

SPORTS TECHNOLOGY, DATA & INNOVATION

Quarterly Insights Report





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Dear Members,

We are excited to present our third quarterly Sports Technology, Data, Innovation & Insights Report, developed by FIFPRO Player IQ in cooperation with LaSource.

As new technologies shape the future of sports, it has become increasingly important to stay updated on emerging developments and explore how they can impact on the health, performance and careers of professional players, both on and off-the-field.

The Player IQ Tech Insights Report is a short newsletter-style mini-report which will be delivered to you quarterly over the year ahead. It presents relevant news and analysis of the latest trends and developments at the evolving intersection of sports, technology, and data.

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SUMMARY

Recent FIFPRO & Member Union Activity p.4

Trending News p.5

Football Tech: What's happening in the Industry? p.8

Sports Tech: What's happening in the Industry? p.11

Private Equity / Sports Investment p.14

Football Tech in Focus: BioCore & AI Scout p.17

Player IQ Tech: Coming Soon p.21



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RECENT FIFPRO & MEMBER UNION ACTIVITY

About FIFPRO's Player Workload Monitoring Tool

The FIFPRO Player Workload Monitoring tool combines scientific knowledge with data insights to monitor player workload and match scheduling across different competitions. The tool was updated last week with the workload data from recent months of over 1800 men's and women's players.

FIFPRO Europe Statement: European Court of Justice decisions underline importance of players rights

Professional footballers collectively influence governance structures, particularly in decisions impacting the employment market, working conditions, job opportunities, and welfare. This responsibility gains added significance in the context of technology and innovation, as players actively participate in shaping the evolving football landscape.

Elin Landstrom: "Why Sweden's new CBA is a much better deal for players"

Elin Landstrom is a Swedish left-back. A Serie A winner with Roma in 2023, Landstrom is also a lawyer and works for Swedish player union Spelarforeningen as player legal manager and a board member. The 31-year-old discusses the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) that Spelarforeningen arranged in late 2023.

Technology can help every athlete – but we need to talk it through

Co-founder and chief Strategy Officer at Dari Motion, Patrick Moodie, is a thought leader in technological musculoskeletal health. Patrick has developed specialised knowledge in tracking technologies and data insights, which is demonstrated through his design and development of DARI Motion.

FIFPRO & The World League Forum's Call on Improved Concussion Management

FIFPRO in conjunction with The World League Forum wrote to the IFAB prior to their AGM meeting on 2nd March, to call for improved concussion management.



TRENDING NEWS

Tech Ball Set To Assist VAR AT EUROS

UEFA and Adidas have unveiled a new football that will be used at Euro 2024 to help produce faster offside and handball decisions.

The 'Fussballliebe', which has been named as the official match ball of UEFA Euro 2024, uses Adidas' connected ball technology to send data in real time to officials.



TAKEAWAY

The real-time data transmission feature can potentially enhance decision-making, particularly in crucial scenarios like offside and handball situations. The new Tech ball, 'Fussballliebe', uses technology to identify when a touch has occurred, but not where on the body. Officials will then use camera images to decide whether a handball has occurred.

The new football aims to minimise delays and errors by providing officials with instantaneous insights, fostering a more accurate and efficient officiating process. Potential challenges may include ensuring the technology's reliability and security, addressing data accuracy concerns, and maintaining a balance between technology-assisted decisions and the game's human element.

Overall, the successful implementation of this technology and its results at the upcoming Euros will help assist VAR in significant football leagues and contribute to fair play and the integrity of the sport worldwide.



TRENDING NEWS

Bet365 preferred bidder for Champions League betting sponsorship

Bet365 has been selected as the preferred bidder to become the first-ever betting brand to sponsor the Uefa Champions League.

The British gambling firm is understood to have been in advanced discussions with Team Marketing, the exclusive sponsorship sales agency for Uefa's men's club competitions, about a deal covering the next three-year cycle of the competition from 2024-25 to 2026-27.



