

# SPORTS MANAGEMENT

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# WOMEN (AND GIRLS) IN SPORT

Progress is being made, but much remains to be done to fully engage girls and women in sport. Frankly, if we can't get it right in the west, with the resources we have, then what hope is there for nations where poverty and oppression are rife? We have to keep fighting

In this issue we focus on women in sport, with a cover celebrating the amazing Jo Pavey and her inspiring gold medal performance in the 10,000m at the European Athletics Championships in Zurich. She powered to the title aged 40 – the oldest competitor ever to win in Europe – and only a year after giving birth to her second child. It was lump in the throat stuff.

Athletes like Pavey show what incredible feats women are capable of and are a huge inspiration at a time when girls and women around the world are increasingly being threatened with loss of life and liberty and denied the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

We kick off our special coverage on page 40 with a report from *Sports Management's* Tom Walker on the International Working Group on Women and Sport (IWG) World Conference, which took place in Helsinki recently.

This four-yearly event brings together thought leaders to share best practice. A quick look at its five sub-themes gives insights into its purpose and the challenges facing the sports community if we are to successfully break down gender barriers. They are: increasing girls' participation in sport; leading the change in sport policy; enhancing female leadership and coaching; women's physical activity and wellbeing; and promoting sport as a safe haven and bastion of human rights.

The IWG is working to empower women to get involved at every level – from taking part in community sport to training for elite events and encouraging more women sports leaders.

At the conference, Johanna Adriaanse, IWC co-chair said, "Globally, women's sport is a very important tool for developing nations. It can empower women not only in physical activity and sport, but also as a vehicle for other sectors of life." Much has been achieved, but there's still a great deal more work to be done.

There are few greater ways for women to celebrate freedom and self-determination than through sport and it's incumbent on all of us to offer girls and women these opportunities.

Yet we're still falling short in fundamental areas: according to the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation's (WSFF) report, *Changing the Game for Girls*, 51 per cent of girls in the UK are deterred from exercise by their unsatisfactory experiences of school sport.

And the report found it's not just the overall standard of PE that's discouraging them, it's the lack of choice: 46 per cent

of inactive girls gave up on sport because they didn't enjoy those on offer at school. WSFF says: "Those girls who have been let down by school sport grow into young adults who see little value in taking part."

So the challenge is clearly laid out. The social and health benefits of involving girls in sports which

engage them – which *they* want to do, not what someone else thinks they should do – is hugely positive and we must work together to find effective ways to make it happen.

Part of the solution is opening our minds to what works and what really engages girls and women and then being prepared to change and adapt. On page 52 we look into the growth of parkour (or freerunning) and discover that up to 25 per cent of participants are female – something few people will be aware of, as this is largely seen as a male-only sport.

Sport and the confidence and empowerment it brings, is one of the best ways to support women and girls in their battle for equality around the world, and now is the time to act.

**Liz Terry, editor**  
twitter: @elizterry

**Around 51 per cent of girls  
are deterred from sport  
by their unsatisfactory  
experiences at school**

Share your thoughts – visit [sportsmanagement.co.uk/blog](http://sportsmanagement.co.uk/blog)





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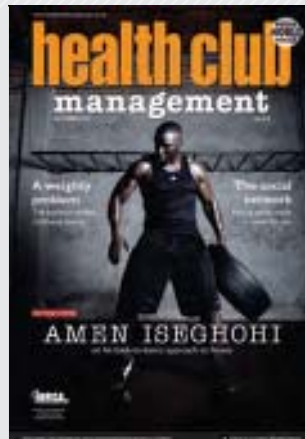


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# PEOPLE

I spent most of the time in the control room watching it all unfold on the TV screens

Nicky Roche, CEO, Tour de France HUB



**T**he Tour de France's first three stages in England this summer were hailed as the "grandest opening in the race's history", by race director Christian Prudhomme. It is estimated that more than four million people packed the sides of roads during the first three days, which saw the riders travel from York to London. Lavishing praise on the public who lined the roads as well as the English organising team, the Tour de France HUB (TdfHUB), Prudhomme says it is a question of "when, not if" the Tour returns to British shores.

The TdfHUB, a subsidiary of UK Sport, was led by Yorkshire-born Nicky Roche. A keen sports fan, she describes herself as having been a "useful club athlete" during her teenage years. Roche's journey to lead the TdfHUB demonstrates her passion for sport. While working at the Home Office as a civil servant in 2004, she saw the role of director of sport advertised in *The Sunday Times*.

"I thought it was my ideal job but that I'd never get it," Roche recalls. "Until the

DCMS' permanent secretary, Sue Street, called and encouraged me to go for it. I did and I got it!"

At the DCMS, Roche worked closely with Tessa Jowell and was part of the team that worked on the winning 2012 London Olympic bid. In 2007, she was named a director at the Government Olympic Executive (GOE), where Roche worked closely with all stakeholders – LOCOG, ODA, GLA – and helped shape the Olympic journey from start to finish. Her responsibilities for London 2012 came to an end in March 2013 when the handover to Rio was completed. Soon after, in August 2013, she was appointed as CEO of TdfHUB.

Describing her role at the hub, Roche says the biggest challenge was the time available. "With less than a year to go, I came with an incredibly short amount of time for such a big project - especially as we started pretty much from scratch.

"When I arrived the partners – particularly the local authorities and the transport operators – had already done

The three Le Tour stages in the UK attracted an estimated four million people to cheer the riders on

really good work to start off, but the work was very siloed. In my experience the best way to ensure a successful event is when everything is done by a group of people working as a team – when everyone knows what each other does."

The most rewarding aspect for Roche was the public's reaction to the event. "I spent most of the time in the control room watching it all unfold on TV screens, so watching the huge crowds line the route pretty much from start to finish was amazing," she says.

She is also proud of the fact that the event was delivered by a dedicated team – funded by public money. "I'm very chuffed that this was largely delivered under public sector leadership. The public sector really rose to the challenge!"

**Details:** [www.letour.fr](http://www.letour.fr)





The success of this year's race means that Le Tour is likely to return to these shores again





# Bristol has strong links to ground-breaking engineering. The Wave could build on this reputation

Nick Hounsfield



After receiving planning consent in June, The Wave Bristol – a £6m man-made surfing lake planned for greenbelt land outside Easter Compton near Bristol – has been awarded up to £840,000 funding by The West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

The project, which is the brainchild of Nick Hounsfield and Tobin Coles, will feature a freshwater lagoon which will use Wavegarden technology from Instant Sport in Spain to generate surfing waves suitable for beginners and experienced surfers. The site will also feature a swimming lake and multifunctional gardens including an activity garden, barefoot trails, a sensory garden, a healing garden, a culinary garden and herb gardens. A core facility building will house a cafe, an educational space to support

school visits and a small retail space.

According to co-founder Nick Hounsfield, the idea for The Wave was born over a pint and a curry. “Having seen videos of the Wavegarden technology in Spain, we felt like it was something that could appeal to a very large audience in the UK and rather than waiting for someone else to come up with the plan, we formulated a concept, ethos and business structure. Before we knew it the project was on its way to becoming reality.”

As for the location, the founders saw Bristol as a perfect fit. “From Brunel to Banksy, Bristol has always been a leader – The Wave could build on this burgeoning reputation,” says Hounsfield.

“The city has strong links to ground-breaking engineering. From Brunel and the SS Great Britain, to Concorde and aerospace there is long tradition of

engineering firsts – the cutting edge Wavegarden technology seems to have a natural fit with the city. Bristol also offers an opportunity to tap into other areas that are important to us, such as getting more city based children into the water and making a positive change to the lives of those from the city’s deprived areas.”

It’s hoped the project would be completed by 2016.

**Details:** [www.the-wave.co.uk](http://www.the-wave.co.uk)



Nick Hounsfield (left) with The Wave co-founder Tobin Coles at the site of the ambitious development





Over the past four years, FHFF has raised in excess of 1 million pounds of food in support of food banks

A volunteer-driven, non-profit organisation in Canada is using ice hockey – the country’s national game – as a vehicle for social change, and reaching a new generation of social entrepreneurs. Five Hole for Food (FHFF) is a nation-wide project with a bold, enterprising and entrepreneurial approach aimed at helping those most in need.

Over the past four years, FHFF has raised in excess of 1 million pounds (454,000kg) of food in support of local food banks across Canada. Armed with national partners, more than 40 volunteers and an identity borne from social media, FHFF has set out to bring communities together.

The organisation is the brainchild of Richard Loat, a young entrepreneur who describes the project’s aim as mobilising the disengaged. “We want to use the power and passion of sport to inspire micro-activism which creates a significant collective impact,” he says.

“Our goal has always been to mobilise people, and disrupt typical philanthropic processes in support of charity. At the moment, this is directed specifically towards food security, but it’s not limited to that in its future development.”

The idea of using hockey for social good came to Richard following the 2010 Olympic Games, held in Vancouver. “There was a real energy around hockey following

## We want to use the power and passion of sport to inspire micro-activism

**Richard Loat, founder, Five Hole for Food**



the 2010 Games, as it was the great unifier for Canada. As a result we set out to unite hockey fans under a single cause, as opposed to the different crests on club shirts. From there, we started hosting ball hockey events for people to participate in and to donate to the local food bank – and the idea has taken off since then.”

FHFF hosts a national tour across Canada each year, which visits 13 cities in 17 days. It also works to support other communities and food banks who want to raise food and funds through the programme. The activity has since grown under the umbrella Sport for Food, to include Footy for Food (a football programme) and a soon to be launched Hoops for Food (a basketball programme).

Loat is now planning to take the Sport for Food concept global.

**Details:** [www.fiveholeforfood.com](http://www.fiveholeforfood.com)

# THOUGHT LEADERS

## Spiraling costs of major sporting events

Alan Shaw, managing director of EPIC



This year's Winter Games in Sochi were among the costliest in Olympic history



The cost of hosting major sporting events has increased rapidly in recent years and event owners have become eager to control the cost of staging games. Olympic Games costs through the past 15 years have jumped from the US\$2-6bn range (1996-2002) to \$10-18bn (2004-2012). The Beijing Games in 2008 (US\$40+bn) and Sochi this year (US\$50+bn) have been touted as the costliest in history.

Other major sporting events, such as the Pan American, Asian, Commonwealth and World University Games cost around \$150-250m to organise just over a decade ago. It is estimated that organisers

are now looking at investing between four and 12 times that.

'Games inflation' is out of control and one negative impact is that many potential Games hosts are dropping out of bid races. Stockholm, Munich, Toronto, St. Moritz, and more recently Krakow have all pulled out of bidding races citing high costs. Even cities awarded bids (Hanoi, Asian Games 2019) are reneging for similar reasons.

So, what can event owners do to limit costs and help ensure their brand stays healthy? Push harder for temporary venues? Simplify the bidding process?

This might help, but event owners have little ability to control costs when their event

is used for political, economic, image or pride reasons. They do, however, have control over at least one way to significantly reduce costs: improve and quality-assure the data and information that gets passed between organizers to reduce the significant guesswork that future organisers typically face.

Host cities face an unfathomable amount of guesswork relating to the scope of services, facilities and other operations. As a result, resources are significantly and systematically over-scoped for both larger cost-drivers (such as space, equipment, vehicles and people) and smaller line items (F&B, training, signage and fuel). Organizers egregiously over-plan, commonly adding multiple contingencies and buffers to even worst-case scenario requirements.

For example, a host city might pass on to a future host the information that they provided a 145-space 'permit parking lot' for a sport federation or broadcaster. What might not get passed on is that no more than 20 vehicles used the parking lot at any given time.

Such examples are almost endless. To improve the situation, organisers must take responsibility for indicating realistic, essential requirements and identifying excesses that aren't necessary, or perhaps even desirable.

For each event, organisers should target, capture, filter, contextualise and validate specific data and information – especially actual usage data for the largest cost-driving resources and for the key documents that will reduce guesswork and improve resource forecasting.

Providing future organisers with a comprehensive, guided Games-time learning experience will also help, as will creating (or revising) minimal service level standards and resource levels (benchmarks) for future organizers based on usage from prior events.

These ideas alone won't resolve all the cost-related issues, but they are a practical way to dramatically reduce guesswork, ensure future organisers are well-informed and enabled to make better decisions, to simplify operations and significantly reduce costs.



There are now pressures on Olympic hosts to deliver a spectacle



Games at the FIFA Women's World Cup 2015 in Canada will be played on artificial pitches

## A World Cup on artificial turf - step in the right direction?

Eric O'Donnell – managing director of Sports Labs

**T**he FIFA Women's World Cup will be held in Canada next year. The plan is to host games on artificial turf – a decision that has angered many of the world's leading female players. The players have accused FIFA of treating them as guinea pigs and using the tournament as a testing ground to see whether all future competitions could be played on synthetic surfaces.

There has been a lively debate in the US press on this subject, fuelled by the players. There's even been a tacit threat to take legal action against FIFA for alleged 'discrimination' against women if the games aren't switched to natural grass.

What makes the timing of the furore odd, however, is that the use of artificial turf should come as no surprise. The



use of synthetic surfaces was part of Canada's original bid to host the tournament. Also, it is inaccurate to claim that the tournament next year would act as some sort of experiment.

Many tournaments at the highest level have already been held – or partially held – on artificial turf. Out of the 50 Scottish League clubs, 14 now use artificial pitches each week. The reason why



artificial turf is gaining leverage is because it opens up many possibilities for clubs to make use of a playing surface for competition, certainty in playing performance and revenue security.

That said, it's unlikely natural grass will be completely replaced as the preferred stadium surface anytime soon. This is because natural surfaces at major stadiums can be

maintained in good condition and the amount of use can be controlled. What shouldn't be overlooked in this debate is that humans are adaptable. Whether they play on mud, sand or artificial turf, players will modify their approach to the interaction with the surface. Hosting the games on artificial surfaces next year is not a game changer – but an evolutionary step in the right direction.

## The true legacy of the Brazilian sporting dream

Dr Aileen Ionescu-Somers – director of IMD Global Center for Sustainability

**A**t the start of the new millennium, it looked as if there was no stopping Brazil's trajectory towards prosperity. Hosting the World Cup this year and the Olympics in 2016 was meant to be a reflection of Brazil's role in a new world order increasingly shaped by the BRICs. Seven years after the decision to hold the event in Brazil, however, optimism has waned. The country's 6 per cent GDP growth in 2007 is a distant memory. In 2013,



hundreds of thousands of protesters took to the streets, demonstrating their ire against rising costs, corruption and lack

of investment in public services while Brazil's World Cup is the most expensive in history.

There have been construction worker deaths, threats of strikes and increasing social discontent. The dream is not becoming reality because the benefits of these events are almost certainly overstated. Brazil's GDP is still the seventh largest in the world, but while the country produced 19 new millionaires every day since 2007 according to Forbes, inequality is at its highest ever. A full 21.4 per cent of

the population lives below the poverty line, with 4.2 per cent in extreme poverty.

The experiences of Athens, Beijing and South Africa in hosting large sporting events suggest they may be right.

Can Brazil do better? Probably not, given the location and restricted future of the stadiums built at an estimated cost of US\$3.6bn. So far – in Brazil – the case has not been convincing and there is little proof that tourism and investment benefits materialise when the crowds disperse.

# A DESIGN DIALOGUE

Despite local authorities struggling with budget cuts in recent years, there has been a steady stream of new swimming pools being opened. But are good design and quality environments being sacrificed, asks Mike Hall, sports partner at FaulknerBrowns Architects



f the many casualties of the recession, there is no

doubt that the skill- and resource-base of local authority leisure departments have been severely affected.

Despite this, I was pleasantly surprised to see recent figures indicating that the number of new local authority swimming pools coming on stream has been steadily increasing over the last eight years, despite the recession. There were 14 new facilities completed last year, although there were steady declines in the education and commercial sectors.

These completed pools have been procured through a variety of frameworks and public/private sector initiatives. One of the key drivers, however, remains the desire for local authorities to reduce and, indeed, where possible, to remove the running cost deficit associated with leisure facilities from the books altogether. In the light of the diminished local authority skill base, there's a real concern that these facilities may become involved in a race to the bottom, without checks, balances and quality of thinking across all aspects of procurement and design.

Looking forward, we may see some of the skills and resource challenges being addressed by cities and regions aggregating the way new facilities are procured and bundling operational contracts into a larger critical mass with associated economies of scale. The quality of dialogue and debate across the continuum of design, build and operate is, however, still pretty poor. There also remain outdated preconceptions about the benefits good design can bring to the process.

Our collective goal as architects is to produce quality environments that engage people and encourage a healthy lifestyle. To achieve success, a strong social agenda



There has been a steady increase in the number of public swimming pools

PIC: @WWW.SHUTTERSTOCK/DOTSHOCK

**We may see some of the skill and resource challenges being addressed by cities and regions aggregating the way new facilities are procured and bundling operational contracts**

needs to go hand in hand with efficiency, flexibility and cost-effectiveness.

One recent initiative is the resurrection of the RIBA Client Forum in the Sports and Leisure sector. The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland set a strong example with an excellent sporting component to its recent annual conference. While the Client Forum has got off to a slow start, it's an opportunity to engage clients and designers with topical issues.

It'd be good to see more of these sessions integrated into sports seminars, conferences and so on. There are reasons to be positive about the upward trend of new facilities. However, the debate on the level of design needs to move forward too.

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# Vertex RGF acclaimed by the elite of football

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## Kilmarnock FC Board of Directors:

"Having been designated the official synthetic turf supplier to FC Barcelona, and working in close partnership with other clubs such as Ajax, Arsenal, Schalke and Olympique Lyonnais among others, FieldTurf is best placed to provide Kilmarnock with the very best in synthetic turf technology" .....



NEWTOWN AFC, Welsh Premier



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# FIVE HOURS IS ALL IT TAKES WITH GERFLOR



The sports centre is a high volume facility

**“WE’RE LOOKING TO EXPAND THE FLOORING INTO OTHER AREAS OF THE FITNESS SUITE”**



Sports areas are now resilient and functional

## The University of Huddersfield’s gym area gets a functional flooring boost and a brand new look, in just five hours

In 1992 Huddersfield Polytechnic changed its name to The University of Huddersfield. The writing was on the wall that this centre of learning would indeed surpass all academic expectations on both delivery and student environment.

In January 2014, the university opened Student Central, a £22.5m development which brought together support services, access to the library, computing facilities, sport and leisure, together with a range of eating and social spaces under one roof. Huddersfield was recently named the Times Higher Education University of the Year. This follows on from a highly successful 2013 in which the university was awarded two Queen’s Awards for Enterprise and in 2012 the prestigious Entrepreneurial University of the Year at the Times Higher Education Awards.

Today, student numbers have reached over 24,000 with over 130 countries represented on campus. And like most red brick universities the sports and leisure facilities feature very heavily in student life. These sports areas take a hammering and need to be both resilient and functional. The Gerflor brief had to offer a suitable solution for an ‘under rig’ flooring area which was positioned directly underneath the sports centres ‘Technogym Omnia’ system. Chosen for its comfort and safety performance properties Taraflex™ Sport M Evolution (7mm) in Anthracite, Gold and Beige would be the specified product.

## COMFORT AND PERFORMANCE

Laurie Nettleton, Sport and Leisure entrepreneur manager commented: “Gerflor recently





Gym members have been very impressed with the results and the flexibility the flooring offers

installed a bespoke flooring solution at our sports centre in order to provide protection underneath the functional rig. The floor was fitted in less than five hours and the team were efficient, friendly and professional.”

Taraflex™ has been used in every summer Olympics since 1976 and is available in 17 colours and two wood-effect designs. The Sport M Evolution product offers a P1 category shock absorbency 25-35% and meets the EN 14904 Standard for indoor sports surfaces. Taraflex™ is also recognised for its durability, safety and comfort without impairing performance. The range offers greater than 45% force reduction, making it unrivalled in the market in terms of comfort for users.

