

Andy Reed

SPORTS THINK TANK

With the sport strategy we have some clarity about why we fund sport, even in times of austerity

Cover star: Danny Willett becomes the first Brit to win the Masters in two decades p6

Should tackling be banned from school rugby? p34

Inside the world of gene doping p30

Tax incentive: Corporation tax to be scrapped for grassroots sports clubs? p42



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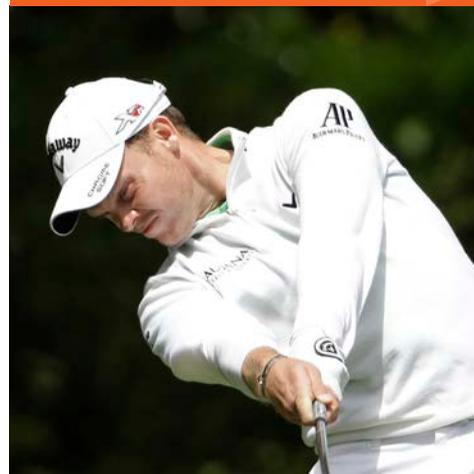
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Targeted approach required for engaging disabled in sport

The merger between London Sport and Interactive, announced at the beginning of April, is a significant moment in London Sport's vision of making London the most physically active city in the world.

Too many disabled people are living inactive lives with the negative outcomes that result. In physical activity and sport in London only 19.3 per cent of disabled adult Londoners regularly take part, compared to 38 per cent of the adult population as a whole.

A more targeted approach to engaging disabled people in physical activity is required to ensure that this population gains all the physical, mental and social benefits that accrue from regular activity. For London Sport to achieve our target, it is imperative that



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Only 19.3 per cent of disabled Londoners take part in regular physical activity

engaging 'low participation' groups into active lifestyles is a fundamental part of our strategic efforts. For the wider sector, attracting disabled people to activity is not only the right thing to do but it also makes good business sense

- as studies have shown that disabled people are largely keen to do more but remain an under-served population.

Interactive has demonstrated a capacity for supporting the development of equality in physical activity and sport for disabled people in London. As a recognised part of London's sport sector, the team have delivered extensive activities which have helped change perceptions within the sector and encouraged more disabled people to participate.

By 2020, we want to have helped get 1m Londoners more physically active. It is imperative that those efforts are targeted with disabled people in mind, just as much as non-disabled participants.

Angus Robertson, London Sport

Sport and physical activity sector must take mental health issues seriously

Successful public health campaigns mean that we all know that regular exercise is good for our physical health. Fewer people know that it can improve our mental wellbeing.

Having a mental health problem can put us at even higher risk of developing serious physical health problem. Those of us with a mental health problem are twice as likely to die from heart disease and four times as likely to die from respiratory disease.

This is why Mind, with support from Sport England and the National

Lottery, launched Get Set to Go. It's an ambitious project running at eight local Minds across England and has been designed with people living with mental health problems.

There is a role for the leisure sector to play. Last summer Mind asked people with mental health problems what would help them participate in sport. Nearly three quarters felt their mental health made taking part too difficult. This shows the sports sector needs to make clubs, gyms and leisure centres more accessible to people with mental

The sport sector needs to make clubs and gyms more accessible

health problems so they can benefit from physical activity.

Mind is working with coaches with experience of mental health problems to design a training package for professionals working in the sport and leisure sector.

Hayley Jarvis, community programmes manager (sport) at Mind

PICTURE BY: CHRIS CARLSON/AP/PRESS ASSOCIATION IMAGES



“An Englishman winning the Masters is an inspiration to lots of players coming through”

Danny Willett, Masters champion 2016

Danny Willett has become only the second Englishman to win the prestigious Masters Tournament – the other being Nick Faldo – in the golf competition’s 82-year history.

The Sheffield-born golfer’s dramatic race to don the famous green jacket is a shot in the arm for English golf and his remarkable display could help create a new generation of players.

“This is inspirational,” said Nigel Edwards, England Golf performance director. “The media are going crazy and hopefully we can have another surge of interest, as there was for European golf in the 80s and 90s.”

PITCHING IN

While Willett’s win was a shock to most golf fans, those familiar with his progress – and the training opportunities offered to him by the game’s national governing body – might be less surprised. England Golf’s training programme offers coaching and playing opportunities to the country’s most talented players.

For Willett that has meant trips to Australia – where he won the Australian stroke play championship – and to Spain, where he won the Spanish amateur cup

before turning professional as the world number one amateur golfer in May 2008.

“Ultimately the performance is down to the player,” says Edwards. “But many of the players have said the opportunities they’ve had along the way have been outstanding – whether it’s from a junior organiser at their club, someone running county events or the chance to play for England or at the Walker Cup.

“Our England Golf ambassador, Justin Rose, has said that the opportunities England gave him when he was young, to compete around the world, were crucial to his development. Obviously, it’s down to the player, whether they have the heart and the will to put in the hard work – whether they have the desire to succeed. But all these experiences contribute to this success.”

Edwards’s words were echoed by Graham Walker, the lead coach to the England Golf men’s squad. He was Danny Willett’s coach for more than a decade, taking him from a two-handicapper to being the world’s number one amateur.

“For an Englishman to win the Masters is just fantastic and it should be an inspiration to lots of players coming through. But they have to make sure they work at the right things,” said Walker. ●





PICTURE BY: DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP/PRESS ASSOCIATION IMAGES

Danny Willett – the first Englishman to win the Masters since Nick Faldo in 1996

“Having grown up and played sport in the South Wales valleys, I’m certain of the benefits of sport”

Paul Thomas, Sport Wales chair

Paul Thomas – shortlisted for Sir Alex Ferguson’s ‘most influential leader’ award of 2015 – has been named as the new chair of Sport Wales. The Welsh government appointed Thomas as successor to Laura McAllister, who was at the end of her second three-year term.

As well as leading on major projects for UK Sport and Sport England, Thomas is the founder of creative think tank DNA Definitive and has become known by the wider public as BBC Wales’ ‘Business Doctor’. Thomas has spoken at TEDx conferences and spent time consulting in India, China, Malaysia, Pakistan and parts of Europe – gaining significant experience in the development and implementation of leadership within varying cultural environments.

A certified canoe instructor, his more recent (and local) achievements include setting up a new community fitness gym in Ebbw Vale.



Thomas (right) began his three-year term this month

GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

Taking up his position, Thomas says he wants to deliver Sport Wales’ vision of “uniting a proud sporting nation,” in which everyone in Wales was “fit and enjoying life through the benefits of sport.”

“Over the past decade I have worked in regions all over the world, making a difference to the health and wellbeing of people, leaders and organisations,” he adds. “It’s such a privilege to be able to use that experience to play a part in the future of Welsh sport.”

“Having grown up in the South Wales valleys – and played sport most of my life – I’m certain of the benefits sport can have on people’s health and wellbeing. Sport has provided me with great opportunities and skills, so to be appointed to this role by the government is a real privilege.”

CLEAR VISION

One of Thomas’ priorities will be driving and facilitating a new approach to community sport that “creates a clear line of sight” between Welsh government goals and investment decisions, and the



Using sport to improve the health of the nation

SHUTTERSTOCK / PHILIP BRID



SHUTTERSTOCK / MITCH GUNN

needs and challenges of clubs, communities, coaches, athletes and volunteers who are delivering sport.

He will be expected to galvanise the sport sector in Wales to deliver against the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and to do that by maximising the collective effort and investment of Sport Wales and their partners in NGBs, local authorities and the third and private sectors.

“I look forward to meeting all those involved in grassroots sport,” he says. “I want to help in some way to create a new future for the generations of communities throughout Wales; making us even stronger, more active and resilient.

“I’m also looking forward to working with the board and everyone involved at Sport Wales to help it deliver the vision of ‘Uniting a Proud Sporting Nation’ but one in which everyone in Wales is active, fit and enjoying life through the benefits of sport.”

As chair, Thomas will have a say in all aspects of Welsh sport, from elite to grassroots

TEAM LEADER

Welsh deputy minister for culture, sport and tourism, Ken Skates, said Thomas was elected for his “vision, passion and commitment, along with his knowledge and experience in leadership and management.”

“We want to break down barriers to participation in sport and physical activity,” Skates said. “We aim to create opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to become hooked on sport for life. I’m confident Paul’s qualities, experience and commitment will help the Welsh Government deliver a more physically active and successful sporting nation.”

In his role, Thomas will lead an 11-strong board of directors and will work closely with Sport Wales CEO Sarah Powell. Sport Wales currently employs around 160 staff, based across four locations, with a head office in Cardiff and a string of regional offices in Carmarthen, Deeside and Caernarfon. ●



“We encourage the sector to be creative, brave and explore new ideas”

Dave Candler, Swimming Teachers' Association CEO

Where has your career taken you so far?

I've been involved in teaching swimming and leisure management for 20 years and as operations, swimming and training manager at Inspire Leisure for the last 10.

I was STA's youngest, longest serving president, which has given me the opportunity to share practical experiences and influence the development of STA's educational programmes. As a tutor, I've also had the privilege of training hundreds of teachers.

Working in a leisure environment gives me an understanding of the industry and what's needed.

What will your priorities as CEO be?