TAKEAWAY

Despite consistently maintaining a conservative stance towards the betting industry because of the threat of match-fixing, UEFA's recent official foray into the betting industry through the potential sponsorship agreement with Bet 365 signifies how sports governing bodies are diversifying their revenue streams. With most bookmakers offering markets on most of their events anyway, this decision will enable the organisation to make a commercial return by officially selling its betting rights.

It remains to be seen how UEFA channels the revenue into betting integrity programs, as it claims. However, there are potential downsides, such as increased scrutiny on the promotion of gambling within sports, especially concerning its impact on younger audiences, and the premier league's recent decision to prohibit betting companies from becoming front-of-shirt sponsors of teams. UEFA faces the challenge of balancing financial gains with potential reputational risks associated with sports betting partnerships, particularly considering the growing concerns about the societal implications of gambling.



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TRENDING NEWS

Basketball leagues, federations introduce AI tech under long-term Fiba-Genius deal

Fiba has announced a major expansion to its long-term agreement with Genius Sports, with the deal to provide leagues and national federations with access to an AI-powered automated player tracking system for the first time.

This new technology will transform the entire data and video ecosystem of international basketball, providing a unified, connected solution to automate and synchronise the collection of live game statistics and video production with advanced player tracking.



TAKEAWAY

Implementing Artificial Intelligence powered technology across leagues and federations will offer an automated data & video ecosystem to FIBA. Genius Sports' Optical tracking system could understand live game-plays and predict outcomes in real-time, turning raw live data into actionable insights. More than just offering insights for betting purposes, Genius's tracking system will provide an analytical solution for coaches to make data-driven decisions on tactics and team performance.

Through this agreement, FIBA showcases its approach to modernising its data ecosystem, offering richer insights into player performance and game dynamics opening the door to potential growth in fan engagement, sponsorship opportunities, and overall competitiveness. However, challenges may arise concerning data privacy and the potential for increased scrutiny of player performance metrics. The success of this collaboration will likely hinge on effective communication about the benefits of AI-powered player tracking and addressing any concerns related to data security and privacy.



FOOTBALL TECH TRENDING NEWS

National Women's Soccer League Launches Performance Medicine Solution from Kitman Labs as Advanced EMR

The SaaS-based Sports Science and Technology Company will Power All Medical Data and analytics for the League Across All First Teams.

The Performance Medicine Solution will provide the technology and infrastructure to automate and power accurate, league-wide medical data collection and analysis, drive collaboration among all relevant league and team stakeholders, yield actionable intelligence to support specific performance outcomes and enable data-led decision-making and research.



NATIONAL WOMEN'S SOCCER LEAGUE

TAKEAWAY

Kitman Labs' performance medicine solution for the NWSL teams has the potential to foster inter-departmental collaboration and enable informed decision-making across the league. Kitman Labs' solution could also elevate evidence-based decision-making regarding player health, care, and overall wellness. The streamlined workflows across the league could contribute to enhancing the league's reputation, potentially setting a benchmark for women's football.

However, potential challenges include the cost of implementation and ongoing maintenance and addressing privacy concerns surrounding sensitive medical data. Moreover, there might be resistance from teams or individuals unaccustomed to such advanced sports science technology. A balanced approach, with careful consideration of the advantages & potential drawbacks, will be crucial for successful and mutually beneficial integration of this performance medicine solution in the NWSL.



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FOOTBALL TECH

What's happening in the Industry?

LALIGA launches data analysis pilot project for unemployed coaches

LALIGA is launching a pilot project that will give unemployed coaches the chance to receive ongoing training through the Mediacoach performance data and video analysis platform.

BreakAway Data Joins StatsBomb's Partner Programme

The agreement will see over 300+ players in the NWSL get subscription-free access to a host of StatsBomb's performance metrics including the likes of Pass Completion, Duels and Shot Creation.

