



**OUR JOURNEY; VOLUME ONE**



ELITE SKILLS ARENA

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#### Elite Skills Arena - Our Journey; Volume One

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# OUR JOURNEY

## Welcome to the Elite Skills Arena; Our Journey Brochure.

The brochure provides a photographic time-line of Elite Skills Arena's development, from the initial concept back in 2014 (Chapter 1), to our most successful sales period (Chapter 5). Since the company was incorporated, our team have devoted thousands of hours with a range of professionals to design, create, manufacture, market and sell the highest quality football training products.

Currently we have three established product ranges, the ICON range, Wall range, and Wireless Range. All of which have been successful with professional clubs and academies, large organisations for marketing and events, and high-tech training centres

around the world. At present, ESA products can be found across 6 continents and we are approaching a milestone of 1 million games played using our equipment.

There is still plenty of innovation to come, with new concepts, software and hardware advancements already in the works.

We hope you enjoy the illustrated journey of Elite Skills Arena over the past 6 years.

Eddie Mitchell,  
Managing Director  
Elite Skills Arena Limited



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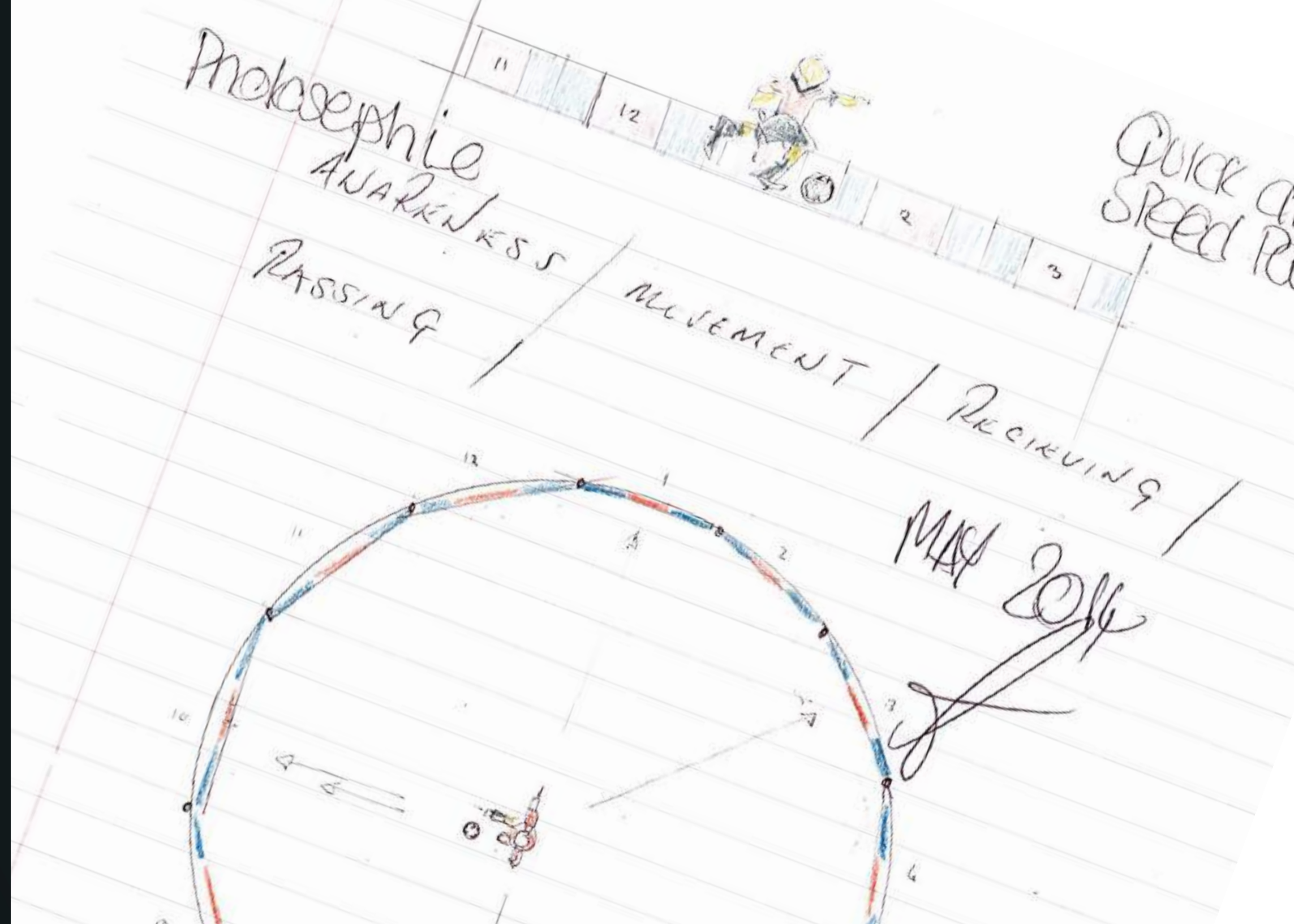
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# CHAPTER ONE

In 2014, the initial idea for Elite Skills Arena (ESA) was born and developed by our founder Eddie Mitchell. The company was formed, and we built our first ever prototype in a back garden to test and trial. We later launched our first product and created the iconic arena we still sell today.



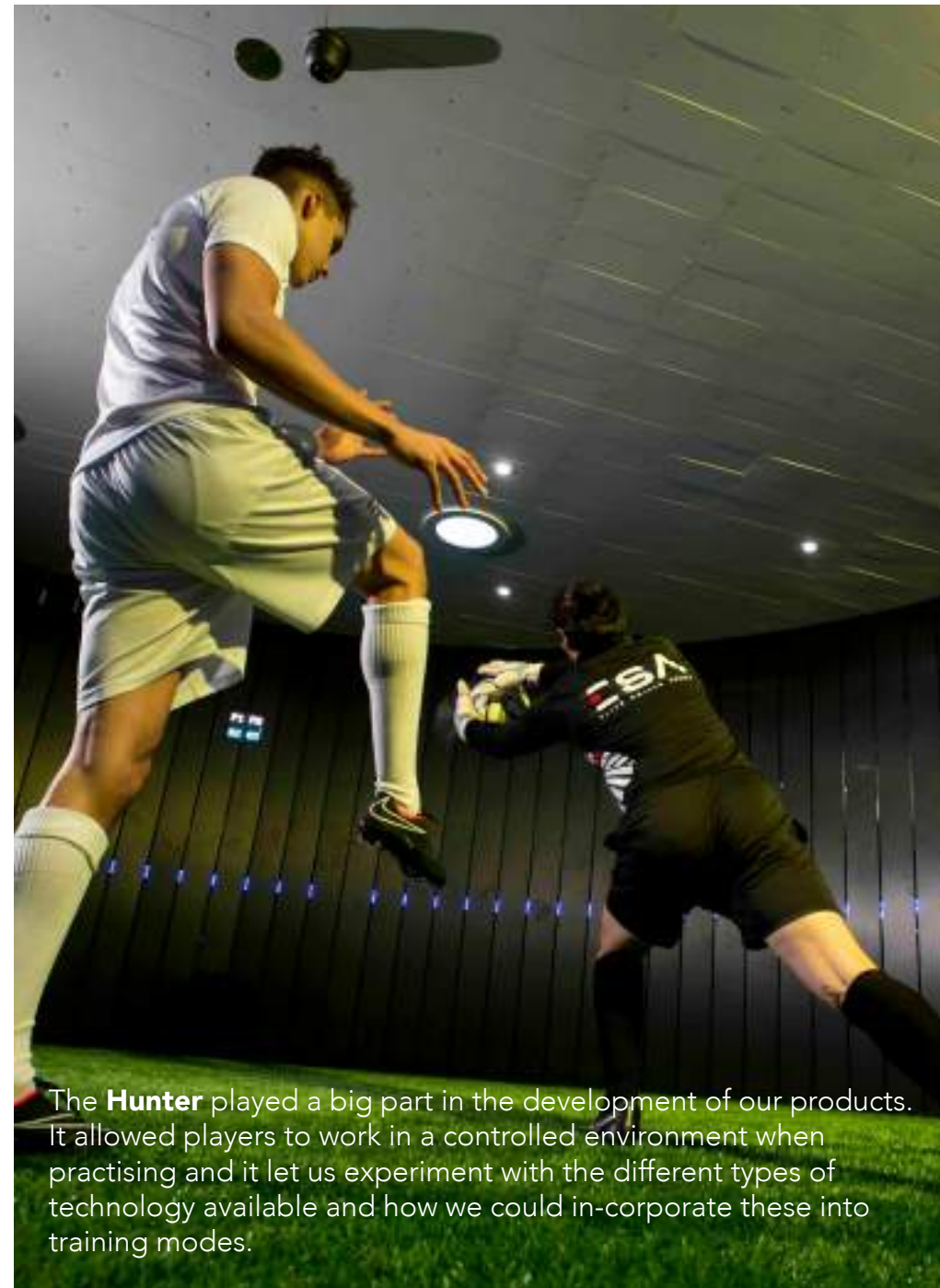




## THE HUNTER PROTOTYPE

Our first thoughts, after finalising the concept of a circular wall with moving targets, was to build an indoor space where players could practise their technical skills. However, it soon became apparent that this would be too limiting of space inside the Hunter prototype. After constructing the Hunter, our focus switched towards more portable arenas that could easily be assembled, leading to the Urban and the ICON.





The **Hunter** played a big part in the development of our products. It allowed players to work in a controlled environment when practising and it let us experiment with the different types of technology available and how we could in-corporate these into training modes.







**Urban & ICON Concepts** were worked on with the thought of making an arena as portable as possible. Our first concept had double aluminium walls with the ESA technology sandwiched in-between. This style was soon made redundant as it was still too time consuming to assemble which led to us using just one single wall with an external electrical box on the outside.



## ICON CREATED

The first ICON was built and tested, laying the foundations for the company's growth. It featured 610mm x 1045mm panels which were joined with acrylic knobs. This allowed the product to be portable and easy to assemble, as well as making the targets challenging to hit under pressure.

