and will be reduced further over the next few years.

A traditional response to the reduction of subsidy is to reduce opening hours of facilities, increase charges or look at others to run a service. But sports managers will need to look at new ways of addressing the loss of subsidy. These could include:

- Combining leisure trusts
- Sharing services across council boundaries
- Looking to the third sector
- Including volunteers to run services

Partnership working will be the key to keeping services running. An example of working with the private sector is Wigan Leisure trusts partnership with Slimming World, which has proved mutually beneficial with clients of Slimming World seeing opportunities for sustained physical activity in Wigan's centres.

The National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs) will be considering their plans for 2014-2017 under the next round of Sport England lottery funding. Many people involved in local government sport were disappointed that the 2010-2013 Sport England funding passed them by. Perhaps a better model for the future would be a much more joined-up local approach, which involved NGBs, local authorities and County Sports Partnerships (CSPs).

There are 49 CSPs in all, which cover all parts of the country and are uniquely placed to be the brokers between all organisations providing sport in their area. During the past two years, the County Sports Partnership Network (CSPN) has provided a national as well as local perspective on sport. The CSPN has earned the respect of Sport England which has funded its activities, recognising that there needs to be an effective organisation, which can provide local leadership and connectivity.

The reduction in funding for school sport through the Youth Sport Trust means that we will need to find new ways of encouraging school sport – CSPs can play a key role here.

Volunteering has always been central to sports clubs and without it much of community sport would simply not exist. But as many readers who are sports volunteers will know, volunteering is fragile and we need to support our volunteers better. One way we do this is to reduce the burden of regulation on volunteers. The Sport and Recreation Alliance (formerly CCPR) has recently reported to the Sports Minister, Hugh Robertson, on how red tape and bureaucracy can be reduced while still safeguarding those involved in sport.

> **New partnerships with both the private and community sector can help break down barriers and create more business opportunities for sport locally**

Sport needs to work harder to overcome the barriers to regular participation by wider sectors of the population

CONCLUSIONS

Sport in this pre-Olympic and Paralympic year has a great opportunity. The London Games will showcase sport to the world and at home provide a huge boost in public interest. The transfer of public health to local authorities, with ring-fenced budget up to £7bn, offers the opportunity for mass sport and physical activity programmes to make a real impact on preventable diseases – such as obesity and heart disease. The modified GP Commissioning framework also offers opportunities to get people more active and healthier.

But sport needs to move with the times and work harder to overcome the known barriers to participation by those who might try but, for various reasons, do not 'cross the threshold'. New partnerships with the private and community sector can break down barriers and create more business opportunities for sport locally.

The brokerage role of CSPs with NGBs and other sports providers such as local authorities and schools, can offer joined-up local solutions. And CSPs can assist with accessing the commissioning process, with advice from LGID and CLOA.So, despite an era of austerity, sport can have a future – if we all rise to the challenge. ●

Based on the CCLOA document *Culture and Sport Impact Survey*, drawn up by Richard Hunt, chair of CCLOA and on presentations made by Martyn Allison, LGID national adviser on culture and sport

John Bell is Honorary Secretary at CCLOA, a director of the Sport and Recreation Alliance and chair of Merseyside Sports Partnership

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Bottom pic: Going blue at Livingstone, Scotland

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GROWING THE GRASSROOTS

The British American Football Association is set to use its new strategy to embrace the sport's recent rise in popularity

TOUCHDOWN FOOTBALL

Ever since the National Football League's (NFL) Washington Redskins took on the Miami Dolphins in Super Bowl XVII in 1983, the sport of American football has been indelibly imprinted in the consciousness of the British sporting public.

The game aired on a then fledgling Channel 4 in the days before multi-channels offering extensive live sports coverage and 24 hour rolling sports news. As a result of this and allied to a culture that was increasingly exposed to and devouring, various forms of Americana, from television programmes to fast food and soft drinks – American football struck a chord.

The sport quickly took hold across the UK. Teams were set up and many were soon playing in front of crowds whose numbers were in the thousands. A collegiate league started across British universities and the stellar cast of the NFL – Dan Marino, 'The Refrigerator' and Jerry Rice – became household names.

However, the sport soon started to dip from its participatory highs and wide audience. Cultural changes, in particular relating to the re-emergence of domestic sports on television, and increased focus and investment from other national governing bodies, meant that American football was getting squeezed and the structure underpinning the domestic game was not sufficiently robust to sustain the sport during this period.

At a national level the sport was run by leagues with little in the way of a development agenda and at grassroots level most teams existed without a supporting club infrastructure where the next generation of players would be groomed. As teams fell by the wayside there were knock on effects for leagues and the overall management of the game.

Into this vacuum the British American Football Association (BAFA) arrived. Recognised as the national governing body for the sport, the association existed as an umbrella organisation to bring together the different elements of the sport, which existed as separate entities.

Below: The 2011-2012 University National Champions – the Portsmouth Destroyers – charge onto the pitch

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Above left: The University Challenge Champions – Cardiff Cobras and the Birmingham Lions' youth team (above)

The first stage of BAFA's journey, which started nearly 20 years ago, is now almost complete. This current sport-wide review will see one unified organisation in existence from 2013 driven by a new strategy, which aims to build upon the sport's first Whole Sport Plan. This was authored in 2007 and caters for the governing body's circa 7,500 membership.

A great opportunity

There could not be a more opportune moment for the sport to be reinvigorating itself in the UK as the NFL is now back in Britain in a big way. When the New York Giants took on the Miami Dolphins in the first of the International Series regular season games at Wembley Stadium in 2007, the stadium could have sold out five times over within 72 hours of the tickets going on sale. In the same period, television figures for the NFL have increased by more than 60 per cent and well over a quarter of a million fans have signed up to the NFL's UK website. When the 2010 International Series game hit Wembley, not only did it sell out, but 38,000 fans turned up in Trafalgar Square for a Fan Rally in the week leading up to the game.

Commenting on NFL's positive influence, chair of BAFA Gary Marshall says: "As we lay the foundations for the development of the sport over the next decade we are acutely aware that the interest which is generated by the NFL will provide the principle driver of growth in the domestic game. We have to work to ensure that the systems and structures which we employ serve to both provide effective opportunities for engagement from those whose interest is kindled and provide a positive enough experience which aids their retention and development."

The need to pursue this twin track approach has also been demonstrated through the decision by Sport England in 2009 to invest over £70,000 in a series of activities under the Impact and Improvement Award programme.

"The investment by Sport England has proven invaluable," says Marshall. "Among the various projects which were funded included the development of elements of the coaching and officiating pathway – providing the sport with both new entry level qualifications and an enhanced programme for continuing professional development."

While investment into the support infrastructure for the sport is vital, the principle problems which face most teams when seeking to start and develop relates to the cost of participation. With the basic equipment of a helmet and pads costing over £250 there is quite a commitment required from players or a significant outlay for a team who seek to provide equipment for players to use.

Kick Start

"One of the great aspects of the Impact and Improvement Award was that it enabled us to pilot a targeted equipment loan programme," Marshall explains. "This has led to a new initiative for the summer of 2011 entitled Kick-Start. This is a new BAFA initiative to fast-track the growth of Youth (U17) American Football teams competing in the BAFA National leagues competitions by providing the loan of playing equipment for players in start-up programmes."

Such is the value of the Kick-Start programme, the global governing body for the game, the International Federation of American Football, has invested in it through their Education and Development Programme Fund in 2011.

Kick-Start project lead director Jim Messenger says: "Kick-Start is a landmark programme for us. Our participation profile shows that most of our members are adults. Kick-Start, allied to wider development work, gives us a chance to significantly boost the number of young people playing football in Britain.

"In addition to the provision of equipment to successful applicants, the resources put into the programme see a dedicated co-ordinator in situ to provide a high level of support to the new teams in their start-up year and to collect in-depth information to support future investment and development in youth football," Marshall says.

University Growth

At present, one of the primary entry routes into American football is through

We're working towards 67 student teams this season with more undertaking development in readiness for 2012-2013

Andy Fuller, BAFA director for student football development

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Above: Neil Reynolds – the UK's foremost expert on the NFL. Right: London Blitz National League champions

university-based programmes. While there has been competition across universities since the mid 1980s, recent years have seen considerable growth and a maturing product.

"In 2007, we had 42 teams competing in the national student championships," says Andy Fuller, BAFA director for student football development. "For the coming academic year we are working towards 67 teams looking to start the season with more seeking to undertake a development year in readiness for the 2012-13 campaign."

During the course of these four years, university American football has seen the number of participants grow by close to 50 per cent and there are plans underway to increase the reach of the sport. "The 2011-12 season saw the League conclude pilot events for Flag Football, the non-contact version of the sport, with a view to establishing national tournaments for both men and women next season. The League will also be launching a pilot of six on six contact football specifically for women," Fuller explains.

He puts this successful growth within the country's universities down to a series of factors. "The key driver for the sport's growth across Higher Education is hard work and dedication from the students, the coaches and the Student Unions. To complement this as a governing body we have worked hard to support their endeavours, providing enhanced advice and guidance and delivering a credible product worthy of their efforts.

"Clearly it's hard to ignore the NFL frame of reference," says Fuller. "The increased presence of the NFL in the UK has undoubtedly underpinned increased interest and recruitment. Indeed, the NFL has supported student football by providing the League with capital to invest in a new website to build the brand of competition across universities and to support more effective engagement with the students."

Beyond this again it is Sport England's impact which can be felt. In recent years, almost £40,000 of funding has been secured by universities through the Small Grants programme to support fledgling programmes in this sector.

With squads of 40-plus athletes to fit in changing rooms and full-sized fields being 360ft long, we have to make compromises to get games in many locations

The future

"Our platform for development is now more robust than at any time in our history," Marshall says. "However, we recognise that there is still a great deal which needs to be done to further develop the sport and to form the backbone of our emerging strategy.

"We have to continue to review our competition programmes and outreach offer so that it is more supportive of engagement, particularly to teachers of Key Stage 2 and 3 aged children from whom we are receiving increased requests for guidance to support schools-based programmes. We have to author a comprehensive facilities guidance package, which informs the development of new facilities. With squads of 40-plus athletes to fit in changing rooms and full-sized fields being 360-feet-long we have to make a number of compromises in order to get games played in many locations.

"Crucially, we have to continue to invest in the development of our workforce. As a largely voluntary organisation, a strong reward and development programme is vital."

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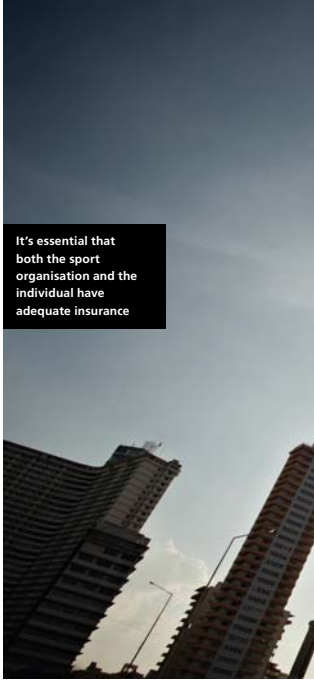


It's essential that both the sport organisation and the individual have adequate insurance

Insuring against risk in sport

Insurance is an essential requirement when protecting individuals and organisations against potential risks – particularly in this increasingly litigious age (and the recent riots). We ask industry experts what to consider to ensure the right cover for sports people, clubs and governing bodies, leisure trusts and the hosting of major sporting events

Chris Rackliffe,
lead contingency underwriter, Beazley Group

Risks that organisers of major sporting events need to consider include cancellation due to terrorism, adverse weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances, such as political unrest and civil commotion.

Event organisers need to work closely with their insurance broker and underwriters from as early in the planning process as possible, to allow them to gather the key underwriting information. In addition, site visits can also be made to advise clients as to the steps they should take to lessen the risks of a cancellation.

The next big decision the event organiser needs to make is what level of cover is required. For example, does the full cost of running an event, including profits, need to be covered? And does the event timing allow for any rescheduling of key competitions due to unforeseen circumstances – as this may affect allotted televised coverage time, ticket sales and advertising revenue? If an event needs to be extended by an extra day – what would be the cost to the organiser to be able to do this?

Collaborative discussions between clients and brokers means that cover is tailored specifically for the event and enables more competitive pricing – based on the underwriter's understanding of the risk.

Andrew Nixon,
associate and sports lawyer, Thomas Eggar LLP

The concept of consent and the implied acceptance of certain participator risks means that the liability threshold is higher in sport than in other walks of life. However, the risks associated with personal injury still need to be managed – in particular when it comes to team contact sports.

It's fundamentally important that clubs have appropriate employer's liability insurance in place to provide cover against any claims made against an employee who causes injury to an opposing player. Generally speaking, the clubs will be linked to any personal injury claim on the basis of vicarious liability.

Players also need to manage their individual risks. For example, in football, clubs can lawfully terminate a playing contract, subject to obtaining medical opinions. Therefore, during contract negotiations, it's important for the player to make it a contractual term that 'notice to terminate' cannot be invoked until – say – the last six months of the contract. This will ensure the contract is paid-up in full, effectively meaning the club is insuring the player against injury. If this cannot be agreed, then career-ending injury insurance should be obtained and the contract should contain a clause that the club pays the premiums.