Nettleton adds: “Members of the gym have been very impressed with the Taraflex floor and have welcomed the flexibility that it provides.”

At this recent project, Gerflor was also able to utilise its bespoke water cutting, HD printing and line marking service. Nettleton says: “Team Hud sports staff are also impressed and find the markings helpful when delivering functional training classes. I personally love the solution, so much so



Gerflor used its bespoke water cutting, HD printing and line marking service

that we’re planning to expand the flooring into other areas in our new fitness suite.”

Taraflex™ meets the EN Standard of 22196 for anti- bacterial activity (E. coli - S. aureus - MRSA) (3) returning >99% levels of growth inhibition. It’s treated with ProtecSol®, which renders polish redundant, has a double density foam backing and it’s environmentally friendly.

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## Sports theme park plans for Barcelona stadium

A new theme park is set to open on the site of the Barcelona Olympic Park. Scheduled for a 2015 launch, the 66,000sq m (710,000sq ft) park will be dedicated to sport and will occupy the current Olympic Stadium – the main venue of the 1992 Olympic Games – the Palau Sant Jordi sports hall, the Olympic and Sports Museum Juan Antonio Samaranch and the Bernat Picornell swimming pool.

Among 56 activities and attractions are simulators and other forms of interactive digital technology, giving visitors the experience of being elite athletes.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=W9t3H>



The club had been looking for funds to improve its existing team facilities

## Pompey first club to use crowdfunding

Portsmouth FC has become the first professional football club to successfully complete a crowdfunding facility project, having raised its target of £250,000 (US\$417,000, €311,000). The club teamed up with specialist football fan-funding platform Tifosy to create new training facilities.

The proposed new centre will sit alongside the club's new first-team training facility close to the Portsmouth Roko health club and enables the club's youth team players to train in the vicinity of starting regulars.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=v2E4G>



Dubai could submit a bid as early as next year, if it wishes to host the 2024 Games

## Dubai to bid for Olympics 'within next eight years'

Ali Omar, director of Dubai Sports Council, has stated the emirate is planning to launch a bid to host the Olympic Games "within the next eight years" – possibly targeting the 2024 or 2028 Summer Games. Speaking to local media, Omar said a bid was very much "on the agenda".

"Hosting the Olympics is a dream," he said. "We hope to submit such a bid within the next eight years, God willing."

In November 2013, the United Arab Emirates won the right to host the World Expo in Dubai in 2020 – the first time the expo will be held in the Middle East, North Africa or South Asia. According to

Omar, Dubai's successful Expo bid – and Qatar hosting the 2022 World Cup – has raised the profile of the Gulf region as a destination for major events.

"Qatar's move put professional sports in the whole Gulf Arab region in the focus of the world's attention," Omar told *Khaleej Times*. "Further, Dubai winning the bid to host Expo 2020 definitely brings more world attention to this part of the world."

The Dubai bid has already garnered support from sports leaders – former IOC president Jacques Rogge and Lord Coe are among those to have voiced their approval.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=S4k9X>

## London 2012 economic legacy worth £14bn



The opening ceremony – an unforgettable occasion that kicked off the ever best Olympics

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games have provided the UK economy with a trade and industry boost in excess of £14bn. The figure comes from the second annual update of the *Inspired by 2012: The legacy from the Olympic and Paralympic Games* published by the DCMS, the London Mayor and UK Trade and Investments.

Included in the £14.2bn are contract wins for UK businesses and additional sales and new foreign investment.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=H8V5Y>



# NEWS UPDATE

## HOK agrees deal to purchase design firm 360 Architecture

Prominent architectural design firm 360 Architecture is to be acquired by fellow practice HOK, with the US-based group looking to expand its footprint in the sports sector.

Founded in Kansas City (KC), US, 360 Architecture is known for its award-winning designs of stadiums, ballparks, arenas, recreation and wellness centres, plus mixed-use entertainment districts. The firm has also won competitions to design corporate facilities, commercial office spaces and government-led projects.

“As a global design leader, it’s important for HOK to offer clients design excellence in sports architecture,” said Patrick MacLeamy, FAIA, HOK chairman and CEO.

“360 Architecture has created several of the world’s most innovative sports



360 Architecture has produced designs for the Edmonton’s Rogers Place development

facilities and their design-focused culture and values align with ours. Together, we’ll design the next generation of sports facilities while serving all types of clients as one of KC’s largest design firms.”

360 has been at the helm of some progressive designs of late, having been awarded the design contract for two 30,000-seat stadiums in Iraq.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=h6E5S](http://lei.sr?a=h6E5S)

## ManU bucks stadium tech trends – bans iPads

Manchester United Football Club has moved to ban iPads from the club’s stadium, at a time when many sports clubs are embracing technology as a way of enhancing the matchday experience.

The move is presumed to be an attempt to stop fans from infringing on broadcast rights by recording the action, although it could prove a hindrance for fans arriving straight from work or who have brought their iPad as entertainment for a long train journey to the match.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=r6N2b](http://lei.sr?a=r6N2b)



Old Trafford, home of Manchester United FC



The committee called for a more creative approach to engage girls

## PE lessons in England ‘putting girls off sport’

Girls are being put off sport by PE lessons and must be offered more “imaginative” activities – such as dance and cycling – to make sport attractive to them.

The findings come from the *Women and Sport* report by the cross-party House of Commons culture, media and sport committee, lead by Conservative MP John Whittingdale. The committee expressed concern about the low participation rates in sport by women and girls and urged a more creative approach to engaging women in sport. *To read more about Women in Sport, turn to p. 44.*

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=n7A9B](http://lei.sr?a=n7A9B)

## UK’s largest dedicated Parkour facility expands



The site was extended due to its popularity

The UK’s largest dedicated Parkour training facility has quadrupled in size, after North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) commissioned facilities provider Freemove to carry out a £100,000 upgrade.

Working in partnership with NLC, Freemove started on the site in June and the urban sports specialists completed the project by mid-July, with the opening event taking place last week (18 July). Parkour is growing in popularity across the UK. *To read more about Parkour, turn to p. 52.*

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=T3A3j](http://lei.sr?a=T3A3j)

## London 2012 Paralympics 'transformed' attitudes

Nearly 70 per cent of Britons feel attitudes towards disabled people have improved since the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

The figure comes from the Department for Work and Pensions' DWP Paralympic data from the ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey – a national, cross-sectional survey.

The London 2012 Games have also had a direct effect on participation levels in disability sport. Government statistics show that there are now 315,000 more disabled people playing sport regularly than in 2005.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=Q8m8R](http://lei.sr?a=Q8m8R)



An artist's impression of the stadium

## Aberdeen stadium "will be ready for 2017"

Aberdeen Football Club's new stadium at Loirston Loch is set to be built in time for the 2017-18 season, according to club chair Stewart Milne. Speaking to *BBC Scotland*, Milne said work to reduce debt was progressing well, helped by good performances on the pitch which earned the team a run in this year's UEFA Europa League.

Milne has previously said he wants the club to be debt-free before it embarks on relocating to a new home. Plans originally put forward by the club to build a 21,000-seat stadium at Loirston Loch – close to a proposed community sports centre at Calder Park – came to nothing.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=N9N8D](http://lei.sr?a=N9N8D)



North Korea's Un Guk Kim won Olympic gold at the London 2012 Olympic Games

## North Korea invests in sport to increase health

North Korea is now turning to sport in to raise its image on the international stage by targeting international competitions such as the Olympic Games, while also "increasing labour output and national defence" by improving its citizens' wellbeing, according to a North Korean sports delegation.

Speaking at a sports science congress in Incheon, South Korea, Yang Song Ho – part of the delegation and assistant professor at Pyongyang's Korea University of Physical Education – said North Korea was working to make sport "an everyday concern for the masses."

The announcement was made in the buildup for the Incheon-based Asian Games, which begin on 19 September. The games – which will see 150 athletes make the trip south – mark a rare appearance for North Korea in South Korea, as the two countries are still technically at war after the Korean War ended in a truce, rather than a peace treaty.

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has placed an emphasis on sport since his rise to power in 2012, previously hosting NBA hall of famer Dennis Rodman for an exhibition match.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=U4J2V](http://lei.sr?a=U4J2V)

## Report: too few community sports facilities in the UK



The committee said it was concerned over the number and quality of sporting facilities

A cross-party committee of MPs has expressed its concern over the declining number of community sports facilities in the UK. The Culture, Media and Sport Committee said it was concerned that there are "too few facilities to enable people easily to participate in sport".

The committee recommended a government review into how local communities can better secure the futures of playing fields and facilities and prevent unnecessary closures.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=S8f7S](http://lei.sr?a=S8f7S)



# NEWS UPDATE

## Boston United's £100m mixed-use stadium plans gain initial approval

Non-league football team Boston United's £100m mixed-use project, which includes a new 5,000-seat community stadium, has gained initial approval from the local council. The scheme, which has already received £5m from the government's Growth Deal, will include an all-weather 3G pitch for community use, plus educational spaces and conference and banqueting facilities.

Facilities will also include a café, education and community spaces, meeting rooms for hire, an all-weather sports pitch and a sports hall.

The club submitted a planning application in May for the Quadrant development, which will also feature more than 500 new homes, as well as retail space and restaurants.



The community stadium will be the centre of a £100m mixed-use development

"The planning committee overwhelmingly supported the application, which I believe is not only significant for the future of our fantastic football club, but also for the town as a whole," said Boston United chair David Newton in a

statement. "This is major step forward, but we must not get carried away, as there are many things that need to fall into place before The Quadrant and the new community stadium become a reality."

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=b8k3B](http://lei.sr?a=b8k3B)

## Emma Boggis named Sport and Recreation Alliance CEO

Emma Boggis will take up the role of CEO for the Sport and Recreation Alliance (SRA), replacing interim CEO Sallie Barker.

Prior to her appointment, Boggis was non executive director for the British Paralympic Association and head of the government's Olympic and Paralympic Legacy Unit. Boggis has also held roles as private secretary to Prime Minister

David Cameron, deputy head of mission and deputy director of social policy and legislation for the Cabinet Office.

In her role as CEO, Boggis will take over all responsibilities for delivering and shaping the direction of the SRA, aiming to keep the organisation in the centre of the UK sports sector.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=S6h2c](http://lei.sr?a=S6h2c)



Boggis took over the role on 8 September



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## Sheffield to host 2017 National Summer Games

Special Olympics GB has confirmed its 2017 National Summer Games will be held in Sheffield from Monday 7 August to Friday 11 August 2017.

Held every four years, the Games is the largest disability sports event in the UK and features nearly 2,000 athletes with intellectual (learning) disabilities, competing across 12 sports. Venues for the Games will include the Sheffield Hallam University City Athletics Stadium; Sheffield City Trust's Ponds Forge International Sports Centre; Hillsborough Leisure Centre; Concord Sports Centre; Graves Tennis and Leisure Centre; the English Institute of Sport Sheffield and Forge Valley School.

[Read more:](http://lei.sr?a=e8P3C) <http://lei.sr?a=e8P3C>



The facility will be the first of its kind

## Dedicated para-sports facility planned for Scots

Scotland's first dedicated para-sports facility is to be built at the SportScotland National Sports Centre Inverclyde in Largs, Ayrshire.

The £9m development, the first of its kind anywhere in the UK, will ensure disabled athletes can train at world-class, fully integrated, multi-sports facilities. As part of the work, a total of 60 fully adapted, disability-friendly residential rooms will be created at the centre.

Funding will be provided in its entirety by the government and SportScotland. The centre is set to be completed in 2016.

[Read more:](http://lei.sr?a=K9Q3Z) <http://lei.sr?a=K9Q3Z>



A total of 1,250 schools across the country got involved in the action this summer

## ASDA challenge activates 60,000 youngsters

Approximately 7,500 trained sports leaders helped over 61,000 young people run, jump, skip and dance their way to activity participation this summer as part of a widespread schools initiative.

Starting back in April, 360 Asda Active Sports Days – powered by Sports Leaders UK – were set up throughout Britain, with a majority hosted in areas of deprivation identified by the government's Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

In partnership with Asda Community Life, ukactive and Spirit of 2012, Sports Leaders UK helped organise these free events for schools, most within a

10-minute drive of their local Asda stores, as 1,250 schools got involved.

The children tried out a wide variety of different sports, with a focus on participation over competition. Sessions ranged from more traditional sports day fun and games, to taster sessions in activities such as archery, Zumba, tennis and basketball. Events ranged in size from 25 to 1,000 participants, but all shared the common goal of introducing young people to the benefits of leading healthy lifestyles through greater physical activity and better food choices.

[Read more:](http://lei.sr?a=N3b9v) <http://lei.sr?a=N3b9v>

## Cockroft: disabled children “missing out on sport”



Hannah Cockroft (second from right) with children at a Youth Sport Trust event

Double Paralympic gold medalist Hannah Cockroft has called for more emphasis to be placed on providing disabled children with equal sporting opportunities at school.

Responding to the findings of a new survey from the Youth Sport Trust, Cockroft said that ensuring better quality PE is “desperately needed” for young disabled students in mainstream schools. 73 per cent of leaders working in disability school sport said disabled students in special schools experience higher quality PE.

[Read more:](http://lei.sr?a=e7r4r) <http://lei.sr?a=e7r4r>



# NEWS UPDATE

## New tool launched to demonstrate economic value of sport in England

Sport England has launched a new modelling tool, designed to help local authorities calculate the economic impact of sport on their communities.

The *Economic value of sport – local model* will provide each local authority, county sport partnership and local enterprise partnership area with estimates on sports' contribution to the local economy in the form of business output and jobs as well as health.

Developed by Cambridge Econometrics and SQW, the model will provide a “snapshot” of the overall value of sport in the local area, indicating the contribution made by businesses and services supporting people playing sport plus the wider interests in sport – such as sports broadcasting or spectating at



The model could help steer investment and ensure the right facilities are built in the right places

sporting events. It will also help assess the impact of change, showing the effect of increasing or reducing the number of people playing sport, for example if new facilities are built, facilities are closed or more marketing is done to attract those

not playing sport regularly. Guidance on how to best use the evidence – to help protect existing investment and make the case for new investment in sport – will also be included.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=s4m5j](http://lei.sr?a=s4m5j)

## Prince Harry given Rugby World Cup 2015 role

With only a year to go until England hosts the Rugby World Cup 2015, Prince Harry has been appointed honorary president of England Rugby 2015 – the organising committee delivering the tournament.

A keen rugby fan and vice patron of the Rugby Football Union, Prince Harry will play an important role in welcoming the 20 nations to Rugby World Cup 2015. The prince is involved in a number of sporting initiatives and was instrumental in launching the Invictus Games for injured

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=Q8R3K](http://lei.sr?a=Q8R3K)



Prince Harry is known to be a keen rugby fan



A Smash Up! session taking place

### “Brave” methods needed to attract inactive teens

Sports organisations need to be “brave and unconventional” if they are to reach young people who don’t take part in traditional physical education at school.

The claim was made by Badminton England, the sport’s national governing body, after its own initiative to attract inactive teens succeeded in getting tens of thousands of young people playing the sport. The organisation’s Smash Up! initiative has been aimed at those 13-16-year-olds who wouldn’t normally take part in sport. The branded sessions include music and playlists, no dress codes and no formal coaching.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=u9S6j](http://lei.sr?a=u9S6j)

## UEFA award for football-based mental health project



Certificate presentation with John Hollins (centre), former Chelsea FC legend

A pioneering project designed to help people with mental health problems in the UK has been recognised as a “shining example of how football can be used to improve lives” by the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA).

Coping Through Football uses sport as a means of improving physical health, increasing self-esteem and enhancing social skills of people with mental health problem – by offering football sessions in a safe and welcoming environment.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=f9z3h](http://lei.sr?a=f9z3h)

## Glasgow 2014 kit distributed to boost grassroots sport

More than £600,000 worth of sports equipment, used at the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, will be distributed across Scotland as part of legacy plans to help the country's grassroots sport.

More than £200,000 worth of equipment will be given to sport governing bodies, with another £200,000 going directly to clubs and facilities. Separately, £200,000 of weightlifting and powerlifting equipment will go to the sportscotland Institute of Sport to upgrade and replace existing items.

Stewart Harris, CEO of sportscotland, said: "Glasgow 2014 provided sportscotland a fantastic opportunity to accelerate our plans towards developing a world-class sporting system at all levels, which we have seized.



Kit distributed to grassroots will range from hockey sticks and balls to larger, technical equipment

"From balls and whistles, to the larger and more technical items of equipment which are available, all will have a positive impact on the communities which receive them. Sportscotland is committed to

providing more opportunities for people of all ages and abilities in communities across the country, and the Games equipment will play a part in this process."

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=A4q8B](http://lei.sr?a=A4q8B)

## Sony to launch new batch of tennis wearable tech

Tennis enthusiasts could soon get the chance to record metrics and data from recent performances to help improve their game, with Sony preparing to launch its attachable Smart Tennis Sensor next year.

The device is planned to retail at US\$200 (€152, £121) and will give players the chance to record data monitoring swing and serve by attaching it to their rackets, with the findings transferred to an app available on either Android or iOS smartphones.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=G4p5U](http://lei.sr?a=G4p5U)



Players will be able to collect and analyse data

## Revealed: why consumers stop using fitness apps



Wearables are only effective if the user is fully aware of what data the tracker will provide

New research, examining why as many as one in three people ditch fitness trackers shortly after buying them, has found that better education of the benefits is key to ensuring continued use.

The report, from research firm IDC Health Insights, showed that trackers will only be effective – and remain in use – if the user is fully aware of what data the tracker will provide and how this can be used to change behaviour and achieve health goals.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=Q4w3n](http://lei.sr?a=Q4w3n)



Bristol Rovers fan – known as Gas Heads – are being urged to get active

## Club in push to get football fans more active

English football club Bristol Rovers wants to help its fans emulate the fitness of its players, through an innovative community initiative which sees supporters swap half-time pies for weekly exercise.

The club's charity – the Bristol Rovers Community Trust – has launched a new Fans4Life project designed to improve the health and wellbeing of nearby residents, using an exercise and education programme. Although open to all, the course is specifically aimed at males who are not comfortable with traditional weight loss classes.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=r3M2G](http://lei.sr?a=r3M2G)



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Nielsen: Les Mills Global Consumer Fitness Survey (2013).

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## Nike creates the world's first full-size LED basketball court

Nike has unveiled the world's first LED basketball court in Shanghai, China, a facility that has been created for basketball star Kobe Bryant to help train young players in Shanghai as part of Nike's RISE campaign.

The court – dubbed the 'House of Mamba' – features all over LED flooring; bringing graphics, video and real-time player tracking to training. Using motion sensors to enable tracking and interactive visualisations, players will be trained and challenged using circuits set by Bryant and the innovative new technology.

'House of Mamba' can display almost anything, from bespoke virtual training programmes to classic court markings and customised court overlays. It can also respond instantly to mistakes made by



The full-size LED court will be able to produce almost any graphic or overlay on its surface

players and display personal performance statistics. Nike's RISE campaign has set out to get children in China heavily involved in basketball – held over several different stages, the aim is to help young

players improve their performance and skills, culminating with three young individuals competing in the Nike World Basketball Festival in Spain.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=W2N8E](http://lei.sr?a=W2N8E)

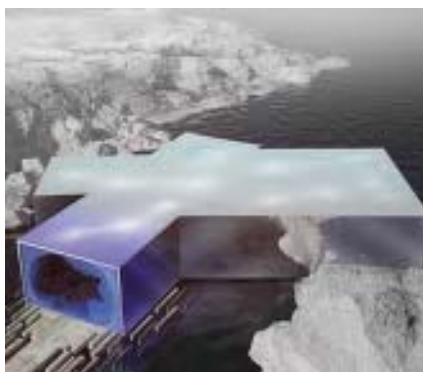
## Innovative concept for diving complex revealed

Bulgarian designer Kristian Terziev has designed a new diving centre-cum-public space to showcase diving to the world.

