



For immediate release

7th December, 2017

TurfTrax GoingStick continues global expansion

British technology continues to contribute to the success of major international racing festivals, and following its successful deployment at last month's Melbourne Cup Carnival at Flemington, the TurfTrax GoingStick and mapping system is set to further penetrate the Southern Hemisphere.

Developed in response to the British horseracing industry's search for more scientific methods of monitoring and measuring going and weather conditions on UK racecourses, The GoingStick has featured in the preparation of the Flemington track since 2010 and has inspired more widespread use of the device in Australia, one of the racing world's most diverse and challenging territories.

In 2016, following extensive trials, Racing Victoria began a programme of implementation at nine metropolitan and provincial racetracks in Victoria with a further four set to follow, making the GoingStick an integral part of the preparation for all meetings at Flemington as well as Moonee Valley, home of the William Hill Cox Plate, and Caulfield, the venue for the celebrated BMW Caulfield Cup.

TurfTrax Managing Director, Mike Maher, travelled to Australia ahead of the Melbourne Cup Carnival to oversee the GoingStick's use, and to meet with track managers in the region who are now using the device.

He said, "The GoingStick was developed by a Cambridgeshire-based company in collaboration with the Centre for Sports Surface Research at Cranfield University to satisfy a need identified by the British Horseracing Authority, and is 100% British.

"Implementation of the technology across this vast continent with a huge variety of climates, grass and soil types is testament to its versatility and reliability.

"It's a great compliment to the UK racing industry and homegrown scientific research, that racing authorities around the world continue to show interest in, and ultimately adopt, the TurfTrax GoingStick and Mapping Systems."

TurfTrax's revolutionary product also now stretches to Queensland where the GoingStick is in use at five racetracks, and more than 2,600 miles across the continent, Racing & Wagering Western Australia is implementing GoingStick and mapping technology at its two flagship tracks in Perth, Ascot and Belmont, and if successful more venues will follow. New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing are also beginning trials at two locations this year. The Australian Turf Club who operate the four Metropolitan tracks in Sydney will also be joining the GoingStick revolution early in 2017.

Use of the GoingStick in Australia is not limited to racing with a number of agronomy companies already using the device for multi-purpose turf sports pitches, and growing interest from other sports and turf amenity organisations.

ENDS.

Further information:

Philip Brannan

Sportsguide Limited

T: +44 (0)1189 341 280

M: +44 (0) 7774 964 119

E: philip@sportsguidelimited.com

Mike Maher

TurfTrax

T: +44 (0) 1480 408 970

M: +44 (0)7866 383 952

E: mike.maher@turftrax.co.uk

About TurfTrax:

TurfTrax is a global leader in the design and implementation of innovative data products for the horseracing industry, we combine this data to create knowledge and insight for the industry.

In recent years the Sectional Timing & Tracking System has been deployed at Ascot (QIPCO British Champions Day), Goodwood, Lingfield Park (All Weather Championship fixtures), Newmarket, Sandown Park, York and also at Aintree/Cheltenham where the TurfTrax data forms an integral part of the Channel 4 Horse Tracker App.

The British Horseracing Authority rules require every racecourse in Great Britain to use the TurfTrax GoingStick. The company also installs and operates Going Mapping and Weather Systems and its international customers include; France Galop, Dubai Racing Club, California Horseracing Board, Churchill Downs Inc., New York Racing Association, Hong Kong Jockey Club, Japan Racing Association, The Australian Turf Club and The Victoria Racing Club.

The TurfTrax GoingStick - Q&A

What is the GoingStick?

The GoingStick is an electro-mechanical device manufactured by the UK based company TurfTrax Limited. It was designed in 2001 in conjunction the centre for Sports Surface research at Cranfield University, The Jockey Club, UK racing regulator at the time now the British Horseracing Authority (BHA), and many of the leading UK racecourses.

How is it used/how does it work?

A 100mm probe is inserted into the turf racing surface to measure penetration, the handle is then pulled back to an angle of 45 degrees so that the probe measures shear resistance. The information is recorded using strain gauges and is stored electronically on the device. A grid map is followed so that readings are taken at pre-determined locations each time. After the track walk is completed, data is downloaded using bespoke software and transferred to the TurfTrax data hub for analysis and distribution.

How long has it been around/been in use?

The major racecourses in the UK began using prototypes of the GoingStick from 2002 onwards and it was used at all major racing events from 2003. In 2007 every racecourse in the UK started to use the technology. From 2009 use of the device became part of the British Horseracing Authority 'rules of racing'.

How does it differ from the Penetrometer?

The GoingStick measures penetration and shear, the penetrometer only measures penetration. The two forces combined provide a proxy for the forces that the horses hoof exerts when in contact with the turf. The GoingStick records data electronically, so is faster and more efficient to use with less chance of user error. The GoingStick comes with a software package and access to a database which enables mapping of the data and more detailed analysis which is not possible with the old penetrometer. One key point to remember is that the GoingStick scale is the reverse of the Penetrometer. The GoingStick measures higher numbers on faster ground and lower numbers on softer ground.

Will the Penetrometer still be used?

During the Spring Carnival race clubs have been asked to use both devices. Tracks without a GoingStick will continue to use the Penetrometer.

Can I equate a Penetrometer reading to a GoingStick reading?

Whilst the trials in Victoria show there is a correlation between the two data sets, because the devices measure in different ways, you will not always be able to equate a reading from the old technology in a linear way with the new method. A table is being provided to give an indication of how the readings compare

Does the GoingStick work on all soil and grass types?

The device works on all soil and grass types that it has been tested on including the majority of tracks in the state. The range of readings may differ between locations partly because of soil and grass types.

How was the GoingStick tested in Victoria and why have RVL chosen to adopt its use?

RVL first became aware of the GoingStick in 2006/7 through the Australian Racecourse Managers Association. Some early trialling took place, but there was no strong desire within the industry to move from the Penetrometer at that stage. In 2010 the Victoria Racing Club decided to use the GoingStick and mapping technology for the Melbourne Cup Carnival at Flemington and it has been used extensively by the VRC since that time. From 2012 onwards Racing Victoria and TurfTrax agreed

to trial two devices across as many venues as possible in Victoria. Since 2012 racecourse managers and RVL have been unanimous in their opinion that the GoingStick technology is the best available in the world for measuring the going on a racecourse.

Where will the data and maps be available?

The maps and data will be available on the racing.com website, on all racecourse/race club websites and on the TurfTrax website.

Will other tracks in Victoria be adopting the device?

No decision has been made about this yet, RVL will await the results over the coming months before deciding on a wider roll out.

Will other tracks in states in Australia be adopting the device?

At least one other state will begin adopting use of the GoingStick later in 2016.

Where else is the GoingStick used?

As well as 58 turf racecourses in the UK, the GoingStick is currently used by all turf racecourses in California, New York Racing Association, Churchill Downs, Arlington Park and Keeneland in the US. Woodbine in Canada, Singapore Turf Club, Hong Kong Jockey Club and Dubai racing Club also use the device. France Galop are also considering replacing the Penetrometer with the GoingStick and trials have recently taken place in Ireland.