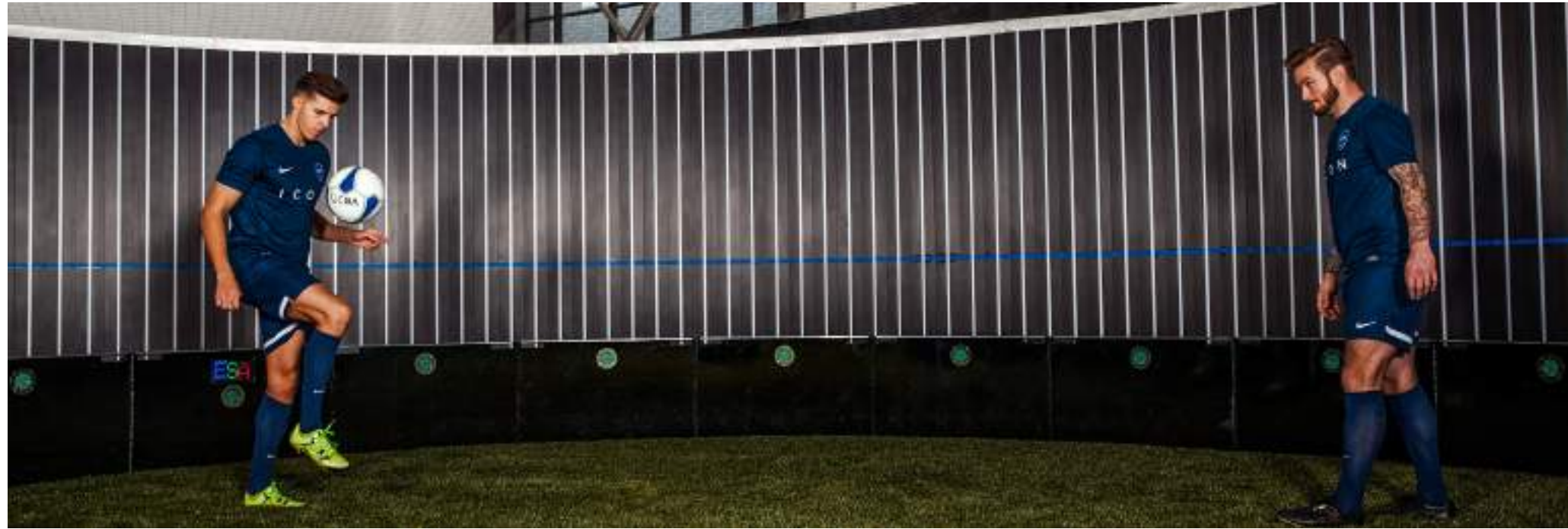




The **ICON** was finished in a black with a silver-mirrored livery. During the creation process the ICON could be painted in a range of different colours and in either a matte or gloss finish. The initial size was 8 metres in diameter and work was planned to make various sizes.









# CHAPTER TWO

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Chapter Two saw ESA enter the product production stage. There were further hardware tests and game development before the ICON Series 1 went to production and sent on a roadshow around the world to visit clubs to show off the technology. Sales, trials and relationships were also created in 2016, with each experience providing vital feedback for the company's development. We also created more innovating products.





**Crystal Palace Football Club** were the first club to trail the ICON as they invited us and our product to South Africa to be a part of their fan-zone for the Premier League Live event. Initially they were shown the ICON 8M but space was a premium at the event so chose the ICON 4M in a Crystal Palace blue colour. It proved to be the star of the show and was used over 4,000 times.







The United States has been one of our best-selling countries. After trials at the **IMG Academy** there was much interest shown in the ICON. A special IMG ICON was built in the academy's colours of white and blue.



### ICON '66 EDITION

Next stop was a trip to the England National Team home at St George's Park. A special edition ICON '66 World Cup was built in the England red with white features and the famous three lions to pay homage to the triumph back in 1966.







Red proved to be a popular ICON colour with many of our demonstrations on the **Club Roadshow** featuring the same colour. Many topflight clubs were visited including Liverpool Football Club, and we had a special guest Harry Arter from local Premier League side AFC Bournemouth.







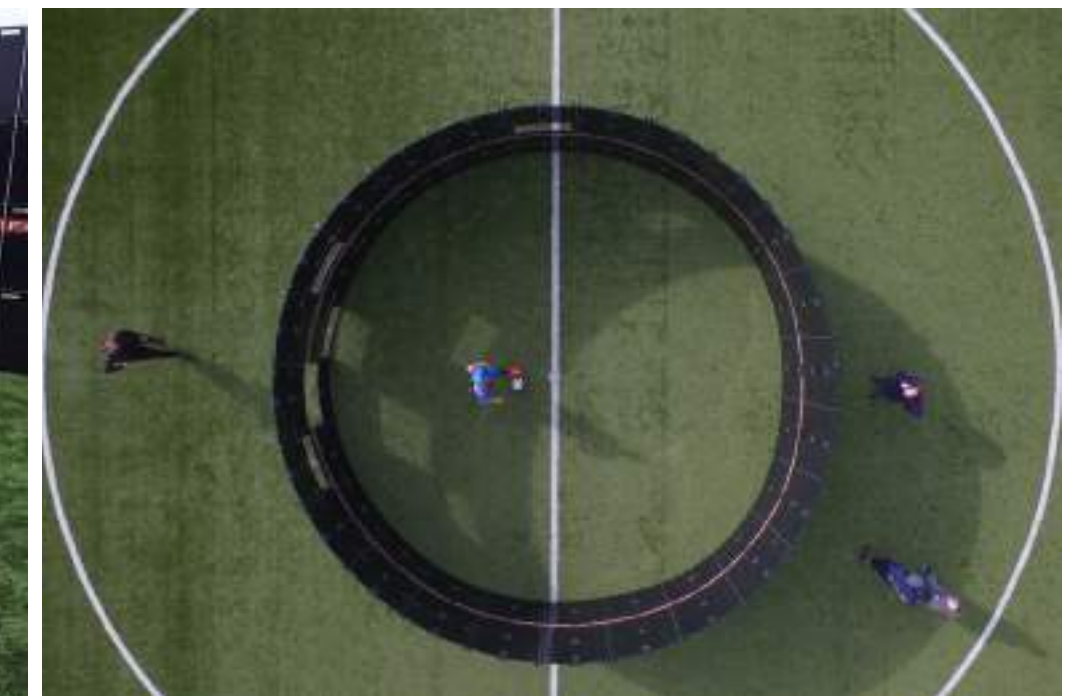
## ICON LEGACY CREATED

With the ICON's momentum moving forward at a fast rate it was decided to build a four-tiered ICON, the ICON Legacy.





Built, tested and trailed, the **ICON Legacy** allowed players to get all the main benefits of the ICON with additions such as height of pass and heading. It also saw the birth of a new training mode, Liftball, which is a hybrid of football and squash. The Legacy is still available to purchase today by stacking ICON panels but has remained as a showpiece built only to order.





After creating the first series of ICON in a range of sizes and colours, we released the **ICON Series 2**. Series 2 contained alterations directly from the feedback received from clubs as well as other new software and hardware developments we progressed since the initial ICON launch.

The ICON Series 2 featured smaller compact boxes on the back of the panels, a new scoreboard, individual rubber washers between the panels and an extra handle. This contributed to a much lighter and more streamlined product. The latest designed training modes were also included for the Series 2 ICON.





## ICON Q CREATED

We wanted to expand the ICON range to give customers further options to buy our technology. We released the ICON Q which is essentially the ICON but a quarter of its size. The Q would also allow customers to buy additional panels after the original purchase date and add to the arena until a full ICON was formed, meaning you could spread the costs.

