



The Mbombela stadium will be one of two locations to incorporate the GrassMaster system

Photo: AFP

Grimsby football pitches gain upgrade

SPORTS FACILITIES in Grimsby are undergoing a revamp with a £1.3m overhaul of the Bradley Road Football pitches. Part-funded by North East Lincolnshire Council, the Football Association and the Football Foundation, the initiative includes the construction of one synthetic and four natural pitches and a new pavilion. It is set for completion in July.

Agripower Contactors was awarded the pitch contract in late August with work starting in early September. The contract covers an irrigated, floodlit full-size natural Premier pitch with seating, a full-size floodlit 3G synthetic pitch to both Football Association and the Football Foundation specifications, and three full-size natural training pitches, car parks and all pitch works, site secure fencing systems, turnstiles and stands.

The work on the synthetic pitch included the topsoil being stripped, subsoil graded, drains installed, stone formation laid followed by all edgings, floodlight bases, path surrounds and fencing. The pitch is currently awaiting an upgrade to a FIFA two-star accreditation.



FIFA World Cup in the mix

The 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa will be played on grass pitches that partly consist of artificial grass for the first time.

DESSO Sports Systems has been commissioned by the FIFA World Cup Organising Committee South Africa to install a Desso GrassMaster system at the Mbombela stadium in Nelspruit and the Peter Mokaba stadium in Polokwane.

With a capacity for about 45,000 spectators, both new stadiums will host four group matches. Among others Italy, Ivory Coast, Argentina, Australia and France will play one of their matches at the stadiums.

Turf fibres

The system, scheduled for implementation this month, consists of a natural grass

surface into which 20 million artificial turf fibres are injected to a depth of 20cm. The roots of the natural grass intertwine with the artificial fibres, which anchors the field into a stable and level grass surface.

Over several weeks the 2010 FIFA World Cup stadiums will be used intensely for training and matches and the system will endure all weather conditions, according to Desso. After the tournament, the pitches will continue to be used for football and rugby.

The solution is already in use at football clubs including Arsenal, Liverpool, Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester City.



Extended play at Paignton College

THE NEW Football Development Centre at Paignton Community College in Devon features a full size 3G pitch, floodlights, portable goals, male, female and disabled changing rooms, an indoor viewing area and a coach education room. The facility, which opened in October, was funded through a joint project between the College, Torbay LEA and the Football Foundation.

By installing the 3G pitch with TigerTurf Total Turf 65, the College has been able to significantly increase the amount of play on the area. Football development officer Rob Payne says: "With such a consistent surface replicating all the characteristics of a grass pitch, players' confidence and technical abilities continue to grow rapidly."