

CASE STUDY
[international]



White Horse Kicks Off a Raft of Firsts to Complete Middle East FIFA Project

White Horse Contractors have recently delivered international standard football pitches; including both tournament match pitches and training pitches; as well as the first full size rugby pitch, to the FIFA Club World Cup Local Organising Committee (LOC) in Abu Dhabi.



This fully integrated contract, saw the successful construction of facilities for the 2009 and 2010 editions of the annual FIFA Club World Cup. The contract covers two tournament stadia and six training facilities, each built to FIFA's 105m x 68m specification. In addition there is a brand new pitch suitable for both football and rugby at the Emirates Palace Hotel - the first rugby pitch in Abu Dhabi to provide a facility for showcase rugby games. It was constructed by White Horse Contractors on a greenfield site within the hotel's grounds and it will now be the warm weather training ground for Manchester City FC's players.

Due to the extremely tight timescales involved to guarantee the delivery of the pitches in a match-ready state for the season start, White Horse Contractors used a number of innovative methods and processes never before used for sports pitch construction in the Middle East including methodologies to accelerate growing.



White Horse Contractors transported four articulated trucks, containing its own specialist plant and machinery, overland to Abu Dhabi travelling via Italy, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. the team negotiated all the attendant customs and borders issues to ensure its plant was onsite and ready to start work on time according to the build programme.

The Mohammed Bin Zayed Stadium (MBZ) has been completely re-built which involved using White Horse Contractors' own purpose-designed laser grading trenching machine to construct a new drainage system for the match pitch. This is believed to be the first time such an advanced machine has been used to facilitate football pitch drainage in the Middle East.

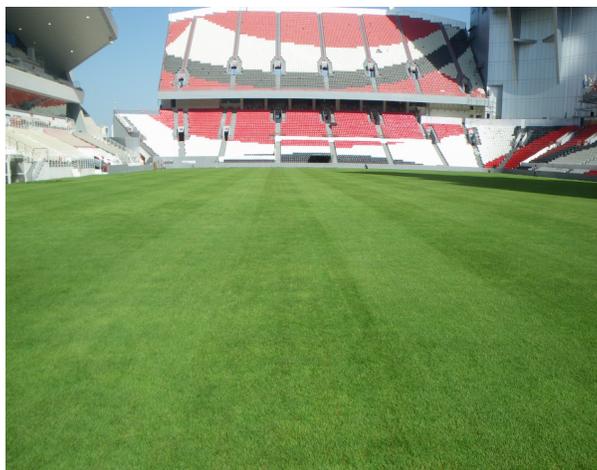
Following final grading and cultivation of the pitch, the hydrosprigging, a process by which a mulch is sprayed onto the new grass surface, completed the construction operations. Again, the first time this technology has been used on sports pitches in the Middle East.



The second match pitch, the Zayed Sports City Stadium (ZSC) required significant and intensive renovation with new grass. White Horse Contractors removed the Bermuda grass surface using a Blec Combinator machine, cultivated the sand, re-levelled the surface using a laser grading box and applied a moisture retention element. Then hydrosprigging treatment to the Panamanian Paspalum was applied.

The White Horse team also developed a series of high quality training pitches – including the Emirates Palace Hotel pitch for football and rugby - to support the development of football in the UAE and to a legacy programme of developing infrastructure, skills and expertise in Abu Dhabi.

Pitches have also been completed at Al Wahda Academy and the Officers Club as well as the Al Jazira training pitches. White Horse Contractors has introduced verti-draining to relieve soil compaction, verti-cutting to reduce the matting of surface roots, encouraging a more dense, vertically growing grass sward and top dressing to improve surface levels.



Stephen Greene, Contract Director from White Horse Contractors said: "Working in temperatures regularly exceeding 45-50°C with very high humidity means the team needed to be flexible, working in the coolest parts of the day. This was against stringent timescales to ensure the pitches were ready for play in time for the new football season.

Without an established supply chain we had to identify every supplier required to deliver these pitches – diesel, transport, excavators, geotextiles, hydromulch, irrigation. Effectively White Horse Contractors developed an international business unit, to facilitate the delivery of this very prestigious project in the Middle East."

Key stakeholders in the scheme are the UAE Football Association (UAE FA), the Abu Dhabi Sports Council (ADSC) and the Executive Affairs Authority (EAA) of Abu Dhabi.