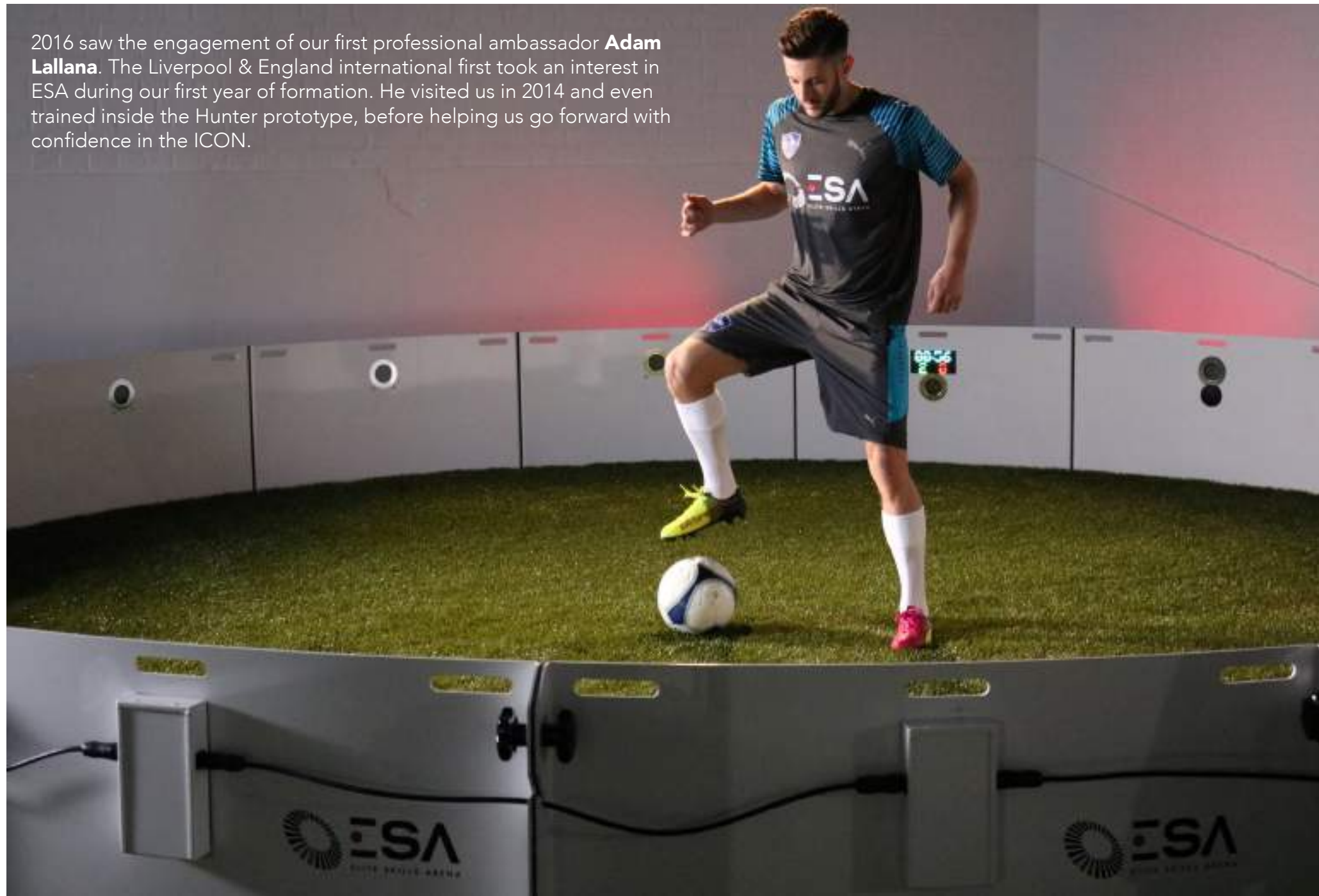




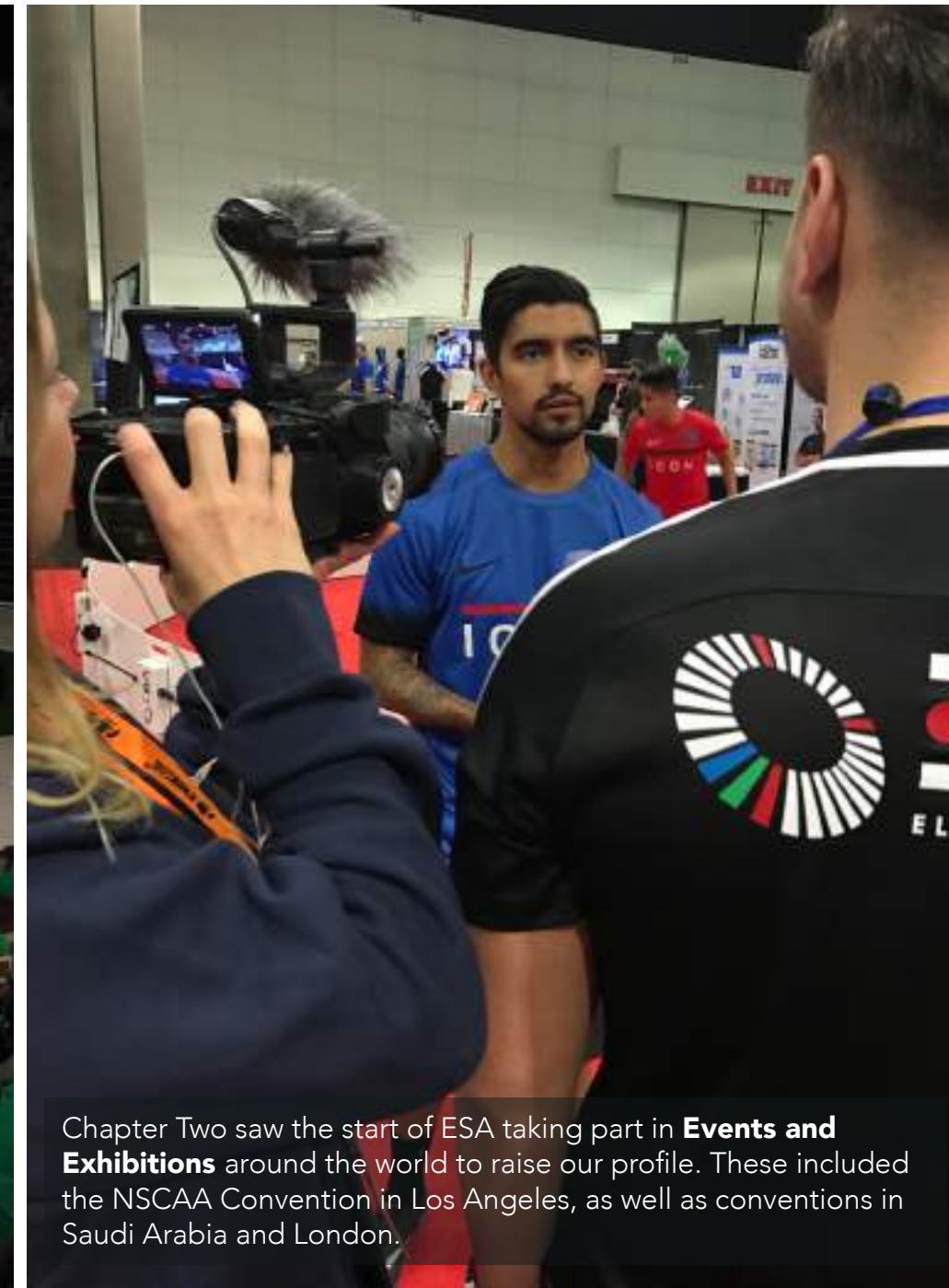




2016 saw the engagement of our first professional ambassador **Adam Lallana**. The Liverpool & England international first took an interest in ESA during our first year of formation. He visited us in 2014 and even trained inside the Hunter prototype, before helping us go forward with confidence in the ICON.







Chapter Two saw the start of ESA taking part in **Events and Exhibitions** around the world to raise our profile. These included the NSCAA Convention in Los Angeles, as well as conventions in Saudi Arabia and London.





## **PRECISION WALL CREATED**

With sales starting to come to fruition and two products already in production, we set about creating a new product. The Precision Wall, an interactive full-sized goal, was created in our showroom. The Precision Wall allowed players to practise their shooting and gather much needed feedback on their performance.









Alongside the ICON Legacy, other ICON variations were also formed to make up our **Showroom** at ESA HQ. The ICON Velocity was built, an ICON 8M with an extended 2.4 metre Perspex wall, allowing training modes such as Liftball. The ICON Motion, a M shaped arena which focused on players being moved from the centre, also featured in our finished showroom alongside the Precision Wall.





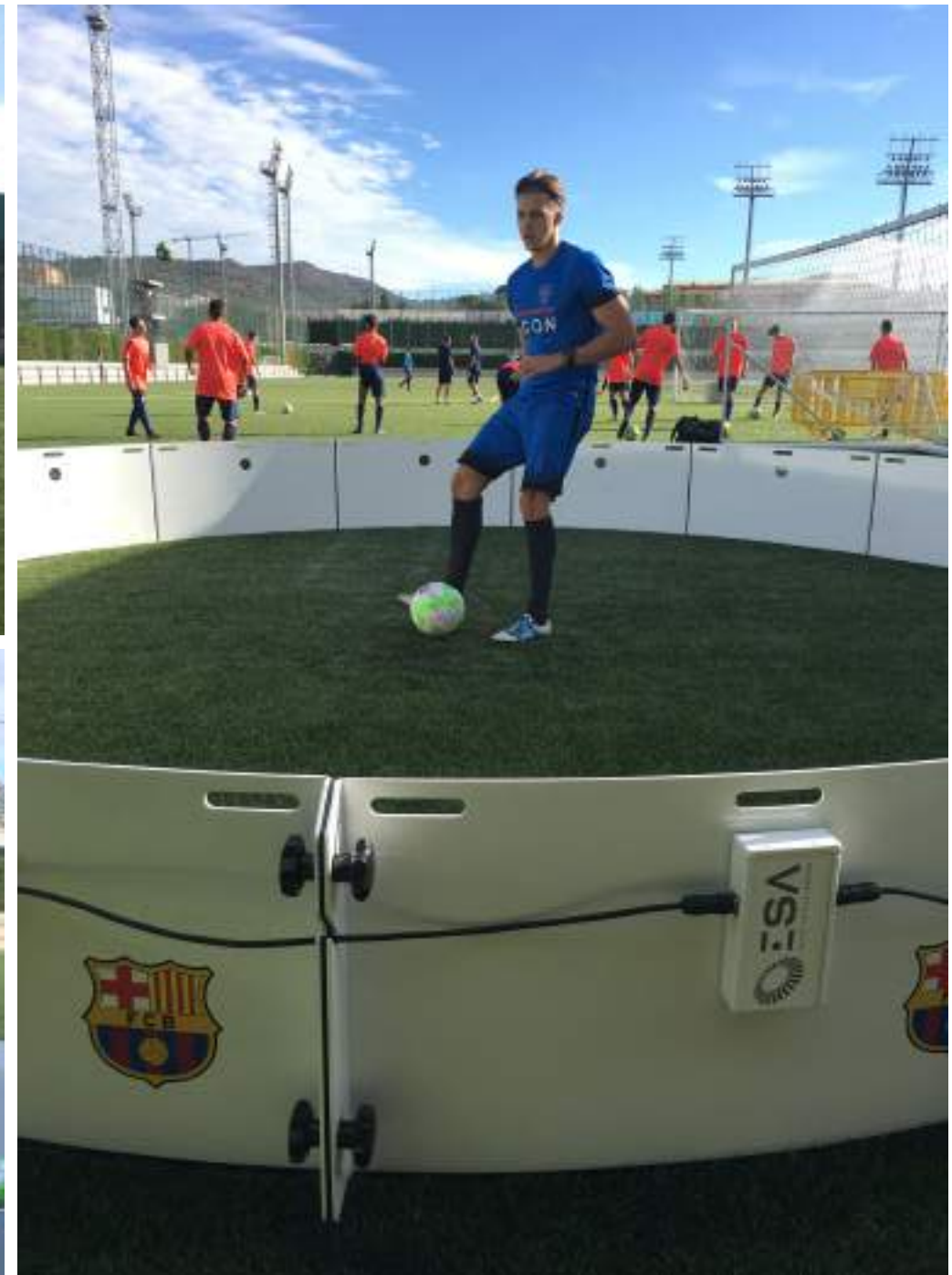
During the end of 2016 we developed a relationship with leading watchmaker **TAG Heuer**. To run alongside the launch of their first smart watch, TAG planned on using our arenas globally for marketing events. The circular ICON represented a clock face for them and the use of advanced technology in both products created a match made in heaven. TAG became one of our biggest customers purchasing 12 units and each one featured unique specification including branding, a new scoreboard, branded joiners and light stickers.







Since our foundation, we developed a relationship with football giants **Futbol Club Barcelona** and saw it flourish with them taking delivery of the first ICON 12M. It came after many discussions and presentations, with our team flying out there to demonstrate the technology. We work closely with Barcelona and their coaches to develop new training modes and even create new products. The 12M still remains the largest ICON built.











At the end of the calendar year we welcomed two more ESA ambassadors. West Ham United Football Club and England International **Jack Wilshere** visited our showroom and knocked Adam Lallana off the top of our Pro's Maestro Leaderboard. FA Cup winning manager **Harry Redknapp** also visited and has become a regular visitor with his grandchildren.





# CHAPTER THREE

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Chapter Three saw a huge leap forward with production, as we went past the 50 products sold mark. Our product usage reports also showed over 200,000 training modes played since the start of production. This period also brought some milestone events for the company, as recently crowned footballer of the year Cristiano Ronaldo took on the Maestro Challenge in the ICON.





The first of many #DontCrackUnderPressure events with Tag Heuer. Some of **Manchester United Football Clubs'** biggest stars, Wayne Rooney, Zlatan Ibrahimovic and David De Gea, were drafted in to take on the ICON inside the world-famous Old Trafford Stadium. We have gone on to do multiple events with the football club.