Called 'The Art of Diving,' the centre will be located in the Bulgarian coastal city of Tsarevo and is a space to reflect on the themes of water sports.

As a working diving centre close to the sea, the project allows divers to benefit from high end technology such as easily-accessible scuba suit areas and slimline changing facilities.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=v2x9A](http://lei.sr?a=v2x9A)



The centre will be located in coastal Bulgaria



Football fans will be able to relive Mario Götze's extra-time goal

## Pioneering 360 film to debut at FIFA's museum

The 2014 FIFA World Cup final has been filmed using a pioneering 360° Ultra HD camera – and the spectacular footage will debut in FIFA's recently approved World Football Museum, opening in 2016.

The entire game will be relayed for visitors in a 360 degree viewing experience with an Ultra HD OmniCam developed by scientists.

The equipment used a panoramic shooting technique meaning the game can be watched on the 360° or 180° screens of panoramic cinemas – creating an illusion that the viewer is sitting in the stadium watching the match in person.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=c4d7Q](http://lei.sr?a=c4d7Q)

## Coventry agrees deal to return to the Ricoh Arena




The club returned to the Ricoh after a year away

English Football League One club Coventry City has made a return to the Ricoh Arena, agreeing a two-year deal to return to the ground after playing a full season of home games at Sixfields in Northampton.

The Sky Blues had been forced to leave the Ricoh in 2013, following a long-running row over rent with stadium owners Arena Coventry (ACL). ACL was owed unpaid rent of more than £1m by the club dating back to early 2012 – an issue that has now been resolved following negotiations.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=S9m4k](http://lei.sr?a=S9m4k)



A close-up, low-angle shot of a Life Fitness machine, likely a cable machine. The focus is on a black, textured handle with a circular Life Fitness logo embossed on it. The handle is attached to a silver metal frame. In the background, red and silver components of the machine are visible, creating a sense of depth and industrial design.

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## High court challenge means Spurs could spend season away from home

Premier League football club Tottenham Hotspur may be forced to play a season away from home thanks to a legal wrangle over the club's new stadium development.

Plans for the £400m (US\$644m, E498m) 58,000-seat stadium, being built next to Tottenham's current home of White Hart Lane, have been challenged at the High Court by the owners of the Archway Sheet Metal Works company – located adjacent to the existing stadium – because of a compulsory purchase order of land being approved in July.

In a statement, the club said: "We have revised its construction programme in order to take the shortest possible time to construct. This now therefore involves the club moving away from the Lane during construction for a period of one season, to



The high court challenge, relating to a business property adjacent to the stadium, will cause delays

start at the beginning of a season in order to comply with Premier League rules."

The club went on to say it was "undertaking due diligence on alternative stadium options," with Milton Keynes

thought to be a likely temporary venue. Other options include rotating between Wembley, the Olympic Stadium and Stadium mk, depending on the fixture.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=c4P3N](http://lei.sr?a=c4P3N)

## Cycling in UK "more popular than ever"

Cycling in the UK is more popular than ever, with a 14 per cent increase in bike sales over the last five years causing the market to grow from £639m in 2008 to £754m in 2014, according to market research firm Mintel.

In the year that saw Yorkshire host the start of the Tour de France, participation has grown across the country with 35 per cent of adults describing themselves as cyclists and a further 31 per cent say they would consider cycling in the future.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=z9m3M](http://lei.sr?a=z9m3M)



45 per cent of Londoners are frequent cyclists

## Wearable tech to detect illegal bowling actions



The device would alert umpires of illegal actions

The International Cricket Council (ICC) is looking to continue research in partnership with an Australian developer to produce a reliable wearable sensor that can detect illegal bowling actions.

Working with developers in Australia, the ICC is hoping that its wearable device will be able to detect an illegal action during match situations.

International cricket has seen a number of cases where bowlers have been deemed to 'chuck' the ball

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=c9C8G](http://lei.sr?a=c9C8G)



Murray is one of the members behind plans for the mixed-use development

## Blow for Judy Murray's tennis and golf hub plans

A development group led by tennis coach Judy Murray, mother of star Andy Murray, has been dealt a blow after a prominent member of Stirling Council's planning office said that it could not support plans for the creation of the Park of Keir sporting hub in Scotland.

Led by Murray and the King Group, the project is also backed by her son Andy and former Ryder Cup captain Colin Montgomerie, as well as members of the sporting community, including the Lawn Tennis Association, the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) and Tennis Scotland.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=z2z5u](http://lei.sr?a=z2z5u)





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# MALCOLM MCPHAIL

The CEO of Life Leisure talks to Kate Cracknell  
about his successful actiLife programme and how  
it's spawned the new actiSport initiative



Malcolm McPhail set  
out the concept of  
actiLife in 2009

“What we’ve done at Stockport proves that tapping into the 87 per cent of people who are physically inactive can be commercially viable,” says Malcolm McPhail, CEO of Life Leisure – a not for profit social enterprise that runs 16 sports and leisure centres. The former British Counties Champion runner and PE teacher is referring to the transformation he and his Life Leisure team have overseen at Avondale Leisure Centre in Stockport.

Five years ago, the ageing centre had just 500 members and the site was losing £170,000 a year. McPhail, already frustrated by the public health commissioners’ failure to recognise the importance of getting people more active, was keen to try a completely new approach. Avondale was to become a test bed.

“The centre was earmarked for closure and it was the last throw of the dice,” says McPhail. “So we invested £250k and decided to do the complete opposite of what has been done in this industry.”

He and his team came up with the concept of a local ‘health hub’. The physical environment was changed: mirrors removed, partition walls brought in to offer privacy, bariatric chairs introduced and an AlterG anti-gravity treadmill acquired to help larger individuals exercise. The programming was overhauled, with new schedules introduced utilising the pool for water-based activities and classes such as Legs Bums Tums given prime-time slots.

“You could say Avondale is more of a self-help centre than a health club” McPhail explains. “We take inactive people and talk about discipline, because that’s what they need if they want to change their behaviour. We make them aware what they’re doing is an important change in their lives. For us to be successful, we need to educate – we can’t just tell people to go on a treadmill and run for three minutes,





we need to tell them why they need to run or walk and what the benefits are.”

### WINNING FORM

The results have been nothing short of remarkable. Membership at Avondale is now up to 1,500 and the centre is on-track to turn a profit next year. The rapid increase in the number of members has been largely down to the centre being able to attract people from the 87 per cent of the public who were previously physically inactive. As a result of its achievements, the concept has tapped into new funding streams and it's now held up as a best practice example within the borough and beyond.

At the heart of the Avondale experiment was a pilot scheme known as actiLife – essentially a ‘back to activity’ scheme that targeted local residents who were either overweight or felt too intimidated to use a gym. It was designed to start people off by getting them walking, with a specially-designed walking programme and team members dedicated to leading sessions.

McPhail explains: “Public health departments have confused the public by giving conflicting messages in the past, not to mention campaigns suggesting that all

Walking football (above) is among the activities offered under actiSport, a sports-specific programme following on from actiLife (below)



people need to do to get healthy is to walk. Walking isn't enough, but it is the first step on the journey to health and fitness.”

A total of 300 participants were recruited onto the ‘pre-membership’ scheme via a range of channels, including GP referrals and links with the local housing association and job centre. Running over a period of 12 months – actiLife was one of the interventions monitored in the year-long ukactive *Research Institute* study of 2012 – the results were impressive: 33 per cent of participants reported a decrease in weight and blood pressure, 75 per cent reported being more active, and 90 per cent said they would recommend the programme to a friend. Most important of all, they all felt more aware of their activity levels and more confident about taking responsibility for their own activity and weight in the future.

“You can't expect these people to come straight to the gym,” McPhail adds. “You need an industrial-sized concept or intervention that just gets them interested in physical activity more broadly.”

### TEMPLATE FOR SPORT

According to McPhail, the model is something that could be replicated by any ►





McPhail (above) introduced anti-gravity equipment (right) to help attract larger individuals to engage in exercise



- operator in the country, whether public or private sector. The model can also be made to work using sport.

Life Leisure itself is now looking to mirror the success of actiLife in a new pilot, actiSport, which takes the same walking-based approach but as a re-entry point into sport rather than gym-based activity. Supported with new funding from Sport England, it's currently also offered through Avondale, which has introduced sessions such as walking football as a way to bridge the gap between inactivity and full-blown sport for sedentary people.

"One of the things that came through the consultations we did with individuals through actiLife was that sport was at the heart of what they wanted to do," says McPhail. "Sport and recreation has lost a lot of ground to health and fitness, a lot of people who were playing five-a-side and badminton have come round to the thinking that there is greater benefits by using their energy in health and fitness. So the health and fitness market to a certain extent has gained at the expense of the sport and recreation market."

Going forward, the aim is for the full package – the actiLife and actiSport programmes, new software being developed to support them, and advice on the physical offering – to be made available to other Life Leisure sites, as well as to new contracts beyond Stockport. The decision is yet to be made if this will be offered on a franchise basis or as a commissionable package.

### PERSONAL JOURNEY

Besides the commercial rationale, McPhail also has a very personal reason for

## Sport and recreation has lost a lot of ground to health and fitness, so the fitness market has gained at the expense of sport. The actiSport programme will redress this balance

broadening the reach of his centres. He may now be a CEO who has successfully grown his business from a turnover of £3.5m when he joined in 2007 to £11.5m in 2013, but his childhood was a tough one.

"I came from a single parent family, I spent some time in care, my father was an alcoholic, I used to stand in free school meal queues being identified as poor and different from everyone else.

"When I questioned this, I was always told 'that's just the way it is', and I developed a hatred for that statement even as a child. Even today, it drives me to challenge tradition and conventionalism. For me, 'that's the way it is' isn't acceptable as an answer to anything. Fortunately for me, I was also a reasonable athlete: I was British Counties Champion and held numerous Scottish titles at

400m and the 400m hurdles. Sport gave me the discipline and focus to be able to make my life what I wanted it to be.

"So now I'm in a position where I can make a difference, although it sounds a cliché, that's what I want to do. I don't want to just provide sport and fitness only for the people who can afford it. I also want to give opportunities to people like myself.

"In any case, at some point everybody in the sector has to get sick and tired of fighting over the same people – the same 13 per cent. In a way I'm now glad the budget operators came along and forced us to rethink our model, because they can have the fit, healthy 16- to 25-year-olds. Their arrival has forced me into making steps to go after the other percentage of the population, the silent majority, and I'm over the moon about it." ●





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Fans inside the 58,170-capacity Mineirão stadium in Belo Horizonte - the venue for the infamous Brazil v. Germany (1-7) game

# FRONT ROW SEAT

**Charles Cooke, associate principal at sports architects Populous put down his tools and travelled to Brazil this summer to experience the World Cup from a fan's perspective. Now back in London he reflects on the tournament, the atmosphere and the management of the event and its facilities**

**M**y dad and I have been talking about going to a World Cup for a number of years. Brazil, with its reputation as the soul of football, was an opportunity too good to miss. We spent two years planning the trip. The itinerary was determined by the tickets we could secure in the FIFA ballot and via the Football Association (FA), where supporters have to earn the right to purchase tickets through support of the England team over time.

In the end, we were incredibly lucky to get tickets for five group matches, including two of England's fixtures and Brazil's Round of 16 game. Five of the matches were in Belo Horizonte and one in Sao Paulo. Sadly our trip did not include a visit to Arena das Dunas in Natal, which was designed by my colleagues at Populous. By the time we returned home, we'd flown 17,200 miles and met hundreds of international football fans and even more welcoming Brazilians.

## OPENING MATCH

Brazil shuts down when the "seleção" plays and fans pile into the bars. Arriving in Belo Horizonte, the pre-match build-up was well underway. The Brazilians like to make a din in the run-up to a Brazil game and use anything at their disposal – car horns, whistles, any type of airhorns that can be blown, fire crackers and fireworks. The streets had military police and army personnel on every corner,

with helicopters hovering overhead monitoring any small protests that took place at the beginning of the tournament. In short, the atmosphere was electric.

We squeezed into a local bar and, being the first of the overseas fans to arrive, our flag was soon out. By the time we headed home, most of the bar had been photographed by the St George cross.

## MATCHDAY

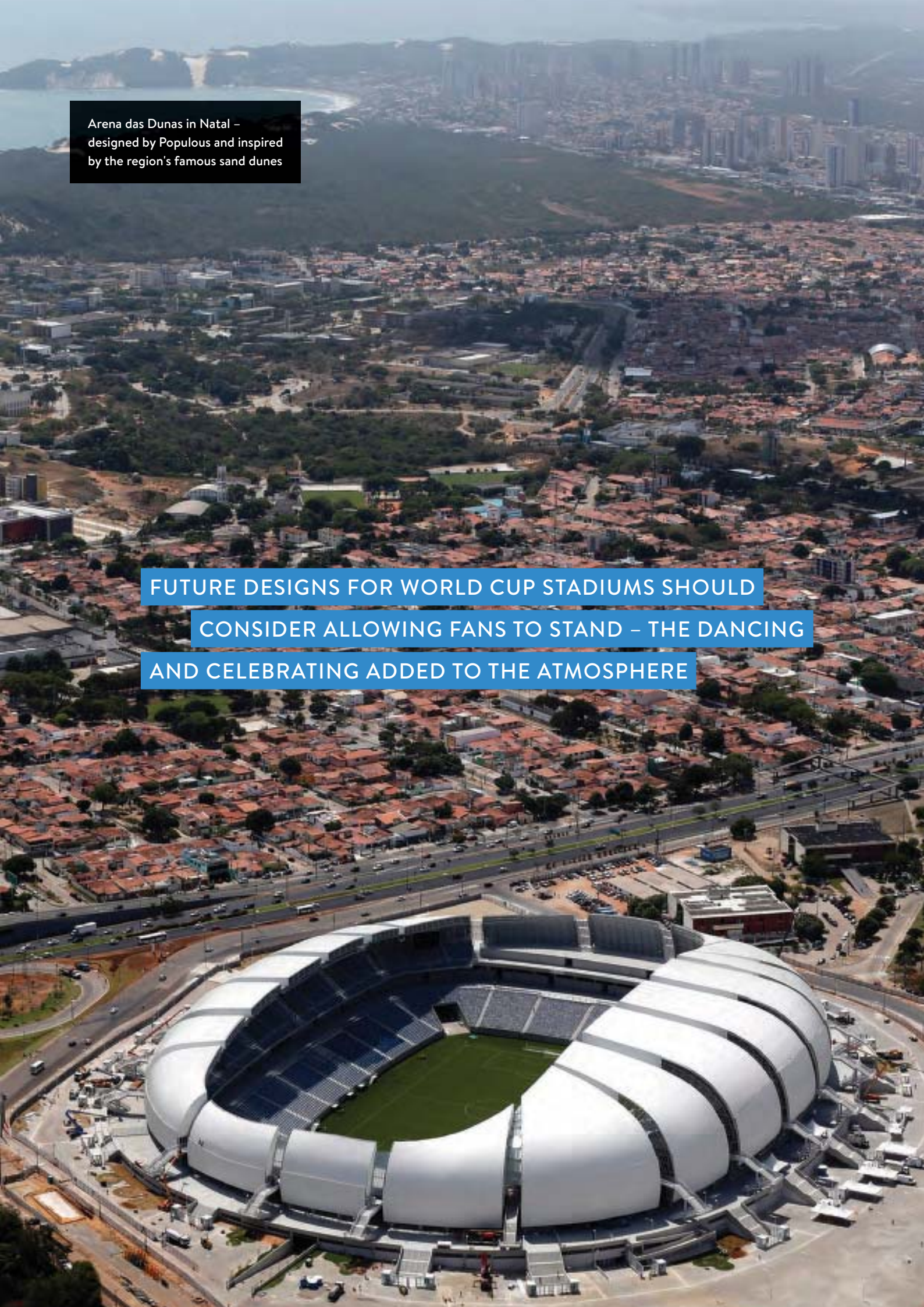
The new rapid bus transport route from the city to Pampulha – the district where the stadium is located – was only partly built by the time the first match kicked off. Special buses ran from the city centre to the stadium; not from the central bus station or a local landmark but from a seemingly random street – this is Brazil after all!

Some fans worked out the local bus services, plenty paid for a cab, other fans got accommodation close to the stadium (and complained there was no nightlife). In the end, 57,174 people managed to get to the matches by one means or another.



The carnival atmosphere outside the arena





Arena das Dunas in Natal –  
designed by Populous and inspired  
by the region's famous sand dunes

FUTURE DESIGNS FOR WORLD CUP STADIUMS SHOULD  
CONSIDER ALLOWING FANS TO STAND – THE DANCING  
AND CELEBRATING ADDED TO THE ATMOSPHERE



## MAJOR EVENTS

### ► FANS

Attending a World Cup match when you are not affiliated to either team is incredibly enjoyable. You have no need to worry about the result and you can party with both sets of supporters. We chose to tackle our first game, Columbia versus Greece, as England fans, with shirt, cap and flags.

It took 90 minutes to walk from the bus stop to the stadium due to the number of times we were stopped for photographs. We loved it! The interaction with other fans is something special that you will only experience at a football tournament. We had a similar experience at Belgium v Algeria. For the Argentina v Iran game we went 'undercover' as Brazilian supporters and backed Iran. The Iranians fed off the support they were getting due to the South American rivalry. Iran were unlucky to have been beaten by a Lionel Messi wonder goal.

### MINEIRAO, BELO HORIZONTE

The Mineirao stadium was built in 1965 and was refurbished for the World Cup by BCMF architects. The building is protected which prevented it from being demolished. The bones of the building are a simple and elegant concrete structure. To that a new, lightweight steel and fabric roof and a new podium structure were added to accommodate FIFA's programme requirements. The stadium's



The buildings surrounding the lake designed by Oscar Niemeyer

playing pitch was lowered and the surrounding running track was removed. The seating bowl is shallow and spread over two continuous tiers. You can see everyone in the stadium and the sightlines are good everywhere except around the lateral gangways which are frequented by ice cream and popcorn sellers. It works well for Mexican waves and roars with noise during moments of excitement.

The upper concourses are limited in size by the extent of the original façade - this made them tight and after the first match we avoided them at half time.

The Mineirao has a wonderful setting near a huge artificial lake that was commissioned in the 1940s by then Mayor Juscelino Kubitschek. The new neighbourhood was landscaped by Brazilian architect Robert Burle Marx with the surrounding buildings designed by another famed Brazilian - Oscar Niemeyer.

The stadium is home to two of Brazil's most successful football teams, Cruzeiro and Atletico Mineiro, so it will be well used after the World Cup. In Belo, the rivalry between the two sets of fans is intense. During quieter moments in the stadium, a Cruzeiro song would start up - followed by booing and a rival Atletico chant. It was like having four sets of fans inside the ground.

The Mineirao is the first stadium in the world to be fully powered by solar energy.

It also collects and uses vast quantities of rainwater and makes use of the nearby lake for cooling. Interestingly, the impressive eco-friendly solutions have been designed to be very subtle. There's no 'green bling' - in fact no visible evidence at all of any of the admirable measures in place.

Another astute step was to introduce strong, reusable plastic cups - rather than weak, single-use ones - branded with the match details. This reduced waste, as it encouraged fans to take the cups home. In fact people collected them, with many fans fishing discarded ones out of bins.

