

## Case Study: The Netherlands Men's National Football Team - Training

**Type:** Sports, media and public  
**Venue:** Sydney Showground, Main Arena  
**Client:** Football Federation Australia  
**Date:** 7th October 2009



## A Last Minute Win!

**WHAT WE DID:** With less than one day prior notice, Sydney Showground successfully transformed the Main Arena into a football field fit for the Dutch Senior Men's National Football Team, ranked third in the world. Football Federation Australia (FFA) was in urgent need of a training ground for the Netherlands Football team after heavy rains made their original training ground unusable. The first training session was private, and for the team and media only. The second session was public with approximately 200 people in attendance. Sydney Showground was easily able to accommodate the spectators by providing signage and extra security for the crowd.

**SPECIAL TOUCHES:** Football Federation Australia required a training ground that adhered to strict international football specifications. Sydney Showground happily catered to these rules and regulations by altering the size of the field, removing AFL goal posts, erecting appropriate goal markings, and mowing the grass to the desired length. The Main Arena has special sand based ground drainage allowing the field to cope with heavy rain, deeming it safe and in an excellent playing condition. The ability to meet these needs and the quick turn around highlights the versatility of the Main Arena playing surface and its ability to cater for a range of sporting codes.

**CHALLENGES:** The primary challenge in catering for the team was transforming the Main Arena from an AFL pitch into a football field, within only a few hours. The initial inquiry to use the Sydney Showground facilities was made at 9:00am on 6th October for use by 11:30am on 7th October. Use of the space was not confirmed until 11:30pm that night.

**OVERCOMING CHALLENGES:** In the early hours of the morning, the Sydney Showground staff began to transform the playing surface. The AFL pitch lines were greened and hidden from sight, and replaced with soccer lines. The AFL field goals were removed and football goals installed. Despite the tight lead time, the football team and media arrived to find a safe and playable pitch set to international football specifications.

**CLIENT'S COMMENT:** "Sydney Showground was able to deliver a training field to Football Federation Australia's requirements at very short notice. The management and staff at Sydney Showground worked tirelessly and within tight timeframes to ensure the venue's readiness for 2 training sessions on Wednesday 7th October. Sydney Showground exceeded the FFA's expectations and the FFA has commenced dialogue with Sydney Showground for some possible future training sessions".

Despina Kalogiannis, Events Manager, National Teams