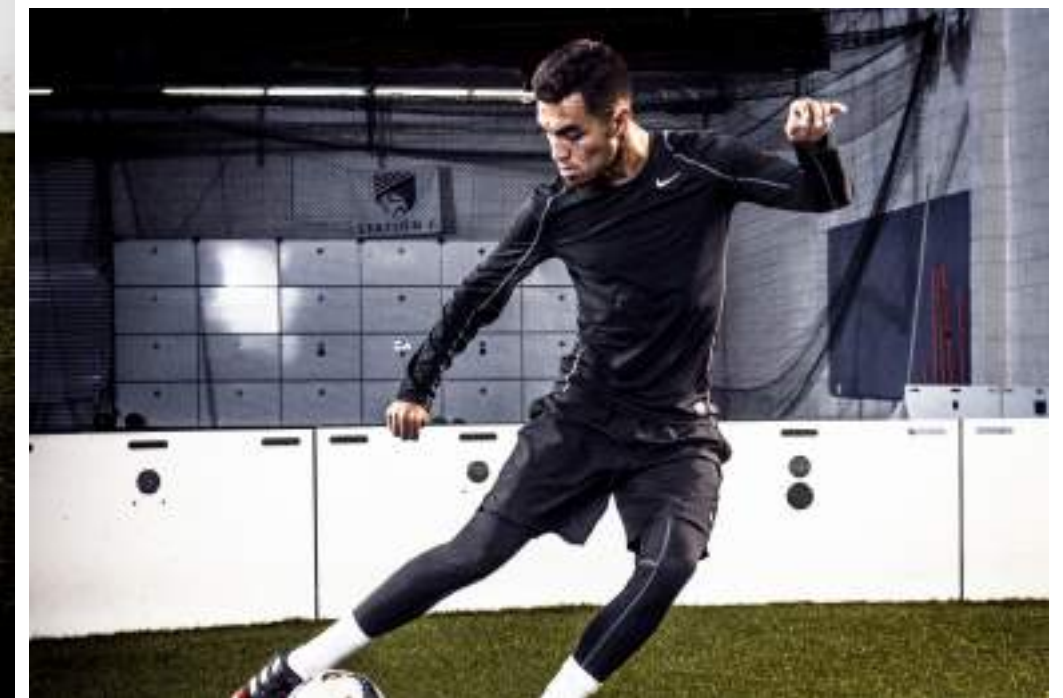


The **#DontCrackUnderPressure** events were global, visiting most of the 7 continents. Often, as a part of Tag Heuer's sponsorship deal with the biggest European leagues, legends and ex-legends of the game would be involved with the event and take on the ICON. Shinji Kagawa, Peter Schmeichel, Dwight Yorke & Lothar Matthaus were just a few of the famous faces seen in our products.





It wasn't just us growing and expanding our business. Our global distribution network was also establishing themselves in the industry. Californian-based **SoCal Soccer**, one of our first distributors, were a part of a marketing event with Adidas using one of their ICON's. They also have welcomed a host of MLS-stars looking to use the products at their centre.







More visitors came to our showroom in the UK. **Chelsea Football Club** academy players Faustino Anjorin and Dynel Simeu trained on a range of our products during their visit. Both have impressively continued their progress in the Chelsea and England youth set-ups. Anjorin recently made his Chelsea Premier League debut under Frank Lampard, coming on in a 4-0 win against Everton Football Club.



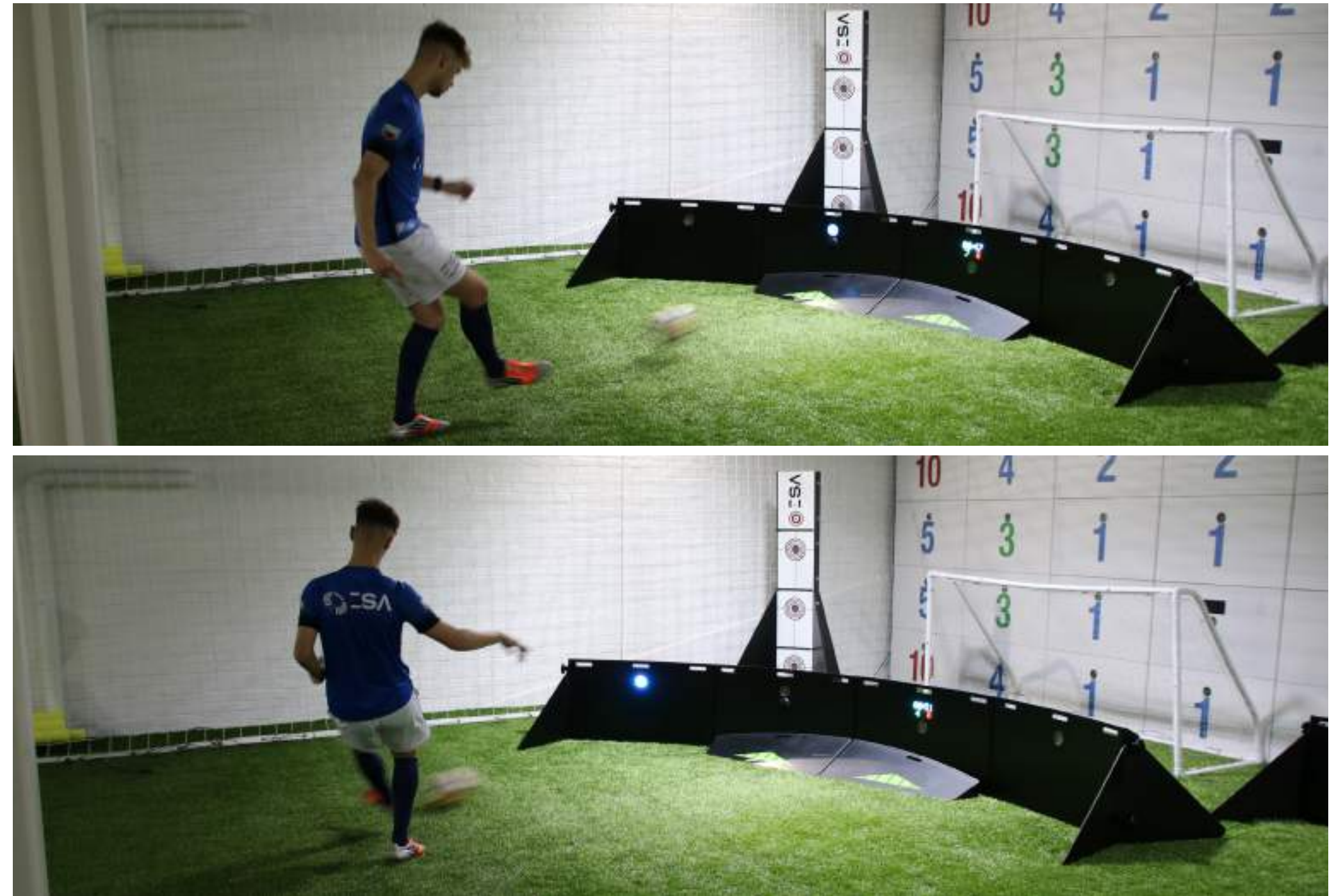
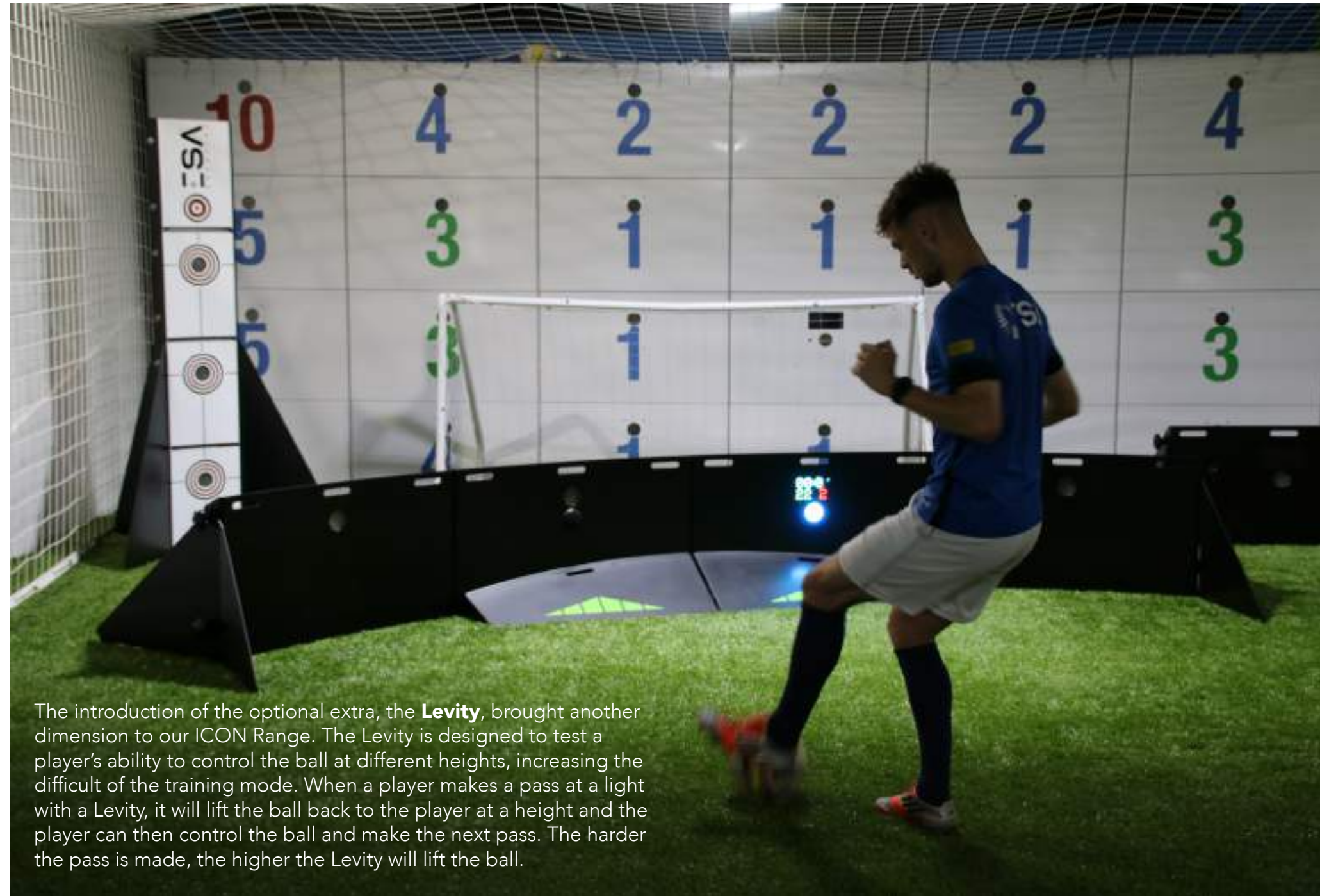




Perhaps our biggest event since the company's foundation. The Ballon D'or holder at the time **Cristiano Ronaldo** featured in the ICON during a Tag Heuer #DontCrackUnderPressure campaign. Regarded as one of the best who have ever played the game, Ronaldo smashed the high score on our Pro's leaderboard and featured on a global campaign for ESA. This grew the brand within the industry, and we generated record social media interactions, as well as featuring on 433's Instagram page amassing over 2 million views.









The level of exposure ESA received from recent events welcomed in a new level of clientele. **Yannick Bolasie** had recently joined Everton Football Club in a £30million move from Crystal Palace Football Club before sadly sustaining a serious knee injury. Bolasie came the first professional player to purchase an arena, as he used it during a key rehabilitation stage which allowed him to train at a high level without any physical contact. Fast forward to today, Bolasie still uses his ICON regularly to gain fitness and train in his garden with his son.