Being firmly focussed on our charitable objective of 'the preservation of human life by the teaching of swimming, lifesaving and survival techniques'. This will

involve working closely with members and customers to deliver what they need in terms of qualifications, and resources to reach the highest standards of teaching.

There's also a need to address the industry's challenges in recruiting trained swimming teachers, which is creating problems for swim schools across the UK. We've already started this process by piloting a Swimming Teacher Mentor Course, which involves STA training candidates and placing them in local swim schools to receive training, mentoring and practical experience with a swimming teacher.

I also feel strongly that a Level 2 swimming teacher qualification should be exactly that – no matter who the awarding body is. To my knowledge, in no other industry are qualifications specified by the awarding body name – a 2:1 business degree is a 2:1 business degree and a first aid at work qualification is just that.

The misconception I want to address is that choosing a Level 2 qualification from any of the awarding bodies does not mean you can't teach another's learn to swim programme and doesn't impact on ongoing training. I know this from running one of the biggest swim schools in the country.

How will you get more people swimming?

For younger children, it's about educating parents on the importance of swimming, so they see it as a key life skill. For schools, we want swimming to be taken more seriously on the curriculum and the government to intervene to provide them practical support, but as mentioned this will be a long process.

For children who've reached the top of the learn to swim programme and don't wish to progress on to club swimming, we want to retain their interest by giving them a choice of activities they can do in the pool.

For example our Junior Lifeguard Academy offers 40 aquatic activities for youngsters aged 8+ years to



Dave Candler took up his role this month



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Candler wants to create a diverse range of swimming programmes reaching all ages and abilities in society

choose from. For adults, we need to attract them to the pool and we're in the process of exploring exciting new fitness based aquatic programmes that are more akin with what you find in a gym programme.

How will the STA's role develop, going forward? Will it expand into other areas?

We want to create programmes which people of all ages will enjoy in the pool and that might mean expanding into other teaching areas or partnering with specialist training companies.

Education is also big on our agenda, informing parents and/or carers about the importance of learning to swim and water safety education. In June we have our National Water Safety Week and we'll be reaching out to all those involved in influencing young people to pledge their support.

What do you see as swimming's biggest strength as a participation sport?

There are so many benefits from it. Swimming is a fantastic way for people of all ages and abilities to get fit and stay fit. The natural buoyancy of the water reduces weight-bearing stress, allowing a greater ease of movement with less strain on the body.

For families, it's also one of the only activities you can all do together and have fun. It also goes without saying that learning to swimming is a vital life skill that could one day save your life.

And its biggest weakness?

Cost is a major barrier, as is an ageing pool stock and pool availability in some parts of the country.

Pool programming is also an increasing issue, fitting everyone in at a time everyone wants. Pools are an expensive commodity and with many council pools not being subsidised these days, timetabling has become ever more an issue with the most profitable and popular sessions given a priority to cover costs.

How would you correct these weaknesses?

As an awarding body, we can't do much without government intervention when it comes to pool stock, but more needs to be done to ensure facilities fulfil their potential – not only from a financial viewpoint but also to encourage more people to use them.

We encourage the sector to be creative and explore new ways to optimise pool time and increase revenue. Many councils and trusts, for example, have embraced change through our Swim Academy programme.

The scheme increases wet leisure income, reduces operating costs and expands pool programmes by offering a more diverse range of aquatic activities.

The results speak for themselves – the Link4Life Swim Academy in Rochdale saw a 30 per cent increase in enrolments over three years – and the success of the Swim Academies has led the way for more council- and trust-run pools to have the confidence to step outside of the box. They too are reaping the rewards. ●



FUNDING

'Rebalance Sport England funding'

Sport England funding should be rebalanced in favour of locally-led organisations and away from national governing bodies (NGBs), according to the Local Government Association (LGA).

In its submission to the quango's consultation on the government's *Sporting Future* sport strategy, the LGA said that councils and their local partners were "well placed to lead a step-change in sports participation rates that will improve the nation's physical and mental wellbeing".

"Councils' understanding of communities enables them to target opportunities"



JJ PIX / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

▲ According to the LGA, councils are best placed to improve participation rates

"Not only are councils the biggest public sector investor in sport and physical activity, spending £1.4bn (US\$2bn, €1.7bn) per year, but their understanding of communities enables them to target opportunities and encourage mass participation," said the submission.

"The LGA would like to see a rebalancing of funding from national interventions to a more local one, with councils of all types able to access as many funding programmes as possible to develop locally-led solutions to tackle inactivity."

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=t4c8j>

Scotland's £32.9m Oriam to welcome basketball, netball and handball

Three sports governing bodies – Basketball Scotland, Netball Scotland and Scottish Handball – have signed up to use the nation's £32.9m (US\$47m, €41.2m) Oriam national sports centre for training and events.

From August 2016 onwards, when the impressive facility is due to be completed, each sport will use Oriam's sports hall for national training and occasional matches.

The three organisations are the latest sporting bodies to commit to using the facilities. The Scottish Football Association,



▲ McCafferty, Achara and Pettitt (left to right)

Scottish Rugby and Scottish Squash and Racquetball have already signed up.

To coincide with the announcement, Glasgow

Rocks basketball team captain Kieron Achara, Scottish Thistle National netball athlete Jo Pettitt and Team GB's London 2012 handball

captain, Lynn McCafferty, visited the centre.

The Edinburgh-based facility is being built in the city's Heriot-Watt University campus, and once complete Oriam will be a multi-sports centre with a full-sized indoor pitch with seating for 500 spectators, grass and synthetic outdoor pitches, a strength and conditioning centre, a high performance medical centre and hydrotherapy pool, fitness centre and studio, and a 12-court sports hall with 300 seats.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=5z7R0>





▲ The Eco Park will include the new stadium and a green technology park

FGR launches stadium design contest

Architects are being invited to submit “sustainable” stadium plans in a competition to design a new ground for non-league football club Forest Green Rovers.

The stadium will be part of a £100m (US\$142m, €124.9m) development – called Eco Park – which is a 100-acre sports and green technology business park being proposed for a site near junction 13 of the M5 in Gloucestershire.

Forest Green Rovers owner and chair Dale Vince said he was looking for “fan-focused stadium designs”.

“Sustainability will be key; we expect that to run through the core of the design, as through a stick of rock,”

“Sustainability will be key; we expect that to run through the core of the design as through a stick of rock”

added Vince. “There are two aspects of sustainability – first, it’s about sustainable construction, and second, it’s about the long-term operational sustainability of the stadium.”

Potential entrants have until the end of April to submit design proposals.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=s0W9z>

Prince William calls for Football Association governance reform

Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, has told the Football Association (FA) to embrace governance reform or get “left behind”.

Delivering a speech at Wembley Stadium to mark his 10-year



▲ Prince William addresses the FA

anniversary as FA president, the Duke said that “our governance structure is in danger of falling short of modern standards of best practice”.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=K4W5C>

NEWS IN BRIEF



▲ Money was spent on coaching

Rugby league benefits from Big Lottery Fund

Grassroots rugby league has benefitted from grants worth £271,570 (US\$390,849, €343,182) over the past 12 months, courtesy of the Big Lottery Fund.

With support from the Rugby Football League (RFL), 28 grassroots organisations have applied for the fund, with money put towards the qualifying of coaches, new equipment and first aid training.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=z0d6Y>

Irish sport participation numbers decrease

A decrease in the number of individuals taking part in team sports such as Gaelic Football and soccer has resulted in an overall dip in physical activity in Ireland according to the latest statistics.

While 1.7m people are getting physically active every week, between May and October 2015 Sport Ireland found that 46.3 per cent of the population had taken part in sport the previous week – compared to 48 per cent over the same period in 2013.

The decrease was partly attributed to an improved economic situation and more people returning to work.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=t0g0P>

NEWS IN BRIEF



▲ Director Angus Robertson

London Sport merges with Interactive

London Sport – the capital’s County Sports Partnership (CSP) – has merged with disability sport expert Interactive with immediate effect.

Interactive’s staff and operational costs have been absorbed by London Sport and no redundancies have been made. As a result of the merger, Interactive will maintain its brand for another 12 months until March 2017.

The disability sports body will continue to run its existing campaigns and projects and will work in league with its new bedfellow to enhance equality in disability sport across the capital.

Encouraging and stimulating physical activity among disabled individuals in London is one of the main priorities of London Sport, which has a target of getting 1m more Londoners active by 2020.

“Interactive’s team of specialists in disability equality will help to enhance London Sport’s activities,” said London Sport director of operations Angus Robertson.

Of London’s 8.5m population, 924,700 16-64 year-olds are considered disabled under the Equalities Act – 19.3 per cent of which take part in regular physical activity.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=Q7J8C>



PRESS ASSOCIATION

▲ Sixways’ artificial pitch will be laid in time for the start of the 2016/17 season

Worcester Warriors to lay artificial pitch

Worcester Warriors will become the third Premiership rugby club to lay an artificial pitch at its home ground ahead of the 2016/17 season.

The new pitch will be laid at the Sixways Stadium between June and August in time for the start of the new Premiership season. According to the club the pitch – produced by Italian firm Limonta Sport – is the first in the UK to feature an organic infill rather than rubber crumb.

It will sit on top of a rugby-specific

shock pad, and will permit greater usage for the elite playing staff, academy players and community rugby, as well as reducing maintenance costs.