Wearable lower limb tracking system awarded FIFA certification for use in official matches for first time

Playermaker's AI wearable tracker straps to football boots to monitor technical and physical performance data including time on the ball, technical balance, kicking velocity, speed, distance, acceleration and changes of direction.

Premier League to trial AI-powered bodycam for Wolves v Tottenham

The initiative is aimed at providing fans with a unique perspective into a player's pre-match routine. Utilising AI auto-detection, the bodycam captures a wide-angle view of the pitch, later cropped to focus on the key moments.

ANGEL CITY FC Launches Performance Optimisation Solution From Kitman Labs

Angel City FC will now be able to combine performance data – including game, training, gym, physical testing and more – with player-level medical data for a complete, real-time assessment of each athlete.



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FOOTBALL TECH

What's happening in the Industry?

A blueprint for the future: how digital transformation is empowering Portuguese football.

Earlier this year, the FPF partnered with Pixellot, a leading provider of AI-automated video and analytics solutions for sports, to help implement the FPF's ambitious Project 2030 plan

Playfinity launches its first Gaming Soccerball with embedded sensors and gamified app

The ball is embedded with sensor technology that tracks players' number of kicks, distance, speed, airtime, height, and bounces, then sends that data to a companion mobile app called Playfinity FC

FC Barcelona and Supponsor extend partnership including first ever use of virtual technology in women's football

The initiative included the activation of virtual technology on both the first and second LED rows combined and cam carpets.





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SPORTS TECH TRENDING NEWS

SPORTRADAR Is Unlocking Data To Transform The NBA Fan Experience

Sportradar is the official distributor of NBA data worldwide and has been working with the NBA since 2021 to drive fan engagement and support the commercial growth of the league with the development of next-generation, value-added products and services. Through this partnership, Sportradar has access to NBA optical tracking data, which has the potential to generate hundreds of thousands of data points from a single game.



TAKEAWAY

The strategic alliance between SportRadar and the NBA focuses on elevating fan engagement and fostering the league's commercial expansion. The access to NBA optical tracking data is particularly noteworthy, as it opens the door to a plethora of detailed and granular information, potentially amounting to hundreds of thousands of data points per game.

This wealth of data enhances the depth of analytics and paves the way for creating innovative, value-added products and services. Through AI, machine learning & computer-vision capabilities, SportRadar's solution could improve the NBA's odds modelling, create more markets to drive the growth of in-play betting and offer additional ways to engage bettors. Products like 'Next Scorer' and 'Race to 15 Points' could increase engagement. However, professional players face utmost scrutiny based on the granularity of data collected, leading to data security and personal privacy issues. As a critical pillar of data protection legislation, transparency is crucial. Athletes need to understand how their performance data could be employed fully. Will the data be used as the basis of betting odds, to select a team, to decide a bonus or even negotiate a future contract?



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What's happening in the Industry?

Head injuries in rugby: World Rugby to introduce instrumented mouthguards to detect player concussion

New mouthguard technology to enable medical staff to monitor head impacts in real-time, enhancing player safety. This development coincides with the impending decision on concussion rules expected at the annual IFAB meeting in March.

A Nippon Professional Baseball (NPB) league team has announced its adoption of the Trajekt Arc™ pitching robot for batting practice

The Trajekt Arc™ is a cutting-edge pitching robot known for its ability to replicate the pitches of any pitcher in the league.

FanDuel Group Launches Mobile Sports Betting in Vermont

The North American online gaming company is now available across Vermont. Sports fans in Vermont can download the FanDuel Sportsbook app for iOS and Android or play via desktop.

NHL Sense Arena VR Turns Hockey Fans Into NHL Players

The platform's new Multiplayer mode allows fans to create their own private rooms or join public locker rooms to compete against their friends, teammates, and other hockey players around the world.

Endeavor to Integrate OpenBet and IMG ARENA Businesses Under OpenBet Brand

The integrated entity will leverage the individual strengths and operational expertise of both global businesses, marrying OpenBet's industry-leading betting technology, content and services and IMG ARENA's data rights and capabilities to create an end-to-end sports data, technology and content ecosystem.



