



## PALAIS OMNISPORTS IN BERCY PARIS

Athletes participating: **630**  
 Countries of origin of the athletes: **46**  
 Disciplines practiced: **13**  
 Seats: **8,659 (per session)**  
 Spectators (3 days): **30,000**  
 Start of the Championships: **March 4, 2011**  
 Closing of the Championships: **March 6, 2011**

(France)

FROM MARCH 4 TO 6, 2011 PARIS HOSTED THE XXXI EDITION OF THE EUROPEAN ATHLETICS INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS. IN THE BERCY SPORTS HALL, 630 PARTICIPATING ATHLETES WERE ABLE TO TEST THE QUALITY OF THE NEW TRACK CREATED BY MONDO.

### A SUCCESS ANNOUNCED

Paris has always been a city with a very close relationship to sports, particularly to athletics. Not surprisingly, from the heart of the Latin Quarter in 1892, the Baron **Pierre de Coubertin** launched his call for the revival of the Olympics, with the French capital hosting the first edition of the Games in 1900, also opened to the participation of women. If you look at the city today, it shows its sporting soul with as many as 360 structures and hundreds of clubs and associations. "Ile-de-France is a land of sports, with about 2.2 million people that practice sports and more than 21.000 clubs. The love for athletics is demonstrated by the 32,000 practitioners and the 350 clubs that support this sport," says **Jean Paul Huchon**, President of the Regional Council of Ile-de-France. When Paris was chosen to host the 31st edition of the European Athletics Indoor Championships the success was thus assured. "Having visited Paris many times I know that its people love athletics, and sports in general, and I have no doubt that they will fill the Palais Omnisports in Bercy Paris (POBP) for the three-day event," declared **Hansjörg Wirz**, President of the European Athletic Association before the start of the European Championships, and so it was!

### RECORD CHAMPIONSHIP

It has been many years since 1970, when Vienna hosted the first edition of the European Athletics Indoor Championships, a period of time in which the geography of Europe was changed after the breakup of the Soviet Union and the emergence of new nations. "We are very proud to organize this great competition. Europe has expanded and now includes fifty nations. European athletes are international leaders in some athletic disciplines," said **Bernard Amsalem**, President of the French Athletics Federation. In fact, the 2011 edition has a **new record**: 46 participating nations, with 630 registered athletes (346 men and 284 women). This year not only the number of nations has changed, but also some indoor athletics rules. The competition became shorter, with the elimination of certain disciplines such as the 200m race. A major change occurred in 2000, with the equalization between obtained indoor and outdoor records. A decision that created more interesting competitions, including the latest European Championships, which saw at the individual level 101 personal records, not including relays. To top it all, **Tamgho Taddy**, a French athlete set the world record in triple jump with 17.92 m.

## BERCY HAS A NEW LOOK

The European Athletics Championships gave POPB the opportunity to replace the old track, which was 25 years old and unsuitable to the new international standards. The choice came down to the new portable track with **Mondotrack FTX** system built by Mondo. The company that deals with the development of the building purchased it in early 2010 and tested it during the French Indoor Athletics Championships in February of the same year. The new track has a 200m ring with six lanes and a center line of 60m with eight lanes. To get the right set-up, the track was not only replaced, but the configuration changed which required the removal and storage of 550 tons of steps by using 40 cranes and the presence of 48 workers. The operation took 23 days to complete, and in the end it produced the desired result. "This track really has nothing to do with the one of the 1997 World Championships, which seems prehistoric," **Philippe Ventadour**, General Director of the building, told to the French magazine, *Athletisme Magazine*. **Alain Spira**, Head of the French Federation of Athletics for Major Events, said, "All athletes has a positive opinion about the new track. There were good performances, even with the world record in the triple jump. Compared to the old track, it took several days to be installed, but the result was excellent."

## ENVIROMENTALLY FRIENDLY CHAMPIONSHIPS

During the European Championships, the French Athletics Federation and the European Athletics Association presented the "**Sustainable project**". Developed from the collaboration with the International Academy for Sports Sciences and Technology of Lausanne, this project aims to create guidelines for athletic events in order to demonstrate how sport can contribute to a responsible approach to environmental problems. Each committee has included this information in any decision or proposal, with the aim of reducing CO2 emissions. One example came from the displacement, which was optimized by choosing the closest accommodation to the place where the competition was held to reduce the impact caused by transportation. A great effort was made for printed paper, as well. For example, the volunteers were mostly recruited through a questionnaire on paper, but then were chosen using an online form. During the event there was a close collaboration with POPB, which is already a leader in this field, to coordinate efforts to obtain maximum energy savings.