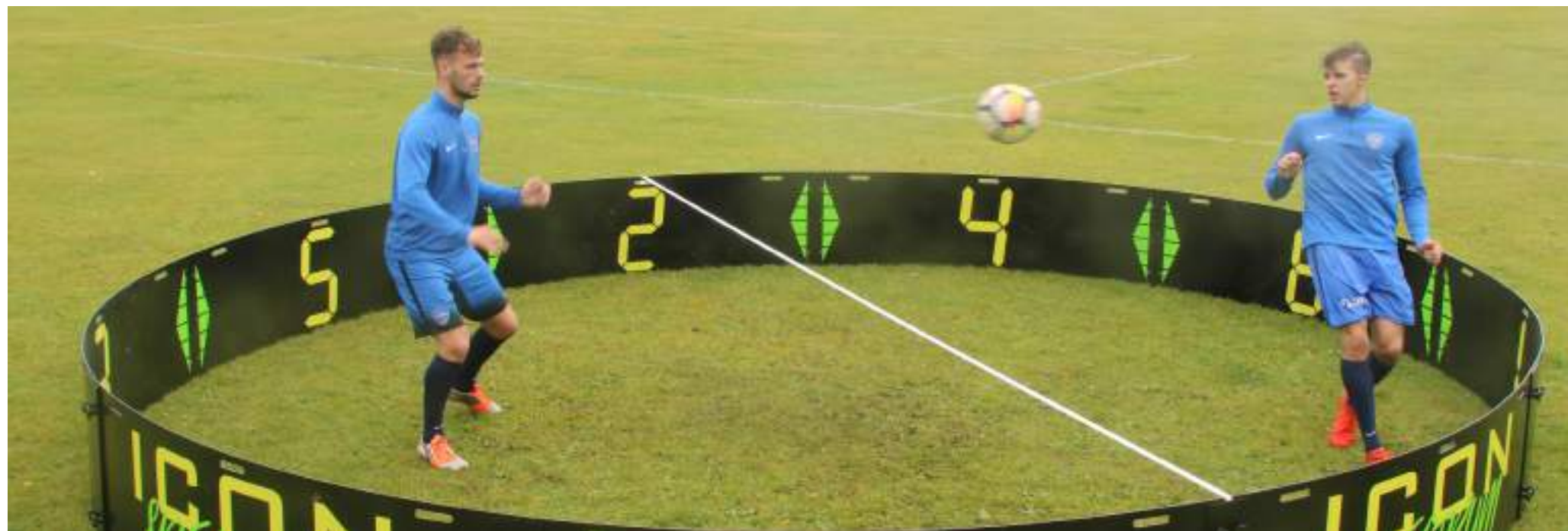




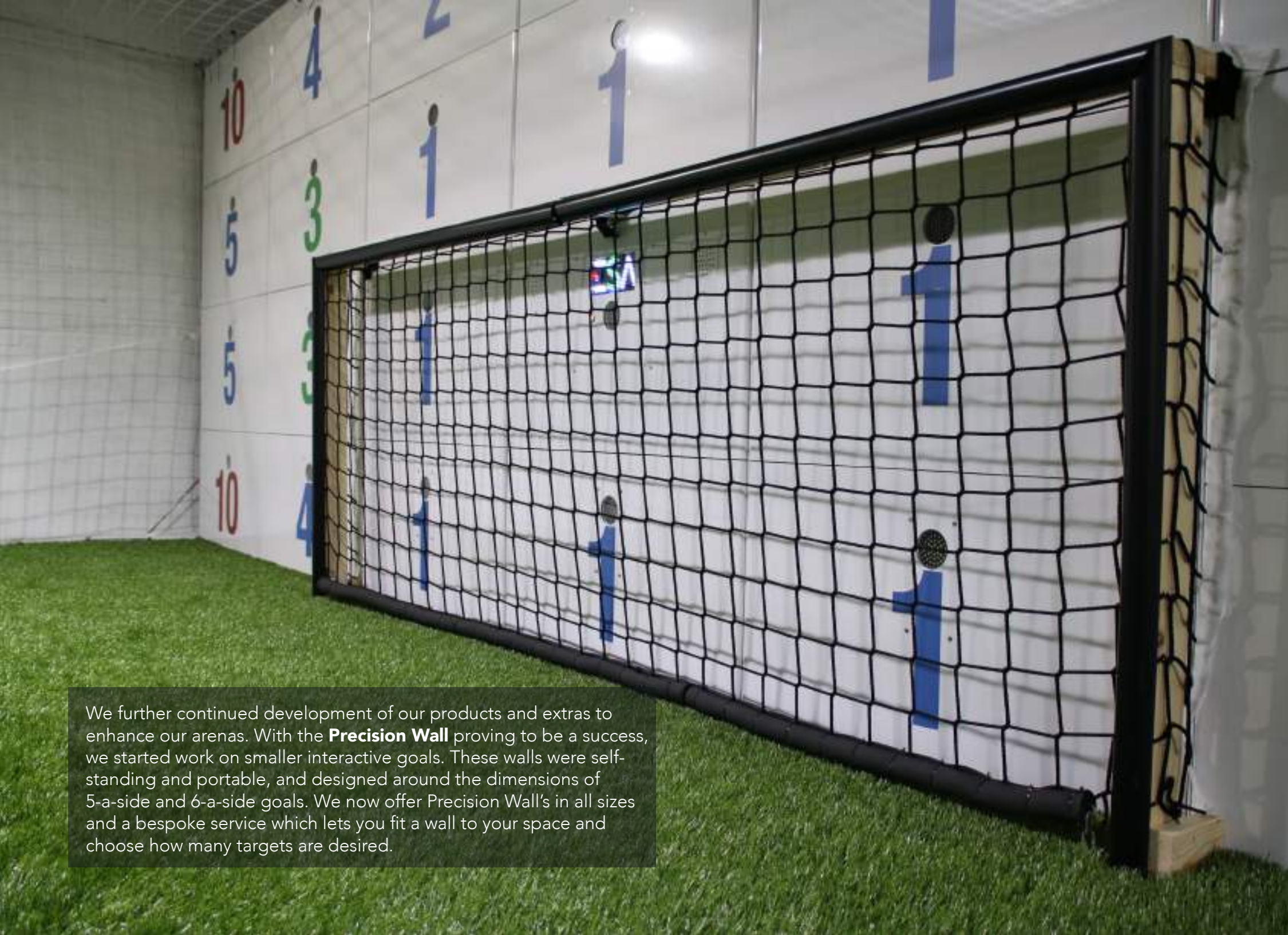


We launched our **ICON Boys** scheme, which encourages the younger generation of players to use our products to excel their technical skills, with our first **ICON 10M** and **ICON Fast Feet** concept. The **ICON Boys** could become the next generation of players with more skill, speed and technical ability. The scheme fits into the company's ambition to bridge the gap between the levels of football and still focus on developing young players today.









We further continued development of our products and extras to enhance our arenas. With the **Precision Wall** proving to be a success, we started work on smaller interactive goals. These walls were self-standing and portable, and designed around the dimensions of 5-a-side and 6-a-side goals. We now offer Precision Wall's in all sizes and a bespoke service which lets you fit a wall to your space and choose how many targets are desired.





# CHAPTER FOUR

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Chapter Four saw us make relationships with some huge global brands, expand our distribution network and develop further products to add to our range. We launched a new website which showcased ESA as a company and finished the year off promoting our product to the America's market. We also enjoyed record sales, going beyond 100 arenas sold and had our products featured heavily at the FIFA World Cup in Russia.







We struck a relationship with leading sports manufacture **Adidas** back in the start of 2018. They purchased two ICON 6M's for their complex in Berlin (The Base) and stacked them on top of each other, similar to half of an ICON Legacy. The top half was to be taken down and used at several events they were planning to host, whilst the bottom remained in The Base. This has led to a hugely successful relationship with the brand. We have done a number of events with Adidas all over the globe and sold units for their retail areas.







Early in the year we travelled again to Germany, this time to meet our distributors at the SPOBIS expo. New distributors formed in both Germany (**Cotesk**) and the Netherlands (**ESA Benelux**) have proven to be successful for the company and clubs like Hamburg SV, Feyenoord Rotterdam, FC Groningen, FC St Pauli & PSV Eindhoven have gone on to become product users thanks to our network.





## ICON V2 CREATED

New innovations followed incorporating the latest technology, we wanted to create a new product which showed off all we had manage to achieve. The ICON V2 was put into production as our third ICON Range product and our fourth product overall. The V2 was built with the same principles as the original ICON but featured 3 new types of panel to enhance the training further.



We looked at the way an incorrect pass effects a player in the ICON and decided to change the way to punish the misplaced balls. With the V2's Press Panels, any incorrectly hit pass will result in the player having to work without the ball and in essence work harder to win it back. This accompanied with smaller Pro Panels and longer-Range Panels, meant the **ICON V2** was a tougher and more technologically advanced arena. Our new Beam Breakers were installed in the Range Panels which allowed players to dribble and, with the help of the ICON Boys, we filmed the promotional video on Poole Town Football Club's pitch.











Another high-profile client was added to our customers list when insurance giants **AIA** purchased the ICON for their marketing events. The company is focused on healthy living and has several ties within the football industry, including the sponsorship of Tottenham Hotspur Football Club. It was another year and another superstar who took their turn in the ICON, this time it was legend **David Beckham** who showed off his skills in-front of an eager crowd. We also created one of our most unique ICON liveries to date for AIA, which featured a half white and half AIA red structure.





## ICON FAST FEET CREATED

Our second product launch of the year, the ICON Fast Feet. Measuring at only 2.5 metres diameter, the Fast Feet was built for smaller spaces and focuses on quick reactions as well as providing a real endurance test. Using the Series 3 technology, the Fast Feet was also made with optional Perspex walls, great for branding and ball retention.







We launched the **ICON Fast Feet** with our ICON Boys just before the summer's World Cup and started a campaign for the product. Aiming at retail shops, back gardens and gyms, the size of the Fast Feet gives the product great versatility for anyone wanting to use our technology. We have sold many units worldwide and the Fast Feet remains one of our most popular products.





