

Press release

investor relations

Original press release sent by Amsterdam ArenA/Ajax on Monday 29 October

Ajax and Amsterdam ArenA select partners for artificial grass project

Edel Grass, Royal Ten Cate/Thiolon Grass and Rubber Resources are the partners with whom Ajax and the Amsterdam ArenA have entered into a joint venture for the artificial grass project. The ultimate goal of the project is to provide the Amsterdam ArenA with an artificial grass pitch that at least matches the quality of natural grass.

Another regular player on the grass in the Amsterdam ArenA - apart from Ajax - is the American Football team, the Amsterdam Admirals. The artificial grass in the ArenA will therefore have to satisfy the demands made by the coordinating bodies such as FIFA, UEFA, and the KNVB (Dutch Football Association). They aim to install an artificial grass pitch in the Amsterdam ArenA within three years.

Ajax and the Amsterdam ArenA are acting as the contract-awarding body within the project team. Edel Grass was selected as the principal contractor for the design, installation and maintenance of the artificial grass pitches. Thiolon Grass/Royal Ten Cate produces the artificial grass fibre and the carpet backing. And finally, Rubber Resources supplies the Ecorr ® Infill Pro filling, the rubber granules with which the pitch will be filled in.

At the beginning of this year Ajax applied for pilot status for playing official matches on artificial grass. The KNVB submitted this request to UEFA and carried out a survey of the Dutch professional football organisations. The clubs indicated that they would like to have more information; moreover, they were not of one mind about the proposed timing of the introduction.

Ajax would like to introduce artificial grass across the board. The project group is therefore attempting to phase in the installation of the artificial grass pitches, which would give all the parties involved sufficient opportunity to gain experience and to provide feedback.

The existing artificial grass pitch at De Toekomst (The Future), Ajax's training centre, must be replaced by the latest generation of artificial grass before January 2002. In the same period the sports centres of the Amsterdam ArenA and De Toekomst will get new artificial grass pitches. In the spring of 2002 artificial grass will be laid on the training pitch at the Amsterdam ArenA. The closing stage of the project will see the installation of an artificial grass pitch in the Amsterdam ArenA; a maximum of three years has been reserved to complete this programme.

Amsterdam, 29 October 2001
