



PRESS RELEASE

Genemuiden, the Netherlands, Friday 18 September 2015

Vitesse ready for its first *Eredivisie* match on hybrid pitch in GelreDome

On Sunday 20 September Dutch soccer club Vitesse will play its match against De Graafschap on a new, hybrid pitch, on which the natural grass has been reinforced with synthetic fibres in a woven backing. Both players and coaches are enthusiastic about XtraGrass™, on which they are already training at their training facility, Papendal, in Arnhem, the Netherlands.

The patented XtraGrass™ was developed by material technology company TenCate and supplied by its subsidiary GreenFields. In this system the natural grass grows in a – partly biodegradable – backing, consisting of woven clumps of synthetic fibres. This enables the natural grass to become stronger, better and to be played on for longer: 800 to 900 hours a year, as opposed to 200 to 250 hours for a traditional natural grass pitch. A number of Dutch amateur clubs are already playing on this hybrid surface. XtraGrass™ has already been installed in the Ricoh Stadium and the Kassam Stadium in England and can also be found in countries such as Germany, Japan, the United States, Australia and New Zealand and in Scandinavia. Apart from football, this hybrid pitch is also used for other sports that are played on natural grass, such as rugby.

Vitesse's fast game

Head coach Peter Bosz of Vitesse comments: "We have our own way of playing and a good pitch is important for this. In the past year the pitch in GelreDome left something to be desired. We hope that the investment in this pitch will produce great sporting results." The captain of Vitesse, Guram Kashia, says about the new pitch: "The new pitch is fantastic and it suits our style of football perfectly. It's a very fast and even pitch, which is exactly what our game is all about, holding on to the ball and playing as fast as possible. I like playing on a really fast pitch. The ball then moves around faster, the game itself becomes faster and everyone knows that I really enjoy tackling. The new pitch is ideal for this."

The best of two worlds

Ton Raaphorst, director of TenCate Grass and GreenFields, says: "With XtraGrass™ GreenFields and TenCate deliver a strong, durable, even and stable natural grass pitch that combines the best of two worlds. According to reliable sources, it is not only more Dutch professional clubs but also clubs in the Premier League, the Bundesliga and other international leagues that want to switch over to XtraGrass™." In Germany, 1. FC Köln already has XtraGrass™ on its training pitch.



Eredivisie club Vitesse has been training for several weeks on the hybrid grass surface, after its training pitch at the training facility at Papendal near Arnhem was sown with grass seed at the beginning of June. Meanwhile the integrated grass sods for the pitch in GelreDome were growing at a nursery in Limburg in the south of the Netherlands; they arrived in Arnhem by truck in large rolls some ten days ago, and here they were installed at the stadium using special equipment.

XtraGrass™ satisfies stringent requirements. The synthetic fibres are not visible in the natural grass, as they are below ground level, so will not be seen unless the natural grass on parts of the pitch wears away. In winter periods too the pitch thus remains eminently playable, appears green, even and stable and has excellent drainage.

Note for editors:

Digital photos and video material are available on request on marketing@greenfields.eu or media@tencate.com

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GreenFields develops, produces, supplies and installs innovative synthetic turf systems and hybrid grass systems in collaboration with and as part of the TenCate material technology company. GreenFields has distribution partners in more than 100 countries, and in various sports, including hockey, football and rugby, it ranks among the innovative market leaders.