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What's happening in the Industry?

How the FEI's training technology partnership is driving equestrian into the digital future

The collaboration has seen riders use the Silicon Valley-based company's Pivo Pod, which can be mounted to a rider's smartphone and uses AI-powered tracking technology to follow the horse and athlete as they practice their routines.

UCI's Track Champions League gets metaverse treatment for London finale

The UCI Track Champions League and Infinite Reality unveil a new and first-of-its-kind mobile metaverse experience to bring fans even closer to the action and riders

ATP's Carbon Tracker sees more than 200 players engage in first season

The ATP launched its Carbon Tracker last June as part of its tie-up with Infosys, enabling players to track and offset their carbon emissions while traveling for tournaments.





PRIVATE EQUITY/SPORTS INVESTMENTS

TRENDING NEWS

PGA Tour agrees to private equity investment from Fenway-led Strategic Sports Group, launches PGA Tour Enterprises

The PGA Tour announced it has come to an agreement with Strategic Sports Group for private equity investment. The move, which has been expected since December, was made official to PGA Tour membership in a call Wednesday morning. The announcement coincided with the launch of a new, for-profit venture, PGA Tour Enterprises



TAKEAWAY

This move aims to empower PGA Tour players by granting them equity in PGA Tour Enterprises based on their achievements, future involvement, and tour status. It represents a shift towards player ownership within the league, enhancing their investment in its success. Additionally, with its extensive experience across sports, media, and entertainment, the SSG's participation promises to elevate the golfing experience for players, tournaments, fans, and partners.

However, questions arise regarding the role of Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF) in this venture, with potential co-investment opportunities mentioned in the deal. Antitrust regulations and ongoing congressional scrutiny complicate PIF's involvement, particularly amid tensions stemming from the PGA Tour's pursuit of alternative private equity deals and players.

Despite these challenges, the LIV Golf League gains momentum, and PGA Tour events continue. Yet, uncertainties persist regarding the potential unification of professional golf under this new paradigm, suggesting a period of transition and negotiation lies ahead.



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PRIVATE EQUITY/SPORTS INVESTMENTS

What's happening in the Industry?

Soccer Tech Company Playermaker Raises Funds to Spur U.S. Growth

Sports tech startup Playermaker recently raised a growth funding round as it looks to expand the use of its shoe-mounted wearables in the U.S.

F1 drivers Sainz and Norris team up with soccer stars to back and advise US\$54M investment fund

F1 drivers Carlos Sainz and Lando Norris are headline investors in the Elite Performance Fund that aims to specialize in sports technology and media, fan engagement and nutrition.

US Golfers Confirm Leeds United Investment

American golfers Jordan Spieth and Justin Thomas have officially bought shares in Leeds United's prospective owners 49ers Enterprises

Qatar Sports Investments and Arctos Partners agree landmark strategic partnership and investment deal in Paris Saint-Germain

The partnership will form the foundation of the next phase of PSG's global growth and drive forward the Club's footballing and business success.

NBA invests in AI predictive analytics and micro-betting firm nVenue

nVenue—whose sports betting platform uses machine learning and AI to create "next play" probabilities and micro-bets for fans watching live—was selected by the NBA last March for second installment of NBA Launchpad



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PRIVATE EQUITY/SPORTS INVESTMENTS

What's happening in the Industry?