### PUBLIC ORDER

We saw very little disorder during our time in Brazil. The authorities had a big security presence outside the stadiums and were available to move into the stadium when required.

### About the author

Charles Cooke is an associate principal at sports architects Populous. Populous has 30 years' experience in sports stadia and arenas, and has designed stadia for three FIFA World Cups. It also designed the Fisht Olympic Stadium in Sochi - the venue for this year's Winter Olympics and a future host to FIFA World Cup matches in 2018.

Charles is a passionate football fan and as well as England, follows Portsmouth FC. He is currently working on football projects for Manchester City and Southend United and secretly planning his next sabbatical for Euro 2016 in France.



Charles (in cap on right holding the England flag) and his dad with other fans



The entrance to the Mineirão stadium – the familiar branding of the World Cup was omnipresent



## THE PLASTIC CUPS, BRANDED WITH THE MATCH DETAILS, BECAME COLLECTABLES THAT PEOPLE TOOK HOME RATHER THAN DISCARD

In Sao Paulo we had FA tickets for the Uruguay match, so we were sitting with all the other England fans. The tier above us was a temporary addition for the World Cup and some fans preferred to stand at the front of the lower tier rather than occupy their seats in the upper tier.

We noticed at several matches that fans often stood. This is something future organisers could consider in terms of stadium design. Being able to stand, dance and celebrate added to the atmosphere and carnival nature but should not be at the expense of fans who want to sit. It should be safe standing rather than the uncontrolled movement of fans that we witnessed in Sao Paulo.

### DREAM QUARTER FINAL

Had England managed to qualify for it, they would have met Brazil in the quarter

finals. Instead, Brazil played Columbia. Our travel arrangements were already in place and we hoped we might still be able to buy tickets. As it turned out, because Brazil were in the quarter final, interest in the match was huge and tickets – if you could find one – were trading for thousands of dollars. Instead we recreated England v Brazil on the beach, invited by the locals to take part in five-a-side in the 32C heat. Back heels and volley's being the only acceptable way of scoring a goal!

### THE FINAL

After a brief stop in Rio – just long enough to sample the magnificent views of Rio from Sugar Loaf Mountain and the bohemia of Lapa – we started our departure by setting ourselves up in Sao Paulo to watch the final. Sunday is also market day and there's a great antiques

market under the Museu de Arte de Sao Paulo building, which was designed by Lina Bo Bardi. Walking around the market felt just like a regular Sunday.

Sao Paulo is just such a big city it was impossible for every part of it to be affected by the World Cup and Avenue Paulista was full of flaneurs and cyclists as usual, who were benefitting from the freedom of the bank-sponsored traffic lane closure. Come Monday (the day after the final), the German team had been crowned World Champions and the incessant traffic was again roaring down Sao Paulo's inner city dual carriageways as life got back to normal.

So was it the best ever World Cup? Perhaps. What I'll remember most were the people we met – the fans and most of all the smiling and welcoming Brazilians who made it such a special experience. ●

# TURF WARS

Poor facilities and badly maintained pitches are being blamed for steep falls in the number of people playing football in England. What can be done to save the beautiful game?

When Sport England announced earlier this year that it was cutting grassroots funding for football, it did so with a blunt message to the sport's governing body, the Football Association (FA). Taking away £1.6m from the amateur game, Sport England CEO Jennie Price said the FA needed to "change its grassroots strategy" after failing to arrest a sharp decline in the number of people playing the sport. While football wasn't the only sport to have its grassroots funding cut by Sport England, the poor state of the country's most popular team sport ignited widespread debate over the state of the national sport.

## NOT PLAYING THE GAME

The cut, like each funding decision made by Sport England, was linked to participation levels. These make uncomfortable reading for the FA. Over the past six years, there has been a 9 per cent decrease in the number of adults (16-year-olds and over) playing football at least once a week – from 2.14 million in October 2007 to 1.83 million in October 2013. What makes these figures particularly worrying is that

during the same period the total number of people playing some form of sport at least once a week increased by 1.4 million – from 13.9 to 15.3 million.

The FA's general secretary Alex Horne responded to the funding cut by saying that falls in participation were to be blamed on the poor state of facilities –

## FOOTBALL FOUNDATION

The UK's largest sports charity was set up in 2000 by the FA, the Premier League and government. Since 2000 FF has awarded £500m worth of grants and has attracted a further £600m of partnership funding towards improving the grassroots.

made worse by cuts in local government budgets and inclement weather over the past two winters. "Grassroots football is played during winter on facilities almost exclusively owned and maintained by local authorities," Horne says.

"A combination of severe weather, increased pitch hire costs and reduced

maintenance spend has made this a very difficult time for clubs seeking to complete their fixtures and for individual players to value and enjoy regular football. This challenge – to ensure a much better provision of quality affordable grassroots facilities – is one we are determined to address."

Horne also pointed out that, although disappointing, the £1.6m reduction in Sport England funding represented a fraction of the funding the FA ploughs into grassroots. He said the cuts would not deter the FA's "extensive financial commitment" to the grassroots of the game of which the Sport England funding was "only one element".

"It's naturally disappointing to learn that Sport England is cutting its funding to football especially at a time when the challenges faced by the grassroots of our game are so acute," Horne said. "We continue to maintain investments of £1m-a-week into grassroots football. We believe this continued commitment – which in the last year has seen growth of 1,300 new youth teams formed and playing football – will enable us to transition more young players into adult football over the next four years."





Since its launch in 2000, the Football Foundation has channelled £1.1bn into improving grassroots facilities



## More than a third of the people who no longer play 11-a-side football say they would return to the game if facilities and pitches were better

### RECURRING ISSUES

The decline in grassroots participation is not a new problem and the FA has been proactive in its attempts to buck the trend. When the number of people playing regularly fell between 2007 and 2011, the FA responded by launching the Just Play initiative – which was designed to attract people of all abilities and especially those who haven't played in a while. The idea was to organise informal sessions without the need to commit to playing for a club or organisation.

The move made sense, as studies looking at the reasons for people abandoning football had identified busy lifestyles and less leisure time (including working at weekends), a decline in the number of club volunteers and a loss of referees as major factors. Put simply, people have less time to play football and even those who find time, might struggle to find a club to accommodate them. Just Play was designed to arrest the decline

by encouraging football centres and clubs to introduce a new, informal kick-about format for people. The scheme also offered an online database for people to find a centre offering the sessions closest to them. The target was to get 150,000 more people playing football for at least 30 minutes a week by 2013.

By December 2013 the scheme had enlisted 200 football facilities to take part and had secured a sponsorship deal with confectionery giant Mars. While the figures show it attracted players back to the game, it failed, however, to halt the overall decline. Sport England figures reveal that rather than gaining a further 150,000 grassroots players between 2011 and 2013, football as a sport lost a further 177,300 players.

### FACILITIES STRATEGY

While initiatives such as Just Play might convince people to give football another chance, the opportunity to keep them

playing is lost if they find the facilities lacking – and this is where the sport faces its largest battle. Having adequate facilities should be the minimum standard for any sport, yet it seems that football has a particular problem with being able to provide them.

In a recent survey by *Sky Sports*, more than a third (37 per cent) of respondents who no longer played 11-a-side football said better pitches and facilities would entice them back. Perhaps more tellingly, when asked what the single biggest problem facing the future of the grassroots game was, nearly half (44 per cent) cited the poor state of facilities/pitches.

The FA is acutely aware of the problem and has poured a significant amount of resources into tackling the problem. In its most recent facilities strategy, covering the years 2013 to 2016, the FA announced an ambitious target of redeveloping 3,000 natural pitches across England, building 100 artificial pitches and developing





Paul Thorogood, CEO of the Football Foundation

**"If we install a 3G pitch and supplement it with floodlights, we can guarantee we'll get 85 of usage hours a week"**

► 150 all-weather surfaces. Central to the delivery of the strategy will be the UK's largest sport charity, the Football Foundation, which was set up in 2000 by the FA, the Premier League and the government.

Funded jointly by the three partners, the foundation has over the past 14 years allocated and overseen more than £1bn worth of investment in 12,000 facilities across England. Thanks to the foundation's strategic performance indicators (SPIs) the impact of the investment can be accurately assessed. The SPIs show that on average, participation has increased by 9 per cent at facilities which have received Football Foundation funding. The message is clear: having better facilities does attract people to the game.

"It's no secret that grassroots facilities in this country are in a pretty woeful

state," says Paul Thorogood, CEO of the Football Foundation. "The financial crisis, which put pressure on local authority budgets, has made things worse over the past four years. Running leisure facilities and football pitches is costly and we've seen that some councils aren't caring for – or even mowing – their grass pitches anymore, rather they're relying on club volunteers to do it. It is our job, with our partners, to help ease those pressures by providing better facilities."

### SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS

The foundation is tasked with directing £30m into grassroots sport each year under the Premier League and the FA Facilities Fund. It uses the money to leverage even more partnership funding, which then goes towards building new and redeveloping existing facilities. The focus



is on providing facilities that will boost participation and rejuvenate communities, especially in underprivileged areas.

"We unashamedly focus at least 40 per cent of our investment in the most deprived areas in the country," Thorogood says. "We've already built a reputation of being able to identify where the greatest need is to drive participation levels and where to provide improved facilities that also improve communities."

He adds that for a project or facility to qualify for funding, it has to show clear and concrete plans on how the grant would be used to get more people playing the sport. "There's little point investing and creating a facility if there's no demand for it. We keep tabs all the way through the year on every single facility we've invested in for 25 years to make sure they're actually doing what they're supposed to be doing."

While the foundation provides the initial grant, its strategy is also to ensure the facilities it invests in become self-sustainable in the future. For Thorogood, this is particularly important in the current economic climate.

"It's one thing providing the capital funding, but these days the cost of

### THE MONEY GAME

The plight of grassroots football in England is in stark contrast with the success of the English Premier League (EPL). While the amateur game struggles, the EPL has strengthened its hold as the world's richest and most powerful football competition in history.

In the summer transfer window of 2014, the 20 EPL clubs spent a total of £840m on recruiting and making millionaires of some of the world's

most exciting talent. Sport England's £1.6m cut on grassroots funding is the equivalent of five-and-a-half weeks' work for England and Manchester United captain Wayne Rooney (who earns a reported £300,000 a week).

This hasn't gone unnoticed and a campaign, Save Grassroots Football (SGF) has called for the EPL to re-invest more into the amateur game. SGF is calling for 7 per cent of EPL broadcast revenues to be directed into grassroots. Details: [www.savegrassroots.co.uk](http://www.savegrassroots.co.uk)





running and maintaining the facilities is often not being picked up by the local authorities,” Thorogood says. “When we back a project, we need to make sure the facility not only meets the need of the local community, but that there’s a business plan that includes ideas on driving revenue.”

Crucial for revenue generating activities is that the facility is open to business as often and as long as possible. This increasingly means investing in artificial turf and floodlighting. For Thorogood, artificial surfaces are a must at grassroots level.

“We’re moving towards investing in 3G artificial pitches,” he says. “The reason we have a heavy focus on 3G pitches is because, even the most perfectly manicured and maintained grass pitch will only give you four to five hours of usage a week before it begins to deteriorate. And as we know, hardly any of community grass pitches are perfectly maintained.

“If we install a 3G pitch and supplement it with floodlights, we can pretty much guarantee the club or operator gets 85 hours of usage a week out of it – no matter what the weather.”

#### WHO'S RESPONSIBLE

For Thorogood the future of grassroots boils down to one question – who’s responsible for providing sport as part of the health of the nation?

“Football is by far the largest sport in this country and still dominates in terms of interest and participation,” he says. “But if you go to the continent – to France, Germany or Belgium – you’ll find that it’s mandatory in those countries for local authorities to provide the kind of facilities that are supplied by us (The Football Foundation). So not only do councils have to provide them through the local taxes, but they have to maintain them.

“Driving through France or Belgium, you’ll see that every single village has a perfectly manicured grass pitch or a 3G pitch, accompanied by a stand or a clubhouse because the local authority is mandated under the federal government to provide that to the community.

“Unfortunately in the UK that’s not the case. If a local authority’s budget is cut it is often leisure and sport that suffer first. And until that changes, all we can do really is make sure that whatever money comes our way, it is used as effectively possible.” ●

# MARK HARROD

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The Sport Without Fear session at the conference, moderated by Lydia la Rivière Zijdel (centre), tackled the issue of sport as a human right

# LEADING THE CHANGE

The sixth IWG World Conference on Women and Sport was held in Helsinki this summer. Tom Walker reports on the highlights

A record number of delegates travelled to Helsinki, Finland for the sixth International Working Group on Women and Sport (IWG) World Conference on Women and Sport in June 2014. Nearly 900 sports administrators, researchers, government ministers and other sports leaders from 100 countries attended the event, held under the banner of “Lead the Change - Be the Change”.

The four-day conference offered more than 50 sessions, presentations, seminars and workshops – each exploring the topic of gender equality in sport through theory, policy and practice. Held every four years, the 2014 conference programme was put together under five ‘sub-themes’: increasing girls’ participation in sport; leading the change in sport policy; enhancing female leadership and coaching; women’s physical activity and wellbeing; and promoting sport as a safe haven and bastion of human rights.

## PROGRESS REPORT

A further theme of the conference was to encourage decisive measures and firm commitments from delegates to increase gender equality in sport. One of these was the amendments made to the original Brighton Declaration on Women and Sport,

## IWG

Launched in 1994 IWG has served as a platform to give a voice for women and girls across the globe. Through an active network of decision-makers, politicians, researchers, educators and students, coaches, athletes and volunteers, the voices of women and girls have been shared at parliaments, conferences and seminars. Since its launch and first World Conference in Brighton in 1994, more than 400 organizations have signed the Brighton Declaration, which aims to engage organizations to commit towards a more equal sporting world.

adopted at the first IWG Conference in 1994. Despite its standing within the international sport movement – a total of 419 organisations have signed the declaration – it was felt that significant developments in the international policy landscape during the last 20 years demanded an “update” to the document.

The document will now be known as the Brighton Plus Helsinki Declaration and is designed to take into account and benefit from all national and international charters,

laws and regulations introduced since 1994. The new declaration was supported by a comprehensive progress report – entitled From Brighton to Helsinki – intended as a source of inspiration for policy and decision-makers who are working to advance the status of (and opportunities for) girls and women in sport.

Raija Mattila, co-chair of this year’s conference, said: “The conference allowed us to explore the latest knowledge regarding gender equality in sport and to review the impact of the 20-year-old Brighton Declaration. I’d encourage everyone to use the results of the progress report, which also provides examples of initiatives that have been undertaken by Brighton Declaration signatories to further empower women.”

## A SOCIAL OCCASION

As well as the 900 delegates, the sessions were streamed live on the internet, attracting thousands of viewers around the world. Social media played a major role at the conference too, with the twitter hashtag #IWGHelsinki being used throughout the four days – and managing to trend globally during the opening ceremony. For those wanting to view keynote sessions, the archive can be accessed through IWG’s youtube





Delegates from the 2018 conference host country Botswana took over the stage on the final day

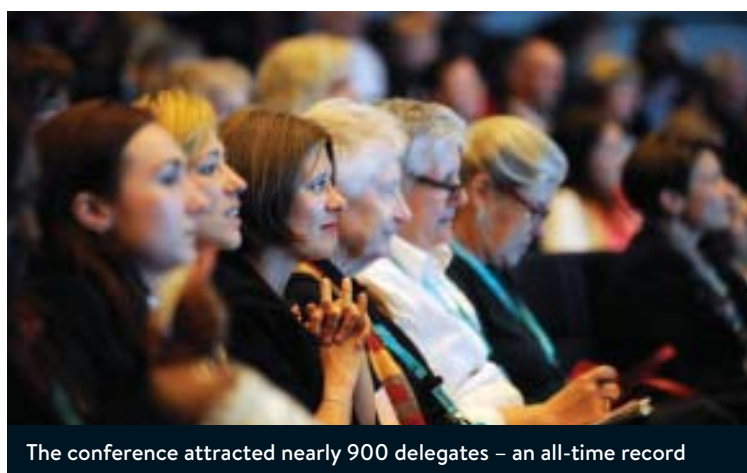
channel ([youtube.com/user/IWGWomenSportNetwork](https://www.youtube.com/user/IWGWomenSportNetwork)).

Johanna Adriaanse, IWC co-chair, said the event was a success not only in terms of the number, but also the quality of high profile delegates it attracted. For the first time ever, the presidents of both the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee – Thomas Bach and Sir Philip Craven – were present in person, while FIFA president Sepp Blatter made an appearance via a video feed.

“The number of people attending the conference was the highest we’ve ever had,” Adriaanse comments. “We were also very happy with the partnerships that we established and the vibe of the conference was great. There was a real inspirational atmosphere throughout the week. What we wanted to provide was an uplifting experience for the delegates and I think we were successful in doing that.”

### CONTINUED WORK

The next IWG World Conference is to be held in Botswana in 2018. Marking the



The conference attracted nearly 900 delegates – an all-time record

### IWG Conferences

- 1994: Brighton, UK
- 1998: Windhoek, Namibia
- 2002: Montreal, Canada
- 2006: Kumamoto, Japan
- 2010: Sydney, Australia
- 2014: Helsinki, Finland
- 2018: Gaborone, Botswana

second time that the event will be held in Africa and is a sign of how the international movement for women in sport is continuing to grow. According to Adriaanse, IWG has a crucial role in the process of bringing

equality to sport.

“Globally, women’s sport can be a very important tool for developing nations. It can empower women not only in physical activity and sport but it can be also used as a vehicle for other sectors in life,” she says. “IWG aims to activate women and empower them to get involved at every level of sport – from taking part at grassroots level to encouraging more women leaders of sport.”

She adds that great progress has been made in recent years – and mentions the London 2012 Olympics as a major step in the right direction. The London Games were the most gender-equal in history, with every single participating nation having female competitors for the very first time. Furthermore, 40 per cent of all athletes were women – a record for the Games.

For Raija Mattila the progress is encouraging, but still remains as progress. “A significant amount of valuable work has been done,” she says. “But more work is required before we can say that we have created a sporting world that treats women and men, girls and boys as equals.” ●

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES?

**Around 80 per cent of the UK's women do not meet the government's targets for physical activity, while only 7 per cent of all sports media coverage is devoted to women's sport. Something needs to change**

TOM WALKER, MANAGING EDITOR, SPORTS MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE



Dr. Johanna Adriaanse, senior lecturer in Sport Management at the University of Technology, Sydney in Australia



Anita White, founder of the Anita White Foundation at University of Chichester

**T**here remain stark differences between men's sport and women's sport. At the elite level, women's sport gains much less sponsorship and media coverage, while prize money is also lower. At the grassroots level, participation by women is significantly lower than by men.

Gender inequality can also be found within the corridors of power – a look at the many international sports federations reveals that, on average, only 15 per cent of board members are women. The International Olympic Committee, the torch bearer for all sport, has an executive board of 15 members – only four of them are women. Even worse is FIFA, the governing body for the world's most popular team sport, football. It has an executive committee of 24 people, but only one female (Burundi's Lydia Nsekera).

"While some barriers for women's participation and leadership in sport vary from country to country – such as those relating to a lack of facilities, for example – there are also barriers that are global and can be found in most nations," says Johanna Adriaanse, senior lecturer at the University of Technology Sydney, Australia and a leading academic on women in sport and gender equality. "One of these universal barriers is gender stereotyping – the perception that sport is only for men. This stems from history. Not so long ago, sport was pretty much entirely played by men, organised by men and watched by men. The influence of this can still be seen

in the attitudes towards women's sport. To change these cultural and traditional patterns takes a lot of time and effort – you won't be able to change those overnight."