Kate Biggs,
account executive, The Endsleigh Business Team

Some local authorities have managed to reduce operational risk by transferring old, dilapidated buildings to leisure trusts. However, maintaining these buildings at a safe standard can be exhausting and expensive.

This is further exacerbated by the fact that the majority of claims against leisure trusts tend to be personal injury claims under the Occupiers Liability Act 1984. It's a disappointing fact that some of these claims are often made by unscrupulous individuals who are taking advantage of the current claim culture and this increasing trend means the volumes of claims are rising.

In order to manage these risks, the trusts have to strike a balance between expenditure of funds for services and managing the budget – particularly when local authority management fees are ever decreasing. So sound advice from a specialist health and safety consultant could be a great advantage.

These specialists can assist individual trusts by conducting audits of the premises, providing assistance with risk assessments and reviewing health and safety policies. Thus providing all the documentary evidence needed to help defend against any submitted claims.

Richard Doubleday,
director of sport, Perkins Slade

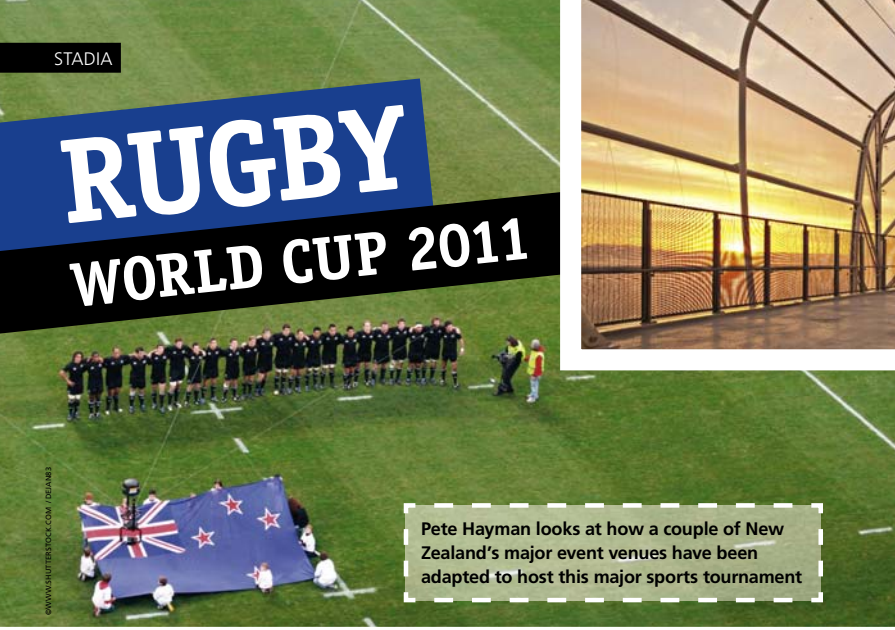
Not so many years ago people who took part in sporting and recreational activity did so on the understanding that accidents and injury were part and parcel of participation. Sadly there's now a culture – if people get hurt – of looking for someone to blame, however minor the injury might be.

That being the case, national governing bodies of sport (NGBs) are increasingly including Civil Liability protection as an integral part of affiliation, both by clubs and individuals. Most vulnerable are coaches and volunteers.

The way in which people claim they're suffering injury or loss is increasing all the time and as such it's essential that both the organisation and the individual have appropriate protection in place. In addition to conventional Public Liability insurance, many NGBs are including Professional Indemnity, Directors and Officers and Libel and Slander cover as integral to their arrangements.

Of equal concern is the level of damages now being awarded in the Civil Courts. In October 2010, a former professional cyclist was awarded £14m in compensation following a road accident. This has to be funded from insurance premium payments, which are inevitably going to have to increase in order to keep pace.

RUGBY WORLD CUP 2011



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Pete Hayman looks at how a couple of New Zealand's major event venues have been adapted to host this major sports tournament

On 9 September, New Zealand will play Tonga in the opening game of the Rugby World Cup (RWC) 2011 at Eden Park in Auckland. The country that co-hosted the inaugural event in 1987 – alongside Australia – has been selected as the sole host for this year's tournament and is determined to put on a good show.

It has been anticipated that the event will generate a significant boost for the national economy. In September 2006, organisers revealed that the total economic activity would total more than NZ$1.15bn (£600m), while it was revealed in August 2011 that offshore ticket sales indicated an influx of 95,000 overseas visitors from more than 100 countries is anticipated during the six-week tournament.

Martin Snedden, chief executive officer of Rugby New Zealand 2011 (RNZ 2011), said: "The upsurge in support from overseas fans is a strong sign of confidence in our ability to host the biggest sporting event New Zealand has ever held."

New Zealand's bid for the tournament was centred around the philosophy that it would be hosted in a "Stadium of Four Million" and offer an "All Rugby" experience for those involved. One of the core promises set out in the bid was the provision of high-quality facilities and one that left a global legacy for the sport. Regardless of which nation takes home the trophy on 23 October, New Zealand can already boast significantly improved stadia that are breaking boundaries

RECREATING EDEN PARK

Rugby World Cup 2011 gives Auckland's Eden Park the opportunity to make history. It is to become the first stadium to host the Rugby World Cup Final on two occasions, having hosted the showpiece event in 1987. A three-year, NZ$240m (£125.2m) redevelopment has increased its permanent capacity to 50,000 – a capacity that will grow further for the tournament to 60,000 with temporary seating.

Eden Park Trust sales and marketing general manager Tracy Morgan believes there is little to compare between the Eden Park of 1987 and the Eden Park of 2011. "The stadium has none of the same infrastructure still in place and the event is unrecognisable in scale," she says. "The sheer media presence alone which must be accommodated underlines there is almost nothing related to tournament delivery which can be compared to 1987."

The redevelopment of Eden Park has included the construction of a new six-level, 21,500-seat South Stand and a new three-tier East Stand. The project has also seen the creation of an internal concourse to allow supporters to flow through the venue. Morgan says this feature is the result of a desire to be respectful of its location.

"Some of the key changes, such as the concourse connecting all stands, have been made to bring people into the stadium and off residential streets as quickly as possible," says Morgan. "The old configuration had 29 gates and meant traversing the streets to find your dedicated gate. There are now four main entry points and any seat can be reached from any of these."

Populous were behind the design of the new Eden Park, which has Ethylene Tetrafluoroethylene (ETFE) incorporated

Three out of the five pool matches to be held in Christchurch will now be held on the South Island with two to take place at the new Otago Stadium in Dunedin

Top: The concourse at Eden Park in Auckland. Top right: The Westpac Stadium, Wellington Right: An aerial view of the Poplous-designed Forsyth Barr Stadium in Dunedin

into the cover of the new stand. Morgan says this was one of the main features of the scheme. The aim is for it to "appear less dense from the outside and be more sympathetic to the surroundings".

"Another cornerstone of the design is the reflection of New Zealand and Auckland within the architectural features. For example, the fern is a key element within the ETFE structures and the way the building sits on a heavy dark grey granite base and gets lighter as its rises is based on the volcanoes around Auckland," Morgan explains.

PITCH PERFECT

With nine high-tempo fixtures to be played at Eden Park, ensuring the pitch is able to meet the challenges is crucial. Nothing has changed with the surface – it continues to be managed by the venue operator and uses a Motz stabilised turf system, with a StrathAyr portable sand tray for use during the rugby season.

The stadium has a "considerable amount" of replacement turf if needed during the tournament, but Morgan explains that preparations for the tournament have looked at off-field elements: "The major emphasis has been on the short turnaround for back-to-back matches – such as cleaning and replenishing food and beverages" she says.

Eden Park Stadium has also been chosen to host its next major sporting tournament – the Cricket World Cup in 2015. The stadium has long been marketed as a multi-purpose venue, but measures have now been put in place to upgrade its offer and ensure its commercial and sporting sustainability. "Features such as retractable seating allows the new stand to convert from winter sports (rugby) to summer sports (cricket) more easily," explains Morgan. "Equally, new coaches' boxes and changing facilities have specific design features to accommodate different uses, such as a full cricket team being able to use the coaches' box in air-conditioned comfort to watch a match."

EDEN PARK

"Patron experience is fundamental to any stadium development and the emphasis on enhancing the enjoyment of any event at the Park was critical," says Tracy Morgan, who explains that the design of the food/beverage outlets had been put at the heart of the design process.

""Best practice was considered, as well as the various building consent requirements for toilet to patron ratios etc. In most instances, the new stands and facilities exceed recommended ratios," says Morgan. "The older 'belly-up' outlets have been replaced by 'grab-and-go', which are built into the stadium. This gets rid of queuing across the concourse and allows for a faster flow of patrons."

The food and beverage outlets were designed by Wildfire, with a supply of components sourced from a number of different companies. Elsewhere, the new permanent seating has been installed by Camatic and temporary seating will be provided by GL Events.

CRISIS IN CHRISTCHURCH

Along with Eden Park, Wellington Regional Stadium and Christchurch's AMI Stadium had been allocated five pool matches. The two stadiums had also been chosen to host two quarter finals. However, Christchurch was removed from the Rugby World Cup schedule in March 2011 in the wake of the tragic earthquake that struck the city a month previously.

RNZ 2011 consulted with tournament owner – Rugby World Cup Limited – on the arrangements and logistics involved with rescheduling the fixtures just months ahead of the event. Three out of the five pool matches to be held in Christchurch will now be held on the South Island, with two now scheduled to take place at the new Otago Stadium in Dunedin – known as the Forsyth Barr Stadium.

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VENUES

EDEN PARK, AUCKLAND
Capacity: 60,000
Fixtures: 11 (inc. two quarter finals, semi finals and final)

WELLINGTON REGIONAL STADIUM, WELLINGTON
Capacity: 40,000 (inc. temporary seating)
Fixtures: eight (inc. two quarter finals)

FORSYTH BARR STADIUM, DUNEDIN
Capacity: 30,000
Fixtures: four

NORTH HARBOUR STADIUM, AUCKLAND
Capacity: 30,000
Fixtures: four

WAIKATO STADIUM, HAMILTON
Capacity: 30,000
Fixtures: three

ROTORUA INTERNATIONAL STADIUM, ROTORUA
Capacity: 26,000
Fixtures: three

STADIUM TARANAKI, NEW PLYMOUTH
Capacity: 26,000
Fixtures: three

TRAFALGAR PARK, NELSON
Capacity: 18,000
Fixtures: three

NORTHLAND EVENTS CENTRE, WHANGAREI
Capacity: 18,000
Fixtures: two

RUGBY PARK, INVERCARGILL
Capacity: 17,000
Fixtures: three

ARENA MANAWATU, PALMERSTON NORTH
Capacity: 15,000
Fixtures: two

MCLEAN PARK, NAPIER
Capacity: 15,000
Fixtures: two

DUNEDIN'S INTERNATIONAL VENUE

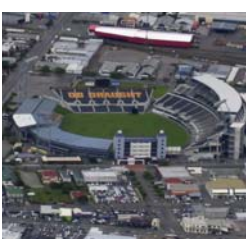
Costing nearly NZ$200m (£104.5m), the Forsyth Barr Stadium will replace Carisbrook Stadium and could be regarded as the most unique venue on the World Cup roster. Designed by Populous, the 30,500-seat stadium is possibly the world's first permanently-covered stadium that also offers a natural playing turf.

ETFE manufactured by Vector Foiltec (also involved in the Eden Park scheme) has been used in the construction of a roof that fully encloses the venue. David Davies, chief executive of Dunedin Venues Management – the stadium operator – believes the design of the venue is a statement of intent for the city.

"The city had already had the discussion about whether Carisbrook was fit for purpose," he says. "That became sharper once the World Cup was awarded and – initially – the contract between the city and RNZ 2011 was to play at Carisbrook.

"The idea for the new stadium was born out of the desire to do something significantly different to what already existed. I think if they were not going to have a covered stadium, they would have stayed where they were."

Top: South Africa defends New Zealand. Above: The Forsyth Barr Stadium in Dunedin. Below: Christchurch's AMI Stadium



Davies joined DVML – a Dunedin City Council-controlled organisation – in November 2009 and has helped oversee preparations to date. He explains that Dunedin is one of the most southerly cities in the world: "The next landfall if you go south is the Antarctic. It can get pretty blowy and pretty cold".

The covering ETFE roof therefore ensures all-weather provision with a long lifespan. At its highest point, the 20,500sq m (220,660sq ft) roof sits 37m (121ft) above the surface, comfortably above the "highest-observed rugby kick" at 29m (96ft). But Davies admits the design is not without challenges: "The combination of a permanent roof and permanent grass, compared with a sliding roof or sliding pitch, is always going to be a slightly nervous undertaking."

The stadium's pitch was sown in January and has undergone regular tests to

Below: The Forsyth Barr Stadium in Dunedin has a completely covered roof. Right: The new-look Eden Park in Auckland

In 2006, the organisers revealed that total economic activity from the Rugby World Cup in New Zealand would total more than NZ$1.15bn (£600m)

confirm that it meets international rugby union standards. However, Davies remains confident about the outcome: "At the moment, we can put our hand on our heart and say it's going pretty well. We're doing our tests on a regular basis and the results are looking good."

OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Two fixtures originally scheduled for Christchurch are coming to Dunedin, with one – Scotland v Georgia – moved away from Dunedin to ease pressure on the venue. The two coming to the city will see England take on Argentina and Georgia on 10 and 18 September respectively. Not that the prospect of 10,000 England supporters concerns Davies. "We will probably use the same method of management for all four games," he explains. "The biggest difference is that with England comes at least 10,000 fans – the second largest in this competition. As a result of that, we end up with some significant challenges .

"We've had internationals down here on a regular basis, but the number of people who come from outside Otago is about 5 per cent – so between 1,000-2,000 people. For this event, England – plus Argentina's contingent, which is 13,000 altogether – means that at least 40 per cent of visitors are coming from out of town. The issues for the city are how you handle that many out-of-towners."

With three England fixtures followed by Italy v Ireland, Davies says Dunedin is lucky in that the same approach can be applied throughout the four games. The stadium and its flow has been designed to accommodate 30,000 supporters, so there has been no need for additional overlay in terms of catering and merchandise provision.

Temporary seating will support the two ends of the stadium during the World Cup. And while there are 12 permanent food and beverage outlets in total, temporary catering provision will also be provided too. Regarding the tournament's media requirements, Davies agrees with Tracy Morgan that the stadium will be expecting some unique demands.

"The media numbers are around 500, which is more than any other event," Davies says. "As a result, the overlay of one of the stadium areas set aside for office use is where the media will be housed. It's in this location where the most technical element of the event hosting will take place."

Once RWC 2011 is over, Dunedin will be left with a signature international venue for various team sports – although its rectangle design means that cricket will not be one of its future uses. However, Davies believes that the stadium will have the ability to draw people back after the tournament, with supporters' closeness to the pitch (10m/33ft from the upper tier to the sideline) seen as a key appeal.

"We've looked at the stock of stadiums around the country and they're well managed and represent a wide spectrum of age and layout. The three predominant ones – Eden Park, Wellington and, until recently, Christchurch – are ovals, which could house cricket as well as rugby," Davies says. "This stadium is a rectangle and is built for team sports without cricket," he says.

"The proximity to the field for international rugby is going to be the single biggest selling point for us and we believe it is this key factor that will bring people back in significant numbers."

STAGE NOW SET

RNZ 2011 was incorporated on 30 June 2006 to oversee the planning and delivery of the event. Nearly six years later, efforts to fulfil the bid promise of a "Stadium of Four Million" and an "All Rugby" experience are now nearing fruition. Eden Park, Dunedin's Forsyth Barr Stadium and other Rugby World Cup venues, are now making final preparations, with International Rugby Board and Rugby World Cup chair Bernard Lapasset declaring that the stage has now been set.

"The stadia are ready, the supporting infrastructure is ready, the Team 2011 volunteers are ready, ticket sales are on track and hosting will deliver long-lasting benefits for New Zealand and New Zealand Rugby," says Lapasset.

"The anticipation is palpable and as we count down to the opening match at Eden Park, I have no doubt that fans attending RWC 2011 will have an exceptional experience. " ●

Pete Hayman is a Leisure Media journalist

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Trends in synthetic turf provision

SAPCA Pitch Division chair Mark Freeman gives an update on synthetic turf trends and how to ensure a high standard installation

What is the current trend in synthetic pitch surfaces?

The main trend over the last decade has been towards 'third generation' or 3G surfaces. A mixture of relatively long-pile yarns with rubber and sand infills, these surfaces have been developed to replicate the playing performance of high-quality natural turf surfaces, and have become very popular for football and rugby use.

While we do still see many multi-use surfaces chosen where there is a need to accommodate a range of sports, particularly within the educational sector, there's also been a steady move towards synthetic surfaces designed for specific sports, including football, rugby and hockey.

Have the standards of synthetic pitches changed over recent years?

I believe that the standards of construction are generally very high, though the industry has been through something of a learning curve as 3G surfaces have become more common. For example, contractors have had to learn new installation techniques for different surface types, and to develop the skills required. There is now much more sophisticated equipment available to ensure that infill materials are installed correctly, generally in thinner, more uniform layers to achieve the correct quality and performance.

The advent of 3G surfaces also led to the more frequent use of unbound or dynamic forms of base construction, rather than the more traditional, fully-engineered pitches. If the technical requirements of this form of construction are not fully appreciated and it's regarded simply as a more cost-effective solution, problems of poor surface level tolerances and poor drainage can arise. There has been a general trend back towards fully-engineered construction for synthetic pitches.

What are the significant technological improvements to synthetic turf ?

There have been significant advances in the yarns and fibres used for synthetic turf surfaces. There's now a much wider range of yarns available, with different profiles, shapes and thicknesses, which make it easier to achieve the playing performance needed for individual sports, and with greater consistency. Fibres are now also more durable – enabling surfaces to achieve longer life expectancy.

What standards are there for specific sports?

With the development of numerous test methods that attempt to measure and compare the playing characteristics of sports surfaces objectively, it is now common for sports governing bodies – typically at international level – to stipulate the playing performance they recommend or require for different levels of use and standards of play. There are also now agreed British/European Standards for synthetic sports surfaces.

The Sports and Play Construction Association's (SAPCA) Code of Practice for the Design and Construction of Synthetic Turf Pitches complements these performance requirements and sets out the minimum standards of construction that should be used to achieve the desired playing characteristics. The Code of Practice also provides valuable guidance on the construction and specification options.

How should someone choose the right standards for their project?

It's vital that specifiers – and those offering technical advice – should fully understand the numerous options for performance standards and construction specifications and the different qualities of alternative materials and products.

The level of playing performance standard for the synthetic surface should be chosen according to the type of facility and the intended standards of play; considerable amounts of project funding can be wasted choosing the most stringent standards if they are simply not appropriate to the facility. At a school or in a public park, for example, it is very unlikely that an international competition will be held.

When analysing competing quotes or tenders, it's important to compare specifications and products very carefully on a like-for-like basis to judge true value for money. There

Surfaces that replicate high-quality natural turf have become popular for football and rugby

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A surface's lifespan will depend on the amount of usage, the quality of the product and its installation, and the level of ongoing maintenance

are often alternative products that will satisfy a given standard but which may offer inherently different quality. It's always best to seek independent professional advice from a specialist in sports surfaces – a member of SAPCA's Professional Services Group.

What is the typical lifespan of a synthetic turf surface?

A surface's lifespan will depend on the amount of usage, the quality of the product, its installation and the level of ongoing maintenance. A highly-used, poorly maintained surface may last for as little as seven years, whereas a moderately-used, good quality pitch that is well looked after may perform for as long as 15 years.

Are most synthetic pitches well maintained?

Unfortunately not. In the very early days of synthetic turf surfaces there was, perhaps, not the same understanding of the importance of maintenance that we have today. Contractors should always supply full maintenance instructions, usually provided by the surface's manufacturer, as well as carrying out maintenance demonstrations for clients and their groundstaff.

The costs of the essential maintenance equipment should be included within the project budget, and the ongoing maintenance costs included within the annual running costs. Where clients do not have the expertise or willingness to undertake routine maintenance, the pitch contractor or other specialist maintenance companies can provide a professional service. General maintenance guidelines are contained in SAPCA's Code of Practice for synthetic pitches.

How should a contractor be chosen?

SAPCA's membership database provides lists of specialist contractors with the requisite expertise and experience for different types of sports facility projects; specialist builders of synthetic turf pitches are in the Pitch Division.

All members have been vetted to ensure they meet the necessary criteria, such as compliance with SAPCA's Codes of Practice, high standards of workmanship, and compliance with a minimum standard of financial stability, on an annual basis. This aspect of SAPCA's Quality Assurance system is operated in cooperation with Experian, the renowned credit reference agency. SAPCA's Technical Audit system monitors the quality of contractor members' work on an ongoing basis.

What does a synthetic turf pitch cost?

The total cost of a pitch will depend on many factors including the location; planning approval; site constraints; ground conditions; construction specifications; surface choice; performance standards; quality of finishes; project management; and testing requirements. The final cost can vary considerably, from say £300 to £700,000 plus VAT.

This highlights the importance of considering not just the initial capital cost but the whole-life costs of the pitch – including on going maintenance, running costs and eventual replacement. ●

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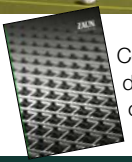

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REPLAY

Edgbaston Priory Club hosts the annual AEGON Classic tennis tournament

TENNIS: BUILDING ON A RISING PROFILE

The LTA's £5m investment into the £12m redevelopment of Edgbaston Priory Club is part of its country-wide strategy to extend tennis accessibility for all. Nick Clowes reports

The honours board at the Edgbaston Priory Club reads like a who's-who of women's tennis over the last 30 years. Multiple Grand Slam champions such as Billie-Jean King, Martina Navratilova and Maria Sharapova have all triumphed in the AEGON Classic event – one of the traditional Wimbledon warm-up events since its inauguration in 1982.

Although the Wimbledon Championships are considered the jewel in the crown of the British tennis season, the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) has made significant steps to ensure that the top names in tennis keep returning to the Birmingham-based club year after year.

In fact this year's AEGON Classic winner Sabine Lisicki proved to be one of the standout names at Wimbledon, reaching the semi-finals as a wild card before losing to another AEGON Classic winner, and favourite – Maria Sharapova.

What's planned

The LTA's £5m investment into the £12m redevelopment of the club, which were announced in April last year, is designed to secure Edgbaston Priory's place as host of world class grass court tournaments for the next 100 years. In addition, the development, which includes a six-court indoor tennis centre, will significantly improve community access to tennis in the local area and across the city.

To complement the National Tennis Centre in Roehampton – the LTA's headquarters – the development will also enhance the club's status as an LTA High Performance Centre. And for LTA chief executive Roger Draper, securing the long-term future of grass court tennis at Edgbaston ensures the sport will continue to thrive in England's second city.

"We are delighted to be able to invest this money into the redevelopment of the Edgbaston Priory Club," Draper said. "It will allow for community access to this site and improve the delivery of tennis across the whole city – boosting the sport from both a performance and grassroots perspective. This investment will also secure the future of the AEGON Classic in Birmingham for generations to come and we're looking forward to working with the city council to help improve tennis provision in Birmingham going forward."

TURF CARE

The grass courts at Edgbaston Priory Club are also set to get a makeover as part of the LTA's £5m investment into the Birmingham-based tennis facility.

Edgbaston Priory's groundstaff pride themselves on the quality of the courts as they ensure the world's top players get the best preparation for Wimbledon fortnight. The man responsible for their upkeep is Stuart Smith.

Smith presided over his seventh AEGON Classic this summer where 16 hour days are the norm and the club becomes his home for the week. Now that grass court tennis is secured within the future plans for the club, his labour of love is set to continue.

"During the tournament week, we stay on site because the days start at six in the morning and finish at 10 at night," he says.

"Throughout the week all groundstaff mow the courts, mark the lines and make sure we are here if the courts need covering for rain. They are long days but we are all very proud of the end result."

The extension of the Edgbaston Priory Club site was approved in March this year and will also include new squash, gym and leisure facilities, together with a major refurbishment of the clubhouse.

As part of the proposals, the club agreed terms to lease an additional four acres of adjacent land on which the new indoor tennis centre will be built.

The redevelopment designs have been created by Glenn Howells Architects and the work is due to commence this summer with the aim of completing the whole project by August 2013.

Rob Bray, chief executive of the Edgbaston Priory Club, said the redevelopment was a huge step forward for the club. "We're grateful to the LTA for this significant support and will work with British Tennis' governing body (NGB) to develop a thriving tennis hub for events, community and performance," he said.

"We're working extensively with our partners and club members – whose creative and innovative input to the project will continue to bring our vision for the club to fruition. When completed, these world-class facilities will establish the club as a leader in promoting racquet sport at all levels and secure the city's reputation as a prominent international tournament venue for tennis."

Community tennis

While interest in tennis is more intense throughout the country during the popular, televised summer tournaments, a major focus for the rest of the year at Edgbaston Priory is on community tennis. The AEGON Classic may draw the attention to the club for one week every summer but for racquets manager Leyla Ogan, tennis is a 52 week a year sport.

Ogan runs the club's extensive range of coaching and community projects, with the coaching levels ranging from the club's top 40 juniors on the national-level high performance programmes to the 800 adult members of the club.

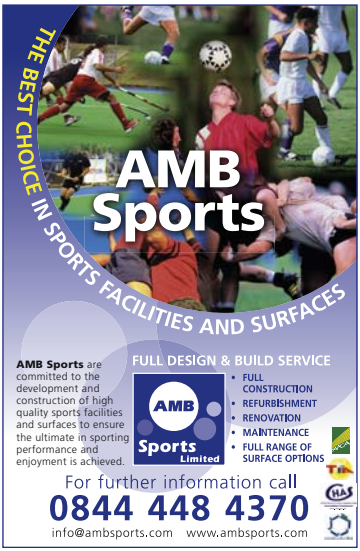
In addition, another 600 junior players also hit regularly at the club, many of which dream of progressing onto the adult tour to join the likes of world number one and Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic or Sharapova.