Sports VR tech firm StatusPro raises US\$20m in Series A round led by Google Ventures

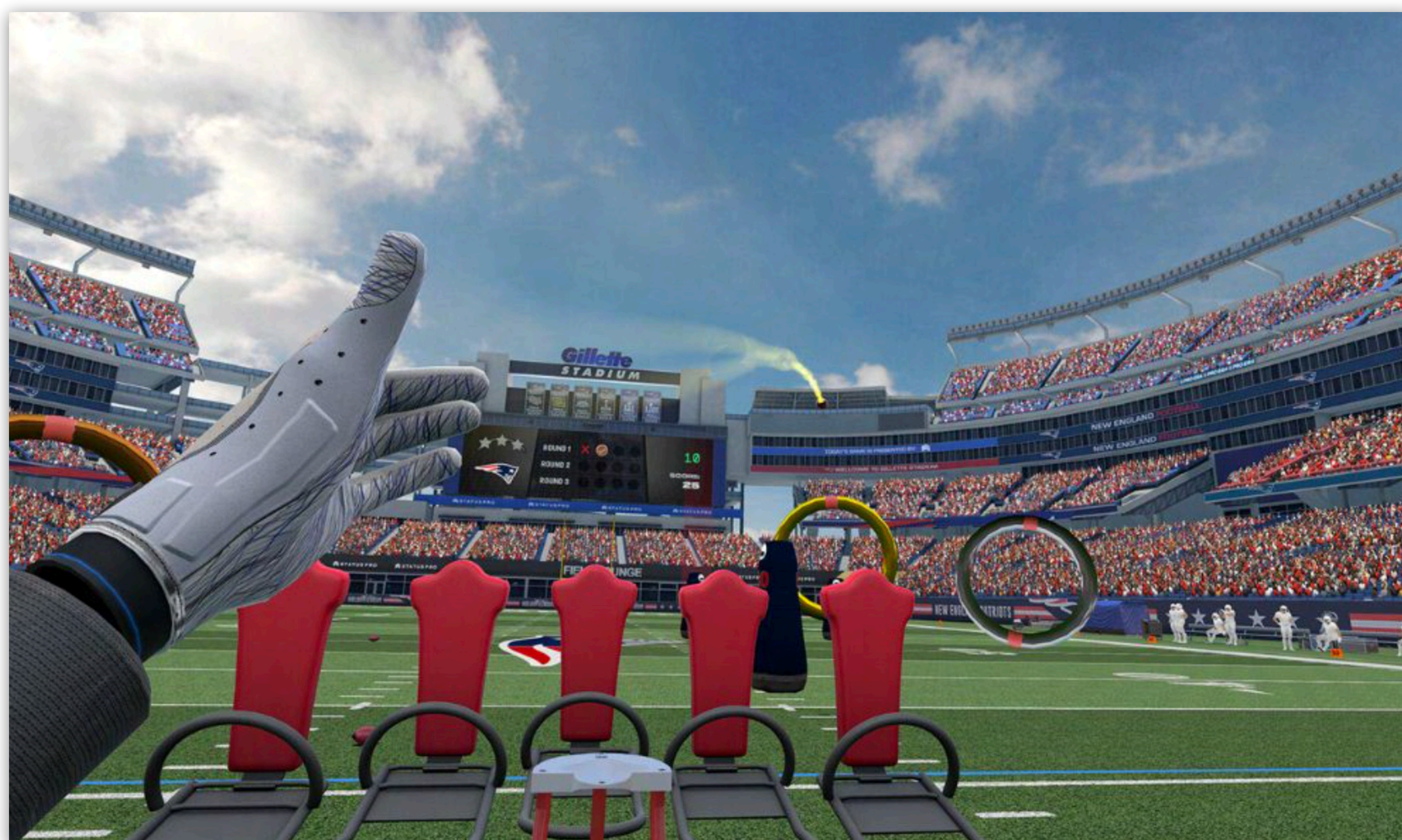
The round is one of the largest for any VR company to date and also saw the involvement of Indian sports tech giant Dream Sports, Minnesota Vikings owners Mark and Zygi Wilf's Wise Ventures, JDS Sports, and Alumni Ventures.

Crystal Palace. Lyon Backer Seeking \$200M in Funding

Eagle Football Holdings has a multiclub portfolio including Crystal Palace. The group is looking to raise new investment money.

Bluestone invests 'US\$45m' in Magnifi developer VideoVerse

Bluestone Equity Partners has invested a reported US\$45 million in Indian broadcast technology firm VideoVerse, best known for its Magnifi artificial intelligence (AI) video highlights software.





