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News Release

British gymnastics to improve efficiency of competition scoring with Electrone keypads The UK governing body for gymnastics selects Electrone Europe 720 keypad to improve scoring process

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Electrone Europe, custom-built IT peripherals vendor (<http://www.electrone.co.uk/>), has today announced that it has supplied its 720 keypad to the UK National Governing Body for the sport of Gymnastics, British Gymnastics, for use in a competition environment in individual apparatus judging.

British Gymnastics has now replaced its traditional scoring system with the 720 keypads, which feature 2x16 LCD character display and a 17-key arrangement, specifically designed to meet the RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substance) environmental standard.

As one of the world's first sports governing bodies, British Gymnastics was founded in 1888 as the British Amateur Gymnastics Association and is a member of the World Governing Body for Gymnastics (FIG). The not-for-profit organisation is dedicated to developing levels and quality of provision across a range of gymnastics disciplines.

Within the competition environment British Gymnastics realised the need for quicker and more efficient scoring processes as Ben Willcox, IT Manager, British Gymnastics explains, "Each piece of gymnastics apparatus has a set of judges to individually mark a gymnast's performance. Prior to the using the keypads, the judges used a single laptop to input their individual scores. This was a problem as there are six to seven judges per piece of apparatus with only one laptop. It was very limiting and time consuming for judges to input scores into the system."

Willcox continues, "When we discovered keypads were available which we could issue to each individual judge, to directly input their score when the gymnast had finished their routine, we searched the internet to find companies who provided this kind of hardware. Electrone stood out with their vast range of products and looked as if they would be suitable for us."

Due to the nature of the scoring there were specific requirements when searching the market for an appropriate product. Willcox explains, "British Gymnastics needed a keypad that would feedback and give confirmation as to

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what had been entered. The 720 was the only product we found which matched our specific requirement as the LCD screen is integrated with the keypad. There are a variety of normal numeric keypads in the market but Electrone were the only company to offer us the text display feedback function, key to the everyday use of the keypads."

British Gymnastics had used keypads in other areas of the competition arena having previously been using the 719 serial version. Currently British Gymnastics are testing the 720 IP version of the keypad which works over a standard TCP IP network. This makes the whole set up of the competition scoring equipment much faster by allowing the use of industry standard network hardware to connect all components together.

On the ease of the installation and the integration of the 720 IP keypads Willcox comments, "We have written a custom application that runs our scoring system which was very easy to integrate with the 720 IP keypads. Electrone has been extremely co-operative and even allowed us to test the hardware to see if and how easy the keypads would integrate with our system, which was so helpful to have access to."

In the future British Gymnastics intend to test the new 720 PoE version which will be released next month. This new product will streamline the cabling requirements and greatly improve the ease of set up and break down for the British Gymnastics scoring system.

Willcox concludes, "We hope to install the keypads in some of our major competitions this year as they have now become a major part of the infrastructure behind the scenes of British Gymnastics competitions. We aim to continue to work with Electrone to improve efficiency in other areas of the competition arena."

Stuart Thorn, Chief Executive, Electrone Europe comments, "Electrone is proud to be able to offer this proven product to the British Gymnastics. The 720 is a unique, low-cost product that can solve a wide variety of network communication problems. The keypad's on-board memory allows settings to be adjusted to suit an array of functions. We are excited to be working with the British Gymnastics and look forward to supporting them with their future plans."

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