Ogan has been racquets manager at the club for the past four years after spending the previous three in another coaching role at the club. She believes that, along with the proposed investment in Edgbaston Priory, the club is well equipped to assist the next generation of players and provide the local Birmingham community with a facility to be proud of.

"There is a really good atmosphere around the place during the AEGON Classic event – it's a really unique place and a unique tournament – but it's our job to make sure that tennis isn't just about the AEGON Classic week or the Wimbledon fortnight," she said.

"To watch the top players playing or

Spectators are given the chance to watch top tennis names close up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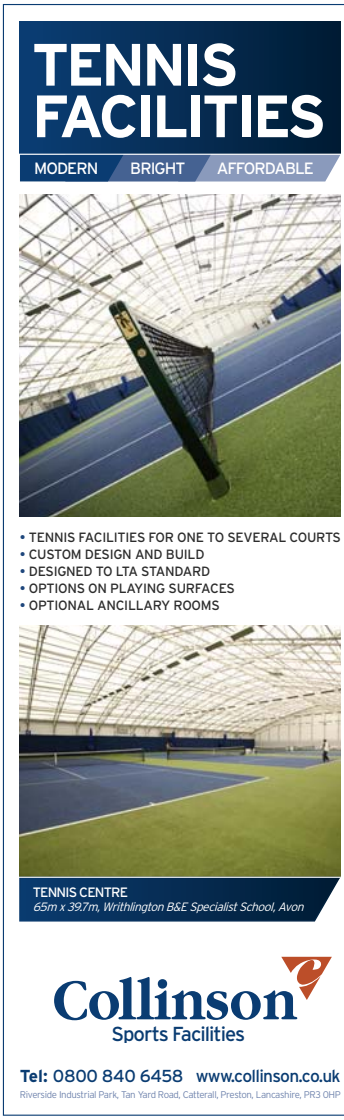
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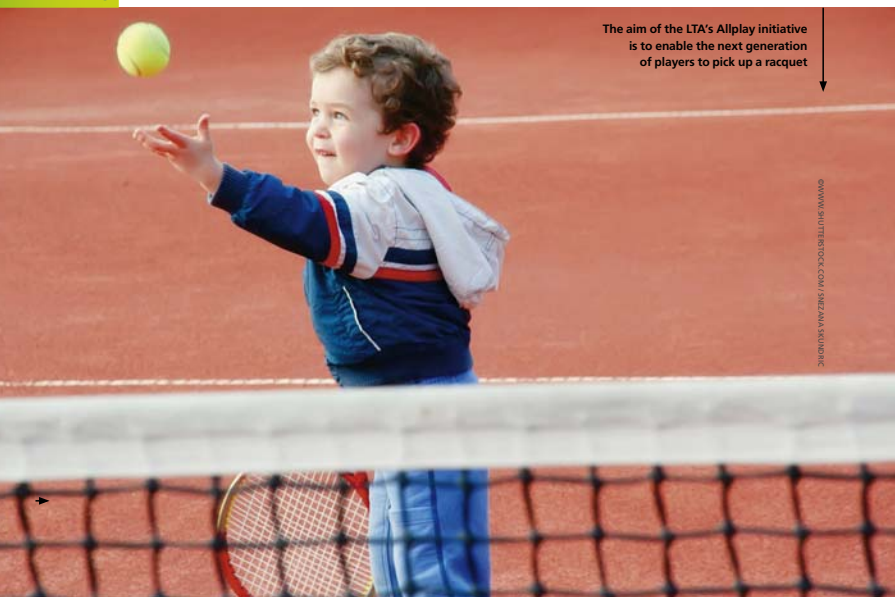

The aim of the LTA's Allplay initiative is to enable the next generation of players to pick up a racquet

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practising close up is an opportunity that doesn't come around that often. However, tennis is a sport that can be enjoyed all year round and if people of all abilities can be inspired during the tournament week then that's great."

Ogan says that many of the club's high performance programme players complete at national level and can be a real inspiration to the other members. But she's keen to point out that coaches spend just as much time and effort on players who are new to the sport or want to rekindle their love for it after a time away.

British tennis facility strategy

The Edgbaston Priory investment is just one example of the LTA's commitment to the British Tennis facilities strategy, which has received substantial investment from Sport England – a major investor in British Tennis. Through this partnership, the LTA has been given financial support to help increase and sustain participation and identify and develop talent. This includes substantial investment in facility improvements, which are a major priority for British Tennis.

The LTA's funding policy is to prioritise investments that support year-round tennis and extended playing hours.

> "The Lawn Tennis Association's policy is to prioritise investment into facilities that support year-round tennis and extended playing hours"

As a result, around 80 per cent of LTA capital investment has been made in tennis centres that offer floodlit or indoor facilities.

In the last three months alone, the LTA has already seen a significant number of grants and loans to tennis clubs up and down the country bear fruit.

In May this year, a £1m indoor, four-court tennis facility was unveiled at Churchill Community College in the North East. This is now available for whole community use, including students and local clubs. This was made possible thanks to a £347,000 grant and a £200,000 loan from the LTA.

Other recently-opened tennis centres include the Oakgates Leisure Centre in Telford, which benefited from an LTA investment of £370,000 into the £2.2m indoor tennis facility. While £150,000 was pledged for the redevelopment of Bishops Park Tennis Club in Fulham, west London as well as numerous other projects up and down the country.

Allplay

These facility investments are all part of the LTA's strategy to get more people playing tennis – highlighted by the launch of the NGB's allplay initiative earlier this summer.

The aim of Allplay is to enable the next generation of players to pick up a racquet, as well as providing the platform for first-timers and people returning to the game the chance to enjoy the sport.

As part of the campaign, a free-to-join website www.allplaytennis.com will become an online tennis community.

Commenting on the scheme, Draper said: "The LTA has spent the last four years building the infrastructure to roll out this campaign to its full benefit. This is not a short-lived project, this about helping more people play the game."

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An average-sized football area offers space for approximately 45 full-sized boards at 2.5m wide x 1.2m high. These boards are exterior quality birch wood with a special film on one face to allow any digital image to be reproduced. Through innovative design we are able to encapsulate the boards within the fencing without the need for drilling and bolting the boards in place. This means that the boards will not suffer from water ingress and because of this we are able to offer a three-year anti-fade guarantee on the colour printing and a 10 year guarantee on the steel work.

Some organisations may not have the man power or know how to successfully sell the advertising boards so to help kick-start this process we have compiled a database of potential advertisers that may be willing to invest in your project (subject to location/organisation etc.)

A recent JB Corrie customer sold their boards to advertisers for £1,000 each. This bought each advertiser printed board advertising for their organisation for a three-year period. In today's market there can't be many marketing opportunities with such a low cost! As a matter of fact, why should they stop at one board? They might take one in each of the four elevations, this will enable them to reach directly to the sports players and spectators whether it is within a school, a college, a university, a sports/leisure centre or local sports club. Plus Image Sports Fencing offers the added benefit for advertisers to give something back to their community – and helps you to improve your sports facilities.

JB Corrie sell the advertising
JB Corrie manufacture the fencing
JB Corrie fit the fencing

Local advertisers

Along with our contacts we will also offer your advertising opportunity to local firms. The more boards sold helps towards club funding. For instance if the new fencing cost £35,000 and 40 full boards sold at £1,000 you would not only receive free top of the range fencing but you'll have an additional £5,000 for your funds.

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The advertising rebound boards can be sold on a time dependant contract. Once this agreed contract is completed the rebound boards would be available to be sold again and again. This could regularly add thousands of pounds to your funds.

How to kick start this process?

Firstly, contact myself and I will arrange for one of our area managers to conduct a free site survey. They will measure the area/s required and report back to our head office. We will then send you a quotation for the fencing / ground works required. If you like what you see we will then contact our extensive list of potential advertisers and promote your project to them. As soon as we have enough sponsors to pay for the project we will be able manufacture the fencing and organise a fitting date. All you have to do is invoice the list of sponsors and the fencing will be paid for – and quite possibly a large sum of money will be generated too!

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This patented system comprises of strong twin bar Corrie play panels set level and flush over the Image rebound boards. The system is available in multiple heights with single/double gates, goal recesses and multi goal /basket ball sections, spectator / viewing areas. The steel posts and gates are hot dipped galvanised to BSEN ISO 1461 then polyester powder coated to any standard colour to BSEN 6497 for longevity.

The image boards are manufactured in birchwood (From sustainably-managed forests). The boards can have any digital image printed on the inside face – an advert, a school crest or logo etc. The reverse side of the boards are supplied green.

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SPORTS STRUCTURES

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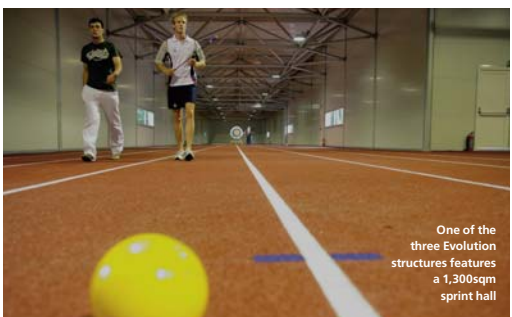

One of the three Evolution structures features a 1,300sqm sprint hall

Neptunus provides Dutch Olympic team with elite training facility

As the official temporary structures supplier to the Netherlands Olympic Committee (NOC*NSF), Neptunus has provided several training facilities to help the Dutch Olympic Team prepare for the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics at its Papendal National Sports Centre.

Located in Arnhem, in the Netherlands, the sports centre was already equipped with five football pitches, four tennis courts, an 18 hole golf course, mountain bike and running routes and a fully-equipped gymnasium.

To accommodate a wider range of athletic sports, the NOC*NSF submitted plans to expand the centre with the addition of all-weather facilities to allow its top athletes to train all year round. However, with the construction of a new permanent facility expected to take more than five years to complete, Neptunus was commissioned to install a number of high-quality temporary structures to bridge the gap and enable training schedules to commence immediately.

Three semi-permanent Evolution structures were constructed, including a custom-made 1,300sq m sprint hall, which was connected to an existing building and fitted with a specially manufactured floor to incorporate a running track.

A 1,125sq m multi-purpose hall, with a side wall height of 13m, was installed to cater for a range of sports, including badminton and volleyball, with special wall panels fitted to improve the venue's acoustics. Neptunus also supplied the wall panels in green – the official requirement for badminton.

The third structure was a fencing hall, which completed the additional facilities the NOC*NSF required.

Collinson's Wey Valley Tennis Centre contract

The centre provides for both student and community tennis

The students of Wey Valley School and Sports College in Weymouth, Dorset have been brushing up their tennis skills in their newly-constructed tennis centre.

Thanks to part funding from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), Collinson was contracted to supply and construct the 2,739sq m four-court hall, which took less than six months to complete. The facility also features an office, a spectator area and washrooms – offering a great opportunity for local community and tennis club use during after-school hours.

Rob Cole, the school's finance and business manager confirmed that the tennis centre has received significant interest from the local community with more than 1,600 court hours of tennis play in the first four months of opening and more than 4,000 people have visited to either play or spectate.

The LTA has part-funded this project to promote the sport

Veldeman tennis hall offers members year-round tennis

Veldeman designs and builds customised semi permanent and permanent structures

Veldeman Structure Solutions has just finished construction of a brand new tennis hall for tennis club Cappelle aan den IJssel, near Rotterdam in the Netherlands. The Polygon structure of 40m by 116m will render weather-interrupted games at the club a thing of the past.

Unique to this project is the terracotta color of the gables and the border of the roof sheets. This was imposed by the local authority, to achieve an aesthetically harmonious integration of the hall with the gravel tennis courts.

The roof and upper walls are made of translucent PVC-coated fabric, which provides glare-free light and increased playing comfort. In summer, the side walls of the hall can be fully opened to a height of 4m – creating an indoor/outdoor playing environment.

The Polygon is an ideal covering option for various sports such as tennis, volleyball, basketball and even swimming pools. The added benefit of the sliding curtain system allows for sports to be practiced all year round.

Veldeman designs and builds customised temporary, semi-permanent and permanent structures. Worldwide the company has built more than 400 sports buildings: for tennis, football, horseback riding, winter sports, water sports and multi sports.

The company offers turnkey solutions including foundations, heating, lighting and insulation. By using high-quality and environmentally-friendly materials, Veldeman structures guarantees a long lifespan. The halls need little to no maintenance and the PVC fabric is 100 per cent recyclable.

The Jubilee Dome indoor sports facility compliments 50 acres of sports fields

Norseman Structures' indoor sports facility at the Jubilee Dome

Norseman Structures is the chosen supplier of Spratton Hall School's 64ft wide x 113ft long (19.8m x 34.7m) indoor Jubilee Dome sports facility.

The independent preparatory school for boys and girls in Northamptonshire now boasts an indoor netball, tennis and volleyball court facility, as well as four badminton courts to complement the school's 50 acres of well-maintained sports fields. Within the structure sports activities and after school clubs can be conducted all year round and headteacher Stephen Player says it's already in constant use from early morning to evening each day.

"Initially we were looking at a traditional sports structure, but as soon as we saw the flexibility, value for money and quality that the Norseman building offers, we knew we had found an ideal solution," Player says.