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NEW TECH IN FOCUS



Who Are They?

ReSpo.Vision is a DeepTech startup that has developed a 3D optical tracking system to capture detailed 3D player and ball position data from any single-camera game footage. Its solution provides sports teams, leagues & federations with performance, tactical, or scouting insights.

How does it work?

ReSpo.Vision immerses fans in 3D recreations of sports matches, offering varied perspectives, including the player's POV. Its AI optical tracking system offers sports organisations advanced insights for enhanced performance and immersive entertainment experiences.



The AI and computer Vision-based optical tracking system automatically collects player skeletal tracking data from any single camera recording of a sporting event (e.g. a TV broadcast).



NEW TECH IN FOCUS



Analysis:

The 3D optical tracking system, operating with a single-camera setup, showcases the startup's commitment to innovation. By capturing detailed 3D player and ball position data, Respo.Vision offers sports teams, leagues, and federations valuable insights for performance evaluation, tactical planning, and scouting.



The value of 3D player data extends beyond the professional realm to the fanbase. Respo.Vision's immersive 3D recreations of sports matches, featuring diverse perspectives, including the player's point of view, contribute to an elevated entertainment experience. Incorporating AI and computer vision in the optical tracking system ensures the automatic collection of intricate player skeletal tracking data from any single-camera recording, such as a TV broadcast.

In essence, Respo.Vision's solution bridges the gap between sports analytics and fan engagement, providing sports organisations with advanced insights for strategic decision-making while enhancing fans' viewing experience through innovative 3D recreations. This dual focus on performance analytics and immersive entertainment enhances Respo.Vision's positioning in the sports technology landscape.



