

## Construction of ICON

Welcome back to my 3<sup>rd</sup> *Newshounds* article of the year! Is it just me or has this school year gone really quickly so far? If so then time sure does fly by!

Anyways, in this edition of my *Newshounds* escapades, we will be diving back into Blackpool Pleasure Beach to explore the construction of their latest rollercoaster *ICON*.



However before we begin, if you are reading this on the school website and want to have a look at the construction of Blackpool's most iconic rollercoaster *The Big One*, feel free to check it out by clicking the link here:

<https://www.pchs.lancs.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/End-of-year-newsletter-spread.pdf>

Without further ado, let's hammer our way into the construction zone!

## **The unexpected and rumours...**

When Blackpool Pleasure beach reopened for the 2016 season, many visitors witnessed the (at the time) the surprising removal of the Tom Sawyer Bridge.



This soon sparked up rumours of a new possible double launch coaster to be opened within the next couple of years. Soon afterwards the truth was revealed!

## **The Beginning...**

In September 2016, Blackpool Pleasure Beach invested in the rumours of the UK's first double launch coaster that would be manufactured by the company Mack Rides for £16,250,000, making it one of their largest investments to date!

Alongside this, Blackpool Pleasure Beach released a simulated 'point of view' video showing off the ride experience, If you are reading this on the school website then feel free to check out the video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eoem-bUa82M>

## **Construction...START!**

In December 2016, Construction officially began on *ICON* and in March 2017 the foundations for the ride were 80% complete with 282 concrete cylinders driven for main pilings.

## **The Name Reveal...**

In April 2017, Blackpool officially announced the ride's name to be *ICON*!

Fun Fact: Around this time, 8,000 metres of steel and concrete piles and been placed along with 5,500 tons of soil being dug out!

Here is a construction update photo for reference:



And then we had a sudden long period of silence until October 2017...

## The First Track Piece...

On October 19<sup>th</sup> 2017, the first pieces of track had arrived at the theme park and were installed onto the supports. Over the next following weeks and months, more pieces of track were being delivered and installed. The 2017 park season was coming to a close and thus Blackpool Pleasure Beach closed off the gates...

## During Downtime...

During Blackpool Pleasure Beach's downtime, major progress was made to ICON and Blackpool Pleasure Beach as a whole. Many more pieces of track were arriving and construction was going well. Even though we did say our farewells to *Wild Mouse* during this period.

However, the 2018 season was getting closer and Blackpool Pleasure Beach opened the gates once again for the new season...



## The Final Piece And Testing...

Around the time of Blackpool Pleasure Beach's 2018 opening day, the final piece of track was installed and the managing directors of the theme park, Amanda Thompson and Nick Thompson, signed the interior of the steelwork. Soon afterwards, testing began on the rollercoaster with ride dummies and this was the time where visitors saw *ICON* complete its first circuits.

## The First Riders...

A few days before *ICON*'s official opening, BPB offered tickets to allow participants to ride *ICON* for the first time. Around this time, The store of *ICON* was officially opened to the public where *ICON* merchandise was sold.

Fun Fact: I actually own an *ICON* Mug (the black version you can see in the picture), hat and even a T-Shirt straight from this store!



## **The Official Opening...**

After two years of speculation, construction and hype, *ICON* at last finally opened to the public on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 to critical acclaim by visitors and critics alike.

And this is where we leave our journey of Blackpool Pleasure Beach's most recent rollercoaster...