The fully-lined and insulated facility provides an unobstructed, column-free area for sports activities. The turnkey project included Sport M Dry-Tex flooring from Gerflor in beech grain effect, 7ft high (2.4m) rebound boards on one side of the building and a lightweight gas-fired continuous radiant tube heating system. Deltalux asymmetric floodlighting and floor fixed wheel-away tennis posts and nets were also provided.

"Norseman Structures provided extensive customer support before, during, and after its installation and the dome was completed on time and on budget," Player says.

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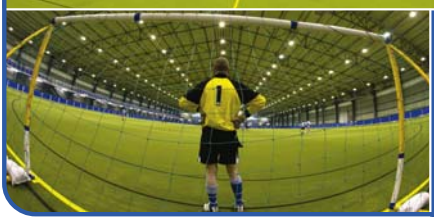

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Rubb offers undercover sports at Meadowbank Sports Arena

Rubb's 70m x 145m Meadowbank Sports Arena in Magherafelt, Mid-Ulster is reputedly the largest indoor sports facility of its kind in Europe. The regional sports venue can cater for a wide range of indoor and outdoor sports activities and provides a consistent playing area where a host of sporting activities can take place simultaneously.

The indoor space can be quickly divided by rebound boards, which are removable at court positions. This means it can be converted into a full size hockey/soccer pitch and four mini-pitches (all badminton court sized). A sophisticated electrical netting system also allows the court to be expanded so that the full hall can be used or alternatively it can accommodate a 300m indoor track – complete with seating for 450 spectators on a first floor gallery.

Rubb sales manager Rob Hindmoor explains: "A full turnkey traditional build sports hall would have cost approximately £12.1m – four times as much as an equivalent Rubb system.

"All our buildings can be custom-designed to any size or shape and also offer a light and airy atmosphere within – thanks to our translucent roofing system," he says.

This March saw the 2011 Woodie's DIY Irish Juvenile Indoor Championships hosted at Meadowbank for the second time and the facility was met with approval from former Olympians, competitors, coaches and spectators. More than 1,000 athletes competed at the competition, showcasing their talent in a range of running, jumping and throwing events. Boys and girls competed in eight different age categories for national medals and titles.

The Meadowbank Sports Arena is Northern Ireland's regional sports venue

The structure provides space for table tennis, dance and gymnastics

Spaciotempo provides an interim solution for Hampton College

Hampton College, Peterborough, built in 2005 to accommodate the expanding student population, is a well-designed, modern school boasting impressive facilities and has been rated as 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

Growth in demand for places over the last couple of years however, has led to the need for additional sports buildings so the school worked with Spaciotempo UK to provide a modular sports hall on site for a period of three years while the next phase of the school's growth is planned.

A 15m x 20m temporary sports hall was installed on site and includes hi-tech lighting to create a light and airy teaching environment. The school's specification included a specialist wooden joisted floor designed to absorb impact and minimise risk of injury, while an advanced heating and air-conditioning system was installed to provide an ambient temperature for the students' participation in sports. The 3m-high structure provides ample space for table tennis, dance and floor gymnastics, among a variety of other games, sports and activities.

The building has been finished with flush fitted, double insulated walls and public access doors for ease of entry.

Hampton College business manager, Susan Wojtowicz, says: "The temporary sports hall is doing a good job for us while we plan our future space requirements. The college is committed to offering a wide range of activities to encourage participation by all and the solution provided by Spaciotempo enables us to fulfil that commitment."

Bespoke lighting inside the structure offers a well-lit teaching environment

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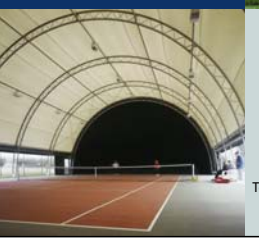

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Alex Welsh, chief executive of the London Playing Fields Foundation, highlights the causes and effects of playing fields' demise

Protecting playing fields, improving lives

From the audit that was undertaken by the Sports Council in 1990 it was estimated that there are more than 78,000 sports pitches housed in 26,000 playing fields in England. Twenty years later, according to Sport England's Active Places, there are 59,000 pitches within 19,000 sites, representing a 21 per cent reduction in pitch provision and a 27 per cent drop in the number of playing fields.

The loss

Losing pitches is bad news for our two national sports in their drive to increase and sustain grassroots participation. In 1990, there were 1,126 grass cricket wickets in London but by 2010 this figure had fallen by 40 per cent to 681. In the same period the number of adult grass football pitches in the capital had dropped by 20 per cent.

Ironically at a time when the 2012 Games has put the spotlight on sport, investment in grassroots sport has fallen and we are in the middle of a perfect funding storm created by swingeing cuts in local authority spending, huge cuts in public funding and a 33 per cent drop in philanthropic giving.

LPFF CEO Alex Welsh

The causes

There are two main reasons for the demise of playing fields:

1) Losses through neglect: Due to chronic lack of investment in ancillary facilities and in the regular maintenance of pitches, playing fields fall into a cycle of decay where they become under used, under valued, under financed and eventually under threat. No longer used by the community for sport they descend into havens of anti-social behaviour and are viewed by the land owner as surplus to requirements.

2) Losses to development: Playing fields are vulnerable whatever the state of the economy. In boom times land becomes more valuable and attractive to commercial and residential developers. In lean times playing fields become a burden on already stretched resources. For schools seeking to increase their roll with a concomitant expansion of their building stock, using part of the school field has, until recent tighter legislation, been a relatively easy option.

The main reason why so many sites are vulnerable is that playing fields are inherently loss-making because the true running costs can never be adequately covered by hiring income derived from community groups. This is compounded by a number of contributory factors:

- **Lack of revenue** to adequately maintain sports pitches has led to a gradual decline in the quality of playing surfaces, particularly for cricket, and this has led to some facilities being taken out of commission.
- **Lack of modernisation** due to chronic under investment has left many sites

> "As a result of its Fields At Risk Register, the foundation was able to take pre-emptive action and secure the long-term future of 15 threatened sites last year"

Adopting sports development principles to underpin the playing field's programme of use will assist in the creation of effective school club links

with non-existent or very poor changing accommodation and inadequate drainage, which renders the pitches unplayable for many weeks of the year.

- **The skills shortage in ground staff**, precipitated by compulsory competitive tendering in the 1990s, has led to an inexorable decline in the quality of publicly-owned playing fields, which in turn has made them less attractive to market to local schools and clubs.
- **Inadequate protective measures** and easily circumvented legislation were mainly to blame for the wholesale losses in the 1990s. Since then, revisions to PPG 17 and the School Standards and Framework Act have closed most of the loopholes.
- **Lack of political support** allied to the historic non-statutory nature of leisure within local authority services has led to a lack of recognition of the contribution that playing fields can make in improving the quality of life of local communities. In the past, many local authorities have seen playing fields as a burden and an easy source of a one off capital receipt rather than facilities worthy of long term investment.
- **Increasing demand for housing** has placed enormous pressure on the available land and some local authorities have been content to leave a playing field unused for five years, (thus avoiding any intervention from Sport England as a statutory consultee) before identifying it as a site for potential housing development.
- **Lack of joined up working** between local partners such as planning, parks, education and leisure has resulted in the under utilisation of playing fields.

The remedy

Aside from a regular Sport England bulletin on planning applications on sports grounds there is no early warning system that identifies playing fields under threat. The London Playing Fields Foundation (LPFF) maintains a Fields at Risk Register (FARR) based on local intelligence and as a result has taken pre-emptive action that has helped secure the long-term future of 15 threatened sites in the capital in the last year. Furthermore, the London Marathon Charitable Trust sets aside a proportion of the income generated by the race for playing field protection and has purchased five threatened sites since 1999.

Increasing participation

As the best form of playing fields protection is full use, it's important that operators are able to offer facilities that are accessible, affordable and attractive in order to provide a fulfilling leisure experience for their customers. The potential user base can be divided into four main categories:

- Schools where a love of sport begins, or does not – depending on the quality of experience
- Clubs where this participation can be continued into a life long association
- Disadvantaged and under-represented groups who, for a number of reasons, cannot gain access to mainstream provision
- Inactive people who have either dropped out or never been involved in organised sport

Adhering to the four Ms of playing field success

The successful operation of multi-sport playing fields depends on four main themes (the four Ms).

MODERNISING

Although the golden age (1995 – 2005) of capital investment in grassroots facilities seems like a long time ago, it is essential that what money is available is spent with a clear vision in mind.

Good quality facilities should provide clubs with a home base that helps their membership to grow. Offering a mix of natural turf and artificial turf pitches, coupled with decent social facilities, will give clubs what they need to flourish – somewhere for their club members to play the game as well as somewhere to practice.

In designing new facilities three key factors need to be considered:

a) Design for maximum use
b) Design for efficient and effective management and maintenance
c) Design for an additional income stream to support the core activity

The sign of a successful playing field is worn pitches, but there's a balance between pitch quality and intensity of use

> "As the best form of playing fields protection is full use, it is important that operators are able to offer facilities that are accessible, affordable and attractive"

MANAGING

Programming for maximum use should be a priority for any provider. A concessionary pricing policy should also help to achieve a representative user profile and ensure that the site attracts a cross section of local people.

Adopting sports development principles to underpin the programme of use will greatly assist in the creation of effective school club links. Being sensitive to the individual needs of clubs and in particular the seasonal nature of sport will help to prevent the dominance of the facility by one sport or organisation.

Partnerships with voluntary, statutory and commercial organisations are essential and can be beneficial in so many ways from staff recruitment, sharing expertise and administration to funding and sponsorship opportunities.

MARKETING

An understanding of what makes the organisation stand out from the competition and developing the brand is crucial. The LPFF strap line is "Protecting playing fields, improving lives" and it is through our innovative inclusion programmes for disadvantaged and inactive groups that we most graphically demonstrate this. It is worth remembering that while the programme is ostensibly about widening, increasing and sustaining participation in sporting activity, the primary outcomes might be health or crime diversion rather than sport, which in turn opens up new funding opportunities.

MAINTAINING

One of the signs of a successful playing field is worn pitches. However, while the focus is on maximum use there has to be a balance, especially on natural turf pitches, between pitch quality and intensity of use, at the same time recognising that some groups cause more wear and tear than others. Good drainage combined with experienced, well trained and highly motivated on site ground staff working with a stock of appropriate and regularly serviced equipment is the holy trinity of grounds maintenance. What the customer wants most is a good surface on which to play on a regular basis so their views must be considered by the ground staff who should seek to cultivate a good understanding with all of the pitch users.

New funding streams

Within Sport England's £135m Places People Play programme is a new Protecting Playing Fields Fund that will provide £10m over four years in grants to bring disused playing fields back into use, safeguard sites for a minimum of 25 years, improve pitches and create new playing field land. Providing grants of between £20,000 and £50,000, any applicant who wants to dedicate its playing field in perpetuity will be passed on to Fields in Trust.

Most of us will at some point have benefitted from our local playing field, so we should cherish them and see them as more than just expanses of open space and as places where lives can be improved. This weekend, when you are at your local supermarket stocking up for your barbeque, pause and think, 20 years ago you might have been standing on a sports pitch centre circle. Once lost, a playing field is lost forever. |

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FSB

Around 600 companies from more than 40 countries will be exhibiting at the International Trade Fair for Amentity Areas, Sports and Pool Facilities (FSB) at the Köelnmesse in Cologne from 26 to 28 October this year

FSB offers sport and pool facility provision to an international audience

According to Stefan Kranefeld, vice-president health, lifestyle and facilities at Köelnmesse, Cologne, the FSB event is almost fully booked and all the renowned sport and amenity area manufacturers represented – underlying the show's position as a leading international trade fair for the participating sectors.

A whole spectrum of innovative products and services from the amenity areas, sports and pool facilities sectors will be presented at the show's gross exhibition space totaling around 62,000sq m.

Industry events

As honorary sponsor of the International Association of Sport and Leisure Facilities (IAKS), the event will also host the 22nd IAKS Congress, the 4th Cologne Swimming Pool and Wellness Forum and the Synthetic Turf Forum. In addition to this, specific events covering playground safety and the design and structure of amenity areas for all sectors of the population will also be featured at the event.

'Sustainability aspects in the planning, construction and operation of sport and leisure infrastructure' will be one of the themes discussed within the IAKS Congress. While modular construction designs, energy and resource-saving technologies and successful operator concepts at the Paralympic Games in Vancouver, London and Sochi will also be a key talking point. Other focus will include the opportunity for joined-up thinking in the construction, design and quality of international sports projects.

FSB will also play host to highly regarded industry award presentations, including the International Olympic Committee (IOC)/IAKS Award, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC)/IAKS Distinction and the German Playground Award, which will be held within the event framework. Other highlights include numerous demonstration areas for soccer, basketball, paddle tennis, ice skating, ice hockey and aqua fitness and a FSB-specific skateparc.

Industry partners

The European Synthetic Turf Organisation (ESTO), the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) and the international governing body of football (FIFA) will once again be the association partners of FSB. While the Federal Association of Playground Equipment and Leisure Facilities Manufacturers will be the show's first amenities sector partner at this year's event.

Another first at the show will be the partner country concept. This year Brazil will be taking centre stage, while international exhibitor groups from Russia and particularly the UK will also have a high presence – with Sport and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) members presenting their products and services to the European market.