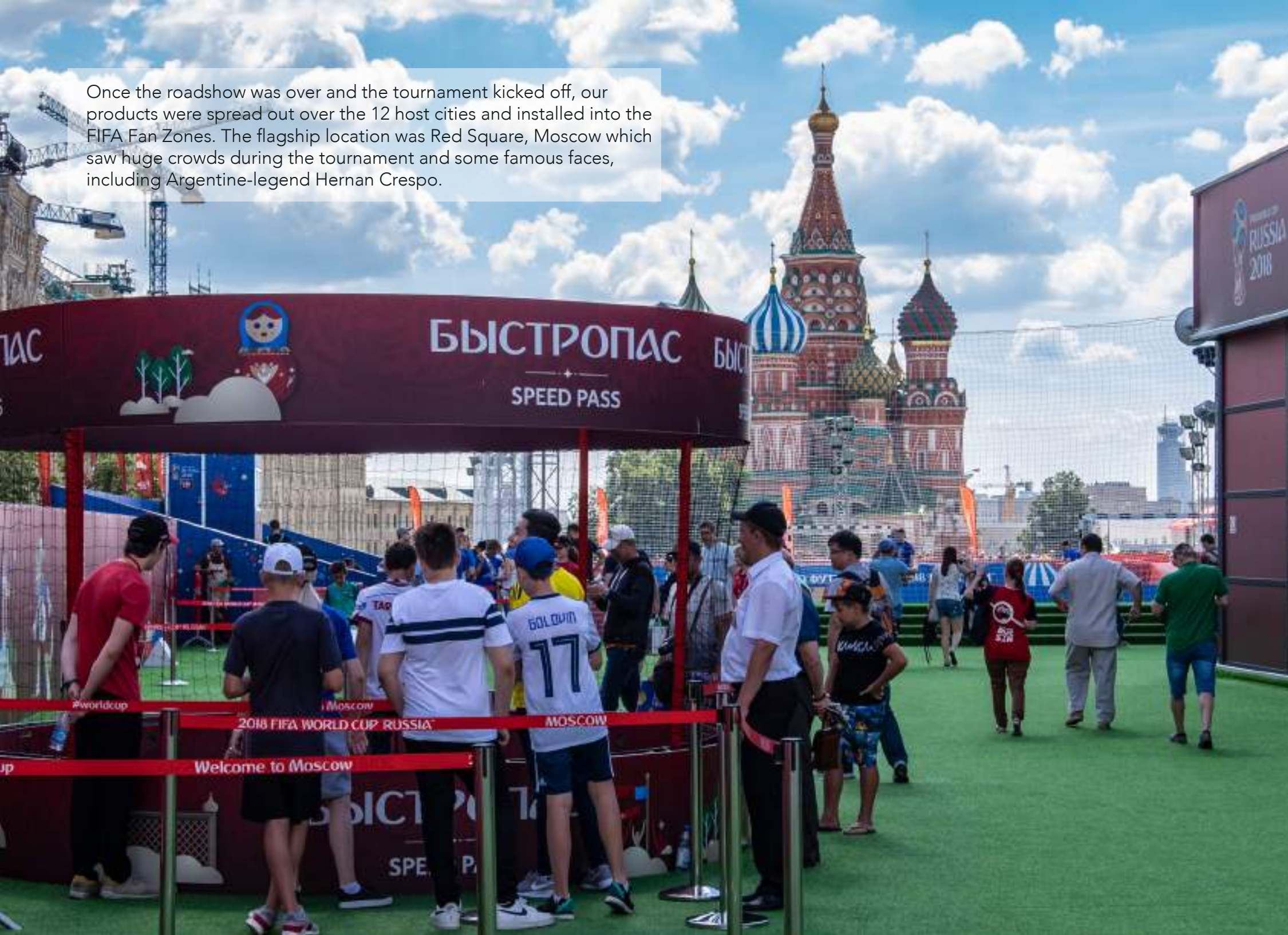


With the Russia 2018 **FIFA World Cup** fast approaching, ESA were approached to supply our arenas for the tournament and go on a roadshow around the host nation. We ended up selling 11 units and experienced some incredible usage with over 45,000 modes being played. This remains on record as one of our biggest orders to date.





Once the roadshow was over and the tournament kicked off, our products were spread out over the 12 host cities and installed into the FIFA Fan Zones. The flagship location was Red Square, Moscow which saw huge crowds during the tournament and some famous faces, including Argentine-legend Hernan Crespo.

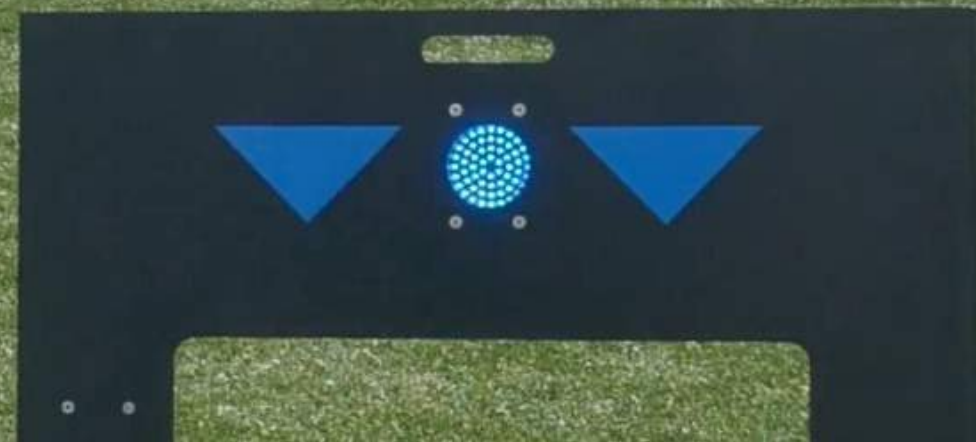




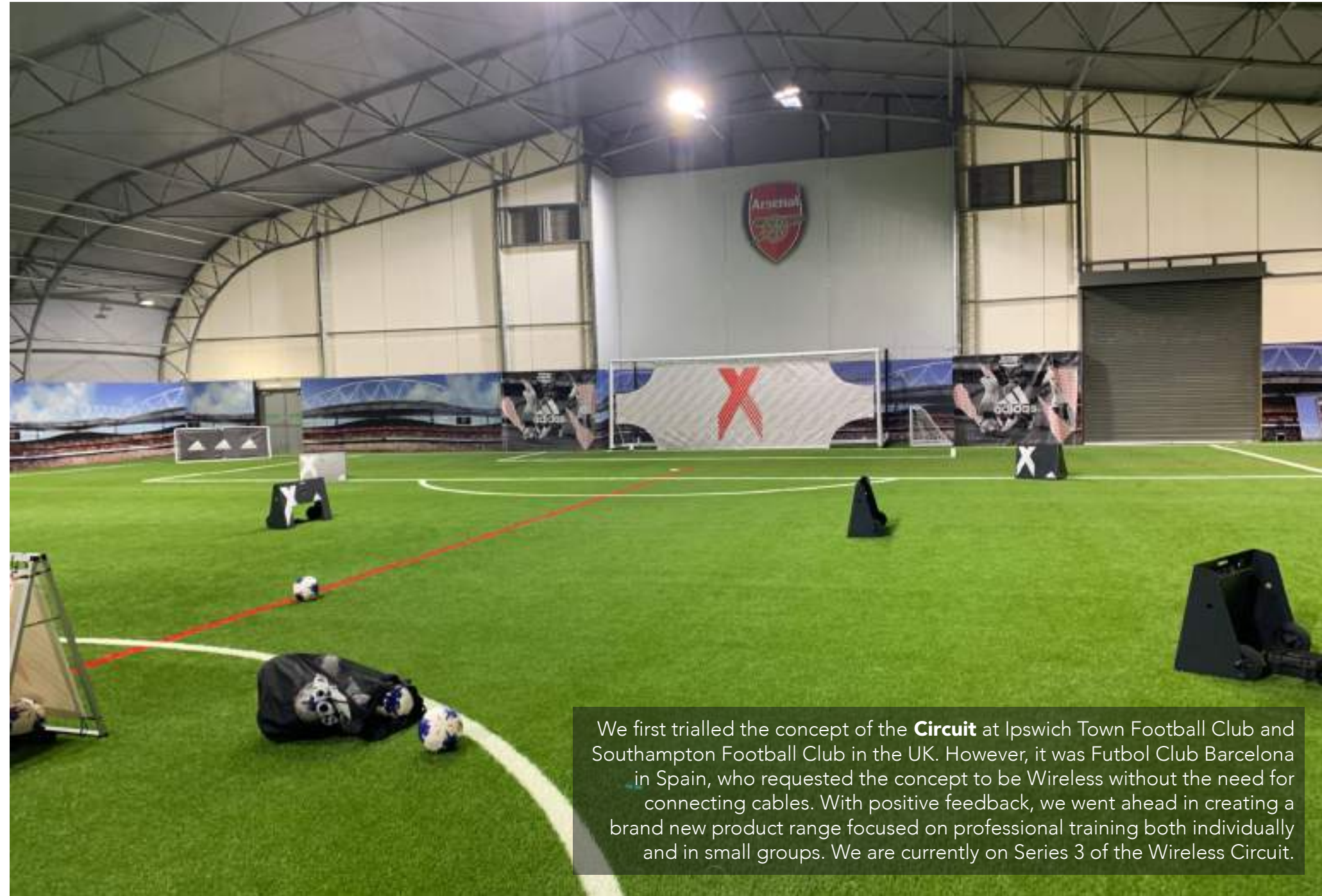


## CIRCUIT CREATED

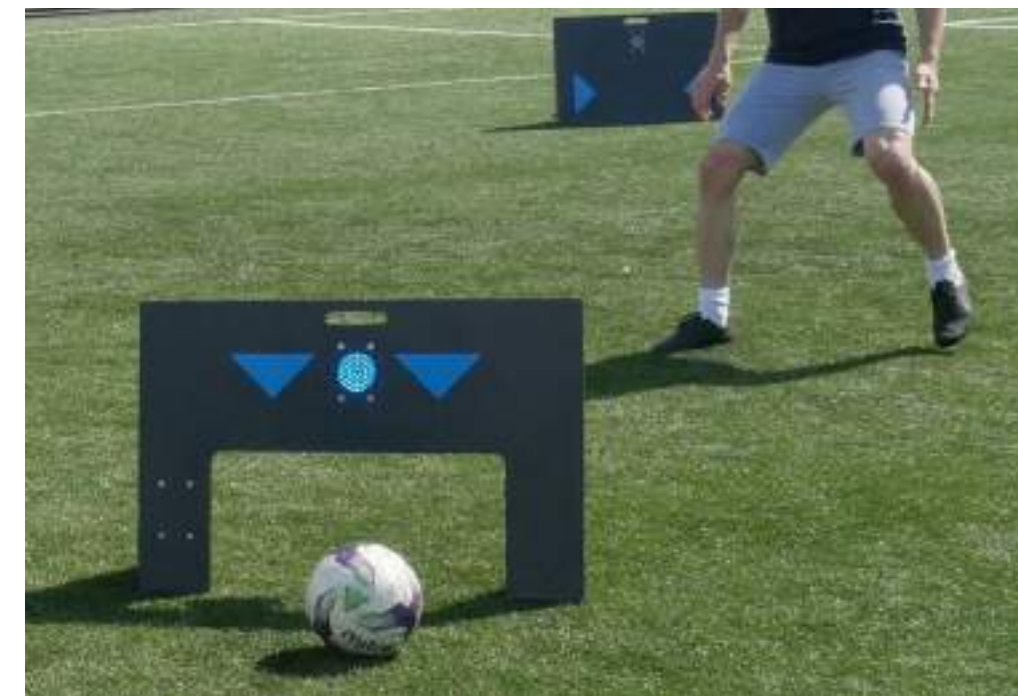
Designed for professional training, the Wireless Circuit is a unique training product which can be utilised in specialised drills or incorporated into traditional individual and team training sessions.







We first trialled the concept of the **Circuit** at Ipswich Town Football Club and Southampton Football Club in the UK. However, it was Futbol Club Barcelona in Spain, who requested the concept to be Wireless without the need for connecting cables. With positive feedback, we went ahead in creating a brand new product range focused on professional training both individually and in small groups. We are currently on Series 3 of the Wireless Circuit.