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NEW TECH IN FOCUS

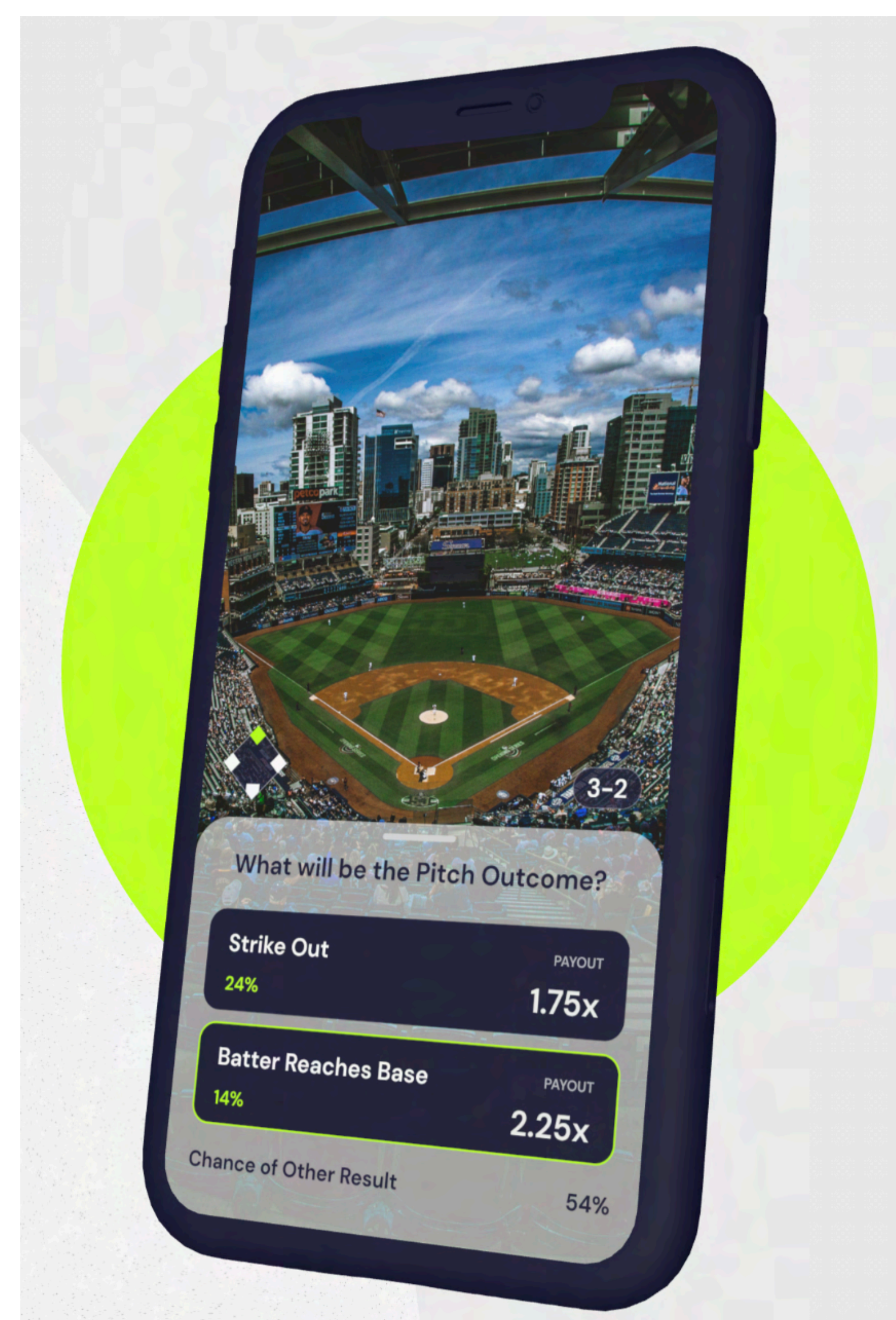


Who Are They?

nVenue is a micro-betting engine & predictive analytics platform built for live sports. Its AI-powered predictive engine delivers real-time probabilities and predictions for major sports leagues and teams around the world.

How does it work?

With a near zero-latency feed, sports betting operators, data providers, and sports media can introduce thousands of new micro-markets to fans while offering rich, entertaining predictive content in real time. nVenue's technology analyses over 120 inputs including key data points live from the field, historical player and league data, and even considers venue details to generate predictions in less than 1 second.



Its proprietary NextPlayLive models not only work to uncover predictions and probabilities but enable sports organisations to discover trends over time



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NEW TECH IN FOCUS



Analysis:

The sports betting and predictive analytics space is on the rise and nVenue's technology provides a comprehensive and real-time solution for the sports industry. The micro-betting engine and predictive analytics platform are powered by AI, delivering instantaneous probabilities and predictions for major sports leagues and teams globally.



Its zero-latency feed enables sports betting operators, data providers, and sports media to introduce thousands of new micro-markets to fans in real-time. This diversifies the betting landscape and enhances fan engagement with rich, entertaining, predictive content. The AI-driven platform analyses over 120 inputs, incorporating live field data, historical player and league information, and venue details to generate predictions in less than 1 second.

Apart from catering to the sports betting experience, nVenue's technology provides predictive analytics to inform strategic decisions and uncover long-term trends for sports organisations.



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Coming Soon

Our next Webinar under the Player IQ Tech series will take place in March. The topic of discussion and supporting information will be provided to the members in due course.

2024 / COMING SOON

MARCH

Webinar #5

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We are pleased to inform you that recording for Webinar 4 is now available for you to revisit or share with your union colleagues who may have missed it.

In our fourth webinar, we explored the significance of data and its collection within the sports betting value chain. Additionally, we explored specific commercial uses of data and how technology has advanced real-time tracking of player data, thereby facilitating the growth of the sports betting industry.

WEBINAR #4 Player IQ Tech Program

COMMERCIAL APPLICATIONS OF DATA: THE SPORTS BETTING INDUSTRY

Thursday, January 25, 14.30

Jean-Baptiste Alliot
Chief Strategy Officer at LaSource

Andrew Cox
Chief Executive Officer at Twenty3

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