



Artificial Grass Pitches 'The English position, so far'

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The different levels of the game in England

- Professional
- Non-League/Amateur
- Youth
- Women
- Community
- Training



The professional game

- Not ready for it

Greatest deterrents:

- Perceived fatigue on lower body
- Injuries, especially longer term consequences
- Ball roll / bounce characteristics
- Lack of sufficient playing/injury data
- Baggage of early 1980s
- FA Cup decision for 2007/08 – No!



Non-League/Amateur

- Some want to use them
- However, uncertainty over professional sanction over time for FA Cup use
- Commercial motivation
- High intensity of use
- ‘Sweating the asset!’
- Users and Leagues looking for a steer from the FA first!
- No funding available, so financial backers only
- Little or no understanding of maintenance needs



Youth, community, training

- Still a lack of knowledge of ‘3G’ products
- Mostly Local Authority or school sites
- Possible changes in times of kick-offs
- Perceived lack of required maintenance against usage
- Ability to manage a sinking fund
- High intensity of use vs durability over the long term – how long will these pitches last for?



So, the issues today.....

- Top down agreement not forthcoming
- Injury concerns still within pro game
- No long term data to satisfy this
- No injury data yet available from 1 Star pitches
- Performance characteristics vs high intensity of use – sustainability
- Warranties
- The right maintenance regimes?
- Correct footwear?



Issues.....continued

- Climatic conditions more stable than other European countries
- Academy and training pitches at pro clubs not maintained too well or earlier versions of 3G
- Would benefit 'home' clubs
- Cost of a 'black top' and / or a shock pad, so minimum cost v longevity
- Poor installations at some sites



And yet.....

- Parts of the Women's game benefiting from greater certainty of play
- Woodley Sports FC – positive feedback to date, but results still matter!
- Rugby Union joint use – training only
- Good youth and training usage
- Stronger club/community spirit
- Pro academies very active on such surfaces but not high performance focused



What is required to move forward.....?

- Public availability/consumption of positive data – all interested parties
- Ongoing statistics from UEFA matches in 2006/07 and during 2007/08
- Greater injury monitoring and 4th year of data collection – to include 1 Star pitches
- Knowledge of how a game might change with a 3G pitch (FIFA/Prozone)
- The need for abrasion testing



Moving forward - continued

- Better maintenance awareness
- More training available to site owners
- Testing of pitches at pro levels to justify 2 Star performance year on year
- Testing of community pitches – installation and performance (approx 30)
- Performance vs high intensity of use – appropriate standards and pitches
- Testing of 1 Star pitches that have both needs
- 25/30 existing sites to be tested soon



Interesting development.....

Russia v England

Euro 2008 Qualifier

Wednesday 17 October 2007

Luzniki Stadium, Moscow





Thank you!

Any questions?