In the pools facility sector, FSB will be continuing its partnership with the European Waterpark Association (EWA). However, the parallel staging of the Aquanale event at the same venue will ensure that the very latest trends from the European swimming pool and wellness sector will also be on show. ●

Reputedly the world's largest synthetic turf exhibition – the Synthetic Turf Forum – will be a major draw at FSB this year, where most of Hall 11.3 will be turned into a synthetic turf pitch.

Around 140 companies will present the different areas of application for synthetic turf in sports facilities as well as landscape architecture. The forum will feature a presentation on new technologies and lifecycle aspects of synthetic turf at the IAKS Congress;,a FIFA workshop will focus on the organisation's quality concept for synthetic turf and turf events will also be organised by ESTO partners.

IOG SALTEX allows you to shape your space

IOG SALTEX
shape your space
Windsor Racecourse 6 - 8 September 2011

With more than 300 exhibitors, a host of special feature areas and a comprehensive education programme, this year's Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) SALTEX, at Windsor Racecourse from 6 to 8 September, promises to grab the attention of those involved in the care and upkeep of outdoor sports and leisure facilities.

Addressing the needs of the open-space industry, the event will showcase new and existing products and services for fine turf and sports surfaces, turf maintenance, outdoor leisure, facilities management, software solutions and security equipment. To add to the attraction, this year's show will also offer a number of special features, including the Education Zone.

Zoned in

The zone will offer visitors the valuable resource of back-to-basics turf skills, a series of demonstrations of best-practice machine servicing plus a showcase of industry-specific college courses. It will provide beginners in the groundscare industry with useful snapshots of everything needed to 'get started', while more experienced visitors can extend their knowledge with updates of modern practices.

More than 400 exhibitors will display products and services within 50 acres

As well as advice on equipment maintenance, visitors to the zone can also obtain comprehensive information regarding training courses and further education by organisations such as Badger Hill Training, City and Guilds Land Based Services, Ian Gower Associates, Merrist Wood College, Myerscough College and Writtle College, alongside the training and education expertise of the Institute of Groundsmanship. While Hadlow College, MWMAC and the Institute of Horticulture can be found elsewhere within the showground.

Back by popular demand, the zone will also include the Sports Turf Skills Village, within which a daily programme of demonstrations will include basic natural turf maintenance skills – featuring equipment and products supplied by exhibitors and supported by The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) pitch advisors and IOG training instructors.

Further education

Away from the show floor, a series of free, educational seminars will be hosted in the racecourse Grandstand. Devised to appeal to a wide range of visitor interests, the extensive programme will include sessions on sustainability, contracting, grass seeds and pesticides, as well as up-to-date information on funding and industry apprenticeships.

On each day of the show Adam White CMLI – an RHS Gold Medal and BBC Peoples Choice Award-winning chartered landscape architect – will present 'design management and maintenance of playful landscapes', which will look at how early design decisions can help reduce the challenges of everyday maintenance. Other speakers include urban designer Liz Kessler, whose talk on 'green networks and the importance of planning at a local level' will look at the challenges arising from the emerging policies of localism and neighbourhood planning. While 'how to survive your toughest maintenance budget ever' is this year's theme of the panel debate hosted by *Horticulture Week*.

Another first at this year's show is professional football's Playing Surfaces Committee's bi-annual conference. This day-long programme of informative seminars and debates will include a range of topical issues of concern to groundsmen from the 92 professional clubs in the Premier League and the Football League's Championship and Leagues One and Two.

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LIW 2011 embraces London 2012's sporting legacy

With less than a year to go before London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, this year's show – at the NEC from 20-22 September – is all about getting more people into regular activity

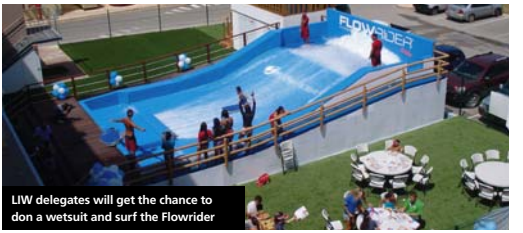
LIW exhibitor Technogym has been the official fitness supplier to the Olympic Summer Games since Sydney 2000 and will take up this role once more at the London 2012 Games. Using this partnership as a springboard to encourage the UK fitness industry to maximise the opportunity presented by the Games, Technogym is inviting all Fitness Industry Association (FIA) clubs as well as Technogym clients to join its national campaign.

The 'I Pledge' campaign, which will be officially launched by Technogym and the FIA at LIW on Tuesday 20 September, calls on people to get behind Team GB and Paralympics GB with the strapline "900 athletes, 60 million strong" – an entire nation supporting its team.

Full details of the campaign, which will run for the whole of 2012 in a bid to create a genuine legacy from the Games, will be announced at the launch event. However, the basic idea is to get people actively participating in the Olympic buzz by encouraging them to make Olympic-inspired pledges, such as: "I'll walk to work twice a week rather than drive", or even non activity-based pledges such as "I'll shave my hair off if we win more gold medals at London than at Beijing" – all to raise money for Sport Relief and get people involved in the Olympic spirt.

Participating health clubs, leisure centres and Olympic partner corporate locations will act as 'I Pledge' hubs, encouraging their members and staff to make their pledges in support of the Games. These will be logged and tracked via a specially-designed Facebook site.

Tony Majakas, Technogym's London 2012 UK project director, says: "The 2012 Olympic Games are a 'once in a lifetime opportunity'. It's important that we don't get to the end of 2012 and find ourselves saying: 'I wish we'd done…' Join us at LIW 2011 and join the movement!"



LIW delegates will get the chance to don a wetsuit and surf the Flowrider

LIW will showcase a special London 2012 Team GB-Paralympics GB area. Clubs will be able to win equipment from the Olympic Village gym, while Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs)-accredited trainers can enter a competition to win a place as a trainer in the Olympic Village Gym during the Olympics and Paralympics.

Inspiring young people into physical activity

Elsewhere at this year's show, which will be held at the NEC in Birmingham from 20 to 22 September, the Youth Engagement Zone will make a comeback to highlight innovative ways of engaging children in physical activity. The zone, which is supported by kids' activity provider Fit For Sport and in association with COMPASS, will showcase providers of products, services and education to the youth market.

Fit For Sport operations director Craig Jones says: "Within the zone there will be children's activity demonstrations, advice on how to engage young people in the community and a showcase of products to help support children's programmes in leisure centres, health clubs and schools. We will also be highlighting examples of best practice and offering information on accredited training and apprenticeship opportunities for people wishing to work within the youth sector."

Elsewhere at the show, Speedo will also be flying the flag for youth engagement by showcasing products from its 'Learn to Swim 2011' campaign, which is currently supported by Olmypic gold medalist Rebecca Adlington. The company will be showcasing swimwear and equipment that has been created to help children embrace swimming and gain confidence in the water.

If visitors are looking for an unusual activity, a combination of live snowboarding, skateboarding, surfing and wakeskating demonstrations will be performed on the Flowrider artificial wave machine, which made its debut at last year's show. Other activities new to LIW this year include a synthetic ice rink and a high ropes course.

Visitors can register to attend for free at **www.liw.co.uk** or follow on Twitter @L_I_W, LinkedIn and Facebook/leisure-industry-week, to receive regular show updates. Organisations interested in exhibiting at LIW should contact Jonathan Monks on (+44) 020 7955 3972 jonathan.monks@ubm.com

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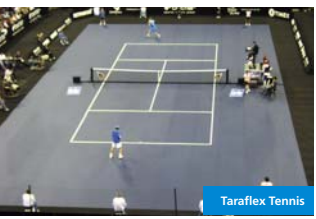

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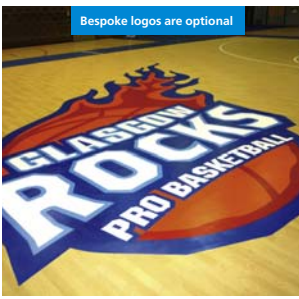

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STAYING ACTIVE

As active ageing becomes increasingly common among the general population, so too does the success of veteran athletes. Kirstyn MacRandal reports on their specific sports conditioning requirements

For many athletes today, reaching the age of 25 no longer means coming to the end of their career. More often, we're seeing professional athletes performing well into their 40s and 50s.

Take Michael Schumacher, for example, who has returned to the Formula 1 racetrack from retirement at the age of 42, or Martina Navratilova, who was 49 when she retired from tennis in 2006, after winning the mixed doubles title in the US Open and reaching the quarter-finals of the Wimbledon women's doubles. We're also seeing a trend for Masters competitions such as the European Golf Seniors Tour, which is exclusively aimed at elite athletes over the age of 50.

In order to maintain the fitness of their youth, these athletes must take into consideration a number of factors that affect their training regime. We're told that lean muscle peaks at the age of 25, and that the heart and lungs reach their apex during our 30s. Research has shown that over-use injuries are the most common challenge for veteran athletes; the incidence of exertion-related cardiovascular events is also greater among older athletes, especially men.

So what do athletes need to do to prevent their muscles losing their flexibility, bones becoming more brittle and cells not processing oxygen as well? According to a number of studies, training programmes for senior athletes should incorporate a significant level of strength and power training in order to combat muscle degeneration and, in turn, prevent injury.

However, it's also important that training is not as concentrated or highly intensive as is commonly the case among younger athletes, and that sufficient recovery time is given between sessions. Furthermore, training regimes must be individually tailored and focus on the predominant energy pathways and performance requirements for a given sport.

Above and below: AC Milan FC is renowned for the longevity of its players' careers – Paolo Maldini retired aged 41

Elite veterans

Today, there's a growing number of professional veteran athletes competing at elite tournaments – athletes such as Olympic rower Greg Searle (see SM Q4 2010, p72), Bernhard Langer from the European Golf Senior Tour and even members of AC Milan Football Club. How have these athletes adapted their training regimes to combat the common issues associated with the passage of time and still maintain optimum performance to compete against younger athletes?

Greg Searle won Olympic Gold in the 1992 Games in Barcelona, in the coxed pair with his brother Jonny. Now aged 39, he has come out of a 10-year retirement in a bid to win a second gold medal at the London 2012 Olympics. With his second attempt just one year away, Searle has adapted his training regime from that of 1992 to accommodate the effect of time on his body. "It used to be 'no pain, no gain', whereas now it's a slow building of physiology over time with fewer explosive sessions," he explains. This helps lower the risk of injury while still building on performance. Additionally, Searle focuses more heavily on

Older members of the general public are motivated by the social aspect of fitness

> **Personal bests may be the motivation of elite veteran athletes, but protection against sickness and disability is a motive for the general public**

stretching and core stability than he used to, again to help avoid injury.

Meanwhile, golf is one of the few sports to provide a competitive playground for players over the age of 50. In order to compete at the highest level, golfing legends such as Bernhard Langer have had to change the focus of their training regimes to ensure they can continue their love affair with the game.

Having played year-round for more than 30 years in different climates and on different terrains, European Senior Tour players are encouraged to balance their skill sessions with yoga and flexibility-related exercises. There's a greater emphasis on muscle management rather than performance optimisation, with players finding it more difficult to build up strength as they get older. There are also considerable measures to safeguard the longevity of the golfers' careers: instead of playing four rounds of golf per tournament, the European Senior Tour competitions last only three rounds.

By adapting training techniques, footballers can also extend their presence in the game. AC Milan FC is renowned for the longevity of its players' careers, with the likes of Paola Maldini retiring from the club in 2009 at the age of 41. This has been attributed to the MilanLab and its appliance of the latest thinking in the field of sports medicine. Using neurology, biochemistry, psychology, chiropractic, modern physical training techniques and kinesiology, the MilanLab aims to maintain fitness and detect potential injuries, thereby keeping its players going for longer.

The man behind the MilanLab is Belgian chiropractor Jean-Pierre Meersseman. His prudent idea was to predict injuries, a common issue in veteran athletes, and prevent them; indeed, research undertaken at the MilanLab has demonstrated an ability to predict injury with 70 per cent accuracy.

Using specially designed IT systems by Microsoft, MilanLab sports scientists monitor, measure and check the various elements that make up the wellbeing of the athlete in a systematic and rigorous manner. From this, they identify which element(s) require attention and what action is needed to strengthen the area in question and achieve the ultimate goal of optimum fitness.

For example, part of the assessment includes a 'dynajump', in which muscle work and knee angles are measured using electromyography. The collated data is inputted into the IT system and flexibility, speed and strength of the knee is analysed. From this, the risk of injury in the knee can be calculated and appropriate, athlete-specific exercises can be prescribed to reduce injury risk.

However, MilanLab is based on a concept of total wellbeing, striving to maintain the balance between not just the physical but also the social and mental wellbeing of the athletes to prolong their playing career; the MilanLab includes the 'glassed-in mind room' where athletes can relax and unwind.

Since the introduction of the MilanLab in 2002, AC Milan has reported: "Total practice days lost are down 43 per cent, use of medicines is down 70 per cent and player injuries have dropped by two-thirds."

Tony Majakas, VP of health and green for Technogym – which supplies equipment to AC Milan – says: "Through the adoption of scientific training principles and with the use of top of the range gym equipment, these players can significantly extend their playing life. We're delighted to be involved with this elite athletic conditioning and advancement, working

Above: Sam Torrence pictured with the Ryder Cup 2002
Right: Nifty After 50: This US chain has developed its offering specifically to cater for an older client base

with the top athletes in football to support the longevity of their careers."