## GRASSROOTS

The stereotype that sport is a masculine activity can lead to women's sport being treated as an afterthought. This attitude can have a devastating effect on participation, particularly among young girls, if their initial experiences of sport are negative. There is evidence to show that young girls are being put off sport due to a poor standard of school sport. According to the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation's (WSFF) *Changing the Game for Girls* report, 51 per cent of girls in the UK have been deterred from physical activity by their experiences of school sport and physical education.

For Adriaanse, getting sport right at grassroots is crucial. "In more developed nations, a key way to encourage participation is providing good physical education at schools – that is where you lay the foundations for sport to become part of people's lives," she says. "This is particularly important with young girls, as they are less likely to take part and get involved in unstructured sports outside school – such as skateboarding or games of football in the park among friends."

It is not just the overall standard of PE that is letting down girls – it's the lack of choice offered to girls. WSFF's figures show that 46 per cent of inactive girls said



## Girl Power

Sport England's research shows that the main things motivating women to play sport are:

- the opportunity to take part with friends
- a non-competitive atmosphere
- girls-only sessions
- the support of family
- links between sport-provider and trusted partners such as faith groups
- availability of childcare
- flexible timing
- safe and comfortable environments

they gave up on sport due to not liking the activities they got to do during PE lessons at school. Those girls who have been let down by school sport grow into young adults who see little value in taking part.

According to Dr. Anita White, founder of the Anita White Foundation and a pioneer in the international women and sport movement, the lack of choice is a crucial issue – especially when it comes to sport and leisure centres.

"There needs to be better understanding and awareness of women as consumers," White says. "It has to be about what girls want. It comes down to good service practice – facility operators and clubs need to look after their consumers, their market, and say: 'why aren't we attracting women?'."

For White, facilities and those who manage them are in a key position to ensure that women are offered activities that fit in with their lifestyles – just as men are. "When it comes to facilities, you need to take women into account in the design, development and management of the spaces," White says. "With the modern sports centres we have in the UK, I see the management being the key issue. Are there, for example, enough people who are willing, knowledgeable and able to deliver sports for women and girls?"

"I'd urge leisure managers and sports centre staff to evaluate their offering through a gender lense. What facilities do they have? Who is using them? Who is managing them? Are they reaching all the women they could reach? Are



PIC: @WWW.SHUTTERSTOCK/DOTSHOCK

Girls who have positive experiences of sport go on to do sports throughout their lives

they reaching all of their potential markets – and if not, why not? How are they presenting themselves? What programmes do they have?"

## GLOBAL ISSUES

There are many countries in which women face an even higher number of barriers to taking part in sport and physical activities. Cultural norms, traditions, beliefs and social practices which class women as somehow inferior or weaker to men contribute towards putting up obstacles for millions of women across Africa, Asia, south America and the Middle East. Although an increasing number of moderate and developed countries are emerging from these regions, investment in facilities often lags behind demand.

"Lack of facilities is a huge barrier in Israel," says Michal Cafrey, chair of Athena – Israel's National Council for the Advancement of Women in Sport. "We simply don't have enough."

To solve the problem, in 2010 the Israeli government launched the Sports Facilities Programme 2020 – a funding initiative that looks to spend NIS5.5bn (US\$1.5bn, €1.2bn, £900m) over a decade on building hundreds of sports facilities, principally for young people. Cafrey says what's encouraging is that the emphasis will be on creating spaces that will considerably extend the hours available to play sport.

"Programme 2020 will involve installing artificial playing surfaces and also add floodlights to pitches – which means that all the new facilities will be available later ▶

► into the night,” she says. “This will be of great help to women and girls, as one of the main obstacles is the huge gap in the hours that are allocated to men and women – most premium time slots are preserved for men’s sport.”

Like White, Cafery is keen to make sure the new facilities – once open – will better take into account the needs of women. “The time-sharing issue is where the education of the facility operators and owners comes in,” she adds. “We need to make sure facility operators are aware of the need to cater for women as well as for men.”

One thing is certain – the inactivity of women and girls, especially those in poorer communities, is not a result of lack of interest in sport. According to WSFF’s Changing the Game for Girls report, there is a greater demand for sport from women than men, with 12 million women in the UK wanting to play more sport – half of whom are currently inactive. These figures are mirrored in similar studies around the world. Women want to do more – but feel they are unable to.

“I think it’s a case of making sure everybody who’s involved in sport is aware and mindful of the need to push the women in sport message,” says White. “Whether it is a PE teacher working in a school, making sure there are enough

### The success of rugby

While female participation in rugby has traditionally been low among women, a comparatively large proportion of women attend rugby games. The Rugby Football Union (RFU) tapped into this by developing a women’s strategy that looked to translate female rugby fans into rugby players. The scheme modified forms of the game and RFU figures show that since 2004, female participation has increased by 90 per cent.

choice to offer every girl something they want to do; or if it’s a member of an international federation of sport, making sure that the competition structure is right so there’s development of the game and more women are participating in the sport in more countries – also that the prize money and awards are equalised.”

### LEADERSHIP

For many, the key to changing the way women’s sport is organised, played and viewed is to enable more women leaders. For Adriaanse, having female representation is crucial to ensure the needs and requirements of women are taken into account. “The barriers to participation are directly linked to the leadership issue,” she says.

“There need to be women among the people who provide the programmes, develop policy guidelines and allocate resources. It’s the only way to ensure the programmes which are developed actually meet the needs of the girls and women.”

There is clear room for improvement. In England, WSFF’s latest *Trophy Women* report – an annual look at the number of women leaders within English sport – shows there’s been an increase in female representation across NGB boards and senior management teams. In its conclusions, however, the report states



Rugby union has been hailed as an example of best practice when it comes to increasing the number of women playing the game – and the recent World Cup win by the women’s rugby team will provide a further boost

PICTURE: SHUTTERSTOCK/MAK HERED



## Anita White Foundation (AWF)

Launched in 2011 and based at the University of Chichester, the AWF is a central point of reference for scholars and activists involved with women and sport. It offers research opportunities for sports scholars as well as a development fund for future women leaders from countries that face particular challenges.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=S1Y0m>

Email: [jordan.matthews@chi.ac.uk](mailto:jordan.matthews@chi.ac.uk)



The attendees at the AWF's Women's Sport Leadership Academy 2014

What we need is a comprehensive approach where you try and permeate all the different aspects of sport in order to try to move towards equality

that the increase in the overall percentage of women on NGB boards, from 23 per cent to 27 per cent, is not significant enough to “create balance or to have a genuine and sustainable impact”. The report also reveals that the overall average hides the fact that 49 per cent of NGBs fail Sport England’s minimum target of having 25 per cent of board members female. Worryingly, three NGBs – British Cycling, Wheelchair Rugby and British Wrestling – have no female board members.

Ruth Holdaway, CEO of WSFF, states that while Sport England’s target to have 25 per cent female representation on each board by 2017 is a step in the right direction, at least 30 per cent female representation is needed in order to lead a genuine, sustained change. “Reaching a

30 per cent diversity threshold by 2017 is entirely possible,” Holdaway says.

“There is a wide and varied pool of talented women open to and actively seeking leadership roles in sport. It simply requires committed leadership which places a priority on achieving gender diversity at all levels of the organisation.”

For Anita White, targets are good as long as they are met – which often is not the case. She would introduce measures to make sure recommended targets aren’t just that – recommendations and not action.

“There have been targets for ages for British NGBs in terms of gender representation – but the targets have consistently not been met,” she says. “The thing is, if you are trying to bring about social change, you need to have incentives

and you also need sanctions as a balance.

“The funding of NGBs is now linked to participation, but I’d like to see funding agencies building in the gender factor too. I believe funding of NGBs should be tied to gender targets both in management and in participation.”

## CULTURAL CHANGE

For White, there isn’t one easy way to empower women in sport, it’s a very complex situation – a view mirrored by many. For the gap to be narrowed between women’s and men’s sport at all levels – media coverage, prize money, grassroots participation – there need to be changes at a societal level. More emphasis should be placed on offering young girls choice and making sure there is a female voice at all levels of decision making.

“It’s not the case that there is one single barrier and by removing it everything will follow. There is no quick fix,” she says. “What we need is a comprehensive approach where we work to permeate all the different aspects of sport in order to move towards equality.”

“There’s a need for us to work on all levels and on all aspects of sport in order to try to change things. Sport is part of society and you have to address issues of culture and structure in order to make change. The first thing to work on is the awareness and recognition of inequalities that currently exist. A lot of people don’t ask those questions, they just take sport for granted without really looking at it and asking ‘is this as good for women and girls as it is for men and boys?’” ●



Annie Simpson of Team Matrix Fitness. Events such as the UK Cycling Tour are increasing media coverage of women’s sport

PIC: ©WWW.SHUTTERSTOCK/HILCOCLZ

# DATA

## THE NEW NATURAL RESOURCE

**The sports organisations and companies that are able to utilise the huge amount of data available to them are the most likely to prosper in an increasingly competitive sector.**



**C**ustomers are increasingly relying on instant communication to make buying decisions and provide feedback on their experiences and logging this activity creates masses of raw data about customer behaviour.

However, many businesses and organisations are unsure about the role the analysis of this 'big data' can play in decision-making. Many are also unclear about how to create a strategy around it and also how to establish a return on investment (ROI) when it comes to investment in the necessary analytics systems to grapple with big data.

The sports industry may seem like a unique sector, with a different set of challenges from other industries, however, in many regards, it's much the same, with many of the same pressures and opportunities which face any other industry. And because it's experience-based, big data and analytics can play a unique and increasingly crucial role in its success.

Traditionally, analytics in sports has been reserved for on the field activities – complex statistical analysis of player and team performance, scouting reports and predictive analytics to try and optimise

the outcome of a game or match. More recently, however, managers in sporting organizations are turning to analytics to understand more about the front office activities of a sports organisation.

### MAKING THE CONNECTION

Most sporting teams suffer from an inability to connect disparate data from across their business operations. Point of sale ticketing systems, concessions, retail and merchandise, dynamic pricing systems

and CRM systems all collect and store data in separate databases. None of that data can be connected or compared. The result? Countless hours trying to stitch the business together using spreadsheets. The consequence? The organisation is left in an entirely reactive state, incapable of engaging in the strategic activities necessary to remain competitive.

Our experience working with sporting teams and venues has shown that the equivalent time in hours to two to three full-time employees is spent annually by organisations manually creating reports to try and analyse their businesses. But as expenditure on player salaries continues to outpace the growth of revenue in business operations, teams are turning to analytics to extract the meaningful insights into their business and data about their fans to drive increased attendance and revenue.

### ANALYSING THE ANALYTICS

By leveraging big data and analytics, sporting organisations are able to:

- Get real-time views of the 'front office'
- See the patterns and relationships that exist between disparate data sources (for example which items in concessions are

### Big Data

A misunderstood term indeed. But the reality is that we live in the data age, and the "data explosion" is still evolving at a pace that is difficult to measure and understand. The future holds more of this for organizations, who will need to increase awareness and expenditure in IT to remain competitive in the marketplace. At the pace that technology and analytics is evolving, failing to remain "current" can leave an organization in last place quickly.





By using data and analytics, operators are able to get real-time views of the front office and see patterns in fan behaviour and consumption

most popular with season pass holders versus general admission buyers?)

- Understand which fans visit most often, and least often
- Quantify which supporters are most valuable from an economic standpoint (their lifetime value)
- Predict which fans are likely to churn
- Understand the relationship between the on-field performance of a player or team and business performance (for example: in baseball, understanding what impact batting average of a particular player has on merchandise sales of that player's shirts in the gift shop)
- Analyse, forecast and predict attendance and revenue based on external factors such as weather data
- Understand what fans are saying about the team and their experience in social media and on the internet in real-time
- Optimise payroll and staffing
- Leverage analytics to optimise energy usage and consumption in a stadium

A key balance is needed with regard to managing what data can be collected, and the impact that can have on real and perceived concerns around privacy. For example, today there are organisations



Work which used to require a team of IT professionals to deliver can now be done by a business manager in the front office, with dashboards and real-time reporting

which can pinpoint the location of your wi-fi-enabled smart phone in real-time to within 3ft. With this technology, it's possible to calculate how long individuals are spending in certain parts of the facility, what the capture rate is for particular locations that are being promoted, and where first-time customers choose to go, versus loyal, repeat buyers.

This raises serious questions around how big data analytics can be used, while also maintaining an individual's right to privacy.

Fortunately, our experience reveals that the majority of organizations are using this technology in a responsible manner, purely with the aim of enhancing the customer experience. Extending this through opt-in apps on mobile devices enables organisations to personalise offers based on contextually aware content, as well as location-aware content. Our experience is this sort of technology is being adopted at a slower and more cautious pace in Europe than in the United States, for example.





Data and analytics will play an increasing role in the future, as operators will look to better understand fan behaviour to optimise revenue

## ► THE FUTURE

There's a trend of IT moving from the server room to the boardroom and we're seeing a fusion of business and IT in the modern sports team. Managers and executives are becoming more technical and IT leaders are becoming far more business savvy and aware of commercial pressures.

As businesses become inquisitive about data and look to increase income by leveraging analytics, the software industry has responded by making modern analytics software easier to use and more approachable for non-technical staff.

Work which used to require a team of IT professionals to deliver can now be done by

### The Cloud

Cloud computing has hit the mainstream and is revolutionising the way organisations consume IT.

Users are adjusting to using software on a SaaS basis (Software as a Service), whereby a monthly rental is paid and the software hosted remotely.

The next major change will come with the advent of the Internet of Things, when electrical devices go online with their own IP address, so they can be controlled remotely.

the average business manager in the front office of a sports organisation. Dashboards, real-time reporting and ad-hoc analysis of the business are all options now available to the modern sports organisation that didn't exist even a decade ago.

As business becomes more technical, IT specialists are evolving to understand more of what businesses need to be proactive.

The modern IT professional in a sporting organisation is far more than someone providing hardware and desktop software support. They have to be effective at working with senior leaders and translating their needs into actionable outcomes which leverage the latest in IT. ●



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# PARKOUR

**Parkour, or freerunning, is taking urban areas by storm all over Europe. As the first purpose-built centre opens in east London, we take a look at how Parkour can thrive as a sport**

UGENE MINOGUE, CEO, PARKOUR UK



Parkour was developed in the urban landscapes of Paris and has since spread across the world

**P**arkour, freerunning and Art Du Déplacement. Three terms that all mean the same thing – the non-competitive physical discipline of training to move freely over and through any terrain using only the abilities of the body, through running, jumping and climbing.

In practice it focuses on developing the fundamental attributes required for such movement, which include functional strength and fitness, balance, spatial awareness, agility, coordination, precision, control and creative vision.

It's a sport that encourages self-improvement on all levels, revealing physical and mental limits, while simultaneously offering ways to overcome them. It's a method of training the body and mind in order to be as completely functional, effective and liberated as possible in any environment. The sport aims to build confidence, determination, self-discipline self-reliance and responsibility for one's actions. It encourages humility, respect for others and for the environment, self-expression, community spirit, and the importance of play, discovery and safety at all times.

## HISTORY

In one sense Parkour has existed for as long as we've moved on two legs – either out of necessity or for enjoyment. It exists at the base of all human movement, and lives and breathes in part within all physical endeavours, from the play of children to the methodology of modern sports. It will continue to exist as long as we find reward and pleasure in the exploration of our own physical talents.

The sport – originally referred to as Le Parcour – was founded in Lisses, France in the 1980s by nine young men; David Belle, Sébastien Foucan, Chau Belle, Yann Hnautra, Laurent Piemontesi, Charles





An increasing amount of the overall parkour activities are now organised by clubs and associations

Perriere, Malik Diouf, Guylain N'Guba Boyeke, and Williams Belle.

In mid 1997, the group was known as the Yamakasi (Lingala for “strong man, strong spirit”), a name suggested by N'Guba and first featured in broadcast media coverage on France's Stade 2. The word *parcours* was used by Belle to describe the group's physical and philosophical practice and featured on the t-shirts worn by Yamakasi, designed by Foucan. The Yamakasi created a new name for their movement-based practice: *Art Du Déplacement*, “the art of moving from one place to another”. This term was also used to describe the movements of the seven Yamakasi who starred in Luc Besson's 2003 film of the same name. As the founders emphasized their diverse interests, other names came to the fore. The term ‘parkour’ was first introduced by David Belle in 1998 to describe *parcours* with a proper noun. Parkour derives from the French word *parcours* meaning route or course. Parkour practitioners became known as *traceurs*.

## RUNNING FREE

The term ‘Freerunning’ was used by Sébastien Foucan in a Channel 4 documentary, *Jump London*, in 2003 where it was used to describe the addition of creative movements, drawn from a variety of other

## The Chainstore Parkour Academy

The Chainstore in east London is the UK's first purpose-built indoor parkour centre. Designed as a dedicated hub for parkour activities, the centre includes daily classes delivered by NGB qualified coaches, training and certification courses, youth academies and parkour holiday camps.

The venue is a partnership between Freemove, a provider of pre-fabricated parkour facilities, and Parkour Generations, a professional coaching and performance organisation. As part of the partnership, Freemove has supplied the academy with the first ever UK indoor concrete parkour equipment, complemented by a bespoke steel and panelled structure.

Facilities include a 14mx14m Parkour Zone, mimicking the conditions of the outside world in terms of materials, feel and atmosphere and a functional strength and fitness gym-space – complete with squat racks, lifting platforms, kettlebells, tractor tyres, prowlers, ropes, sledgehammers and weights. There is also a dance and activity zone for yoga, martial arts and pilates and an observation deck overlooking the entire space.

The Chainstore is open every day of the week. Classes are priced at £10 and a daily drop in fee has set at £8. memberships can be acquired for six or 12 month terms and range from £40 to £85 per month.

disciplines to communicate this amazing new sport to an English-speaking audience.

Parkour UK has chosen to utilise the term parkour to represent the sport, not least because more than half of the UK's young people have heard of parkour. While most commonly practiced by 13 to 30-year-olds, there's significant growth taking place within the eight to 13-year-olds. The UK leads the world, with around 25 per cent of all parkour practitioners

being females – and the number of females taking up the activity is increasing rapidly. Regardless of how old people are when they start or what level of ability they start with, as time goes on and they gain enough experience in parkour/ freerunning they begin to use the problem solving methods they are learning improve their quality of life overall.

One of the factors in Parkour's popularity – and why it is universally recognised ►

There are currently around 30 purpose-built outdoor parkour parks across the UK, while there is also an increasing amount of indoor facilities being built

- – is that it's so visually attractive and exciting. People now watch more YouTube videos of parkour/freerunning than skateboarding and BMX combined. What's more, parkour fits perfectly in the social media landscape, where sharing experiences through videos, images and short messages is so popular.

### ORGANISED PARKOUR

Parkour UK is the national governing body for parkour, providing governance and regulation of parkour throughout the UK. We work closely with a variety of partners encouraging and developing the safe and appropriate practice of parkour in addition to working with groups and organisations.

Parkour UK has around 70 member organisations located across the UK. It has members as far north as the Shetland Islands and as far south as Plymouth in Devon – and everywhere between. It also provides a variety of awards, qualifications and a continuing professional development programme covering achieving, leading, coaching, teaching and instructing. These have been developed in conjunction with a variety of award bodies including AQA, Sports Leaders UK, 1st4sport Qualifications & CYQ.

Parkour UK's qualifications are approved by sector skills council Skills Active and are part of the QCF – so they are recognised across Europe via the European Qualifications Framework. Coaching qualifications are awarded by 1st4sport Qualifications and meet the national occupational standards (NOS) for sports coaching and its instructing qualifications are awarded by CYQ and meet the NOS for exercise and fitness. Parkour UK also partners national projects, such as the Matalan Sporting Promise, to support members and help them deliver community initiatives. One of these, delivered by ParkourDance, offers parkour for the over 50s. Parkour is a sport that is available and accessible to everyone and anyone.