“Our stadium pitch is the single most under-utilised asset in the club, currently being used fewer than 100 hours per season,” said Worcester chief executive Jim O’Toole.

“This development not only allows us to play more rugby at all levels on our biggest physical asset but also allows us to establish new commercial revenue streams such as concerts, festivals and other non-rugby events.”

Worcester Warriors becomes the third club in the top flight to lay a surface that is not 100 per cent natural grass after Saracens and Newcastle Falcons.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=b9s1T>

“This allows us to establish new commercial revenue streams such as non-rugby events”

Government unveils ambitious strategy for cycling and walking

The government has unveiled a new blueprint to boost physical activity and sustainable transport

by encouraging more walking and cycling across Britain.

The strategy wants to make active travel

“the natural choice for shorter journeys” by the year 2040.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=d3s8I>

health sport activity



“Working together for a brighter future”



FACILITIES

Burton Albion set for £1m project

A proposal to build a £1m (US\$1.4m, €1.2m) sports facility at Burton Albion's Pirelli Stadium has been accepted by the local council.

The League One club's Community Trust (BACT) is behind the project to create the hub with an artificial pitch with changing rooms to be used by the people of the town.

East Staffordshire Borough Council has given the green light to the plans and the project has secured £843,510 (US\$1.2m, €1m) of its total budget

"If all goes to plan, the facility could be up and running by September 2016"



PRESS ASSOCIATION

▲ The facility will be built on the site of Burton Albion's Pirelli Stadium ground

via the Premier League and Football Association (FA) Facilities Fund.

According to BACT head of community Andy Taylor, the club has been working on the project with the FA, Premier League and Football Foundation for more than a year. The remainder of the finance

is due to come from the council and partnerships with local businesses.

"We are now concentrating on securing the remaining funding by getting more partners on board," said Taylor. "If all goes to plan, the facility could be up and running by September."

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=s9E2D>

Select Committee launches homophobia inquiry

An inquiry into homophobia in sport has been launched by the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee, which is calling for written submissions and evidence.

The inquiry follows a similar piece of work launched by the committee, titled *Racism in Football*, which found that homophobia was emerging as a bigger problem than other forms of discrimination.

"With this in mind, the Culture, Media and Sport Committee is holding an inquiry to examine the issue of



▲ Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee chair Jesse Norman

homophobia specifically, and to take into account a broader range of sports beyond football," said a committee statement. "It is notable that there are currently no openly gay footballers in

Scotland and England's professional divisions and homophobic abuse remains commonplace at matches and online."

The committee wants to receive submissions from interested parties concerning the experiences of gay sportsmen and sportswomen, the approach of sports governing bodies, how homophobia is tackled in schools and whether football has a bigger problem with homophobic discrimination compared with other sports.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=Q6u3E>



▲ Sports Think Tank's Andy Reed

Sports Think Tank director Andy Reed has been appointed by the Sport and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) to oversee its public affairs activities.

Reed – the former MP for Loughborough – will be charged with raising the profile of SAPCA to "key industry stakeholders" (see pages 26-28).

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=f7W5X>



Turn over: Two London sports bodies merge to improve participation initiatives



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SPORTING FUTURE

Duty of Care review launched

An independent review which focuses on the welfare and safety of participants in grassroots and elite sport has commenced, with experts and members of the public called to provide evidence.

First referenced in the government's *Sporting Future* strategy, the Duty of Care Review will be led by Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, who will consider the submissions as part of an eight-strong working group.

“We want to ensure everyone at all levels can participate in a safe environment”



▲ Grey-Thompson and her working group will publish a final report after the review

The review will be broken down into grassroots sport and elite sport, looking at themes including: supporting participants; concussion and management of catastrophic sporting events; plus equality and diversity.

Grey-Thompson said the review was a “perfect opportunity for people to have

their say on what more we can do to improve safety and wellbeing in sport”.

“Sport is an amazing force for social good and we want to ensure that everyone at all levels – from grassroots to elite – can participate in a safe environment,” she added.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=P4P9U>

England netball players to get full-time status from June 2016

Elite English netball players will have the chance to go full-time from June as part of England Netball's attempt to boost performance ahead of the 2019 World Cup.

The decision was ratified during the governing body's board meeting on 23 March 2016. While the move stops short of totally professionalising the sport, those chosen to go full-time will be paid for the first time.

More details and the first batch of players to go full-time will be unveiled around the time of the Superleague Grand Final on 7 May. Superleague franchises will be asked to



▲ Selected players will begin training on 13 June 2016

nominate players they wish to become full-time.

England Netball will pay the players centrally with support from Sport England and

full-time training will begin on Monday 13 June 2016 in Loughborough.

Joanna Adams, England Netball chief executive, said it

was “amazing to be able to give these girls the opportunity to have netball as a career”.

“It's important to make these decisions in order to accelerate the development of the England Roses' success and get even closer to the top two teams in the world,” she added. “Once again we'd like to extend a huge thanks to Sport England for their continued support of our athletes, without which they wouldn't be able to perform at the level they do.”

The 2019 Netball World Cup will take place in Liverpool.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=z8a9f>



Turn over: League One club Burton Albion announces ambitious community project



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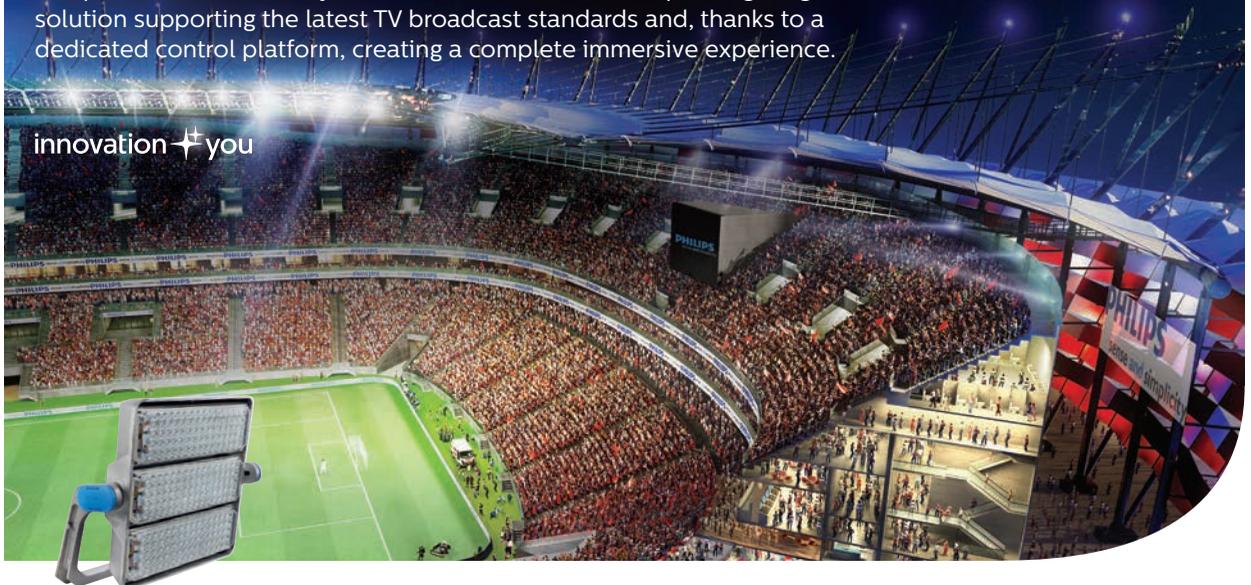
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PHILIPS

FACILITIES

Sport Wales puts forward 25-year facilities plan

The organisation's Graham Williams talks about creating a modern, fit-for-purpose facilities landscape

Sports Wales is hoping to create a “modern, fit-for-purpose and inclusive” sports facilities landscape following the publication of its 25-year improvement plan.

Earlier this month the funding body revealed its *Facilities for Future Generations: A Blueprint for Sport and Active Recreation* report in collaboration with the Welsh government, in which it set out a framework and recommendations to upgrade ageing stock in a sustainable manner.

The report recommended a strategy built on national and regional sports infrastructure plans, increased evidence gathering on facilities, and performance measures based on profitability and impact on activity habits.

Talking to *Sports Management* following the publication of the blueprint, Sport Wales deputy director of community sport Graham Williams emphasised the need for a “long-term, joined-up” view in the face of shrinking local authority budgets and changes to consumer tastes and needs.

“What we are facing today is some pretty significant revenue challenges around how we can maintain facilities,” said Williams. “One of the questions we’re posing back to the sector is can it just maintain what it’s got, what do we need for the future, and what aspects of the



▲ Sport Wales deputy director of community sport Graham Williams

“This isn’t a top-down blueprint. We haven’t sat in a room with government officials and said ‘this is what everyone needs to do’”

service needs to be delivered by other companies such as the private sector?”

The blueprint, according to Williams, was created on the request of the sport sector which was looking for advice in challenging circumstances, coupled with a government focus on the wellbeing of future generations. The government has launched a £5m (US\$7.2m, €6.3m) interest free capital loan scheme which local government can access for improvements, making sure quality sports facilities can be found in hard-to-reach areas.

Sport Wales’ document called for local government to review all its current

and planned provisions to make sure they are fit-for-purpose presently and in the future, integration of sporting infrastructure plans in wider estate strategies and a nationally coordinated review of aquatics facilities.

