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Media Information

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Artificial turf now covered in 'Laws of the Game'

London, 29 February 2004 -At its last meeting on 28 February 2004, the International Football Association Board, the custodian of the Laws of the Game in football, decided that a reference to 'Field Surface', including artificial turf, would be added to the Laws of the Game.

This historic decision allows international club competition fixtures and competitive matches between representative teams of Associations affiliated to FIFA to be played on artificial surfaces that meet recognised FIFA standards and according to the regulations of the competition. This is of great importance, especially for nations, where extremely hot, cold or wet climatic conditions can easily damage grass pitches.

"Integrating the artificial turf surface into the Laws of the Game is another milestone in the history of football. Millions of players around the world will benefit from this decision, as it will allow them to play their favourite sport on a more regular basis and, above all, in difficult climatic conditions that would make it impossible on natural turf pitches," said FIFA President Joseph S. Blatter.

Artificial turf was first used in international competition at the FIFA U-17 World Championship Finland 2003. Ten matches including the Final were played on a "FIFA Recommended" artificial surface. Widespread approval from the teams and positive findings in terms of injuries proved that artificial turf is the best alternative to grass. The latest generation of artificial turf, especially designated for football, replicates most of the qualities of grass, and is fully acceptable at all levels of the game.

As the game's worldwide governing body, FIFA strives to support any move to improve football equipment and will draw up universal guidelines for the use of artificial turf following the IFAB mandate. Based on players' feedback, medical research and information from the industry, the FIFA Quality Concept will be further developed by adapting the test criteria to introduce a second, more stringent standard on 1 July 2004.

The creation of a new, top-of-the-range FIFA standard will further improve playability and safety. This benchmark will provide the world of football with the best artificial turf surfaces for professional football. Besides the new standard, the existing "FIFA Recommended" grading will remain part of the FIFA Quality Concept. The test requirements for the "FIFA Recommended" standard, to which there will now also be a reference in the Laws of the Game, ensure the suitability of a surface for international club competition games and competitive matches between representative teams of Associations affiliated to FIFA. As an alternative, the "International Artificial Turf Standard" reference, which is not subject to a license fee, will also be acceptable.

The FIFA Quality Concept for artificial turf was introduced in 2001 in order to ensure the highest, standardised quality of artificial turf and to protect the safety of players. The FIFA Quality Concept is a rigorous testing programme for artificial surfaces, comprising a series of laboratory and field tests, upon completion of which manufacturers are able to enter into a licensing agreement for the use of the prestigious "FIFA Recommended" mark for artificial turf pitches. Today, 15 artificial turf manufacturers are part of the FIFA Quality Concept licensing programme and over 75 "FIFA Recommended" surfaces have been installed worldwide.

For further information please refer to the FIFA website at: www.fifa.com/en/development/quality

Or [click here](#) for the International Artificial Turf Standard (PDF)

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