

For immediate release:

The Future is Here

Sportsfield line-marking makes a quantum leap into the future with the introduction of the world's first laser-guided marking system.

For decades, the idea of laser-guided line-marking has been considered the stuff of science fiction, but an Anglo-Swiss company has now developed the first laser guided system to help groundsmen mark out perfect straight lines and exact 90 degree angles with the minimum of time and effort. Inspired by the British passion for high quality sports surfaces, and manufactured with Swiss precision, the new BeamRider laser system allows sports fields to be marked out to previously undreamt-of standards in a fraction of the time needed for traditional methods.

We generally do not give a second thought to the lines we see on sports pitches on TV or with our own eyes. We assume that the groundsman will ensure that the lines are straight and that pitches are rectangular. But are they? BeamRider Ltd, the Anglo-Swiss developers of the new laser system, have carried out a thorough survey of pitches in the UK, and the results are surprising: even on the best-maintained pitches, [summary of results]

How straight is straight?

Sports players rely on pitch markings to make decisions judge timing and distance, and to understand where the field of play lies. Referees and linesmen need accurate lines to help them make split-second judgements based upon what their eye tells them. Sport's governing bodies specify pitch dimensions, but often with no indication of what accuracy is acceptable. The advent of laser-guided marking is setting new standards, and governing bodies such as FIFA and the FA will need to update their requirements to specify tolerances of line-straightness.

Right Angles and Wrong Angles

The Football Association's rules state that "the field of play must be rectangular", but they do not mention an acceptable angle tolerance. Again, the new laser guided system will force a re-think, and tolerances will need to be specified; there are right-angles and there are not-so-right angles.

If a soccer pitch is not square, this will create disadvantages and advantages which can affect the outcome of a game just as much as a sloping pitch, or having one goal smaller than the other. I have surveyed many pitches across the UK, including major Premiership grounds, and I did not find a single one which was truly square. The closest to a right-angle I found was 88 degrees, but this was a rare and joyous occasion for me! The worst was over 3 metres out in one corner and 4 metres out in another. In most cases, the error was measurable in metres. And if the perimeter of the pitch is not square, then all other markings must also be out.

All Change

All this is about to change. The new BeamRider laser-guided line-marking system has revolutionised the standards of accuracy which stadiums and sports authorities expect from their grounds staff. BeamRider allows skilled groundsmen to achieve far higher standards than they could ever have achieved with traditional methods, and in a fraction of the time.

www.beamrider.org

ENDS

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Notes for editors

1. Hi-res images can be downloaded from www.beamrider.org/press/imagelibrary
2. The new laser system is the product of a three year, multi-million pound development programme by Anglo-Swiss developer BeamRider Ltd. The main investors in this project are UK-based Fleet (Line Markers) Ltd, and Swiss laser specialists Leica Geosystems. The system is protected by international patents.
3. The BeamRider system is capable of phenomenal accuracy over long distances, and is expected to revolutionise pitch-marking standards for most sports at professional level. It will also drastically cut marking times for contractors and local authorities with many pitches to mark.
4. BeamRider consists of a set of laser transmitters and reflectors, and a laser-following attachment mounted on a spray-marker (such as Fleet's popular Kombi marker).
5. For more information, contact Phil Sharples

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