“This isn’t a top down blueprint. We haven’t sat in a room with government officials and said ‘this is what everyone needs to do,’” he said. “We’ve done this with the sector and on behalf of the sport sector in Wales. The actions have been checked and challenged.”

Following the publication of the strategy, deputy minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism Ken Skates will write to all his fellow ministers to raise awareness and to make sure the document is taken into account.

Williams added: “We’ve already started discussions with the sector about how we might move these nice words into action. We see this as the start of the journey, not the end.”

<http://lei.sr?a=U2Z1g>





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INTERNATIONAL

Populous chosen for Paris 2024 bid

Sports and entertainment architecture studio Populous – designers of the London 2012 Olympic Stadium – will advise on venue design for Paris' 2024 Olympic bid.

The firm will collaborate with international engineering firm Egis to draw up plans for 38 Olympic and Paralympic facilities.

Together, they will design new permanent and temporary buildings and ensure existing venues in the French capital are ready for the

“For Populous, it will be an exciting step on our Olympic Games journey”



▲ Paris is competing against Rome, Budapest and Los Angeles to host the 2024 Games

scale and needs of the Olympic and Paralympic events in 2024.

“This is a great opportunity for Paris to showcase a beautiful international city and its proud sporting history,” said senior principal at Populous, Ben Vickery. “For Populous, it will be an exciting

step on our Olympic Games journey, showcasing our expertise in designing experiences that can be enjoyed by millions of people, whether they're at the events, soaking up the atmosphere in the host city or watching from around the world.”

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=J5W2E>

Qatar 2022 workers subject to human rights abuses, alleges Amnesty

Migrants working on Qatar's Khalifa Stadium and its surrounding Aspire Zone, have been deceived about their working conditions, pay and subjected to abuse according to a damning report published by Amnesty International.

The global human rights campaign organisation has alleged that migrant workers – mostly arriving from south Asia to work on infrastructure for Qatar's FIFA World Cup 2022 – had to pay recruiters between US\$500 (£348, €438) and US\$4,300 (£2,993, €3,771) to get a job and then



▲ Amnesty's Salil Shetty criticised the Qatari government

received a lower salary than they were promised.

“Workers can feel they had no choice but to accept lower wages than they were

promised, poor conditions and other ill treatment because they have large loans (from recruiters) to pay off,” said the report.

Based on the responses of 234 workers interviewed, several complained about delayed payments of salary, in some instances being months in arrears.

Other grievances included inadequate accommodation and the withdrawal of passports on arrival, meaning that they were not allowed to leave the country. Even cases such as Nepalese workers asking to visit their home country to check on their families after the devastating earthquake last year were allegedly declined.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=z3T9G>

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INTERNATIONAL



▲ Founder Curtis J Moody

Moody Nolan designs Temple Uni stadium

Moody Nolan – experts in collegiate sport architecture – have been chosen to lead the design for a mixed-use on-campus football stadium for Temple University in Philadelphia.

The studio, which was founded by president and chief executive Curtis J Moody, has worked on more than 100 university projects, including sports facilities for DePaul, Indiana, Ohio State, Penn State, the University of Chicago and Vanderbilt.

Working in collaboration with AECOM, Moody Nolan will also design a student recreation building and a retail complex next to the 35,000-seat stadium.

Temple president Neil D Theobald said that Moody Nolan was “regarded as a national leader in designing beautiful sports and recreation facilities” which “fit the communities in which they exist”.

“Creating a vibrant and cohesive streetscape experience that blends together the significant retail components, the adjacent indoor recreation facility and various pedestrian plaza and green spaces will be a significant part of the evolution of the overall design strategy,” added Moody.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=L7o3k>



JSK ARCHITEKCI

▲ The development will include bars, shops and several grassroots sporting facilities

Cagliari FC stadium plan gets approval

Italian Serie B football club Cagliari has been given the green light to build a new 21,000-capacity stadium.

Cagliari City Council approved the declaration of public interest for the proposal which will see a new ground constructed in the Sardinian city by 2019. The club is ploughing €55m (£44.5m, US\$62.6m) into the project.

According to a statement made on the Cagliari Calcio website, the project will “focus on the area, sport and fans” and will be built to “the highest standards of service, safety and environmental friendliness”.

The club’s current Sant’Elia stadium is due to be demolished in May 2017 and

“The innovative project will have the highest standards of service, safety and environmental friendliness”

the new structure will include shops, bars, a gym, a physiotherapy centre, a martial arts studio, football pitches and courts for basketball, tennis and volleyball.

Polish architectural studio JSK Architekci are behind the design.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=s3x8G>

Nordic nations eye historic UEFA European Championships bid

The Nordic nations are lining up a bid for the UEFA European Championships, which could see up to six countries hosting matches.

A bid for the 2024 or 2028 iteration of the



PRESS ASSOCIATION

▲ Denmark player Christian Eriksen

tournament is likely to be made by Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland in collaboration, with Iceland and the Faroe Islands also being involved.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=N5V8D>

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SYNCHRONISING BUSINESS

Andy Reed

Former Labour MP Andy Reed was awarded an OBE for services to sport in 2012. The sports policy expert has now been appointed to lead a review of the County Sport Partnerships. Reed will become a columnist for *Sports Management* from the next issue

Tom Walker • managing editor • Sports Management

“**B**eing a sports nut definitely helped me develop lasting political friendships during my time as a member of parliament,” says Andy Reed who – as MP for Loughborough – spent 13 years pacing the corridors of power at Westminster. “While in office, I helped run parliamentary rugby, swimming, football, cricket, tennis and hockey teams and had the honour of playing rugby at Twickenham, football at Wembley and tennis at Wimbledon – as well as travelling the world to play against other parliamentary sides.”

SETTING OUT

Reed was elected Labour MP as part of Tony Blair’s landslide victory in 1997, having spent 10 years working for Leicester City and Leicestershire County councils. During his 13-year career, he spent time working as a front bench aid as well as a back bencher.

While he’s best remembered for being the first government member to resign over the invasion of Iraq in 2003 – “it got global media attention”, he says “I arrived home to satellite vans outside my house” – it was Reed’s love of sport which defined his parliamentary career.

He worked as parliamentary private secretary (PPS) at the DCMS and was also a member of a number of sport-related parliamentary groups and select committees. He chaired all-party parliamentary groups on leisure, rugby and hockey while sitting on committees on sport, athletics and health and wellbeing in schools.

Practising what he preaches – Reed in action at Twickenham



“I was a PPS to Kate Hoey from 1998 to 2001 – basically a bag carrier for a minister,” he recounts of his time at the DCMS. “It meant being the department’s political eyes and ears inside parliament, as ministers spend a lot of time out of parliament.

“We were involved in some massive, high profile projects at the time. We had the rebuilding of Wembley, the bid for the World Athletic Championships, the Commonwealth Games in Manchester and the building of the Dome.”

Reed says helping to secure the London Olympic Games – and increasing UK Sport funding ahead of 2012 – are the things he was most proud of during his time on the front benches. “The increased funding for UK Sport was crucial in allowing us to reach third place in the medal table at London 2012,” he says.

“I was involved in the process from start to finish.

First through my DCMS role and later after I’d moved to work at the Treasury, where I was able to make the case for increased funding for sport. It was a proud moment when the additional £300m was announced by Gordon Brown.”

Among his other victories for sport was the introduction of the Community Amateur Sports Clubs tax relief scheme (CASC).

“I moved a 10-minute Rule Bill and helped it through parliament,” Reed says. “It still saves sports clubs millions of pounds each year.”

LEAVING WESTMINSTER

After he lost his constituency seat to current education secretary Nicky Morgan in 2010, Reed found





Reed says playing sport has helped him make life-long friends during his parliamentary career

himself with time on his hands and in need of a new challenge. He decided to combine his political experience with the love of his life – sport.

He set up his own company, Saje Impact, and within months of leaving parliament joined the board of the Sport & Recreation Alliance (SRA). He was elected chair of SRA the following year. “The SRA was supposed to be a one-day-a-week voluntary role, but I threw myself at the task as there was so much to do and change,” Reed says of the role which he held until earlier this year (2016).

Through Saje Impact, Reed has been able to involve himself in a number of sports-related projects in a wide variety of roles – from consulting on policy to helping with fundraising.

“I’ve worked with some really interesting clients, ranging from Nike and the Bible Society to the rugby TV series School of Hard Knocks.

“I also serve on the board of Special Olympics, chair the Leicestershire County Sport Partnership and am involved with the Rugby World Cup 2015 legacy group.”

Reed is also active in the academic side of sport. He is an adjunct professor at Liverpool John

Moore’s University, helped set up an MBA in Sports Management at Loughborough University and co-founded the Sports Think Tank in 2011 – an organisation looking to bridge the gap between academic research and policy decision making. “The main focus of the think tank is to ensure that academic research conducted on sport and its influence on society reaches Whitehall and those drawing up laws on sport,” he says.

CPS

As a sign of his influence in sports policy, last month (March 2016) Reed was assigned to lead the review of the role played by County Sports Partnerships (CSP) – as called for in the government’s new sport strategy.

He will look at the roles and functions of CSPs against the backdrop of a changing political landscape of devolved local government and increasingly insight-led sports provision.

Reed, who has chaired his local Leicestershire and Rutland Sport CSP since 2004, said the review “comes at an important time”, and that he intends to approach the process “with an open mind”.