Britain leads the world in parkour and around 25 per cent of participants are female

Additionally parkour in the UK has arguably the best cohort of professional freerunners in the world. Many of the world's top practitioners are from UK based groups and teams – such as Storm Freerun, Storrer and 3Run.

### FACILITIES FOR PARKOUR

The British Standards Institution (BSi) published BS10075:2013 *the British Standard for Parkour Equipment* in 2013.

#### What do you need?

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- Some equipment (such as the portable equipment from Freemove and other suppliers)
- To undertake a risk benefit assessment

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Parkour UK led the development of the standard, along with various partners.

This is a significant achievement for Parkour in the UK, which has been aiding the marked increase in new Parkour training facilities being developed, even prior to publication. Following publication it has had and continues to have a direct and beneficial impact enabling local authorities, schools, colleges, universities, sports centres, land owners, manufacturers and installers to build Parkour facilities and equipment that are fit-for-purpose, safe and to the recognised standard.

There are currently approximately 30 purpose built Parkour Parks across the UK ranging from the UK's largest in Coatbridge Scotland to London's LEAP Parkour Park in Paddington, manufactured and installed by our facility development partners Freemove. In addition there are several indoor Parkour facilities across the UK including Parkour Generations' – The Chanistore in East London, The Airborn Academy in Liverpool and The Parkour Project in Poole. Parkour in the UK has a well established and thriving scene that it well developed and supported by Parkour UK as the NGB for the sport in the UK. ●





# SPORT INCORPORATED

**C**orporate Social Responsibility (CSR) ticks many boxes: by using personnel, a bit of cash and key skills, companies can add value to a charity, cause, or initiative which has a social or environmental benefit. At the same time it keeps shareholders, stakeholders and staff happy, is great for PR and builds brand loyalty.

“It’s more strategic than a cash donation and more far-reaching than straightforward sponsorship,” says Rachel Linn, senior consultant with The Social Investment Company, which advises companies on CSR programmes.

Women’s sports clothing company, Sweaty Betty, has developed a programme from its mission statement “empowering women through fitness”. Like many of the best ideas, this is gloriously simple: rails are pushed aside in Sweaty Betty boutiques after hours and a variety of free activities are put on offer: yoga, body attack,

**In the latest in our series on corporate social responsibility programmes, Kath Hudson looks at a number of innovative companies working to add brand value**

running, Pilates, boxing, bootcamp, barre club, Zumba. This builds brand loyalty and provides PR and word of mouth marketing in a cost effective way, while providing a service and giving back to its customers.

Similarly, in its role as an official sponsor of the London 2012 Olympic Games, Adidas synergistically teamed up with The Great Outdoor Gym Company, and public sector partners, to open 70 free outdoor fitness facilities. Research by Nielson, in 2010, showed that adiZones broke down barriers to participation for those in the

hard to reach groups, including those on low incomes and ethnic minorities.

## BRAND REPUTATION

Linn says the millennial generation is more ethical than previous generations in its outlook and so CSR is good for companies from a staff recruitment and retention point of view. She says research has shown people would take a 15 per cent pay cut in order to work for a company which shows good ethics. CSR is also good from a consumer point of view. “Research by Adelman shows people are more likely to recommend a brand which supports a good cause,” says Linn. “People will also pay more for an ethical product.”

Additionally, CSR is effective for business reputation and recognition. In the past, Nike has received negative publicity about using sweatshops, which affected the share price. Since then it has used CSR to improve its brand identity, including its Designed to



German sportswear giant Adidas created the AdiZone concept – an Olympic Games-inspired multisports area





BOKS was chosen by Reebok as its main social purpose initiative in 2010 – a year after it was launched

Move programme in the UK. This multi-organisation approach aims to find a way to make physical activity a lifelong habit.

## VIRTUOUS CIRCLE

Linn recommends that if a company wants to invest in CSR it should assess its strengths and assets to look at where it could add value and be open to collaboration. “Companies should be willing to learn from charity partners and take feedback to evolve the programme in the best possible way,” she says. “Adaptability and sustainability are the keys to successful projects.”

On the flip side, if an organisation wants to attract a corporate they should do their research about which companies might fit with their aims and think about how they could work together to reach the goals. “Have a very clear proposition about what you want to achieve,” says Linn. “Be clear about your needs and wants and create something meaningful.”

It’s also important to be realistic with expectations: a moderate request for investment is more likely to be successful. In most cases, companies still want to see a return on their investment.

As our case studies reflect, when companies share a joint vision, a virtuous circle is created, with both feeding off each other’s enthusiasm in the pursuit of their joint mission. ●

## CASE STUDY 1

### BOKS

Reebok’s CSR initiative, BOKS, or Build Our Kids’ Success, was founded in 2009 and integrated by Reebok a year later. Reebok’s involvement has provided BOKS with operational competencies, as well as its name and funding. In return, Reebok has been able to offer volunteering opportunities to its staff and show the world that the company “walks the walk.”

BOKS was founded by Kathleen Tullie: when she was a stay at home mum she started organising impromptu soccer matches and running races for her kids and their friends before school. Seeing the benefits of getting them moving before school, she enlisted the help of two other dynamic parents and developed two 12-week curricula. The programme spread by “word of mom” as other parents called asking if they could start a programme at their school.

The Reebok Foundation was initially approached for t-shirt sponsorship, but the company decided to integrate the programme as its main social purpose initiative. “BOKS aligns perfectly



with Reebok’s mission as the brand to empower people to be fit for life,” says Tullie. “Reebok believes the sporting goods industry has failed, by creating a culture of spectators and that we need to reverse this and create a culture of participants. There is no better way than to start with the youth.”

The 45 minute class is made up of functional fitness movements, a warm up game, a running-related activity, a skill of the week and group games incorporating skill of the week, as well as an age appropriate nutrition tip called a BOKS Bit. “We are instilling a lifelong love and appreciation for fitness and good nutrition,” says Tullie.

As of the end of July, there were 1,000 schools enrolled to run BOKS and the average class size is 40-60. The aim for 2014 is to get it into 1,200 schools. ►



CASE STUDY 2

## SPORTEducate

Deutsche Bank is in the first year of a three-year programme aimed at 11 to 18-year-olds in London, who are at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training) to gain specific educational outcomes through sport and early interventions.

Sporteducate runs 33 community clubs offering sport, as well as education and employability activities, such as homework or extra tuition. It is closely aligned with Deutsche Bank's Born to Be corporate citizenship programme and staff members lend their expertise through volunteering opportunities, which gives them the chance to gain experience and develop new skills.

All the clubs and young people are being regularly monitored and assessed. "The hope is that over the course of the three years, we will have built a robust pool of evidence to demonstrate and prove how combining sport with education can improve young people's education and aspirations for the future," says programme director, Jo Stocks. "The programme's focus is to equip disadvantaged young people in London with the skills and experience to progress to further education, employment or training."



The Sporteducate programme features 33 community clubs offering sport for youngsters

Lareena Hilton, global head of brand and corporate citizenship at Deutsche Bank, says the organisation is passionate about helping young people realise their full potential. "We wanted to create a bold and ambitious programme – one that had real impact and learning outcomes," she says. "It soon became clear that if we wanted to engage young people and make a difference we would need to tap into

something that they were really passionate about, so what better medium than sport? Sport is a fantastic way for young people to develop the skills that will help them grow in confidence and stature, which is proven to help with success in the academic and business worlds. What's brilliant about Sporteducate is that it connects us with local communities and gives us a chance to contribute to their future development."

CASE STUDY 3

## WOMEN'S BOAT RACE

In a bid to raise the profile of women's sport and erode the historical gender inequalities in sport, Newton Asset Management (NAM) has backed the Oxford/Cambridge women's boat team which goes beyond sponsorship.

As well as providing funding to support the rowers – who previously had to pay £3,000 a year to be part of the squad – the company, which does a lot to raise the profile of women in business, has also provided other benefits. NAM has used its influence to get the women's race scheduled on the same day as the men's and ensure it receives the same amount

of media coverage. It has also given the athletes media training and PR support.

Head of marketing at NAM, Claire Backwell, says: "We hope that our leap of faith, will prove to be as groundbreaking as women receiving the same prize money as men in the Wimbledon final. We made the decision not knowing where the commercial benefit will come from,

but we felt that someone needs to start somewhere. It has been such a positive experience and we would encourage other companies to do the same. We've all gained from this relationship."

NAM is in the process of signing up to other diversity in sports programmes.

• To read more, turn to pp. 40-45 for our special feature on women and sport.



The support for the rowing teams has resulted in increased media coverage of the race





OTIS, the Online Technical Information System available exclusively from Technical Surfaces, is an innovative tool designed to help facility owners and operators manage the maintenance, usage, health & safety and day-to-day administration of their synthetic sports surfaces.



OTIS complements Technical Surfaces' pitch maintenance services

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In response to the growing need for customers to record maintenance and usage as part of their pitch warranty requirements, maintenance experts Technical Surfaces launched OTIS in April 2011. To date, more than 300 customers have accessed OTIS to manage their pitch maintenance programmes, and around two-thirds of all Technical Surfaces' maintenance contracts are now being pre-scheduled using their online facility.

Using OTIS, Technical Surfaces' customers can schedule, view, record and track various aspects of maintenance and usage of their surfaces. A full twelve-month maintenance programme can be scheduled in advance, allowing pitch bookings to be planned around the required maintenance works and providing peace of mind that specialist maintenance will be completed consistently throughout the lifecycle of a synthetic surface.

Technical Surfaces continually monitors the condition of every playing surface it maintains, and through OTIS encourages its customers to do the same. "Logging both maintenance work and usage is critical to ensuring the longevity of a synthetic sports

surface", explains Greg Hill, Commercial Director of Technical Surfaces. "Without accurately recording both aspects it will be impossible to ensure that your surface is being cared for properly."

Monitoring pitch activity and maintenance helps to determine whether the maintenance regime in place is suitable for the level of use the pitch is receiving. If any changes are required, Technical Surfaces works with all parties involved to adjust the pitch maintenance programme.

The potential financial rewards of synthetic sports surfaces have long been clear, particularly when utilised for both club and commercial use. However, as with anything, the more a surface is used the more it requires maintaining. A car, for example, covering close to 50,000 miles a year will require more consumable parts and more frequent servicing than a car that travels just 10,000 miles a year.

Using OTIS, pitch usage levels can be recorded to whatever degree of complexity required – from a straightforward log of booking hours through to detailing the number of players, the type of use, how much of the surface is being used, and even

revenues generated from each booking. And if your pitch's warranty is tied to a suitable maintenance programme, surely this is the very least you should expect from your pitch maintenance provider?

"The extent and detail of the information collected is down to each site", explains Greg. "However, as a minimum it should give the total hours of usage on the surface as a whole. To ensure greater accuracy, clients should endeavour to collate information on the number of players using the surface during these times, and which areas of the surface are used more frequently."

For more information on OTIS and the full range of pitch maintenance services Technical Surfaces provides, call 08702 400 700 or visit [www.technicalsurfaces.co.uk](http://www.technicalsurfaces.co.uk).

## Technical Surfaces contact details

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# GENERATION GAMES

**London 2012's motto was to inspire a generation: has it done that? Kath Hudson looks at some projects aimed at young children, which have blossomed in the post-Olympic glow**

**T**he pool hall was quiet, but the tension was palpable. Solemn-faced, the competitors of the mini triathlon – including my daughter Meribel – lined up by the side of the water waiting to be called to the start. Opposite stood a bank of anxious parents. Then the silence broke, as the children dived into the water in quick succession and parents cheered and shouted encouragement as they swam their two lengths of the pool.

At the end of the 800m bike ride and a 600m run, every child crossed the finishing line with a huge smile, and then went on to collect their medal and t-shirt for taking part. At the age of eight, they could bask in the knowledge that they had completed a triathlon.

## EARLY STARTS

Experts agree it's crucial to engage young children in active lifestyles. Pressure on the curriculum and the sale of school playing fields, however, have led to universal sport in schools dwindling. The obesity statistics are evidence of the fact that children aren't running around,



**Meribel, the author's daughter, competing in the mini triathlon**

riding bikes and playing football in their spare time to the extent they were in previous generations. Fortunately, in the wake of the London 2012 Olympics, which provided a great shop window for sport, many sports providers are doing an excellent job of opening up opportunities for children to engage in interesting sport challenges from a young age.

For example, mountain bike race organisers Fully Sussed and Go Ride now both run kids' cycling races alongside some of the adult races. There's even an emerging pathway into modern pentathlon as more biathlon events are being run through schools. Starting off as swimming and running events, these evolve to add in other elements of the pentathlon.

The Mini Triathlon Series, run by Cornwall-based Trust, Tempus Leisure, has been created following an upsurge in interest in adult triathlons, undoubtedly due partly to the Brownlee brothers gold and bronze Olympic medals.

"The Mini Triathlon Series was viewed as an essential addition to support the charitable objective of the trust while encouraging participation in healthy active lifestyles in the younger age category," says Geoffrey Samuels, senior community leisure officer at Tempus Leisure. "It was also felt that providing competitive opportunities for eight to 14-year-olds would support the growth of the adult series, by developing the skills of younger competitors and acting as a feeder to the adult series. A 15 to 16 age category





Above: legacy games organised by Everyone Active. Below: Providing children a choice of sports is crucial



has also been introduced so everyone is catered from the age of eight up.”

## OLYMPIC FACILITIES

Another way the Olympics have left their legacy is new sporting facilities now available to the general public. For a few pounds, anyone can swim in the hallowed lanes at the Olympic Aquatic Centre where swimmers like Ellie Simmonds and Michael Phelps made history, or try out the velodrome where the British cycling team swept the board.

One of the latest Olympic venues to come on stream is the Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre, where Andy Murray won his gold medal. Manager Angie Oliva says there’s lots going on to encourage children to come and play hockey and tennis, who otherwise wouldn’t have the opportunity. “We’re not having a performance squad at either venue, because that ties it up too much and we want to keep it available for members of the public to use,” she says.

A tennis development officer has been appointed to go into local schools teach some skills, bring them to the centre and

hopefully encourage them to enrol on extra-curricular sports courses. A range of programmes have been developed to appeal to different age groups, including a mini tennis programme and a course aimed at 16-year-olds.

Nearby, at the Lee Valley Athletics Centre, the Athletics Academy is going strong. Two programmes run three times

## STREET GAMES

Another Inspired by 2012 partner, Street Games, is now in its seventh year, with the four national festivals gearing up to take place in August. This year the London festival takes place at The Copper Box at Queen Elizabeth Park. Aimed at 16 to 24-year-olds, it is focussed on disadvantaged areas, creating local sports opportunities throughout the year. At the festivals people can try out sports and activities including roller skiing, indoor canoeing and street dance. Volunteers are enlisted to help with the planning.

a week, aimed at six to eight-year-olds and eight to 12-year-olds. “We teach a basic introduction to athletics, fitness work, relays and work on general skills and motor skills,” says manager Mick Bond. “There has been a 30-40 per cent increase in interest since the Olympics.”

The sessions appeal to a mix of abilities. The good ones are talent spotted and fed into local clubs. The Enfield and Haringey Athletics Club is national champion for that age group, which Bond puts down to the groundwork being done on this programme. He says another advantage of the programme is that children can go to secondary school with a positive attitude towards athletics, rather than losing confidence and opting out. This is particularly important for those with less natural ability or confidence.

## OLYMPIC ATHLETES

London 2012 created a raft of British role models and turned sports stars into household names. Swimming bronze medallist Rebecca Adlington is one of the athletes using her profile to encourage children to get active, with her role in





Role models such as Rebecca Adlington can inspire children to get more active

► the Legacy Games. Her role is to attend the events, hang out with the kids, have photos taken and sign autographs. “What I love about the Legacy Games is that they are playing and doing all different sorts of activities. More programmes need to be aimed at making sport and activities available to everyone,” she says.

The Legacy Games are devised and delivered by Fit for Sport and Everyone Active, and have been awarded the Cabinet Office’s Inspired by 2012 mark. The aim is to get 500,000 under-16s active.

“Let’s not forget that 2012 was very much a spectator year. What we need to do next is move away from watching sport, towards doing sport,” says Duncan Jefford, south east regional director of Everyone Active. “We need to engage youngsters at an early age to show them that sport and activity is fun and rewarding.”

The Legacy Games works with councils and schools to get primary school children to take part in a day of community sport, which is free to schools. The children work in groups to learn new skills and activities and the day ends with a series of races.

So that the impact can be sustained, the teachers also learn new ways to work with children to help continue an inspiring programme of activity back at school. Participating children are also encouraged to return to the centre with their parents to try a new sport or activity.

“I’m proud because the uptake is high, the impact is measurable and the

atmosphere of each event is energising and inspiring. The positivity literally radiates off the kids and even our more sceptical guests soon accept the concept works,” says Jefford. “The halo effect and continued participation of kids at our centres as well as the feedback we get from schools about the success of their updated PE programmes tells me this is working.”

### GAMESMAKERS

There are a few organisational issues for targeting this demographic: safeguarding and health and safety being the main ones.

#### TOP TIPS FOR RUNNING KIDS EVENTS

- Run a children’s event as an add-on to adult events.
- Enlist the help of volunteers to meet high health and safety regulations.
- Make it a fun and positive experience.
- Make it easy for families to treat it as a day out: offer refreshments, ice creams, maybe even a bouncy castle.
- Schools offer a proven and receptive marketing channel. You might even pick up some teachers for adult events.
- Offer some taster sessions for free.
- Offer children some token for taking part to make them feel a winner.
- Make sure a progression pathway is offered.

Most organisers continue to invoke the Gamesmaker spirit of the Olympics by enlisting the help of many volunteers to make sure the events meet the high level of health and safety requirements.

As well as achieving the primary aim of getting kids active, there are a number of knock-on benefits of organising events for children. The Mini Triathlon Series has increased participation in competitive sport at Tempus Leisure centres, helped increase leisure centre throughput, and led to further uptake in coaching sessions such as swimming classes.

Across the first three boroughs which ran Legacy Games in 2013, Everyone Active saw an increase of 17 per cent in children’s activities. Following the sports days and Fit for Sport, local camps saw an average increase in participation of 30 per cent. The programme has also boosted participation rates within junior sports clubs and programmes in the boroughs.

Children competing tends to make the day into a family outing, which has boosted secondary spend at Tempus Leisure’s catering outlets. Samuels says the event has also helped with the kudos of the brand, explaining: “Among the triathlon community, Tempus Leisure is now viewed as an organisation which is prepared to invest in youth development.”

As the Jesuit saying goes: “Give me the child, and I will mould the man.” This is true of sport. If the exercise habits and skills are learned young, they stay for life. ●





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Wattbike tests help to identify future Olympic talent

## UK Sport finds the next generation of Olympic champions with Wattbike

**When UK Sport, the agency responsible for investing in high performance sport, were looking to find the next generation of Olympic champions they turned to Wattbike.**

**T**he Power2Podium talent identification programme is a nationwide search for the fastest, most powerful male and female competitors who have the potential and ability to become part of Great Britain's sporting elite at the 2022 Olympic Games in the sport of Skeleton.

The Performance Pathway team from the English Institute of Sport who are responsible for helping to select athletes require accurate, repeatable and measurable data to analyse progression and compare performances to aid athlete selection. Given its role as a key part of British Cycling's

marginal gains philosophy in identifying many of the golden generation of British cyclists, the Wattbike is an obvious choice.

Lizzie Wraith, Performance Pathway Scientist at the English Institute of Sport, said: "British Skeleton use the Wattbike as part of their testing battery which allows the coaches to monitor athlete progression. For the Power2Podium talent identification programme, we used the Wattbike not only because of its ability to record extensive levels of data but also because we knew we could have confidence in the reliability of that data."

