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Pro Baseball Technology Goes International With First Cyber-Based Cricket Simulators

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MILFORD, CT -- (MARKETWIRE) -- 03/07/11 --

U.S.-based ProBatter Sports, the leading developer and manufacturer of advanced sports training simulators for major league baseball, has completed a deal with the International Cricket Council (ICC) for the first-ever ProBatter PX2 Cricket system in the Middle East. The system was installed in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, earlier this month at the ICC Global Cricket Academy (GCA).

Established 12 years ago, ProBatter quickly earned a reputation throughout the baseball-playing world for its patented, high-end pitching simulators, which brought a level of realism to hitter training that had never before existed. In the United States today, ProBatter systems are used by a growing number of big league teams for player training, including the New York Yankees, Boston Red Sox, Cleveland Indians, New York Mets, Pittsburgh Pirates and Cincinnati Reds.

ICC purchased ProBatter's cricket system for their High Performance program, which is intended to immediately benefit associate member countries, including Canada, The Netherlands, Kenya and Ireland. The goal is to help these teams

improve their level of play against the world's top tier nations during the ICC Cricket World Cup, starting on February 19. The competition concludes in Mumbai on April 2.

ProBatter Sports entered the world of international cricket last year, when the English Cricket Board (ECB) and Cricket Australia (CA) purchased the leading edge training systems for their countries' national teams. Similar in approach to an aircraft flight simulator, ProBatter recreates the experience of facing a live bowler through a seamless integration of video and computer technology.

In its original baseball configuration, the ProBatter PX2 system utilizes proprietary cutting-edge advancements in cyber technology to create a perfectly synchronized batting experience -- with startlingly realistic results. A hitter faces a DVD-quality image of a real pitcher, which is projected onto a screen measuring 8x10 feet. An actual baseball is fired through a small hole in the screen, delivering virtually any ball a human being can throw. Batters can be challenged by an endless variety of real pitches -- fastballs, sinkers, cutters, curves, sliders, change-ups, etc. The ProBatter simulator is extremely precise, capable of pitches of speeds up to 100 mph, in increments of 2 mph, all with pinpoint accuracy.

The cricket version of the PX2 was adapted from the original baseball design and allows individual bowlers to be programmed into the system. Player video can be specially shot, then integrated with their own unique styles of delivery; the data is entered into the simulator and is selectable on a touchscreen by the batsman or his coach.

The deal was negotiated on behalf of ProBatter Sports by Praxis Sport Science, the company's Australia-based overseas sales representative. Praxis' managing director, Marc Portus, worked directly with Richard Done, High Performance manager for ICC.

Extremely well-regarded in the world of international cricket, Portus first became aware of the ProBatter baseball system several years ago, while serving as manager of sport science for Cricket Australia. He was shown an advertisement by Mike Young, Australia's fielding coach, who happened to be a former American baseball player and coach. Immediately seeing the cricket potential of

the simulator, which was already being used by major league baseball teams, Portus contacted Adam Battersby, ProBatter's president. The two met in New York and discussed how to adapt the system for cricket. A stumbling block to closing a deal immediately was the lack of an indoor facility in which to house the unit. After receiving a government grant for a custom-built, weather-proof outdoor hitting tunnel for the system, Cricket Australia's installation was finally completed last November at the team's Brisbane training facility.

The delay allowed the English Cricket Board (ECB) to jump ahead last March, when their training site at their High Performance Cricket Centre in Loughborough became the first in the world with a ProBatter PX2 Cricket system. The national team trained extensively with the simulator during its preparations for the iconic "Ashes" series of five-day test matches against Australia -- which was won by England.

In creating the ProBatter PX2 Cricket simulator, the company's engineers worked tirelessly for months to be certain that the system met the exacting standards of world-class cricket. This included an extensive period of research, physical modification of the equipment and the writing of new software. One of the most critical tasks was the creation of a custom database, consisting of all known bowlers, complete with every detail of their deliveries. The result was the nearly perfect recreation of reality for batsmen.

"We're extremely excited to bring our unique, leading edge technology to the highest level of international cricket," said Battersby. "Timing is critical to hitting success and the ProBatter simulator allows batsmen the opportunity to face the equivalent of a live bowler. It also has a tremendous advantage over a human being -- it never gets tired and is far more accurate. Accordingly, individuals can hone in on aspects of their hitting technique that need the most attention."

The recent deals with Dubai, England and Australia are not ProBatter's first forays into the international marketplace. The company has baseball and softball simulators operational in Canada, Japan, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela. In addition, the China women's national softball team purchased a ProBatter system for their training center in Beijing, as the squad prepared for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games.

About ProBatter Sports

ProBatter Sports was formed in 1999 by members of Kent Communications, Ltd. and Stahl Real Estate, LLC. Stahl Real Estate is one of the principal commercial real estate developers in New York City, while Kent Communications is a publisher of a variety of journals and books on such diverse subjects as intellectual property and licensing.

Originally founded around the ProBatter Professional system, the ProBatter product line has substantially expanded since its inception with products such as the ProBatter II retrofit kit for commercial batting cages, ProBatter Professional Softball system, and a host of ancillary products including a Smart Card control system, a Scoring system, feeder systems, and the ProBatter seamed pitching machine balls, which are licensed to Baden Sports. The ProBatter line of products has received 13 U.S. patents and more than 20 international patents.

www.probatter.com

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SSA Public Relations Media Contact: Elliott Chang (818) 907-0500