

SPECTACULAR STADIA



This year promises to be an exciting year for sport in Europe; seeing two major sporting events taking place. Both will be watched by millions globally, direct from some of the world's most innovative and advanced stadia.



Sports stadia are exposed to a range of corrosive environmental factors that often mean their steel structures require strong, reliable as well as aesthetically pleasing coatings solutions. AkzoNobel has been supplying such coatings for decades, with some new and high profile projects recently being completed.

Stadium construction and regeneration has seen a steep increase over recent years in both Poland and the Ukraine in preparation for a major football tournament towards the middle of 2012. Not only is it vital for each structure to adhere to strict building regulations, health and safety laws and sustainability measures; it is also vitally important that these structures have specified the best possible coatings in order to prolong their life, protecting the structure from corrosion and other aggressive elements. It is becoming increasingly

important for stadia to retain their high impact aesthetics as the trend for striking external design elements soars.

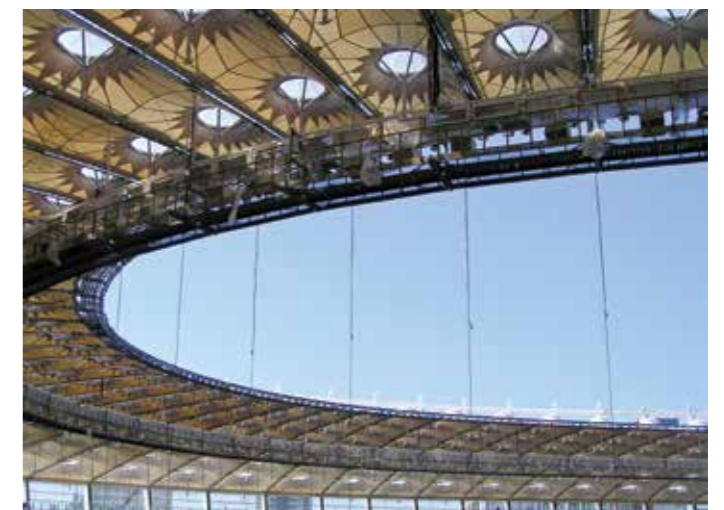
The importance of aesthetics was none more prevalent than at a previous football tournament back in 2010 held in South Africa where vibrant colours were as much the centre of attention as the infamous vuvuzelas. The Johannesburg Soccer City stadium, with a capacity of over 94,000 is one such example where colour and design were king. The Soccer City Stadium,

or the FNB Stadium as it is now more commonly known, boasts a striking exterior made to resemble the fiery and earthen tones commonly associated with traditional South African pottery, the ring of lights surrounding the structure at its base simulate flames engulfing the 'pot' as if it were placed on a fire.

As aesthetics were of such great importance to the success of this stadium, AkzoNobel's protective coatings were chosen to ensure the longevity of the aesthetics and

to protect against corrosion. A combination of Interzinc® Intercure®, Intergard® and Interthane® products were used to help ensure this stadium's innovative design is enjoyed by football fans for years to come.

With work only beginning towards the end of 2008 and taking just under three years to complete, the Arena Lviv, Ukraine is another such European stadium that placed high impact aesthetics at the top of its wish list.





With a capacity of just under 35,000, the arena will be renamed following it playing host to a major football tournament in 2012. The structural steelwork on the Arena Lviv was protected using products from AkzoNobel's Intercure and Interthane ranges, to provide long-lasting protection against corrosion, whilst still ensuring a superb longstanding aesthetic finish.

As investment in sports stadia within Europe continues to grow, the Olimpiysky National Sports Complex in Kiev is another such stadium to benefit. It was formally re-opened in 2011 following rigorous redevelopment, which saw AkzoNobel being chosen as one of its coatings suppliers. During the impressive reconstruction of this stadium, which was originally opened in 1923 under the name of the Red Stadium of Trotsky,

the lower tier was demolished and rebuilt, an entirely new west stand was constructed and a roof was added to cover the whole seated area. This stadium was also given a dose of added sparkle through the use of AkzoNobel's patented acrylic polysiloxane coating, Interfine® 878, which was applied to areas of the steelwork.

In Gdansk, Poland, the 44,636 capacity PGE Arena was opened in 2011 and utilises approximately 140,000 litres of coatings, applied onto around 90,000 square metres of structural steel. Protection was achieved through the use of a four coat system including Interzinc, Intergard and Interthane products. Unlike some stadia the PGE Arena does not offer athletics track facilities, making it a purpose built football stadium, which will see some of Europe's best footballers

representing their countries in the 'beautiful game' during 2012.

The largest purpose-built football stadium in Poland, based in Warsaw, was also opened in 2011. With a capacity of just over 58,000, the National Stadium was built to the highest standards enabling it to play host to matches from some of the most prestigious European tournaments.

This stadium was especially unique, for as well as the corrosion protection afforded by the system of Interzinc, Intercure and Interfine, fire protection was also required and was provided in the form of Interchar® 212, an epoxy based intumescent fire protection, which has also been used on several other high profile buildings around the world to provide structural protection against fire scenarios.

'Coating the National Stadium in Warsaw is something that will live in the memory for a long time' said AkzoNobel's Sales Manager for Eastern Central Europe. 'The sales chain was very demanding to manage, as the steel fabrication was a joint Polish-Italian venture, with most of the production in Italy. However, it was worth it in the end to secure the first application of Interchar 212 in Poland, and on such a prestigious project.'

Whilst Poland and the Ukraine have seen significant investment in sports stadia over recent years, other areas of Europe have not gone unnoticed. Other countries have also seen huge investment with the construction of some of the most striking stadia to be built in Europe for decades.



To read more on prestigious stadia, this time in Brazil, scan the QR code with your smart phone.