The talent identification events held across the UK saw over 450 athletes tested over 6 days in a variety of ways. With a requirement for the collection of large volumes of data and significant time constraints the team at EIS demand robust equipment. Lizzie continues: "We conduct high intensity tests so the equipment we use must be highly durable. The stability of the Wattbike gives us confidence that we can conduct accurate tests such as peak power and peak cadence on a large number of athletes without having to worry about

maintenance issues. When the athletes and coaches have confidence in the equipment we know that we are getting the very best results possible."

Richard Baker, Commercial Director at Wattbike said: "The Wattbike was borne out of a necessity for elite sport to have an affordable testing and training solution which offers scientific accuracy and could meet the demands of professional athletes and coaches. Sports organisations across the globe have seen the outstanding success of British Cycling, of which the Wattbike played a key role, and are striving to replicate that. We take real pride in seeing athletes and teams achieving success on the global stage knowing that the Wattbike has played a part in their victory."



Capturing athletes data via the Wattbike

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# IN SAFE HANDS

**The NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit has been working with leading sports bodies for over a decade to protect children from harm, but now it's raising the bar even further**

RHIANON HOWELLS

**R**esearch shows that participating in sport from an early age has enormous benefits for a child's physical, emotional and social development, as most of us who were given that advantage ourselves can surely testify. But for an unfortunate few, who fall victim to predatory adults or harmful practices in sporting environments, the experience is not so positive.

It was to protect young people such as this that the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) was created in 2001. Formed as a partnership between the NSPCC and Sport England, the CPSU published its *Minimum Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport in England* in 2002 and



Nick Slinn (left), senior consultant at CPSU and Anne Tiivas, CPSU director

since then, around 200 sports bodies in the UK have met the standards, including every County Sports Partnership (CSP) in England.

In 2010, the Sport Unit decided to go even further by launching the multi-agency

Sports Safeguarding Children Initiative (SSC) in England, with the aim of improving collaboration not only with other sports bodies but also with the statutory sector: the police, children's services and local safeguarding boards. With the initiative due to be reviewed next year, what impact has it had? And what can CSPs, NGBs and grassroots organisations do better to protect the children in their care?

## CHILD-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS

By the time SSC was launched in 2010, the CPSU had already made great headway with implementing its standards in England – almost every CSP had achieved them and the NGBs were not too far behind, but as



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/FREDKINGZ

More than 200 sports bodies have signed up to the minimum standards for safeguarding children in sport guidelines, published in 2002





Several NGBs – such as Rugby League – have followed best practice guidelines and set up youth forums

In practice safeguarding often happens in reverse. There isn't a safeguarding team that goes around asking 'have you got X, Y or Z in place' – but in the event of something happening, a club would be hauled over the coals and questions asked.

CPSU senior consultant Nick Slinn points out: "The standards only tell you how well you're doing at the top; there was still a lot of work to be done at a grassroots level."

The expectation, he explains, is that once the standards have been achieved, the CSP or NGB will work with their members to make sure appropriate safeguards are applied at club level. But why the need for standards at all when there is already legislation around these issues?

"There is health and safety legislation and child protection legislation that spells out the statutory obligations of all those that provide services to children," Slinn says. "But unfortunately, in practice, safeguarding often happens in reverse. In the event of something happening, a club would be hauled over the coals

and questions asked, but there isn't a safeguarding cops team that goes around saying, 'Have you got X, Y or Z in place?'"

A current focus for the Unit is eating disorders. Some children may have eating disorders already, which can be made worse by their participation in sport if coaches are unaware and unwittingly reinforce negative messages around diet or body shape. In some sports, there are particular pressures around fitness, weight and diet that can actually contribute to young people developing these problems.

"That's particularly true of weight-related sports," says Anne Tiivas, the CPSU's director. "For example, martial arts, where you need to meet a weight category. We've had cases of young people being sweated out in cling-film, then being expected to

perform in a competition while suffering from dehydration."

### EFFECTING CHANGE

The CPSU works with CSPs and NGBs in a number of ways. Key services include consultancy, helping to develop and review policies and procedures, plus unlimited access to the wealth of resources on the Unit's website ([thecpsu.org.uk](http://thecpsu.org.uk)). For lead officers, there's also access to a training programme, four support groups each year and an annual conference on child protection.

On a day-to-day basis, however, much of the support takes the form of trouble-shooting. "For example, we were recently contacted by a couple of CSPs with questions around running sports in parks," ►



PIC: ©WWW.SHUTTERSTOCKDOTSHOCK

► says Slinn. “What’s involved if you’re on public land rather than in a private club or on a school site? When we started looking into it, there were safeguarding issues around public insurances, around people drinking, around dogs faeces. So we ask ourselves, can we write some guidance on that? How can we test it? How can we promote it? Most of what we’re dealing with is pretty practical stuff.”

As for the progress made, different NGBs face different challenges. “If you’re the Football Association and you’ve got 50,000 junior clubs, consistency is a long-term piece of work,” points out Slinn. “On the other hand, if you’re a tiny NGB which doesn’t have many resources, you may not have the money to progress your safeguarding strategy.”

At grassroots level, one way clubs in England might meet the expectations of their CSP or NGB is by participating in Sport England’s Clubmark scheme, for which the CPSU is the safeguarding advisor. Most recently, the CPSU has widened its net even further by striking up a partnership with Quest, Sport England’s quality scheme for sport and leisure.

“Right Directions, the organisation that

The Amateur Swimming Association is one of the NGBs to have received praise for its actions towards safeguarding children in sport

manages Quest, contacted us through Sport England because they realised that although there was some reference to safeguarding children in their existing modules, there was scope to have a specific module dedicated entirely to this issue,” says Slinn. “Since then, we’ve worked with them to develop an optional safeguarding module for sports development teams and leisure facilities undergoing Quest assessments. We suspect that will grow legs as people see the benefit of it.

### BEST PRACTICE

To date, all 49 CSPs in England and 40 of the 46 Sport England-funded NGBs have met the CPSU standards. Each is now working on a post-standards framework to embed and maintain the standards, while the Youth Sport Trust and 18 of UK Sport’s funded NGBs and support organisations have started the standards process.

Slinn and Tiivas are also keen to point out

the numerous examples of best practice highlighted by the Initiative. These range from the success with which some CSPs are now collaborating with the statutory sector to coaching agencies set up by others. The latter involves the CSP collating a database of appropriately qualified and trustworthy coaches that schools in the local area can draw on.

Several of the NGBs, meanwhile, have set up youth forums. “The Rugby League Youth Forum, in particular, is terrific,” says Slinn. “They’re currently involved with a sexual abuse prevention programme which is about prevention in general, not just prevention in sport.”

Tiivas gives credit to the Amateur Swimming Association: “They’ve had a lot of issues in this area over the years and they need to be constantly vigilant, but they’ve also been very open all the way through, contributing to some very important early research.”

The ultimate goal, she explains, “is to create real ownership across the sector of what needs to be done to keep children safe, so it doesn’t matter where a child participates, in what sport and at what level: the safeguards will be the same.” ●



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# THE POWER OF PREHAB

**Fitness journalist Sam Murphy reports on the value of prehabilitation, not only to prevent injury among elite athletes, but also to help sports centres ensure their gym members stick to their programmes and feel looked after**

**R**ecent industry figures on retention show that just 52 per cent of people maintain their gym membership for 12 months. Fewer than a quarter maintain it for one or two years. The reasons are many, but it's likely that at least some of those abandoning the gym have been laid low by injuries. Or – says Gareth Cole, head of education at The Third Space, a health club operator with two central London sites – because they aren't getting the benefits they expected.

The Third Space launched its screening service 'Prehab, Rehab, Performance'

(PRP) last year. "It's designed to assess readiness for the task in hand, be it running a marathon or regaining strength following an injury," explains Cole. "We're not looking at how a body should move – it's individual. We're fitting the client to their goal, not the other way round."

PRP involves four main assessments: gait (walking and running), bilateral and unilateral squatting and shoulder mobility. "This establishes a start point and signposts where we need to investigate further," says Cole. After the 60-minute screening, clients receive a video report outlining the trainer's findings and recommendations.

They are then encouraged to work with a personal trainer (PT) within the club to address any limitations or weaknesses.

Meanwhile, at 37° – a group of three health clubs in Surrey and London – a LifeScore screen is free to members (£150 to non-members). This one-to-one assessment, described as a 'total body-mapping tool', looks at posture and gait, strength, body composition, nutrition and hydration. A DNAFit test is offered as an option, to ensure diet and training are optimal for the member's genetic make-up.

Independent operators are at the helm of the prehab trend – typically high-end





**Complex terminology  
won't put your members  
at ease. You don't want  
people to leave an  
assessment feeling that  
they are 'broken' and  
need to be 'fixed'**

gyms with specialist staff. But according to Michael Goulden, director of Integra, an independent gym based in east London, any club could benefit from offering similar services. "Whether you're a PT or a large health club, if someone gets injured on your watch, you lose them as a customer," he says. "It's in everyone's interests – the club and the user – to minimise the risk of injuries by introducing initial screening and regularly monitoring exercise performance."

### MEMBER SUPPORT

Cole and Goulden both have extensive specialist knowledge of movement – including neuroscience and motor learning theory – so are well-positioned to offer in-depth musculoskeletal screening. The average gym instructor, however, isn't likely to have the necessary level of education or experience. That means further training, or taking on specialist staff.

"Whether these services add value depends on how well they are delivered," says Dr Paul Bedford, a specialist in member retention. "Research suggests they can contribute to retention, but unfortunately most operators are not prepared to invest in the training required to make them work."

Goulden agrees, but believes that trainers and clubs need to take more responsibility for ongoing training and development. "Too often, the approach is 'I've done my training course – now I know everything I need to know,'" he says. To encourage and facilitate learning, Goulden runs regular study groups and courses at Integra, which are open to all health and fitness professionals. Bedford isn't convinced a significant number of



Prehab can be used by elite athletes as well as members preparing for exercise

memberships fall by the wayside due to injury, but believes there's an issue with discomfort in the early days of exercise. "A high heart rate, profuse sweating and burning muscles signal progress to the experienced exerciser, but to a beginner they can feel more like a medical emergency," he says. "Having some guidance and reassurance through that period could be beneficial."

Goulden supports the idea of more 'hand-holding' and monitoring early on. "Instead of a bog-standard induction, why not offer a six-week 'way in to exercise'? It could focus on finding out what the client's needs are and educating them about movement. This would help ease them into exercise and build a stronger relationship between club and client."

Nuffield Health is already offering this. All new members get a Health MOT – a clinical assessment of overall health, including blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose, aerobic fitness and resting heart rate. Nuffield's recently introduced Wellbeing membership also provides

ongoing individual support and monitoring. Wellbeing members get four one-to-one appointments with an expert of their choice – a physiologist, physiotherapist, nutritionist or personal trainer – as well as a free physiotherapy session (which can be used as a pre-exercise musculoskeletal MOT) and sessions with a health mentor.

"Our health mentors are educated by our Fitness Academy to a significantly higher standard than the average personal trainer," says Natalie Cornish, the company's fitness and wellbeing director. "We educate them not only on how to deliver exercise prescription, but also on nutrition, sleep and stress. All of our training is underpinned by an understanding of how we can help our members achieve behavioural change."

How has the membership been received? "The comments have been incredibly positive," says Cornish. "We run feedback surveys twice a year and our members feel more supported, find our health clubs less intimidating and are more confident about achieving their goals."



Prehab services are increasingly popular in the City, where cash-rich, time-poor clients want to maximise every workout

- We're also getting feedback that, in some cases, members are specifically choosing our clubs because we provide a more supportive membership option."

### THIRD PARTY EXPERTISE

But if you're not in the market for to provide such a service, the other option is to find a partner who is.

Six Physio is a London-based chain of 10 physiotherapy clinics that offers a range of assessment services. "These reflect Six Physio's company mantra 'to cure, not treat' and differentiate us from many other physiotherapists by identifying problem areas even before symptoms present themselves," says Robert Crowfoot, director of Six Physio. "From a business perspective, assessments have proved a big pull for many new clients. We've also seen increased demand from existing clients who, following treatment by Six Physio's rehab specialists, have signed up for assessment services for injury prevention."

Take-up of running assessments has grown more than threefold since November 2012, and cycling assessments almost twofold.

While there are no official partnerships, individual clinics within the chain have built strong links with the gyms and PTs that they rate highly in their area, so that they can work together to meet a client's needs. Six physio movement assessments

use an iPad set-up to video clients performing their chosen activity. "We can identify areas that may need a little more work, either because they're not moving well or not stabilising well," explains Carla Lodweijks, clinic director at the company's Fleet Street branch. Real-time ultrasound is also used to monitor different muscles during movement. "Our aim is to provide a comprehensive assessment and ensure that the client goes away with a clear idea of the exercises they need to do to prevent injury," she adds.

Meanwhile, Run 3D is a specialist within the running arena and claims to be the UK's first company to offer a three-dimensional motion analysis service. "We assess running technique from above, to the side and behind, comparing the results to our database of thousands of runners to advise on what injuries a runner may be vulnerable to and how to prevent them," explains director Dr Jessica Leitch.

Run 3D's flagship clinic is in Oxford, but it also franchises the Run 3D service to sports injury clinics, podiatrists and physiotherapists. "Clinics lease the equipment from us and we train them in how to use it," says Leitch. "They then make revenue by selling the service to their clients."

Due to the specialist nature of the analysis, a healthcare professional (such as a physio, biomechanist, sports therapist or

sports massage therapist) is needed on-site to interpret the data in a meaningful way. "Thus far, we've been approached by healthcare professionals who want to make their clinics stand out from the crowd," says Leitch. "But that's not to say we wouldn't be open to gyms and health clubs taking on the system, as many now have such specialists on-board anyway."

Bedford agrees that forging links with external experts could be a good way of offering specialist services to club members. But he has a caveat: choose carefully. "Complex terminology that might be acceptable within a specialist clinic won't put your members at ease," he says. "And you don't want people to leave an assessment with the feeling that they are 'broken' and need to be 'fixed'."

### PERCEIVED VALUE

There's no doubt that there's a growing demand for prehab services – particularly in areas like the City of London, where hardcore exercisers are cash-rich but time-poor and want to maximise every workout. But can prehab earn its keep? While Bedford says it's difficult to quantify the impact such services have on member retention and exercise adherence without data, Nuffield's experience suggests investing in pre-exercise assessment and early-days support adds value when it's included within a membership cost. ●





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# LAYING IT DOWN

**From Russia's first high-technology natural pitch to rejuvenated tennis courts; a look at recently completed sport surface projects.**

TOM WALKER

## JOHNSONS SPORT SEED

### Re-turfing of Ferencvaros pitch

Due to Hungary's continental climate – with hot summers and bitterly cold winters – pitches there are normally turfed with grass imported from elsewhere in Europe. The Ferencváros Stadium in Budapest is no exception, with a new pitch sown with Johnsons Sports Seed J Premier Pitch.

The stadium – home to Ferencvárosi TC, Hungary's most successful club – has become the first fibresand and seeded pitch in the country.

Premier Pitches KFT has been heavily involved in the reconstruction. The family-run business, owned by Istvan Bekefi, not only conducts pitch and stadium renovations but has now been appointed



as the Hungarian distributor for UK-based Johnsons Sports Seed.

For the re-laying of the pitch, Premier Pitches used Johnsons Sports Seed J Premier Pitch and the turfing project was completed at the end of August 2014, in time for the new season.

"I have used other seed in the past," said Bekefi, "but can comfortably say that

**The club is the first in Hungary to have a fibresand and seeded pitch**

Johnson's is the best seed I have ever worked with. I and the whole team are very impressed with the results achieved using J Premier Pitch."

## REPLAY

### Renewed vision

Sussex County Lawn Tennis Club (SCLTC) has had two of the club's four artificial tennis courts restored to an 'as new' condition. The work, undertaken by Replay Maintenance, included a full site survey, which revealed that the artificial turf courts were of sound construction, but were suffering from the consequences of age, with contaminated materials affecting both the aesthetics and performance.

SCLTC opted for the the Replay Rejuvenation process, which restores sand-filled synthetic surfaces to an 'as



**What once was – before and after shots of the courts, showing the improvements**

new' performance and appearance, often doubling the playing life of a pitch or tennis court for a fraction of the cost of replacing the carpet. Unlike replacing the artificial surface, the Replay Rejuvenation

can also be completed in days - saving facilities time and minimising loss of revenue. The system is also effective on long-pile surfaces – extracting the infill to any chosen depth.





## SIS PITCHES

### First of its kind for Spartak Moscow

SIS Pitches has completed work on the playing surface at the recently opened Otkritie Arena – the new home of Spartak Moscow. Construction work began in March, followed by the seeding of the pitch. The pitch is equipped with a fully automatic irrigation, undersoil heating and

aeration systems which will be seeded on a fibre sand reinforced root zone. Otkritie Arena is the first stadium in Russia to feature these surface technologies.

SIS also supplied grow lights, all pitch covers and maintenance machinery and equipment for the surface – and will

The Spartak team training on the new Otkritie surface ahead of their home opener against Torpedo Moscow

continue to maintain the pitch for at least the next 12 months. As well as being the home to Spartak, the 43,000-seat Otkritie Arena will host international matches. It will also be one of the stadia used when Russia hosts the 2018 World Cup – including one of the semi final matches.

## O'BRIEN

### Ladybridge invests in 3G

Ladybridge FC in Bolton has become the first grassroots club in the region to have its very own 3G surface. Funded nearly entirely (97 per cent) by the club, the new £220,000, full-size Astroturf 60mm pitch was installed by O'Brien on a dynamic base, consisting of a specially graded aggregate including drainage and kerbing works.

The 7,500sq m pitch has already been signed off by the FA for competitive use and club officials are looking

forward to a huge increase in available hours for community use. O'Brien secured the contract to deliver the pitch following a competitive tender process and completed the project in just eight weeks.

The new pitch will increase the number of hours available for Ladybridge FC and has already been approved by the FA to host competitive games





The project included three 3G pitches

## SLATTER

### Pitches fit for a Queen

S&C Slatter is nearing the completion of a large-scale artificial turf project for Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate in York. The company is constructing three full-size, 3G pitches for rugby and football; a full-size water-based pitch for elite hockey; and a half-sized training pitch for rugby and football.

Using FieldTurf's Vertex products for the football pitches and a FieldTurf Hockey Gold WB for the hockey pitch, Slatter worked with pitch design consultants Surfacing Standards on the £2m project. The base construction included bound macadam on a stone sub base, with a insitu, formed shockpad under the synthetic turf system.

According to Jason Douglass, commercial director of S&C Slatter, the scale of the project presented a challenge in terms of the sheer quantities of sub-base aggregate required – with around 15,000 tonnes of specialist material that needed to be stockpiled ahead of the works. The new pitches are part of the school's strategy of improving its sports offering – it has also invested in a new £1m equestrian centre, a new swimming pool and a £1m health club.

## TIGERTURF

### TigerTurf completes three year pitch project at Warwick Boat club

TigerTurf UK is set to complete a three year project involving the manufacture of 10 tennis court surfaces for Warwick Boat Club (WBC). The multi-sport club, which specialises in rowing, squash, bowls and tennis, required an upgrade on its tennis surfaces to make them suitable for both recreational games, as well as elite teams.

After a competitive tender process in 2011, TigerTurf's Advantage Pro surface was chosen and the club has staggered the court refurbishments over three years to limit downtime. Designed with shock-absorbing characteristics that reduce the risk of injury and stress to the body, the surface has been tailored so that it doesn't shine when wet or under floodlights, and has also been tested to International Tennis Federation (ITF) standards. This culminates in a premium, all-round surface that players of all ages and experience levels can enjoy. The installation work was completed by Fosse Contracts.