“The government asked me to take charge of it because they knew I had a deep understanding of CSPs – so didn’t need to get up to speed in the short time we have to complete the review,” he says.

“Hopefully, they also see me as a ‘disruptive thinker’ – one who’s never satisfied with ‘OK’ or the status quo in a changing world. I’d also like to think I have the policy experience of dealing with the politics of this sort of review.”

Describing the review, Reed says it will assess what CSPs can do in the future and what form they will take going forward. “The review is not about their performance, but an appraisal of what the CSPs should look like and what they should be doing in the new era of the government’s new sports strategy. Lets face it, the strategy will fundamentally change a lot of relationships at local level.

“What I’m looking for is greater local collaboration and leadership – and I’ll say more about this through the consultation. I believe we work in silos far too often in the sports sector. The CSPs are a good example of where we need to align the facility strategies of local authorities, the private sector,

Reed speaking at the SAPCA Conference earlier this year

national governing bodies, schools – everyone. That is – of course – much easier said than done.”

STRATEGIC APPROACH

The CSP review is being undertaken as called for by the government’s new *Sporting Future* strategy. Reed is positive about it and says he’s encouraged by the way it defines the role of sport in society – as a vehicle for getting people more healthy.

“I was involved in the last sports strategy in 2001, so it’s thrilling to see a new strategy 13 years later,” he says. “Sport has had its moments in government, but individual ministers have often had their own preferences for what funding for sport means. With this strategy we have some clarity of purpose about why we fund sport, even in times of austerity.”

He says the work is far from finished: “I think the physical activity message is hitting home, but we need to see a fundamental shift in so many aspects of government policy to achieve the right levels of change. Sport and physical activity needs to be seen as part of a rounded solution which also includes dietary advice and other lifestyle choices.” ●



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Gene Genie

What is cheating in sport? As science and technology improves, the definition looks set to become more blurred. Kath Hudson reports on gene doping

Kath Hudson • Journalist • Sports Management



Steve Gullans says gene doping could transform sport

“In as little as 20 years we could see another set of Olympic Games emerge – the altered Olympics – where all the athletes have undergone gene therapy,” says Steve Gullans, author, scientist and biotech investor at Excel Venture Management.

Gene therapy, or gene doping, is already a hot topic in sport and for a number of years World Anti-Doping Authority (WADA) scientists have been working on ways to detect whether or not athletes have altered their genetic make up.

PICKING OUT WINNERS

A number of genes have been identified as being extremely desirable for athletic performance. For example, almost every male Olympic sprinter and power athlete ever tested carries the 577R allele, and endurance athletes have been shown to have the EPO gene – Lance Armstrong’s drug of choice – which improves oxygen-carrying capacity.

Introducing genes to the body is such a simple procedure, that Gullans says it could be carried out

in a sophisticated kitchen. This suggests that once gene therapy is proven to be safe and affordable, it is likely to become widespread – making it difficult for anti-doping authorities to root out those who use it.

Gullans isn’t exactly pro gene therapy in sport, however, he is a realist and believes that once it is proven to be safe, athletes – both recreational and elite – will want to use it, because that is human nature. Given the choice, many people might find the temptation to have the same gene mix as Usain Bolt too hard to resist.

“Botox sales were expected to be US\$25m globally for a rare muscle disorder, but it sells billions and billions for beauty,” he says. “I think it is inevitable that when gene therapy is proven to be safe and affordable that people will want to use it to enhance their performance, because humanity has always lent that way.”

MEDICAL BENEFITS

At present, gene therapy is only in use for medical applications, but Gullans predicts this will soon change: “In hospital settings, we can expect to see one success after another within 10-15 years,” he says. “The natural consequence of any new health-related technology is to move from rare, or tragic, disorders to other fields almost as fast as you can prove they are safe. One field is performance enhancement, the other is beauty and ageing.”

So Gullans believes elite athletes will use gene therapy first – within 10 years – and then it will move to recreational use: “If you’re a weekend mountain climber, would it be a big problem to give yourself more red blood cells to enjoy climbing mountains?”

The two biggest barriers to gene therapy – safety and accessibility – could be overcome fairly soon. There have been over 2,000 human gene trials, and molecules are being made in India and China, which



I think it's unethical to withhold from someone something that would actually allow their muscles to be much healthier



will sort the supply issue and make the genes more affordable.

The International Olympic Committee follows the WADA Code, and WADA believes gene doping threatens the integrity of sport. It banned the practise in 2003, stipulating that gene therapy is prohibited if it enhances performance.

A WADA spokesperson said that the organisation is on it: "WADA has no evidence to suggest gene doping is being used by athletes, however, developing and validating technologies in order to detect it have been one of our priorities since 2004, when the first WADA expert group on gene doping was established."

FASTER, HIGHER, STRONGER

Currently it is very difficult to determine if someone has used gene therapy, but Gullans says scientists will quickly figure it out: "As DNA sequencing gets faster and cheaper, you will be able to identify changes in a person's DNA because you see three copies of a gene (two normal, and one altered), or you find some DNA from a viral vector that carried the DNA into your

Would watching Usain Bolt be as exciting if we knew he had altered his genes?

tissues. Basically, if you know what you're looking for you can find it."

Gene therapy researcher, Professor Lee Sweeney, has discovered that inserting the IGF-1 gene into the muscles of mice promoted muscle growth and slowed the ageing process. Sweeney is on the

WADA board and currently believes gene therapy shouldn't be used by athletes, as it has not yet been proven safe. However, once it has proven to be safe, he believes the ethics are less clear cut.

Sweeney said: "I think it's unethical to withhold from someone something that would actually allow their muscles to be much healthier now and in the future. As long as there's no safety risk, I don't see why athletes should be punished by having these treatments withheld because they're athletes. So, I'm on the other side of the fence from WADA on this one, even though we're on the same team right now."

Would watching Usain Bolt sprint be as exciting if we knew that he had built his genes to do so? Maybe not. Unless WADA can stay one step ahead, we might have to change our perception of sport. ●

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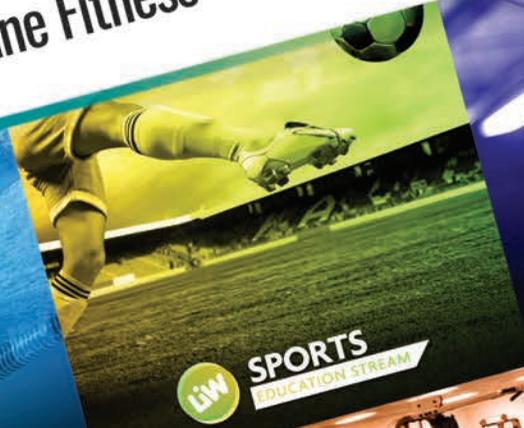
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Tackling issues

An open letter by 70 medical professionals has called for tackling to be banned in all forms of rugby played at school. Is the call for a ban an over-reaction or a measured approach to a real problem?

Tom Walker • managing editor • Sports Management

An open letter, signed by more than 70 doctors and health experts, has called for a ban on tackling in school rugby games. Warning of a “high risk of serious injury” among U-18s playing rugby, the letter urges schools to move to touch and non-contact versions of the game.

Allyson Pollock, professor of public health research and policy at Queen Mary University of London, is one of those to have signed the letter. “We have become increasingly concerned about the harms and risks of injuries to children playing school rugby,” Pollock says.

“Our concern is that rugby is a high-impact collision sport and studies show that the risks of injuries for those aged under 18 years are high and injuries are

often serious. Many secondary schools in the UK deliver contact rugby as a compulsory part of the physical education curriculum from age eleven.”

Pollock is particularly concerned about the types of injuries linked to the unique aspects of rugby. “The majority of all injuries occur during contact or collision, such as the tackle and the scrum,” she says. “These injuries – which include fractures, ligament tears, dislocated shoulders, spinal injuries and head injuries – can have short-term, life-long, and life-ending consequences for children.

“Studies also show that injuries from rugby can result in significant time loss from school. Rugby injury, disillusionment with the game and interference with education, are the most common reasons for children giving up rugby.”

INJURY CONCERNS

The evidence appears to show tackling is the cause of most injuries in rugby. Figures from a 2013 study – entitled *Epidemiology of Time-loss Injuries in English Community-level Rugby Union*, published in the *British Medical Journal* – estimates that 50 per cent of injuries in grassroots rugby are caused by tackles. Another study, by Ulster University last year, came up with an even higher figure, with 63 per cent of the injuries it studied resulting from tackles.

The reaction to the letter, however, has been mixed. While many health experts agree that it is important to address any causes of injuries to children playing sports, many have called for a balance to be struck between the dangers of playing rugby and the benefits it offers.

The RFU is introducing a new, gradual progression to the sport later this year



SHUTTERSTOCK / MITZY



SHUTTERSTOCK / PAVLO BOVA

“There have already been changes to address issues of safety in school rugby,” says professor Russell Viner, officer for health promotion at the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. “While providing safe sport is vital, it is crucial we appreciate the benefits gained from children playing sports in school.

“Currently around a third of children aged between two and 15 in the UK are overweight or obese, making it imperative that we make as much effort as possible to encourage more children and young people to take up regular exercise. Although there are risks attached to any sport, it is imperative that we don’t let this prevent our children from getting out and taking part in much needed physical activity.”