Older amateurs

While competition and 'personal bests' are usually the motivation of elite veteran athletes, research has shown that protection against sickness and disability are increasingly listed as the primary motives for participation among older athletes within the general public.

Amanda Ellison, badminton coach at Sobell Badminton Club in north London, says: "We've definitely noticed an increase in the average age of players at our club, as well as an increase in the number of older players who are taking up badminton as a recreational sport. Badminton lends itself well to older players as it provides a fun, social and safe environment – while not being too physically challenging – the equipment is very lightweight.

"Not only that, most older people are far more used to playing a sport to keep fit rather than going to a gym to lift weights," she says.

Ellison identifies the social offering that sport can provide as an important aspect for veteran athletes in the general public too: "Playing a sport not only provides physical benefits, but allows veteran athletes the opportunity to spend time interacting with others with similar interests," she says.

Leisure centres with sporting facilities are already tapping into this opportunity, but more can be done – by maximising off-peak capacity via 'silver surfer' tennis-and-social sessions, for example.

And for those older members who do venture into the gym, sports-specific conditioning programmes could be developed to help ensure they're able to continue with these life-enhancing 'sport and social' activities for longer. These should of course take into consideration the implications of ageing on sporting ability, with aspects such as developing/maintaining core strength and flexibility at the heart of the programmes.

Fitness equipment manufacturer Keiser also has expertise in the area of exercise and ageing, with the Keiser Institute On Aging (KIOA) set up in 1999 – a web-based information site that integrates the efforts of researchers, practitioners and health professionals – to provide older adults with the knowledge and tools they need to help them maintain an optimum level of health.

As part of the KIOA, Keiser also developed the acclaimed Strength Training Exercise Programme (S.T.E.P), which provides information on how exercise can help conditions such as arthritis, osteoporosis, diabetes and hypertension. It has also developed a number of exercise programmes for older populations, including circuit strength training classes and sport-specific programmes tailored for senior athletes.

Spreading the net

Given the pace at which the veteran sports conditioning field is developing, might we one day see 60-year-old athletes still holding their own against up-and-coming young stars? Sporting accolades are certainly no longer limited to the young, and our traditional perception of what constitutes an athlete is becoming ever more broad.

The sport and fitness industry needs to acknowledge and cater for an ageing population and the smarter brands are those which are already seeing the opportunities and reaping the rewards. As Majakas observes: "We're increasingly looking at how our equipment can be used in locations outside traditional fitness settings to increase opportunities for all members of the population, at all stages of development and for all ages and abilities."

RPII outdoor technical director Keith Dalton advises on how regular inspections can extend the life of play equipment and avoid costly refurbishment

Top tips for maintaining PLAY EQUIPMENT

The Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) is the UK's sole body for syllabus setting, examination and certification of play safety inspectors of indoor centres, inflatable equipment and outdoor play areas. It gained recognition by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) as an approved awarding body earlier this year.

Playground managers have a responsibility and duty of care to children using a play site, and as such a regular series of inspections is recommended. This includes a daily or weekly visual routine inspection, a more detailed monthly or quarterly operational inspection and the essential annual inspection.

These inspections should be performed by one of the 55 UK-registered RPII outdoor play annual inspectors. In addition however, there are approximately 1,000 council and/or grounds maintenance staff currently RPII certificated and eligible to perform operational inspections on their own council-run play provisions. A further 2,000 routine inspectors are also currently qualified to undertake the daily visual check of facilities. The combined objective of these competent inspectors is to identify the need to repair equipment as early as possible and maintain as necessary. Timely, low-cost, immediate action can help prevent accidents, equipment failure and excessive costs down the line.

RPII play inspectors can offer advice to safeguard play areas

Right before installation

When choosing equipment, the RPII recommends working with a reputable manufacturer and designer, many of which are most likely to be a member of the Association of Play Industries (API), and choosing good-quality, long-lasting equipment – which is unlikely to be at the cheaper end of the market.

It's important to do your research and be well informed about the equipment that best suits your community's needs before installation. And site selection is also a key factor, as a play area may look idyllic located underneath trees, but could lead to persistent problems with moss growth, slippery surfaces and potential algae growth.

In addition to the comprehensive play area design advice, which is freely available from the API and Play England, many RPII annual inspectors can also offer valuable assistance by checking new play area designs before installation. This advice can help avoid problems at post-installation inspection.

Indeed, failure to implement this initial post-installation inspection could lead to avoidable problems noted during the first annual inspection, by which time a council-run facility may face remedial costs that could and should have been carried by the designer, manufacturer and installer as part of snagging before the settling of the final bill.

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Common misconceptions

Most misconceptions in play are regarding danger. This is often addressed in the annual inspection where the likelihood of an accident and the potential injury can be risk assessed. For example, appropriate, well-maintained safer surfacing provides protection from a fall and highlights the importance of play surface maintenance, which includes topping up and raking loose-fill materials. Misconceptions include the worry that children may run, trip and fall into moving equipment like swings or roundabouts. But with proper surface inspection and maintenance, trip hazards can be prevented.

Another widely-held misconception is that safety surfacing can actually prevent accidents. This is not the case. Safety surfacing is designed to lower the risk of serious injury from impact, which emphasises the importance of play surface inspection and maintenance.

Another wrongly held view is that once equipment has been installed, kids will mess it up. However, the main reason for deterioration is lack of maintenance of heavily-used equipment. Many think that the job is 'done' once the money has been paid and the kit installed. However, this is only the start. Regular inspections and the provision of a modest annual maintenance budget are essential for the longevity of a project.

Prevention is better than cure

For preventative care, my advice is to follow the manufacturer's recommendations and regularly lubricate, oil or grease bearings and bushes. Make sure that adequate repairs and maintenance, as recommended by inspections, are carried out and that worn components are replaced as required.

Playground roundabouts can be the most expensive items to repair and yet tell-tale warnings (usually noisy when rotating) are often ignored. A slow reaction to these signs can result in a much higher repair cost, when perhaps an early intervention would have been much cheaper.

Fences and Gates

The best advice on fencing and gates is to question, at the design stage, whether they are actually necessary. If they are, then they need to be kept in a good state of repair.

For example, are dogs really such a nuisance that up to 15 per cent of the playground budget is spent on keeping them out? And would parents with young children actually prefer to let them play in a more open-plan, natural surroundings? In my opinion many older children who chose to visit a playground are capable of looking after themselves – after all, many walk to get to the playground in the first place. ●

TOP TIPS

The following tips are based on information obtained via the RPII play safety inspectors' experience of conducting annual safety inspections

DON'T: Install a play area and play equipment and then forget about it

DO: Look after your investment. Inspect and maintain play areas regularly and routinely. Early intervention is the key to low-cost running and long life. Little and often can save big repair costs later

DO: Set up a proper inspection regime of routine, operational and annual inspections. Ask an RPII-certificated annual inspector what type of inspection regime is required for each play area – as it may vary depending on the amount of usage

DO: Make sure someone, probably in-house, is properly trained and responsible for routine inspections. They should check for damage, litter, graffiti and evidence of vandalism. Make sure records are kept and that inspector recommendations are carried out. Ensure inspectors at all levels are current members of the RPII at the appropriate level. Routine inspections are important – they don't cost much and should'nt be ignored

DO: Be sure to have an annual inspection that will highlight everything a council needs to know regarding the state of the equipment's structural stability, as well as wear and tear. This inspection can act as a prediction of its durability for the next year and offers playground managers essential information on the quality and condition of the play equipment and playground

DO: Ensure adequate budgets are available for maintenance and repairs. If left, faulty equipment can lead to equipment failure and accidents. Cutting back on maintenance is a short-sighted, false economy, which could prove to be a more expensive issue for the equipment in the future

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For expert advice on play equipment maintenance, contact a RPII Annual Play inspector listed at: www.playinspectors.com

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MAKING A SPLASH

Is your swimming pool earning its keep? Kath Hudson looks at how to get the most out of this asset

Pools can often be one of the major differentiating factors between health club and leisure centre operators, so it's important to get the most mileage out of them.

Backing this up is The Big Splash, the latest campaign from the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) – launched in May – which aims to generate a 'Wimbledon effect' for pools via a number of initiatives, including television programmes featuring celebrities in swimming challenges.

We take a look at other ways in which operators can maximise use of, and revenue from, their pools.

AQUA CLASSES

Recognising that Zumba classes at a local church hall were packed to the rafters, Dearne Valley Leisure Centre decided to join the growing trend and sent instructors on official training courses not just for Zumba but also for Aqua Zumba. Now these have been added to the centre's pool timetable, alongside existing classes such as Aqua Tone and Nifty Fifty. Sixty people a week are now taking part in Aqua Zumba, with classes free for members and £5.10 for non-members.

"It's been absolutely massive," says assistant manager Craig Bradford, who came up with the idea. "There's been an 80 per cent increase in class attendance in the pool since we introduced Zumba. It's similar to the studio class, but slower."

Meanwhile, aqua jogging and aqua circuits are becoming a feature of pools up and down the country, bringing a bit of the bootcamp mentality poolside. According to studies by Dr Robert Wilder, a physiologist and director of sports rehabilitation at the University of Virginia in the US, aqua jogging is said to offer a better workout than jogging, since water is about 800 times denser than air and offers up to 12 times the resistance of jogging on land: land runners burn off eight calories a minute, while aqua runners burn 11.5.

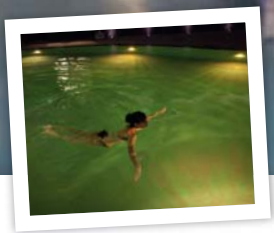
SLM, last year's ASA Operator of the Year, is in the process of rolling out aqua jogging across all its sites. "It's a good use of water space, it's good fun and it's non weight-bearing. Swimming is all about having fun and it's a nice way to exercise," says Jacqui Tillman, group swim development manager.

The RLSS UK has launched a Rookie Lifeguard programme for kids

STAFF TRAINING

If you need to upskill your staff in order to offer these programmes, the Institute of Swimming (IoS) – the ASA's training delivery arm – can help. In May, the IoS launched a new training programme for aquatic fitness qualifications. These include a Level 2 Certificate in Fitness Instructing (Aqua) and a series of REPs-accredited CPD seminars, including Aqua Jogging and Aqua Circuits.

The training programmes have been piloted by DC Leisure, and the resulting boost to the pool timetable has led to an upsurge in swimming. "Running aquatic fitness courses has given us a great opportunity to increase the number of individuals participating in aquatic activity," says Sarah Leonie, group fitness manager. "Many have been new customers and we've also seen an increase in the number of gym members, who have seen the benefits of incorporating it into their regular fitness regime."



Left: Surrey-based health club and spa Lifehouse employs an in-house physiotherapist to run water-based sessions

FURTHER EDUCATION

Existing qualified aqua fitness instructors can access CPD seminars on aqua jogging and aqua circuits. To register your interest, email your name and current qualification level to **aquaticfitness@swimming.org**

Level 2 Fitness Instructor and Exercise to Music-qualified instructors can find out more about the new Level 2 qualification – Level 2 Certificate in Fitness Instructing (Aqua) – by visiting **www.theiosonline.com** and clicking on health and participation.

UNDERWATER GYMS

An activity currently taking Germany by storm, but yet to catch on in the UK, is group cycling on underwater bikes, which is said to be excellent for improving cardiovascular fitness without putting pressure on joints. Manufacturer Beco-Beermann is at the forefront of this trend with its SharkBike.

Another option for exercising in water is Beco-Beermann's SharkWalker, an underwater treadmill with additional bars and belts that can be added to the sides to allow the upper body to be trained at the same time as the lower body.

Water Babies teaches more than 24,000 babies and toddlers each week

New to the range is the SharkJumper – a mini trampoline that works out the whole body. Beco-Beermann will also arrange training for fitness instructors.

Italian company Hydrorider also sells underwater equipment, accompanied by a range of programme options including aquacycling, aquatreadmill, aquaboxing, aquacombat and aquatriathlon, which involves underwater cycling and running as well as swimming.

Underwater equipment is also good for one-to-one use with rehab patients, as well as with those who are deconditioned and find exercising in the gym uncomfortable. The water not only keeps them cool – it's also load-bearing, meaning pressure is taken off the joints.

Essex-based health club and spa Lifehouse employs an in-house physiotherapist to run individual water-based sessions for such clients. "Typically our physiotherapist works with five to 10 clients a day doing exercises that lend themselves to weight loss. They use very simple equipment – such as foam noodles, floats and weights – and the body is perfect for creating its own resistance in water," says Sue Davis, health and wellbeing manager.

LIFEGUARD TRAINING

Becoming an approved training centre for lifeguard training can create another revenue stream for clubs, as well as bringing down your own training costs as it can all be delivered in-house.

IQL UK – which runs the National Pool Lifeguard Qualification – currently uses 2,200 pools across the country. The top seven providers have a collective income of £500,000 a year as they can charge their own fees and receive all of the income; the only cost is the NPLQ training pack, bought from the IQL.