Tony Baker, WBC's tennis captain, said: "A considerable amount of research went into the specification process and some of our coaches visited a local tennis club to

sample the Advantage Pro surface. Their high recommendations certainly pushed us over the line when it came to making the decision on which surface to install.

"The popularity of tennis has increased and is at record levels since having the 10 new surfaces installed. Seven of the courts are floodlit and all of them can cope in harsh weather conditions, which extends playing time all year round."



The project included the installation of 10 tennis court surfaces for WBC





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## Coventry Classic gains traction:

Largest wheelchair racing event in the UK welcomes Paralympic stars

**The third annual Coventry Classic saw a host of Paralympic stars join with the SAPCA-supported charity for the UK's largest wheelchair racing event**

**T**he 'Classic', which took place on 19-20 July, offered an exceptional opportunity for local athletes to embrace their first competition and experience the growing benefits of the Coventry Godiva Harriers Wheelchair Racing Academy, which is now fully supported by the Sports and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) as its charity of the year. An impressive 21 London 2012 Paralympic champions featured at the event, with many of the international elite using the opportunity as a warm up for the Commonwealth Games.

Chris Trickey, CEO of SAPCA, says: "The mix of both sporting stars eager to perfect their craft and beginners keen to try the sport made the day a unique one. The event captured the amazing scope and versatility of these incredible athletes, who have not only coped with a limiting condition, but thrived, adapted and flourished to become great athletes and international champions."

Importantly, the event was notable in remit as well as scale, with British Athletics listing the fixture as the final opportunity for GB athletes to set qualifying marks for the IPC European Athletics Championships, which were held in Swansea in late August. Interestingly, 23 of the 56-strong GB team for the championships were competitors at the Coventry Classic.

Following the Coventry Classic, five Coventry Godiva Harriers were announced as having been selected for the GB team at the IPC European Championships: Maria Hawksworth (F56 jav), Mel Nicholls (T34 100m, 800m), Ben Rowlings (T34 100m, 400m, 800m), Rob Smith (T52 100m, 400m, 800m) and Hannah Cockcroft (T34 100m, 800m). These selections were in



Mel Nicholls and Lauren Rowles used the event as a warm up for the Commonwealth Games

addition to Kare Adenegan and Lauren Rowles who were selected for GB for the IWAS World Juniors in August and Lauren's England selection for Glasgow 2014.

But the club does more than produce world class champions; a core intention of the event is to highlight the Coventry Godiva Harriers Wheelchair Racing Academy as a growing resource to beginners and prospective athletes, particularly now that Warwick's university venue is now recognised as one of the

four UK centres for wheelchair racing excellence. The competition also saw the opening of the university's dedicated wheelchair training and storage centre, which will now be better equipped as the academy has taken possession of five new racing chairs specially modified to allow local youngsters to trial the sport.

SAPCA's Annual Conference, held earlier this year, raised £3,000 to help finance the event and provide essential sporting supplies.

### SAPCA Technical Meeting 'open to all'

The Sports and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) will hold an open meeting later this year to shed light on core industry issues – and the free one-day event will be open to absolutely anyone in the field.

SAPCA's Technical Meeting will focus on discussing crucial questions about sports and play facility construction, as well as offering an excellent opportunity to network with colleagues from across the SAPCA membership and the wider industry.

The Technical Meeting will take place on Tuesday 25 November at Holywell Park, Loughborough University.



# Dramatically Different:

## Scottish sport to be focus of next Sports Facility Show

The Sports Facility Show is known throughout the sports and play construction industry as being a 'must see' event, with its vital advice on funding, construction, design and management of sports facilities



**T**he next show, in Scotland on 28 October, will have the benefit of including several key speakers who are practising athletes – which offers the unique opportunity to hear about sports facilities from the people that use them – as well as including speakers from the main Scottish sports governing bodies.

The exciting event, supported by sportscotland and sponsored by Bonar Yarns, will have a special focus on 3G pitches, following the recent announcement that they can be used on all FA pitches. How will this affect grassroots football? This and other contentious topics will be discussed in detail on the day by

some of Scottish sport's thought leaders and sports governing bodies.

The full line up of speakers at the event is:

- Ailsa Wylie (Commonwealth Games Hockey team) and a Commonwealth Games Rugby 7s player (TBC)
- sportscotland – Graham Finnie – sportscotland legacy projects; Sarah Robertson/Derek Kier – Guide to Project Development/Help for Clubs; Andy Kelly – Funding
- Scottish Golf – Kevin Cadmeyer-Taylor/ Colin Bell (TBC) – Ryder Cup Legacy
- Scottish Athletics – Nigel Holl – Scottish context, facilities strategy – progression of the provision of compact facilities south of the border

To register, call 024 7641 6316 or visit [www.sapca.org.uk/ravenscraig](http://www.sapca.org.uk/ravenscraig)

- FIFA – Nicholas Evens – FIFA quality concept for artificial turf
- Scottish FA – Cameron Watt – 3G & community football
- Scottish Rugby Union – Neil Carrie – 3G for rugby, community level engagement and delivery

In addition, there will be live maintenance demonstrations throughout the day on the venue's synthetic grass pitches. The Sports Facility Show will take place on October 28 2014 at Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility, Motherwell.

## Cheshire County Playing Fields Association celebrates outstanding achievement award

**SAPCA presents Cheshire CPFA with the prestigious outstanding achievement award for its valuable contribution to the protection of playing fields during the last year**

The award, which celebrates Cheshire County Playing Fields Association's (CPFA) very literal grassroots approach to protecting green spaces for sports and play, was presented at the CPFAs' National Conference held at the Ramada Kenilworth on 4 June.

The honour also signifies SAPCA's ongoing support of the charity's wide ranging representation throughout the fields of sports development, planning, grant information and local government. Karen Tonge MBE, chair of Cheshire



Karen Tonge, MBE, accepting the award from Chris Trickey, CEO of SAPCA

CPFA, explains how it's striving to secure the future of sport at a local level.

"We believe that the continued and ongoing decline in the availability and quality of outdoor community facilities is detrimental to us all," she said.

"The legacy left to future generations of run-down, unsafe or lost areas is of major concern – as is the lack of access leading to the breakdown of communities, poor health, reduced productivity in the workplace and the overall decline in the morale of a community."

# THE MAKING OF MULTI-USE GAMES AREAS:

## SAPCA's new Code of Practice offers essential construction guidelines for MUGAs

**S**APCA will shortly release the *Multi-use Games Area Code of Practice 2014* – its latest document dedicated to raising standards across the sports and play construction industry.

Many charged with choosing a playing surface suitable for a variety of sports opt for a MUGA – while a good facility can offer astounding versatility, the vast range of surface types can make the decision a confusing one and a MUGA will always be a compromise as no single playing surface is perfect for all sports.

### Updated construction advice

Tony Hession, project manager at SAPCA, explains why the new code of practice is an essential aid to potential facility owners.

“Existing guidelines concentrate on performance requirements of individual sports,” he says. “They don’t address or detail the important considerations of site investigation, construction design requirements and the technical information that’s vital to a successful installation.

“Documents such as Sport England’s *Design Notes* and the British and European Performance Standards guidelines offer important performance and safety limitations, but don’t really deal with addressing core construction issues that help a client get an accurate costing at the

**Whether it’s limited space, restricted budgets or a demand for different sports to be available in one single facility, SAPCA’s Code of Practice will address the key issues which need to be considered when contemplating the installation of a MUGA**

design and funding feasibility stage.

“The *Design Specification and Construction of Multi-use Games Areas including Multi-sport Synthetic Turf Pitches* was written by Sport England in collaboration with SAPCA over a decade ago. Since then, the number of additional MUGA surfaces available, including 3G turf, has grown enormously, so the code of practice needed not only an update, but to broaden the knowledge base, while at the same time narrowing the focus to pinpoint quality construction guidelines. In our view, this update is essential to ensure MUGA surfaces are properly installed.”

### Nine surface options, one area

It’s important to remember that there are nine principle types of surfacing for MUGAs, each of which has different benefits, ranging from grip, through shock absorption, to ball rebound. From standard macadam through to polymeric surfacing and synthetic turf, each type of surface for a MUGA holds a distinct strength

suited to a particular sport. For example, standard grip macadam is ideal for tennis, whereas sand-dressed synthetic turf (with shockpad) is ideally suited to hockey.

### Clear quality guidelines

Hession adds that with the latest code of practice, SAPCA aims to establish clear construction quality guidelines which not only clarify the importance of proper design, build standards and installation issues, but ensure that the surface chosen meets the needs of the client’s key requirements – and that the expectations of playing performance are realistic.

“SAPCA members all pledge to maintain the highest of quality standards – by providing written advice and expert guidelines SAPCA is helping the industry create even better sports and play facilities nationwide,” he explains.

### Design and project management

The MUGA code of practice will also detail useful design guidelines and project management considerations, such as:

- Design considerations
- Site considerations and location
- Local infrastructure
- Size, orientation and gradients
- Drainage
- Sub-bases
- Edge kerbs
- Macadam, polymeric and synthetic grass surface options
- Playing lines
- Quality control

The code of practice has been finalised and received input from all SAPCA members following a thorough consultation process. The final document will be published shortly.



Current guidelines for MUGAs concentrate on performance requirements of individual sports





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**BUILDING BETTER SPORTS AND PLAY**

# Extra expense or a clever way to cut costs? Why commission a consultant?

**Neil McHugh, chair of SAPCA's Professional Services Group, explains why choosing to bring a consultant into a sports facility development project isn't a drain on your resources – in fact, it can ultimately save you time, money and non-essential labour**

**W**hen sports facility projects run into installation problems and costs spiral, it's often down to a poorly perceived design or underlying issues which, if addressed, could easily have been rectified in the earliest stages of planning.

## Long-term savings

Good advice has its price but the cost of skimping on design quality is far higher. Design fees will usually constitute just a small fraction of the total construction expenditure and pale into insignificance when measured against the operating costs over the lifespan of a facility.

**Independent consultants oversee seven distinct stages of a sports facility project:**

### Stage 1: Preparation

Involving a consultant who is a SAPCA member at the initial stages of your project can add much-needed clarity and direction to your installation. They can identify a clear project brief, examine site information and make recommendations for crucial data which could affect your build – ranging from topographical surveys, to soil investigations and noise and lighting impact reports.

### Stage 2: Scheme design

Here, a consultant really begins to steer your project, freeing up your valuable time. Experts can prepare concept designs, including outlining services information, landscaping, outline specifications and a preliminary cost plan.

They will also put in place an OS Location Plan, proposed layouts to NGB standards, proposed floodlighting spillage plans and review materials being used.

### Stage 3: Developed design

At this stage of your project, a consultant oversees the preparation of developed



A consultant's contribution to a project extends far beyond form and aesthetics

designs including updated proposals for services, landscape, outline specifications and cost plans. Additionally, they will review the environmental impact of your installation (i.e. urban drainage, renewable energy, ecology) to make sure it is not only high quality but sustainable.

They will also prepare and submit a planning application via a registered planning portal, as well as reviewing construction strategy.

### Stage 4: Technical design

This is when a consultant is absolutely indispensable; they will oversee the preparation of technical design information including all services, structural information and specification for sign off. They will also prepare and submit building regulations, prepare National Building Specifications, bills of quantities and priced specification, all to ensure keeping with legislative and quality guidelines.

### Stage 5: Tender

As your project advances, the role of a project consultant becomes more intensive and cost-efficient. At the 'tender' stage, they will agree a tender list with the

client and inform contractors, agree the client's address for tender return, and collate drawings, specifications and pricing documents. Crucially, they will also provide a scoring matrix, issue amendments throughout the tender process and issue the client with a tender opening form.

### Stage 6: Construction

Now the all important physical work begins and a consultant will liaise with your appointed CDM Coordinator regarding Health & Safety plans (unless you have allowed them to take on the role, in which case they will individually review their observations and action as applicable).

### Stage 7: Use and aftercare

When construction is complete, your installation is far from over. There's still the matter of making sure it is fit for purpose and remains so with regular aftercare.

A consultant will inform the client of all the relevant maintenance tasks they will be advised to undertake to prolong the life of their new sports surface and facility, as well as gauge performance testing, a 12 months defect inspection and a final account of the full installation.



# SAPCA DIRECTORY



**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.

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## EXHIBITIONS & SEMINARS: SPORTS FACILITY SHOWS

SAPCA regional exhibitions featuring the leading constructors of sports facilities and suppliers of related products and services, together with seminars on key aspects of sports facility design and construction.

### Forthcoming shows:

- **Tuesday 28 October:** Ravenscraig Sports Facility, Nr Motherwell, Scotland

### MORE INFORMATION:

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### Charterhouse displays new product launches

Charterhouse Turf Machinery's Graden Contour Sand Injection is a scarifier/aerator with the ability to scarify to any depth between 1-40mm, simultaneously backfilling the grooves with either sand or a combination of sand and seed. Elsewhere, the Redexim Double Disc Overseeder range was shown at Saltex after launching earlier in 2014. The Double Disc Seeders bury the seed up to 20mm deep in the ground with a disc spacing of 30mm.

sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**

**CHARTERHOUSE**



### Tracked stump grinder made easy to manoeuvre

A compact but powerful Carlton tracked stump grinder is among the Orange Plant range at Saltex. The SP5014TRX tracked model has been designed to provide optimum manoeuvrability, and features a short track base and radio remote control. It has a 50" cutting arc and a 14" cutting depth. Orange Plant recently added the GreenMech portfolio of wood chippers and shredders to its dealership and also showcased these machines at Saltex in September.

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### Vacuum sweepers and compact seeder on show

Trilo's S range of vacuum sweepers and a compact pedestrian propelled seeder from RotaDairon are new launches for The Grass Group. Four new models are being added to Trilo's S range – the S8, S12, S16 and S20 – whose modular build means options including axle set-up, body types, implements and hitch options can easily be incorporated to meet custom needs. Meanwhile, RotaDairon's Seed-Car has been designed to work in restricted areas and allows seeding into all the 'corners' of a ground.



sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**

**GRASS**



sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**

**LAWNFLITE**

### High speed is the key to Lawnflite's new machine

Lawnflite is to unveil a new high-speed roller mower as part of its Pro range. The 553HRS-PROHS features a high-speed gear which makes it 13 per cent faster than the standard models in the range, the 553HRS and 553HRS-PRO. All have premium engines from Honda and Kawasaki, and have been designed to be quiet when in operation. Fan-assisted collection and a blade brake clutch mean the engine doesn't have to be re-started when emptying the bag. The new model was launched at Saltex, where Lawnflite also showcased its range of chippers, shredders and trimmers.



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## SISIS to unveil synthetic surface machine prototype

A prototype machine designed specifically for synthetic surface maintenance was officially unveiled at SISIS' stand at Saltex. The company says it welcomes comments from customers before full production begins later this year. SISIS also be displayed products such as the Rotorake TM1000 tractor mounted scarifier and Rotorake 600HD pedestrian scarifier and linear aerator with their range of interchangeable reels, which were launched at the show last year.

[sport-kit.net](http://sport-kit.net) **KEYWORD** **SISIS**



[sport-kit.net](http://sport-kit.net) **KEYWORD**  
**ALLETT**

## Innovative lawn mower adds to Allett's range

Allett Mowers unveiled an innovative new addition to its professional range of lawn mowers at Saltex following successful trials with a number of groundsmen across the UK. Representatives from the company were on hand to demonstrate the new machine, discuss its specifications and answer questions. Allett also displayed its full professional range of cylinder lawn mowers for the grounds care sector, as well as a selection of mowers from its Classic and Expert domestic ranges, which includes the Complete



## SCH launches three point linkage mounted groomer

A three point linkage mounted groomer, a multi-tasking unit to groom pitches prior to use or at end of play, has been launched by SCH. The Combination Turf Groomer features a leading star shaped slitter bar which pierces the surface to increase drainage, while brush and rake bars tickle over the surface to enhance its appearance. The rear roller firms up the surface. All three tools can also be adjusted by individual screw jacks for depth and pressure.

[sport-kit.net](http://sport-kit.net) **KEYWORD**

**SCH**



## Wall system offers rapid solution for groundsmen

Developed in Canada, Flex MSE is an innovative vegetated wall system that is intended to provide golf course designers and groundsmen with an eco-friendly solution when looking to rapidly create fixed landscape structures with enhanced engineering stability and durability. It comprises two engineered components: soil filled geotextile bags and spiked interlocking plates which are 100 per cent recycled and recyclable. Product demos took place at Saltex.

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## Leisure Industry Week (LIW)

**NEC, Birmingham, UK**

The annual meeting place for professionals from all areas of leisure - including sport and fitness.

Tel: +44 (0)20 7955 3990

[www.liw.co.uk](http://www.liw.co.uk)

28 OCT 2014

## Sports Facility Show

**Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility  
Motherwell, UK**

The Sports Facility Show is an event for sport professionals working in the designing, managing and maintain of sports and play facilities. The one-day event includes sessions on key topics, expert speakers, dedicated networking time and an exhibition.

Tel: +44 (0)24 7641 6316

[www.sapca.org.uk](http://www.sapca.org.uk)

7-9 NOV 2014

## SIBEC North America

**Ocean Reef Club, Key Largo, United States**

Major operators in the health, recreation, sports and fitness sectors meet with leading executives from national and international supplier companies. SIBEC events aim to bring the industry together to do business in a five-star destination and provide high quality networking and relationship-building opportunities in a relaxed environment.

Tel: +1 603 529 0077

[www.sibecna.com](http://www.sibecna.com)

18-19 NOV 2014

## Soccerex African Forum 2014

**Moses Mabhida Stadium,  
Durban, South Africa**

The forum brings the leading decision makers in African football together with businesses from across the continent and the world for two days of learning, networking and business opportunities. The event will host 1,000 senior football decision makers under one roof in a vibrant networking environment.

Tel: +44 (0)208 742 7100

[www.soccerex.com/events/africa](http://www.soccerex.com/events/africa)

19-22 NOV 2014

## SIBEC Europe

**Pestana Casino Park Hotel,  
Funchal, Madeira, Portugal**

The event brings the UK and Europe's major operators from the private, local authority and trust markets in health, fitness and leisure together with leading suppliers to participate in a series of one-to-one meetings over two dedicated business days.

Tel: +356 2137 0207

[www.sibeceu.com](http://www.sibeceu.com)

25-26 NOV 2014

## BASES Conference

**St George's Park Burton Upon  
Trent, Staffordshire, UK**

The annual conference of the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences, the professional body for sport and exercise sciences in the UK.

Tel: +44 (0)113 812 6162

[www.bases.org.uk/BASES-Conference-2014](http://www.bases.org.uk/BASES-Conference-2014)

04 DEC 2014

## IOG Conference and Industry Awards

**stadiummk Milton Keynes,  
Buckinghamshire, UK**

The awards acknowledge the high standards achieved by volunteer and professional teams and individuals at facilities that range from grass roots through to professional stadia level. They recognise achievement, innovation and examples of best practice from the leaders in the world of groundsmanship. The aim of the Awards is to raise industry standards and professionalism.

Tel: +44 (0)1908 312 511

[www.iogawards.com](http://www.iogawards.com)

10-11 DEC 2014

## The Turf and Grass Expo

**Palexpo Center Geneva, Switzerland**

Find out the latest information regarding synthetic turf, such as: medical facts, technical analysis, financial benefits, community partnerships and others. Learn from clubs and sports governing bodies who will discuss the best practice, new developments and newest challenges.

Tel: +41 79 823 08 55

[www.turfandgrassexpo.com](http://www.turfandgrassexpo.com)

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