SOCIAL BENEFITS

The Rugby Football Union (RFU), the sport’s national governing body, responded to the letter by pointing out the benefits of children playing the game. “Rugby is a fantastic sport for children,” says RFU’s development director Steve Grainger.

“It brings many physical and social benefits, including increased confidence, self-esteem, self-

It is imperative that we don’t let this prevent our children from getting out and taking part in sport



discipline and enjoyable physical exercise as part of a team. Teachers constantly comment on behaviour improvements when rugby is introduced in school.”

The RFU also points out that as part of its new grassroots strategy, it will introduce a gradual progression to the game, with a structured approach covering introduction, playing, teaching and refereeing from under seven to under 18.

The structured approach is designed to provide building blocks to the 15-a-side game, allowing players time to learn the basics before contact and specialism is gradually introduced. These will be implemented across the country from September 2016.

PLAYER POWER

Former and current players’ reaction to the calls for a ban on contact rugby at schools has been less diplomatic. Former England hooker and current rugby

The government says it has no plans to ban tackling in school rugby



Context is needed before some medics blame the game for injuries

pundit Brian Moore says: “Banning contact rugby till age 18 effectively precludes full rugby after; it’s more dangerous to start unskilled, powerful adults tackling.”

Another former England star, Matt Dawson said playing full contact rugby from a young age will make rugby safer. “Context is needed before some medics blame the game for injuries,” he says. “And lets not forget that it can help with the child obesity issue.”

TAKING PART

The letter signed by the health professionals is also critical of government plans to grow the game at grassroots level. “We’re concerned about the government’s plan in England to increase participation in rugby in schools.” Pollock says.

“Under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), governments have a duty to inform children about risks of injury. Yet, in the absence of a comprehensive system for injury surveillance and primary prevention this cannot occur.

“Under UNCRC, governments also have a duty to protect children from risks of injury. The UK is party to the convention, so must ensure the safety of children.”

The government, however, says there are no plans to alter its approach to children’s rugby. In a statement issued by the Department for Education, a government spokesperson said: “The government has no plans to ban tackling in school rugby. We expect schools to be aware of the risks associated with sporting activities and to provide a safe environment.

“Team sports, such as rugby, play an important role in children’s development. They can help children develop positive traits such as fair play, leadership and resilience; an important part of our commitment in preparing children for life in modern Britain.

“Schools have the flexibility to organise and deliver a diverse PE curriculum which best suits the needs of their pupils. We expect schools to be aware of the risks associated with sport, to provide a safe environment for their pupils and to ensure that their teachers and other staff have the appropriate training.”

So it seems that contact rugby is here to stay. For those concerned about the issue, the Association for Physical Education and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents provide advice to schools on how to reduce the risk of injuries: www.afpe.org.uk ●

Matt Dawson says full contact rugby at schools makes playing the sport safer

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Train like a champion

With his eyes on a gold medal in Rio this year, World Champion mountain biker Nino Schurter tells Kath Hudson that the most important part of sport, at any level, is to have fun

Kath Hudson • journalist • Sports Management

There are not many people who can say the lowest point of their career was a silver medal at the Olympics.

Or make history in their sport by being the youngest ever World Champion. Mountain biking legend, Nino Schurter can lay claim to both.

Constantly striving to be stronger and faster, he drives himself very hard, which is evident if you watch his #huntforglory training videotutorials on YouTube, which lift the lid on his gruelling gym workouts, designed to hone the qualities needed for mountain bike racing: power, strength, balance and co-ordination. However, he also has lots of fun doing it, bringing a playful aspect into his workouts.



The London 2012 silver medallist is looking to go one better at the Rio Olympic Games



Schurter's gruelling workouts can be viewed on his youtube channel

TRAINING DAYS

Devised by Schurter and his coach, Nicolas Siegenthaler, his programme replicates a mountain bike race scenario. "Races have got shorter and more technical, so you need more power and co-ordination," he says. "Mountain biking is not just about endurance: you get a steep uphill, followed by a technical descent, which you have to do as smoothly as possible, so you get some recovery."

An intense 30 minute session with nine exercises - three for the arms,

three for the legs and three for the core - the circuit involves exercises like holding a medicine ball between the feet and, with straight legs at 90 degrees, moving them from side to side, or using pulleys to drag himself up a steeply angled bench.

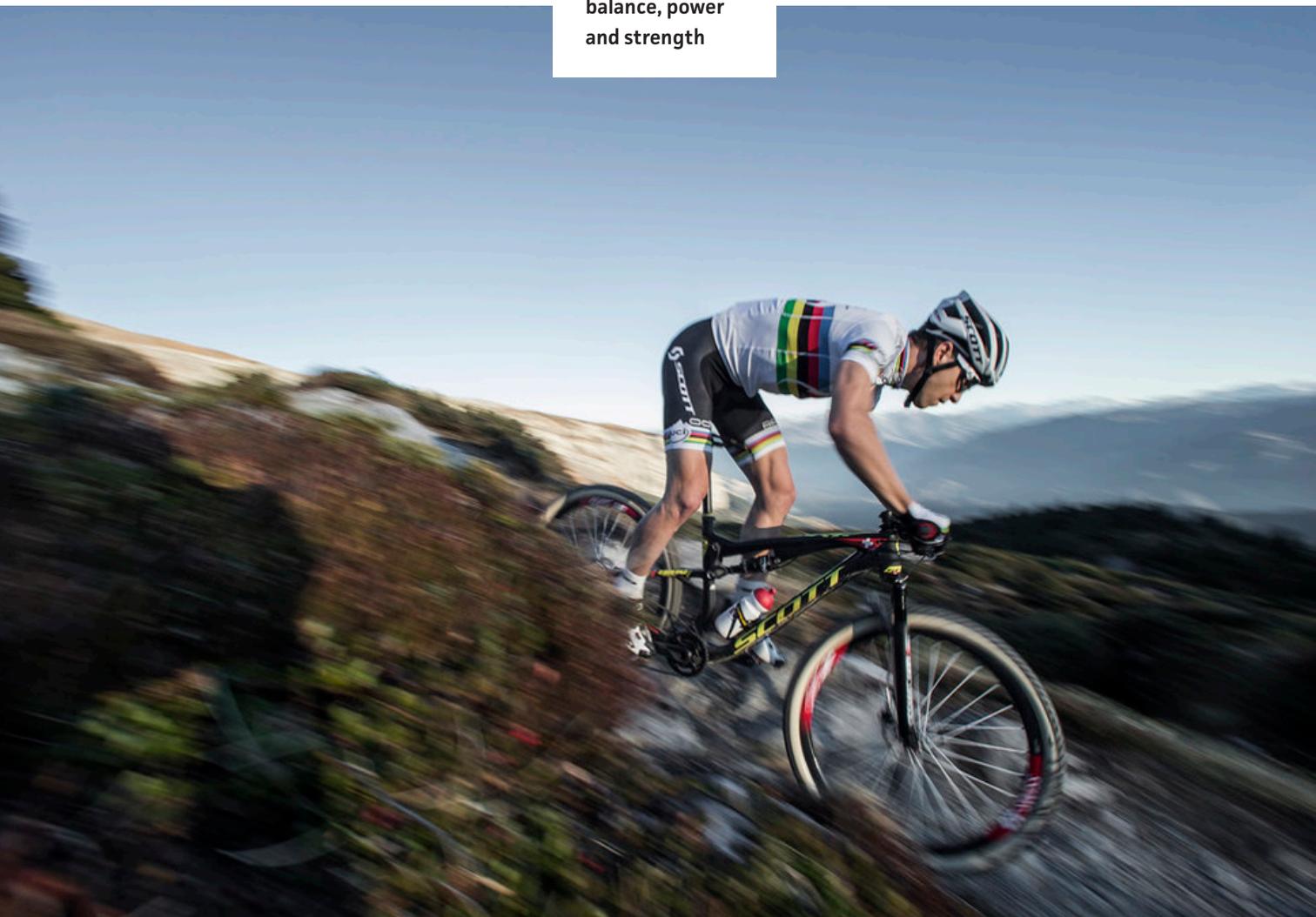
To develop co-ordination, many of the exercises involve doing two different things at once, such as having the arms on a balance board, while the feet are sliding on weights. "You have to keep challenging the body," says Schurter. "If you start to handle something you have to make it more difficult."

However, it's the 20-second mountain bike-style recovery periods between intervals which are most novel: he kneels or stands on a balance ball, holding a weight, or stands on a balance board while juggling or hula hooping. Schurter says this is how it feels to go downhill through a rock garden, or a section of trail with lots of tree roots. "You're sore, but you still have to be co-ordinative," he says.

It all looks insanely difficult, but in his second videotutorial, released on 21 March, Schurter makes it all more accessible, by breaking down the exercises,



Schurter says
the key qualities
for bikers are
balance, power
and strength





Born in a remote Swiss mountain village, Schurter has taken the mountain biking world by storm

giving easier alternatives and explaining the benefits. Using equipment which all facilities have to hand, this is a great circuit for one-on-one, or small group training, especially for those gyms or trainers leaning towards the trend in sports performance training (see issue 116, page 44).

