

ARTIFICIAL TURF DEVELOPMENTS AND SPORT APPLICATIONS AT GHEENT UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

In the past decades artificial turf fields have developed into a worthy alternative for natural grass in outdoor sports appliance such as football, rugby and hockey. Heavy rainfall and periods of drought can affect a natural pitch. Several sport clubs own only a limited number of pitches and therefore are obligated to make full advantage of them. This is one of the reasons why many of these clubs are changing towards fields made of artificial turf which are always available, provided that the correct materials and maintenance are considered and regulated testing procedures are followed. The installation cost may be higher but an artificial turf field can be used more frequently than its natural counterpart and therefore be more profitable on the long run due to the lower overall maintenance costs. Furthermore, natural grass fields need enough sunlight for the grass to grow and cannot grow well in desert or extreme cold environments, whereas artificial turf can be used in many environments. Ghent University has a long history in the development and testing of artificial turf , which will be highlighted in this contribution.