

STAMPING GROUND

Synthetic grass mats that are designed to integrate into artificial turf pitches to showcase logos and brands in an effective way



(Main) Logo mats and name banner in the dugout area; (Right) Specially designed FCN logo mat



Farum Park Stadium is the home ground of Danish soccer side FC Nordsjælland – the winner of the Danish Superliga 2012 and a participant in the UEFA Champions League. The 10,100-capacity venue will also soon become the first stadium in Denmark to host Premier League matches on a FIFA-approved artificial turf pitch.

Traditionally, people have been somewhat sceptical about playing professional football on artificial grass pitches, but once they have tried it, they realise the benefits. “Artificial turf pitches are the future and are a growing market in Denmark,” says Lars Poulsen of NKI.

To create a point of difference and develop brand awareness at FCN’s home ground, the team wanted to have the club logo incorporated into the artificial grass and approached Nordisk Kunstgræs Import (NKI) to help. NKI recommended Signgrass: artificial grass logo mats that are designed to blend into the surrounding pitch. The company’s specialised technique enables club logos, slogans or unique designs to be tufted out of one piece of artificial turf (maximum size 9 x 4m). This piece can then be incorporated into the larger turf pitch.

With Signgrass, FCN was able to define its own technical requirements and parameters, such as its preferred type of yarn (monofilament, fibrillated or texturised), the colours and tints it wanted to use, the pile height (10 - 60mm), and the stitch rate and gauge. The production technique ensures that accuracy is optimised while there is no material loss due to cutting. This way, the club was able to create a uniquely-shaped and highly detailed logo.

Competitive edge

UEFA regulations dictate that a stadium cannot incorporate a logo within 3m of the pitch, while FIFA pitches require that logos are at least 1m away. However, in cooperation with the Dansk Boldspil Union (DBU) NKI worked to get approval for logo

mats, and FCN ordered several club logo mats including a 11m-long ‘FC Nordsjælland’ banner.

To make sure that the mats matched the colour of the artificial turf pitch, NKI supplied the required green yarn and the logo mats were tufted according to the technical specifications of artificial turf. The banner and club logo mats have fine detail and excellent sharpness. FCN is very pleased with the end products, which, they say, have exceeded their expectations.

As FCN will be participating in the 2013 UEFA Champions League, it has so far only installed the banner in the technical area at Farum Park Stadium. The FCN club logo mats will be installed later on as they are currently being used for the club’s Champions League matches, where they have been placed in the technical area besides the dugouts of the pitch at Parken, the National Stadium of Denmark.

FCN’s logo mats stay in place on the Parken pitch due to their large size (4 x 3.5m) and substantial weight, but Velcro can also be used as an alternative method for installing temporary logo mats.

Hot property

As well as functioning as eye-catching features of the pitch, logo mats have the potential to create additional revenue streams and encourage a strong commitment between interested parties. In addition to football pitches, Signgrass logo mats have been installed at mobile sports grounds, rugby pitches, tennis courts, hockey pitches, multi-purpose facilities and five-a-side pitches. The Powerleague five-a-side pitches next to London’s Wembley Stadium, for example, feature sponsored logo mats from Nike, Nivea, Carlsberg, Lucozade, Powerleague and Support In Sport, and are an excellent example of how logo mats can be used effectively and successfully. ■

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