Meanwhile, the Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) UK has launched a Rookie Lifeguard programme for kids – an excellent progression from swimming lessons, as well as being easy and inexpensive to implement. To take the course, the instructor doesn't have to be a lifeguard, but does need a recognised teaching qualification. Most swimming teachers then need no more than the £42 Rookie Lifeguard Pack to qualify to teach the programme, with no additional annual fees to pay.

Ceri Kingston, assistant lifesaving programmes manager at RLSS, says the programme is good for keeping children interested in swimming, as well as providing another revenue stream for the club or leisure centre: "Income can be generated through the sale of places on the course, ongoing Rookie Awards and Progress Books – there are a number of bolt-on awards that Rookie Lifeguards can work towards, which add an element of fun, build confidence and help retention."

FIND OTHER USERS

Hiring the pool out to external organisations is another way of bringing in revenue, from diving or canoeing clubs

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to baby swimming lessons run by freelance swimming instructors.

Water Babies is the world's largest baby swimming company, teaching more than 24,000 babies and toddlers each week through a network of more than 400 franchises. This year, the company will spend more than £2m hiring pool facilities across the UK.

Water Babies' MD Steve Franks says: "Water Babies can offer pools secure and ongoing additional revenue, not only through secondary spend on food and drink but also through membership conversions and hire of dry-side facilities for our termly underwater photo viewings.

"The nature of our business means we can often schedule classes to run during quiet pool times and our courses offer a natural progression into operators' existing Learn to Swim programmes."

Shire Hotels runs Water Babies classes at three of its six hotels and has found this to be a good retention tool for members with new families. "The programmes are a great income generator, particularly as they take place in quiet times and parents often stay for refreshments," says group spa director Stuart Angus. "Offering these classes also helps differentiate us from our competitors."

SPORTING CHANCE

While delighting some members, tying up the whole pool with classes and lessons has the potential to annoy others who prefer lane swimming, so programming requires a fine balance between trying to keep everyone happy and making sure the pool is optimised.

Indeed, many people associate the water with having fun, so mixing up the serious business of length swimming and lessons with more entertaining classes and activities is important.

> **"With triathlons becoming increasingly popular a growing number of half-decent adult swimmers are now keen to brush up on their technique"**

Sarah Hobbs, David Lloyd Leisure's head of family and programming, says: "It's always a challenge, but we do know the usage patterns for our members and try to ensure that the programme reflects the needs of everyone. Generally group swimming lessons account for 15 per cent of term-time pool programming and we always ensure that during these times, there's an option for members who just want to take part in swim training by keeping one or two lanes for lap swimming."

In fact, DLL aims to get all of its members using the pool in some way. Personal training is offered for the pool, bringing a touch of gym culture to the water, and adult and children swimming lessons are also offered. However, gone are the days when adult lessons focused on adult beginners who missed out when they were younger: with triathlons becoming increasingly popular, a growing number of half-decent adult swimmers are now keen to brush up on their technique.

Another opportunity for operators is to host water polo matches. Making an appearance at the 2012 Olympics for the first time in 56 years British Swimming is hoping this will kick-start the sport across the country. ●

Kath Hudson is a freelance journalist

New Blakedown pitch for Lancashire college

Blakedown Sport and Play has constructed a third generation (3G), 100m x 63m pitch – featuring a Desso surface – to FIFA 2 star standards at Accrington and Rossendale College in Lancashire. The £1m sports development consists of two stages; the first is the installation of the synthetic pitch and the second is a pavilion that is due for completion next summer.

sport-kit.net KEYWORD

blakedown

Tennis first for Norfolk college

Easton College in Norwich is reputedly the first facility in the UK to benefit from a BASF Conipur TF tennis court installation. A popular playing surface for European courts for more than 10 years, the system consists of approximately 92 per cent of recycled material and its playing response is similar to that of a traditional clay court. It offers an excellent sliding property, an even ball response and reduced chance of injury.

sport-kit.net KEYWORD

basf

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Easy Lift's goal of making life easier

Mark Harrod's innovative Easy Lift goal wheel has received praise from Birmingham City's new manager, Chris Hughton. He commented that in the past he would often have to move goals for training purposes and how difficult it could be when the ground was wet or rough. Having the benefit of a wheel that lifted the whole goal clear of the ground made life a great deal easier. Mark Harrod, a long-standing supporter of Birmingham, has supplied the goals at St Andrews for the last four seasons.

sport-kit.net KEYWORDS

mark harrod

sport-kit.net KEYWORD

abacus

Edgbaston's big switch on by Abacus

Edgbaston's new floodlights were used for the first time last month, when Warwickshire County Cricket Club staged its first floodlit match against Leicestershire. Part of the ground's recent £30m redevelopment, the floodlights were manufactured and installed by Abacus Lighting, which is also responsible for cricket ground lighting installations at Lords, Kent, The Oval and Trent Bridge. The cantilevered masts incorporate 320 Challenger 3 floodlights with precision reflector systems to ensure tight beam control. This reduces overspill and directs light into the ground where it is needed.

Molten adds new pink basketball

Sports balls manufacturer Molten has launched a pink basketball into the UK market. The new ball is available in size 6 only and has been added to the range of Molten coloured rubber basketballs following significant demand from women players. The 12-panel design ball is manufactured using a special rubber compound which gives it a tacky feel. This, combined with its deep-pebble surface, enhances grip and provides increased accuracy in shooting and passing.

sport-kit.net KEYWORD

molten

New MUGA for Pulse Health and Fitness, Hanson

Pulse Health and Fitness, Hanson has boosted its sport offering to the local community with the opening of a new MUGA (multi use games area) as part of the complex. The MUGA, located at the back of the Pulse Health and Fitness facility, officially opened for business last month.

The five-court, floodlit, tarmac games area now adds a new element to the fitness complex, which already boasts a 65-station fitness suite, two dance studios, a full-sized multi-use sports hall and an interactive gym.

sport-kit.net KEYWORD

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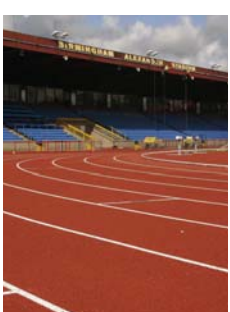

sport-kit.net KEYWORD

polytan

Polytan's medal winning track

US athletes competing in the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will warm up for their medal bids on the newly refurbished Polytan track at Birmingham's Alexander Stadium. The stadium's new Polytan Sports Surfaces' eight-lane track and 10-lane straight will benefit USA's track and field athletes' Olympic training. The project is part of a £12.25m redevelopment at the stadium, which has also benefited from a new 5,000-seater stand. This stand will extend capacity to 12,800 spectators, with scope for temporary seating subject to demand.

Verti-Drain for Norfolk

Mundesley Golf Club, founded in 1901 and situated half a mile from the North Norfolk coast, has taken delivery of a new Redexim Charterhouse 1.3M Verti-Drain. This machine is a very fast, lightweight aerator, it is driven by belts on each side of the machine and powered either by PTO (power take off) or by the new Redexim Carrier machine. It's selling points are said to include its versatility and superior mechanism.

sport-kit.net KEYWORDS

charterhouse

Gerflor signs with Volleyball England

Gerflor has signed an approved supplier agreement with Volleyball England for its Taraflex range of portable and permanent indoor sports flooring products. The company will provide Taraflex courts and technical support for floor installation in the run up to London 2012. Gerflor is already a partner with – among others sports – Scottish Volleyball and the Volleyball Association of Ireland.

sport-kit.net KEYWORDS

gerflor

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The Sports and Play Construction Association, SAPCA, is the recognised trade organisation for the sports and play facility construction industry in the UK. SAPCA fosters excellence, professionalism and continuous improvement throughout the industry, in order to provide the high quality facilities necessary for the success of British sport.

SAPCA represents a wide range of specialist constructors of natural and synthetic sports surfaces, including both outdoor and indoor facilities, from tennis courts and sports pitches to playgrounds and sports halls. SAPCA also represents manufacturers and suppliers of related products, and independent consultants that offer professional advice on the development of projects.

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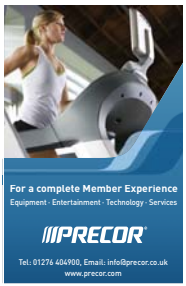

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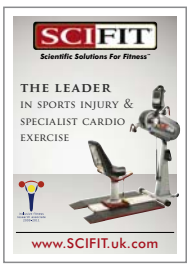

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DIARY DATES

6-8 SEPTEMBER 2011
IOG SALTEX
Windsor Racecourse, Berkshire, UK
This outdoor show, for managers of outdoor spaces, will also host professional football's Playing Surfaces Committee's conference for groundsmen from the UK's 92 professional clubs.
www.iogsaltex.co.uk

15-18 SEPTEMBER 2011
European Women and Sport Conference
Grange City Hotel, London, UK
A joint event with the Council of Europe through EPAS (Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport). Guest speakers will include Androulla Vasilliou, European Commissioner for Sport, and Sir Philip Craven MBE, president of the International Paralympic Committee.
www.ews2011.com

22-22 SEPTEMBER 2011
Leisure Industry Week (LIW)
The NEC, Birmingham, UK
Offering innovative ideas to extend sports participation, the show's Youth Engagement Zone will highlight ways to entice children into regular activity, while Technogym, the official fitness provider to the Olympic Games, will launch its national 'I Pledge' campaign.
www.liw.co.uk

10-14 OCTOBER 2011
World Sport Tourism Congress
P&O Pacific Dawn, New Zealand
TUI Travel's Specialist and Activity Sector has teamed up with sports tourism leaders in this 'Sharing the Sport and Tourism Boom' event, which will coincide with the 2011 Rugby World Cup in Auckland. Delegates can listen to Jeanine Pires, minister special advisor Rio 2016 and Campbell Jamieson, commercial director of the International Cricket Council, while cruising around New Zealand's Bay of Islands.
www.wstc.co.uk

12-13 OCTOBER 2011
Sports Event Management Conference (ISEM)
Wyndham Grand Hotel, London, UK
This event will focus on the challenges and opportunities facing the sports events industry and fuel the drive towards greater professionalism and higher standards in the sector.
www.iirme.com/isem

18-19 OCTOBER 2011
Sports Equipment and Facilities Summit
Whittlebury Hall Hotel and Spa, Northamptonshire
Designed for UK development and procurement managers from stadiums, leisure facilities, arenas and local authorities, this business-to-business event allows delegates to gain up-to-date knowledge from leading solution and service providers – on a complimentary basis.
www.forumevents.co.uk

26-28 OCTOBER 2011
FSB, Cologne
The Koelnmesse, Cologne, Germany
More than 600 companies from 40 countries will be exhibiting at the bi-annual International Trade Fair for Amenity Areas, Sports and Pool Facilities (FSB) event. Brazil will be taking centre stage as an international exhibitor and groups from Russia and the UK will also have a high presence. The event will also host the 22nd IAKS Congress, the 4th Cologne Swimming Pool and Wellness Forum and the Synthetic Turf Forum.
www.fsb-cologne.com

10 NOVEMBER 2011
Business in Sport and Leisure
Lords' Cricket Ground, London, UK
Conference speakers will reflect on economic, political and industry-specific issues at this 'Leisure Works' themed event.
www.bisl.org

14-15 NOVEMBER 2011
World-class Performance Conference
ExCeL, London, UK
Formerly known as the World Class Coaching Conference, this event provides a multidisciplinary forum to meet, debate and share best practice across key themes influencing athletes' performances.
www.uksport.org.uk

29 NOVEMBER 2011
SAPCA Sports Facility Construction Exhibition and Seminar
Twickenham Stadium, London, UK
This one-day event comprises a series of informative and educational seminars. The accompanying exhibition will feature the leading constructors of sports facilities, suppliers of related products and services and professional consultants.
www.sapca.org.uk

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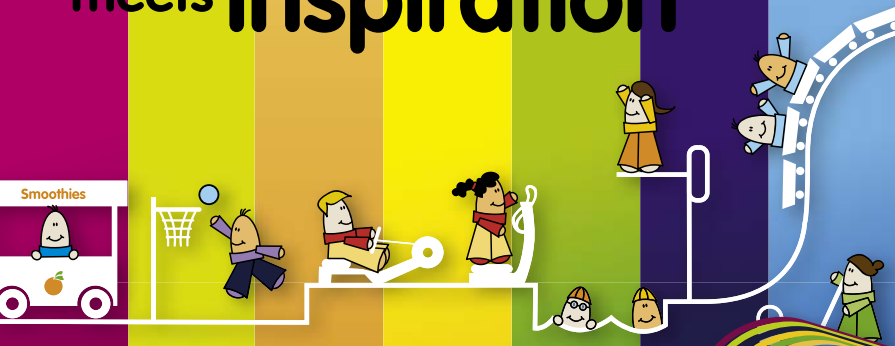

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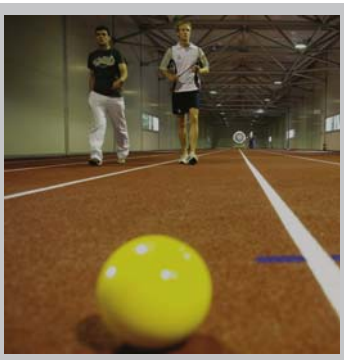

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