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Schurter has even suggested that we should all bring some of these aspects into our everyday lives: sitting on balance balls to work or, better still, standing on a balance board. For someone who has grown up in a very active family and then joined the sports world, he finds the sedentary nature of so many people somewhat baffling. What he stresses is the need for a fun approach: fun is still what drives him.

About 20 per cent of his training is gym-based, with 50 per cent on his mountain bike, 10 per cent on his road bike and the remainder a mix of running, or Nordic skiing in winter. He says he loves being outdoors and this training is a continuation of what he has been enjoying doing his whole life.

“I grew up in a very remote Swiss mountain village - only 50 people lived there - so we spent a lot of

time out in nature, skiing, snowboarding and mountain biking,” he says. “My whole family got into mountain biking and we used to go on mountain biking holidays. My brother and 65-year-old dad still compete, although my mum prefers to hike in the mountains now and doesn’t ride so much these days.”

RIO BOUND

Now, with a few months to go until the Rio Olympics, Schurter has his sights set on gold. It was a nail bitingly tight finish at the London Olympics. Schurter had led the majority of the race, but in an epic battle in the closing stages, Jaroslav Kulhavy got past him a few metres before the finishing line to take gold.

“To start with I was really disappointed with silver,” he says. “But after a few days I became really happy: I’d given my best and it is a big achievement.”

Schurter says he tends not to get too nervous before races, because he trains so hard he always feels prepared, but he does admit the Olympics are a bit different to other races when it comes to pressure.

“The chance only comes every four years and you don’t know if it will come again. You can’t control everything, so you need some luck as well,” he says ●



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Money saved from tax cut could go towards new facilities and equipment

Tax incentive

The Treasury has launched a consultation which could see grassroots sports clubs become exempt from corporation tax. Matthew Campelli reports

Matthew Campelli • News editor • Sports Management

Is the government finally wising up to the power of sport? Amid foreign policy challenges in the Middle East and the launch of a transformational new education strategy – not to mention the fast-approaching EU referendum – it's hard to know where sport sits in terms of priority in 10 Downing Street.

However, one thing is clear – the government now appears to recognise the importance of physical activity in the context of wider priorities, such as healthcare, a more inclusive society and – during a time of austerity – the economy.

Since the government came to power last May it has launched a comprehensive blueprint for the sport sector in its 10-year plan, *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*. While the industry generally welcomed the document's vision and objectives, lots of the detail – particularly in terms of measurement – still needs to be thrashed out.

However, before sports minister Tracey Crouch delivered the strategy last December, her



Osborne first announced the scheme as part of his Autumn Statement

Conservative colleague, chancellor George Osborne, used his Autumn Statement in November to announce that the Treasury would launch a consultation on whether grassroots sports clubs, which are company-owned and generating profit, should become exempt from paying corporation tax.

That consultation paper was published during the back end of last month and drew cautious acclaim for potentially giving grassroots sport the support it needs during difficult economic times.

Emma Boggis, chief executive of the Sport and Recreation Alliance, says the consultation represents a “very welcome financial boost to grassroots sport and the 150,000 sports clubs up and down the country”.

“The new scheme will help grassroots sport to flourish by simplifying the treatment of national governing bodies’ grassroots expenditure and supporting clubs to lever in additional investment from private companies,” she adds.



If the sector's views are taken into account, the new scheme will help grassroots sport to flourish

Objectives of the corporation tax reform

- Increase percentage of the population taking part in sport and physical activity
- Increase the amount of non-public investment into sport bodies which are in receipt of public investment
- Simplify rules and reduce administrative costs for grassroots sports providers
- Delegate responsibility for funding and projects to the most appropriate and effective level

The chancellor must be reasonably confident that whatever the Treasury loses in corporation tax, it will make up in tax receipts from spending by clubs and private sector funders on sports equipment and potentially new facilities. Osborne's colleagues at the DCMS will also have one eye on the potential knock on effect on participation rates, as well as societal and health targets set out in *Sporting Future*.

Rob Wilson, principal lecturer in Sports Management at Sheffield Hallam University, suggests that the tax relief would stimulate private sector investment in social enterprises. He pointed to De Hood – a community boxing group set up in a deprived area of Sheffield – which has helped to lower crime and levels of obesity as the type of sporting organisation which could benefit.

Wilson added that money saved could be spent by clubs on hiring facilities for longer periods, potentially increasing classes and reaching different age groups and demographics, thus giving a boost to participation numbers.

"I hope this will lead to more grassroots clubs popping up, particularly for minority sports. This may be the catalyst they need," said Wilson.

SRA chief executive Emma Boggis said the scheme will provide a financial boost for sports clubs

Stimulating private sector investment is a key pillar of the consultation, particularly in terms of facilities provision, volunteer training and support and coaching. The document's introduction acknowledges the "need to reduce the over-reliance of some organisations on the public sector and move to a mixed funding model" in times of "continued pressure on public finances".

"In the time of pressure on the government finances, it is crucial that government, the private sector, and the sport industry work together to consider new ways of ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the sector," said David Gauke, financial secretary to the Treasury overseeing the consultation.

That said, exchequer and National Lottery funding for Sport England is guaranteed at £1.4bn until the end of the current parliament in 2020.

While cautiously welcoming the move, Sport England and other NGBs are keeping their powder dry until the consultation period closes on 15 June 2016. Following that, the government will comb through the responses and make a formal response during the 2016 Autumn Statement – a response which may go a long way towards demonstrating its appreciation of the sport and physical activity sector. ●



Play is a human right and seen as crucial for children's participation in sport in later life

SHUTTERSTOCK / PAOLO BOVA

Playing the game

Play England is on a mission to ensure children can exercise their right to play. *Sports Management* finds out about the charity's next stage of development

Helen Andrews • journalist • Sports Management

Of the basic human rights set out by the United Nations, the right to play might be one of the less well known – but it does exist. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 31, states that children have the right to relax, play and to join in a wide range of recreational activities.

Play England aims to fulfil this pledge in the UK, by raising awareness about the importance of play. It lobbies government and pushes for policy changes to recognise and plan for children's play. Working with national partners and other organisations, it runs campaigns and projects promoting play and publishes evidence-based publications on play matters.

Steven Chown, programme development manager for Play England, says the charity's work covers a wide range of areas. "Our board of very active trustees campaign for better play sites for children and young people throughout the UK," he says.

"We provide policy guidance to the government, partner with relevant forums to publish resources

and briefings to support the construction and implementation of local play sites and deliver nationwide programmes that encourage outdoor play."

STREET PLAY

One of Play England's most popular programmes is Street Play. Working alongside three partners (the University of Bristol, Playing Out and London Play), the programme aims to support local residents and local authorities willing to close streets temporarily to allow children to play outside.

"We're working with about 33 local authorities who have regular street closures," says Chown. "This programme is particularly popular in Bristol and Hackney in London. We're also working with local partners in Tyneside, Leeds and Nottingham."

Play England is currently collaborating with the University of Bristol to publish an evaluation of the Street Play project in the next few months. Researchers from the University of Bristol are involved due to their continuing exploration into



Turn over: Will scrapping corporation tax for grassroots clubs have an impact?

“ If you want to encourage participation in sport, children need to be able to play.



the importance of physical activity to children's health – and environmental barriers to such activity.

For example, as part of a study titled *PEACH* (Personal and Environmental Associations with Children's Health) project, the researchers investigated activity levels of children in different land cover types (green space or not) and the association between GPS-measured time outdoors after school and physical activity.

"In our new evaluation paper, the University of Bristol is using its methodology – measuring GPS data and accelerometers readings – to record the physical activity levels of children who take part in the Street Play project and those that don't," said Chown. "Our new findings tell us that children are more active as part of the Street Play project than when they are not part of it."

PLAYBOOK

In 2008, the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport commissioned Play England to write a guide for creating successful play spaces, titled *Design for Play*.

Eight years on, a new edition of the guide has now been written and is due to be published later this year. The content focuses on case studies of play sites created using the previous edition's guidelines.

"The original guide was a major game changer in terms of updating ideas on how children's play areas can be catered for. It focused on what it is that children want to do when they play and how to enhance the natural elements of a play space to allow young people to be active. With more than 40,000 downloads as a free resource, plus a large hard copy distribution, this guide was incredibly successful for park and open space development," said Chown.

FUNDING

Unlike other national bodies such as Play Scotland and Play Wales, Play England stopped receiving



Street Play is an initiative which encourages children to take control of their urban environment and play outside

the charity called Spirit of 2012. Play England is part of this consortium and will thus receive a portion of this sum. The grant's aim is to get people active across 18 UK locations as part of an initiative titled Get Out & Get Active.

At Play England's AGM in February, the trustees concentrated on ways to secure future funding for both its own activities and those of the organisations that look to Play England for support.

"While lots of people understand the need for children's play areas outside, it often doesn't translate into investment," said Chown. "As a national organisation, this provides us with a challenge."

CHALLENGES

Play England encounters obstacles from a number of sources, including the sports sector.

"The argument of Play England is simple," said Chown. "If you want to encourage participation in sport, children need to be able to play. Obviously in children's early years they learn to be physically literate through play, which allows them to develop skills, competence and enjoyment of being physically active – before adults can think about children participating in sport. Play is crucial for children's participation and enjoyment of sport." ●



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Next generation

A look at the latest artificial turf installation news from across the UK

Tom Walker • managing editor • Sports Management



The grass pitch at Sixways will soon be replaced with a new artificial surface

Venue: Sixways Stadium
Limonta Sport

Worcester Warriors will become the third Premiership Rugby club to lay an artificial pitch at its home ground ahead of the 2016-17 season. The new pitch will be laid at the Sixways Stadium between June and August in time for the start of the new Premiership season.

