Countdown to the Olympic challenge

The eyes of the world will be focused on the Olympic Games when they open in Beijing this week – a global sporting event which AkzoNobel’s very own winning team has already taken part in.

Construction work began several years ago and the company has supplied coatings for various venues, including the main Olympic Stadium (dubbed the Bird’s Nest) and the equally futuristic National Aquatics Center (known as the Water Cube).

All 8,000 tons of steelwork on the $100 million Water Cube is protected by coatings supplied by the company’s International Paint business, while around 1,000 kilograms of Interpon® powder coatings was also used during the construction. AkzoNobel powder coatings have also been applied to the main stadium.

In total, more than 30 venues will be used during the 16 days of competition, many of which utilize the company’s coatings expertise. These include the National Indoor Stadium (which will host artistic gymnastics, trampoline and handball), the Qingdao Sailing Center, the Beijing Olympic Convention Center (fencing), the Shunyi Rowing and Canoeing Park, Beijing University of Technology Gymnasium (badminton, rhythmic gymnastics) and the Capital Indoor Stadium (volleyball).

But it’s not just on the sporting front where the company’s coatings expertise are putting in their usual world class performance. Products were also supplied for the $3 billion extension to Beijing International Airport, which was officially opened earlier this year. The company’s Specialty Chemicals know-how has also been required, with Surface Chemistry supplying a micro-surfacing emulsifier which enabled miles of roads to be repaved in double quick time during the night in preparation for the huge increase in traffic.

Although the 2008 Games will be the first time the Olympics have been staged in China, AkzoNobel is no stranger to the global sporting spectacular, having also supplied coatings for major venues used in Athens in 2004 and Sydney in 2000.

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Note to editors – not for publication

AkzoNobel is proud to be one of the world’s leading industrial companies. Based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, we make and supply a wide range of paints, coatings and specialty chemicals – pro forma 2007 revenue totaled €14.4 billion. In fact, we are the largest global paints and coatings company. As a major producer of specialty chemicals we supply industries worldwide with quality ingredients for life’s essentials. We think about the future, but act in the present. We’re passionate about introducing new ideas and developing sustainable answers for our customers. That’s why our 60,000 employees – who are based in more than 80 countries – are committed to excellence and delivering Tomorrow’s Answers Today™.

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AkzoNobel
Corporate Media Relations, tel. +31 20 502 7833
Contact: Tim van der Zanden