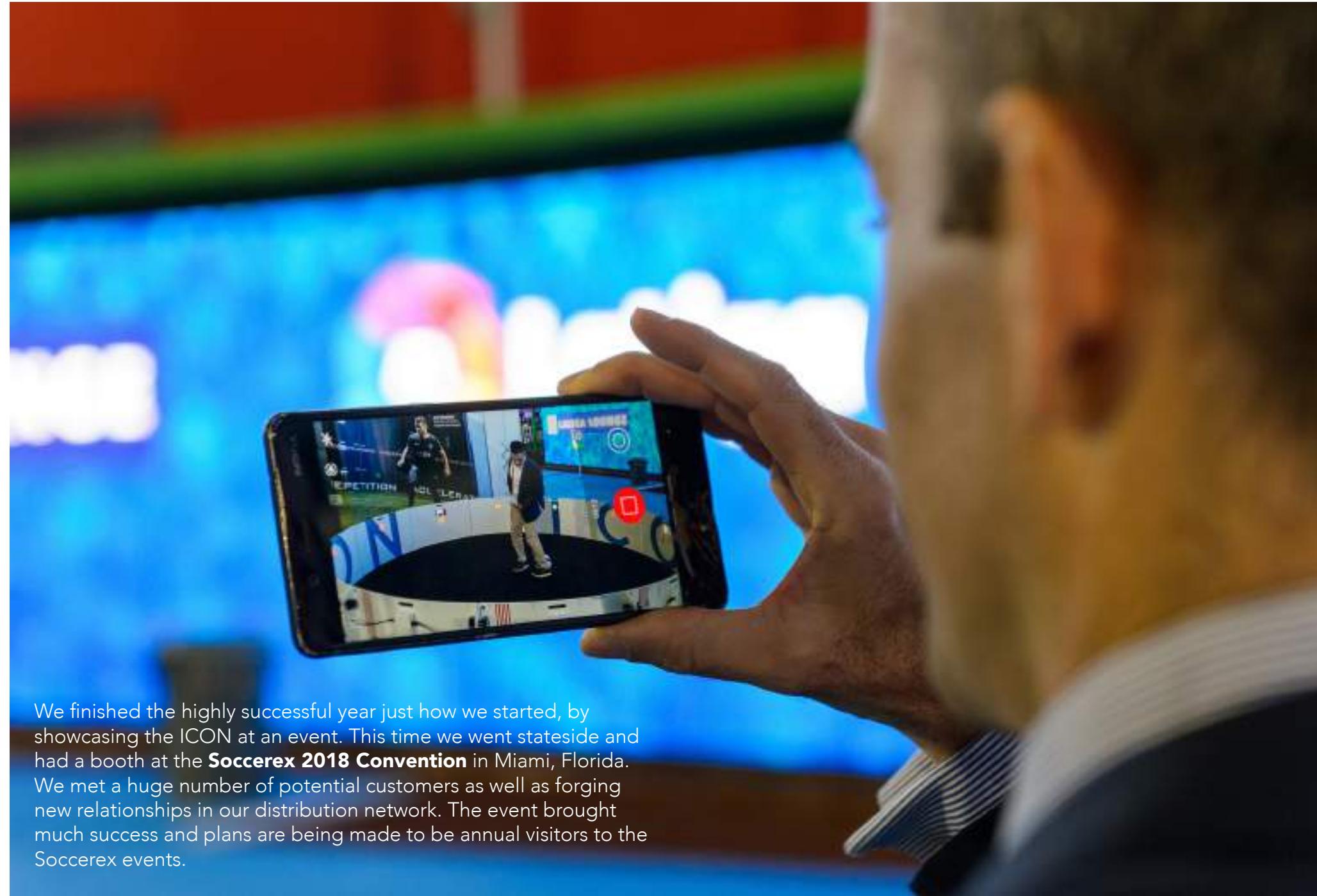




Our products were proving to be successful with the marketing industry around the world due to their uniqueness. Clients such as **Disney**, built events around the products being the star attraction. At this event in the Netherlands, there were special Disney liveries done on the ICON and Wireless Circuit.







We finished the highly successful year just how we started, by showcasing the ICON at an event. This time we went stateside and had a booth at the **Soccerex 2018 Convention** in Miami, Florida. We met a huge number of potential customers as well as forging new relationships in our distribution network. The event brought much success and plans are being made to be annual visitors to the Soccerex events.





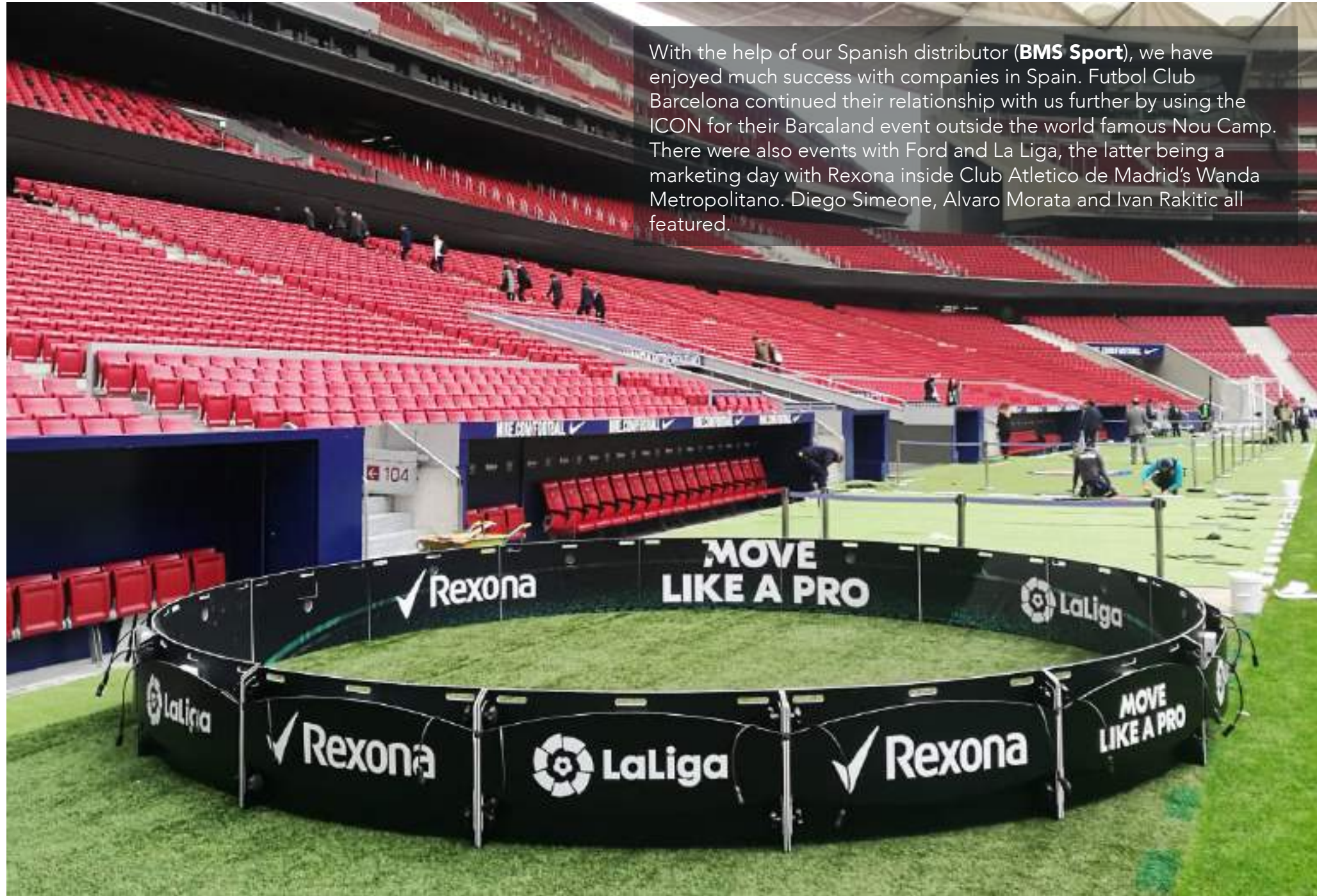
# CHAPTER FIVE

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Chapter Five was another leap forward for the company, as we opened our first football centre to the public, the Technical Football Centre. We also had more icons of the game use our products, including one of world's best Lionel Messi. We even graced live TV, when appearing on Saturday Morning Savage on BT Sport with the ICON V2.