Produced by Italian firm Limonta Sport, the pitch is the first in the UK to feature an organic infill rather than rubber crumb. It will sit on top of a rugby-specific shock pad and will permit greater usage for elite squads, academy players and community rugby, as well as reducing maintenance costs.

“Our stadium pitch is the single most under-utilised asset in the club, currently being used fewer than 100 hours per season,” said Worcester CEO Jim O’Toole. “This development not only allows us to play more rugby at all levels, but also allows us to establish new commercial revenue streams.”

The FIFA-approved surface will benefit more than 2,000 players



Venue: Colchester United community sports centre
Tiger Turf

L league One club Colchester United has installed a new community pitch at its Shrub End sports ground. Working through its Football In The Community initiative – which provides high quality sporting provision for schools and groups around the town – the club commissioned supplier McArdle Sport Tec to install a FIFA-approved Soccer Real 60 XQ surface supplied by Tiger Turf UK.

The club is hoping to build on the 2,000 players who use the facility each week. As well as being used by the club’s academy, a community programme will see the pitch used for a range of wider sporting activities.



Venue: Peter May Sports Centre
SIS Pitches

Spurs and England star Harry Kane attended the opening of the pitch at his old club

the next five years, the number of teams using the pitches will increase by 40 per cent from the current levels achieved using natural grass.

“I grew up learning my football trade in this part of the world,” said Kane. “So I know how much this new pitch will mean to the local community. This facility will inspire more people to get involved in sport and in doing so will create quality, home-grown talent and increase participation levels in football.”

The project was made possible thanks to a £368,696 grant from the Premier League and The FA Facilities Fund, the London Playing Fields Foundation

England star Harry Kane has welcomed a new signing at his boyhood club – a new £578,000 3G pitch. The surface, installed at the Peter May Sports Centre in Walthamstow, North London, was supplied by SIS pitches and will accommodate a number of clubs, including Ridgeway Rovers with whom Kane started his career.

Football Foundation forecasts predict that over

Venue: Holcombe Park hockey stadium
Notts Sport

Holcombe HC boasts 12 full international players

Venue: Priory Lane Stadium
S&C Slatter

National League South club Eastbourne Borough FC will become the latest club in the sixth tier of the English football pyramid to replace its grass pitch with an artificial one. S&C Slatter has been commissioned to design and build a new FIFA 2 Star 3G pitch – supplied by FieldTurf – at the club’s 4,200-capacity Priory Lane stadium.

Club chair, Paul Maynard, said, “This is one of the most significant developments in the club’s history and comes as we have signed a five-year user agreement with Soccersixes – the largest FA-affiliated provider of five and six-a-side leagues in the UK.”

Soccersixes will be operating leagues on at least four nights a week with all matches taking place on the new 3G football turf stadium pitch – providing a guaranteed income for the club. ●

One of UK’s leading hockey clubs, Holcombe HC in Kent, has invested in a new artificial playing surface at its home stadium Holcombe Park. The club’s men and women’s teams play in the National Premier League – boasting 12 full international players – so the club is reliant on having a surface which caters for elite players, as well as grassroots games.

The new pitch was supplied by Notts Sport and, according to England and Team GB star Sam Quek, has already made a positive impact on the team’s performances. “The ball absolutely fizzes across the surface,” she said.





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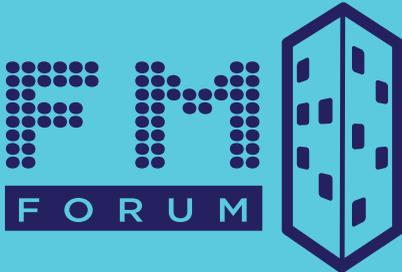
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Game changers

A look at the technology and innovation currently making waves across the world of sport



The new Ecocept turf is being installed at Wigan's DW Stadium

Pitch perfect

Artificial turf manufacturer **TigerTurf UK** has unveiled a new system which offers a solution for disposing with ageing artificial pitches. The new TenCate **Ecocept** product makes use of recycled plastics and old artificial surfaces in the construction of brand new artificial grass pitches.

Up to 90 per cent of Ecocept is made from otherwise landfilled products such as end of life plastics and rubber crumb. As a result, each pitch has the potential to save as much as 140 tonnes of materials from going to landfill – the equivalent of £30,000 in costs – compared to traditional installations.

Additionally, the carbon footprint of each new pitch is further reduced by the layer's high load-bearing capacity, meaning fewer

truckloads of soil are removed at the installation stage.

Paul Langford, managing director at TigerTurf UK said: "The traceability of materials and what happens to surfaces after they are recycled is an increasingly important issue within the industry, and we're thrilled to be able to deliver a simple but comprehensive solution.

"Research and development is at the heart of everything we do and it's fantastic to be able to demonstrate this commitment with the launch of this innovative new system. Not only does Ecocept give a new lease of life for surfaces which would otherwise end up in a landfill, but its versatility and performance extends the array of benefits TigerTurf surfaces can offer".

www.wiganlatics.co.uk



Michelin-starred chef Tim Raue

Michelin dining meets football

German Bundesliga club **Hertha Berlin** has partnered with Michelin-star chef **Tim Raue** to open a new fine dining restaurant at its 74,000-capacity Olympiastadion home. Called Studio Tim Raue, the ultra-modern food haven has a capacity of 200 and will cater for the club's VIP guests.

The menu will be altered for each home fixture, while the design – which includes corrugated steel works and graffiti – will reflect Berlin's reputation as an "edgy but cool" city. The restaurant's open plan setting will also encourage networking among diners under the club's motto, "Hertha BSC – where community meets football".

Ingo Schiller, the club's chief financial officer said: "From the very beginning, the new restaurant was designed to meet the needs of our local Berlin-based fans. It's something completely new and different."

It is the latest in a growing trend of combining fine dining with top level football. In the UK, Chelsea FC and restaurateur Marco Pierre White collaborated to open Marco at Chelsea Football Club, while two-star Michelin chef Raymond Blanc has worked together with Arsenal FC to create the club's premium Diamond Club offer.

www.herthabsc.de/en/



Pitching a wearable

The **Major League Baseball** (MLB) season began on 3 April and for the first time, the league's official rules committee has allowed the use of wearable tech during games. MLB players can wear a **Motus Baseball Sleeve** to keep tabs on elbow stress and the **Zephyr Bioharness** to monitor heart and breathing.

The use of the wearables have been approved mainly for injury detection and prevention purposes by tracking player habits. According to the new MLB rules, data from the devices cannot be transmitted during games and can only be downloaded after games.

The MLB has approved a batch of iPads for use by each team, which do not have Bluetooth wireless technology. No other electronic equipment is allowed in dugouts during games.

Clubs may use the data only for internal purposes and all data will be shared with the player. It cannot be provided to broadcasters or used for commercial purposes.



The Motus in action (above) and an example of what the data analysis tool looks like for coaches (left)

The devices can be used to help pitchers avoid surgery and help rehabilitate them by monitoring valgus torque – stress on the elbow. www.motusglobal.com

Just the ticket

Canada-based **Nanotech Security** has been chosen to provide unique authentication and brand-protection technology for admission tickets during this year's **UEFA Euro 2016** football championships. Nanotech's **KolourOptik** technology will offer intense high definition (iHD) colour imaging capabilities and anti-counterfeiting security features – replacing older hologram technology used at past UEFA events.

The **KolourOptik** technology is able to

accurately control the wavelengths of light at nano-scale, producing an ultra-high resolution image that can only be seen from specifically engineered viewing angles.

Nanotech will use a complex mathematical algorithm and advanced manufacturing technologies to accurately embed more than two billion nano-sized holes on each of the 5.8 million UEFA Euro 2016 admission tickets for the tournament – which takes place in France from 10 June

The tickets will replace the old hologram with nanotechnology

to 10 July. Completely ink free, the system only uses the reflection of light to produce intricate images of the Euro 2016 mascot – “Super Victor”.

More than 15 million people applied for tickets via the official UEFA ticket portal and the fans who have made successful purchases will start to receive their



printed tickets this month.

“Our goal is to ensure that only holders of an official ticket are granted access to the stadiums,” said Martin Kallen, CEO of Euro 2016.

“We are very confident with the tickets produced for the tournament and we are certain that fans will love them as well.”

www.nanosecurity.ca



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©Cybertrek Ltd 2016 ISSN ISSN 1479-9146 (print) ISSN 2397-2378 (online).

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Aquatic and Fitness Manager

Salary: Competitive
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Hours: Full time, including evening and weekend hours where required
Contract: Permanent
Start Date: 1 June 2016

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This position description is current at the date shown but following consultation may be changed to reflect or anticipate changes in the role that are commensurate with the job title and salary.

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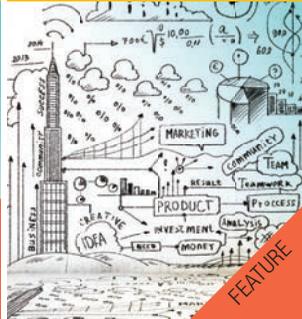
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