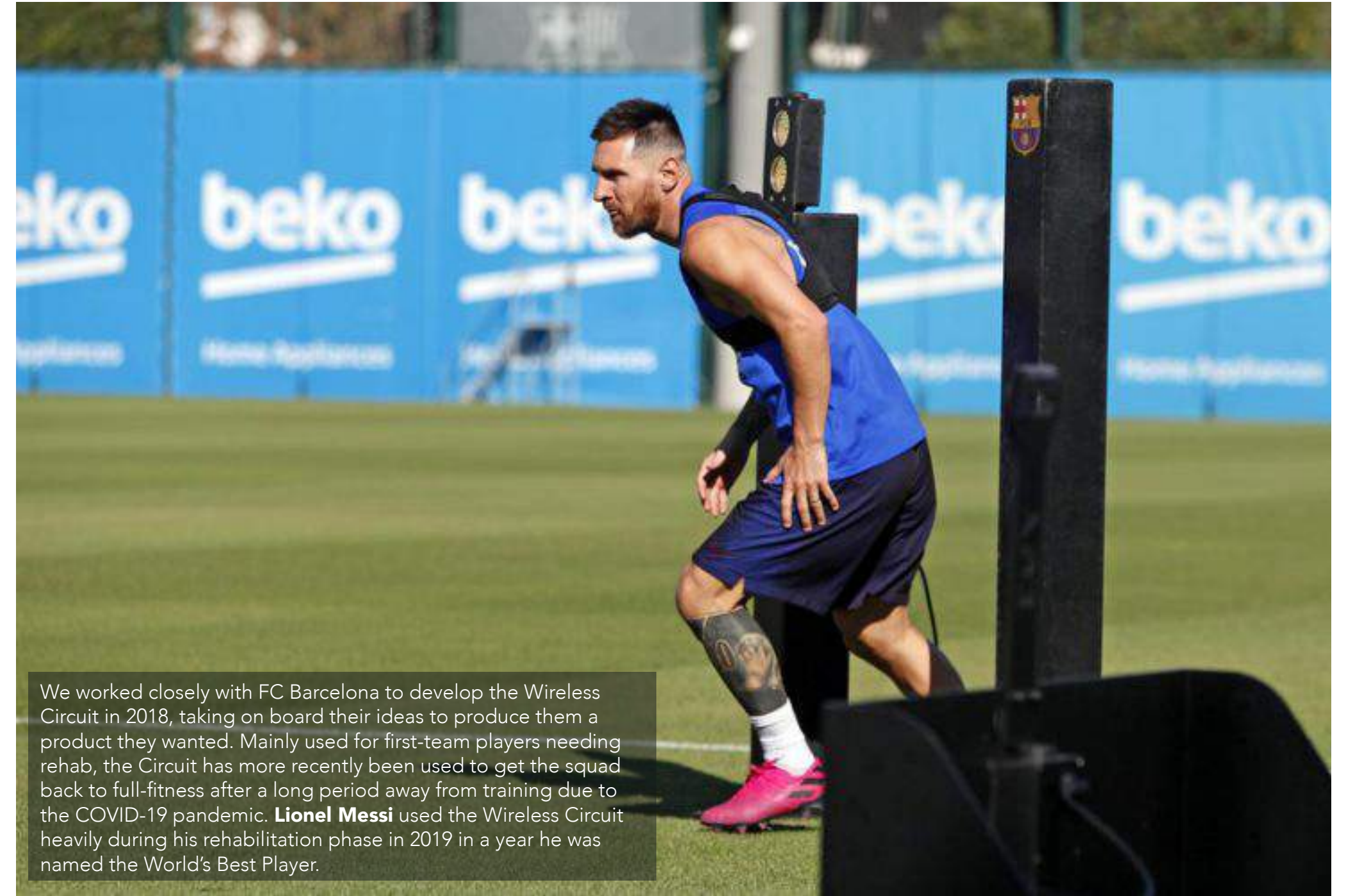




With the help of our Spanish distributor (**BMS Sport**), we have enjoyed much success with companies in Spain. Futbol Club Barcelona continued their relationship with us further by using the ICON for their Barceland event outside the world famous Nou Camp. There were also events with Ford and La Liga, the latter being a marketing day with Rexona inside Club Atletico de Madrid's Wanda Metropolitano. Diego Simeone, Alvaro Morata and Ivan Rakitic all featured.







We worked closely with FC Barcelona to develop the Wireless Circuit in 2018, taking on board their ideas to produce them a product they wanted. Mainly used for first-team players needing rehab, the Circuit has more recently been used to get the squad back to full-fitness after a long period away from training due to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Lionel Messi** used the Wireless Circuit heavily during his rehabilitation phase in 2019 in a year he was named the World's Best Player.





**Puma** became another brand we worked with heavily all-around Europe. Through our distribution network, the ICON went on a German tour, visiting many places and football clubs in the country. Puma have also used our products for their marketing events, the biggest coming when Luis Suarez and Axel Witsel took on the Maestro Challenge inside the ICON at a Puma boot launch.









As preparations were turning towards the up and coming season, we have always found ourselves busy during the period before pre-season. This was no different as we teamed up with **Front Foot UK**, who bring players back up to speed before they go back to their clubs. The ICON V2 and ICON Fast Feet were used during the training camps and Premier League players such as Matt Ritchie, Matt Targett and Jack Simpson brought themselves back up to peak fitness in our products.





New clients **CONCACAF**, who we met at the Soccerex convention, purchased an ICON Fast Feet for marketing purposes for the up and coming Gold Cup. Once branded up, the Fast Feet was put inside of Chicago's Union Train Station alongside the team's kits and a huge Gold Cup trophy.





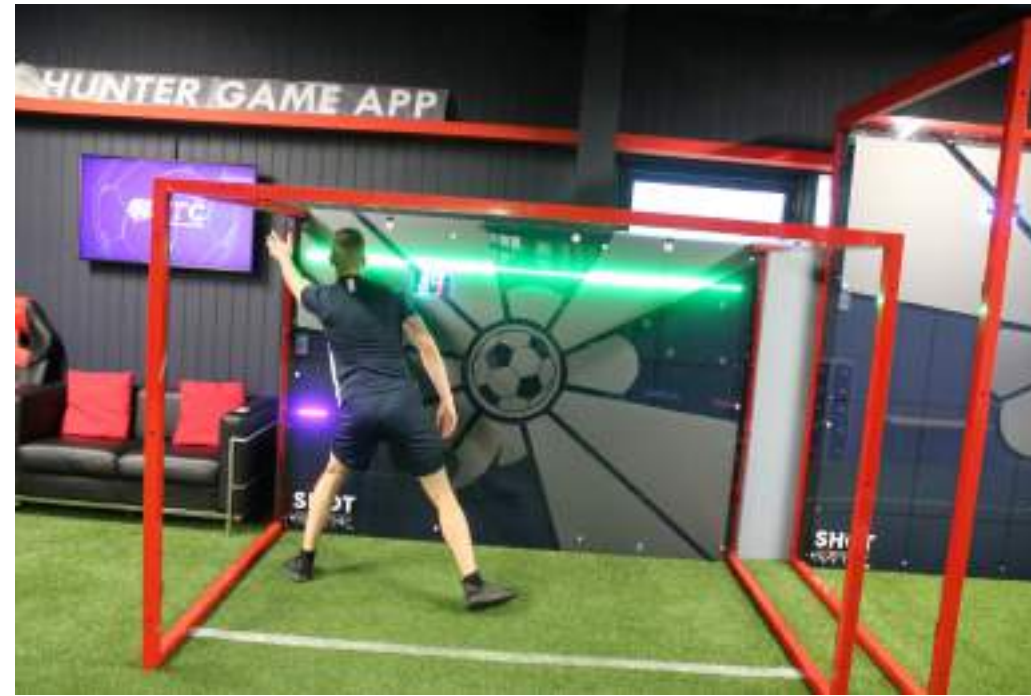


## TECHNICAL FOOTBALL CENTRE CREATED

The opening of the first Technical Football Centre in Bournemouth. After we saw first-hand the impressive usage of the products worldwide and the centre business model working with our products already, it was inevitable that we would make the step into opening our own hub.

In 2019, we opened the doors to the TFC, which had an impressive range of our products and let the general public experience all of ESA's technology.





Since opening the **Technical Football Centre** in October 2019, the centre has proved to be a great success and ESA saw its total usage surpass the 250,000 training modes mark. We're hoping to expand and develop the centre to becoming a large leisure venue with the latest technology.



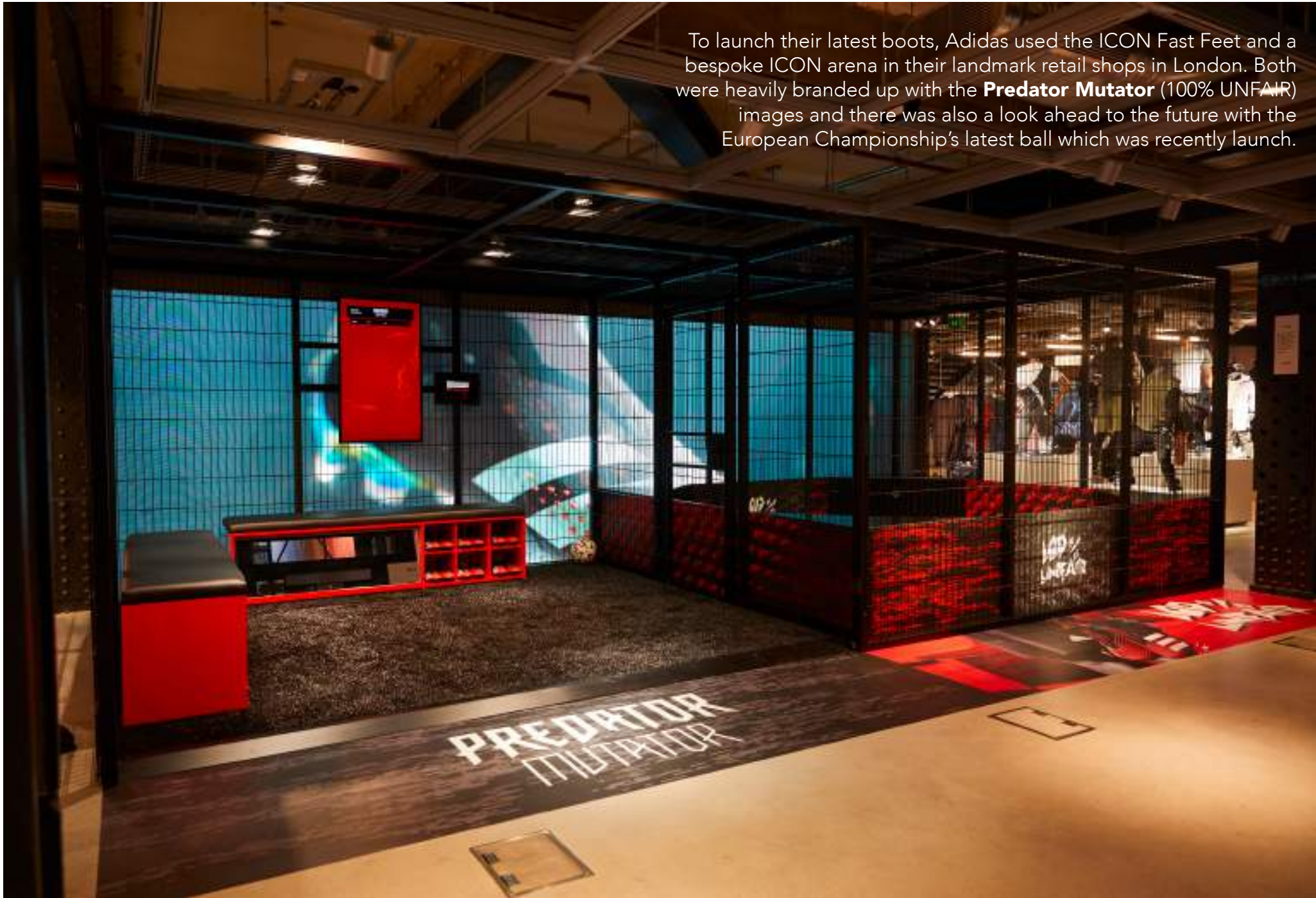




The **Sweden Supercenter** became our newest clients as they opened their centre in Stockholm. They became the first company to buy one product from each one of our three ranges with their ICON, Precision Wall and Wireless Circuit order, a true mark about the progress we have made.







To launch their latest boots, Adidas used the ICON Fast Feet and a bespoke ICON arena in their landmark retail shops in London. Both were heavily branded up with the **Predator Mutator** (100% UNFAIR) images and there was also a look ahead to the future with the European Championship's latest ball which was recently launch.





# FUTURE CHAPTERS

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The year was starting to get into full swing when we were hit with a global pandemic. COVID-19 halted all major leagues and brought the world and industry to a standstill. However, we are continuing to plan ahead and have some exciting projects which we hope to launch in the up and coming future.





## **OUR JOURNEY; CONTINUES**

At ESA we all share a passion to continue to develop and build products that use all of the latest technology to assist players and improve their technical ability through repetition. These improvements will help them achieve their dream of playing at the elite level of professional football where the tiniest of margins can be the difference between success and failure.

We also share the passion to make our products available to the market through ESA zones around the world, so that all players can benefit from experiencing our products regardless of their level. These efforts are aimed towards creating the next generation of players possessing better technical, physical and mental attributes.

We hope to continue our exciting journey as a company and create more long-lasting memories together.



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