



BARCELONA OLYMPIC STADIUM 2010

During the 2010 European Championship:

- 22 national records
- 7 Championship records
- 13 European Junior records
- Top 3 world season

Olympic Editions
(Spain)

SPORTS, HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE GO HAND IN HAND. AS AN EXAMPLE, THE CITY OF BARCELONA, WHOSE NOMINATION TO HOST THE 1992 OLYMPIC GAMES GAVE A NEW IMPETUS TO RENOVATE NOT ONLY THE OLYMPIC STADIUM, BUILT IN 1929, BUT ALSO A GOOD PART OF THE CITY. A MOMENTUM THAT IS KEPT ALIVE AND REINFORCED BY THE RECENT MODERNIZATION OF THE STADIUM FOR THE 2010 EUROPEAN ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS.

Monjuïc reminds us of the old Olympus. Not just for hosting numerous events with the best athletes in the world, but also from the mythology and history than can be capricious sometimes and from which astounding parallels can be drawn.

According to Greek mythology, Mount Olympus was home of the twelve Olympian gods, with Zeus at the head, while in Roman mythology, Zeus was called Jupiter. This would have no relevance if not for the name "Monjuïc" that comes from the Latin Mons Iovis, which means Mount of Jupiter, i.e. Mount Zeus, which is none other than the old Olympus.

Coincidence or not, it is on the slopes of Montjuïc, in 1929, that the Olympic Stadium was built for the Universal Exposition. Retaining its old facade, a new stadium for 60,000 spectators was built in 1989. The 1992 Olympic Games added an 'Olympic ring' including 10 kilometers of roads, streets, fountains and parks. It was during these Olympics that hundreds of athletes tried to replicate these Olympic achievements. In 2001, the new facility was baptized Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium in honor of the former Generalitat president, Lluís Companys.

However, history does not end here, as it continues to create myths. The 2010 European Athletics Championships did a refurbishing of the Olympic Stadium that included the replacement of the existing track with a synthetic one, the world's fastest track.

To Àgata Buxadé, architect in charge of the renovation project, the numbers attested to this. "During the 2010 European Championships, 22 records were broken, 7 National Championship records and 13 European records, and 3 Junior world best seasons were conducted. In total, more than 10 percent of the participating athletes broke their personal achievements," said Buxadé.

Those results fully correspond with Josep Sánchez Pons, director of the Olympic Stadium Lluís Companys objectives. "All athletes are delighted with the results obtained on this track. With the new surface, the times obtained in the '2011 Barcelona International Athletics Meeting' are excellent, even the president of the RFEA (Royal Spanish Athletics Federation) joked at the end of the Meeting, saying that "I was thankful for the length reduction of the track, as all Spanish athletes had entered the minimum time for the next world championship."



THE PROJECT

Buxadé, founding partner of the Buxadé, Margarit, Ferrando SLP company, explains that the project drafting process relied on Mondo's Technical Department "to define and detail the specific technical features of the Olympic Stadium." Between the first contact and project delivery, the executive invested approximately three months.

The new track was nine lanes and the surface was composed of synthetic Mondotrack FTX, a prefabricated latest generation surface of consistent thickness which gave athletes more stability and safety.

The track was installed in two phases: first in 2009 with the installation of the two half radiuses, which were done in 15 days. This stage included six Mondo operators. The second phase took place in 2010 with the installation of the outer ring and inner warm up areas, that were made in 21 days with the help of nine Mondo installers.

CURIOSITY

Buxadé recalled that the previous work of setting out and preparing the base required "personnel with experience and precision" to determine the specific design measures for any problems that could be detected.

In fact, with the assurance many years of experience give, Buxadé did not hesitate to ensure that the materials could be "the best on the market, but if the technical staff and the installers had not been so professional and specialized, the results would not have been so highly satisfactory. "

In this regard, the architect explained that installation should be done in two phases and that 10 months passed between the two phases, so he had to take into account the inevitable color change that would occur between the different zones. "So we proposed that the mark blue and green lanes be a backdrop. The track of the same color, but different phases, only found at the intersection of javelin lane with the track. "

Buxadé says that "the track installed has a useful life of approximately eight to ten years", but with the proper use and maintenance, "its useful life can be more than 15 years. That's what happened with the previous Mondo track which lasted 21 years. "

The stadium director, Josep Sanchez, said that the entire track surface is protected with carpet during major events and it is placed on a type of pavement that corresponds to the material and work done on it, either aluminum, plywood, special plastic plates, , rubber, etc.. "As these materials are removed, we then proceed with a general water pressure wash, and this is done every month, even if we didn't have any events".

According to Sanchez, the Olympic Stadium is known not only for its track undisputed speed, but "it has always been known for its multifunction sports management, musical shows, family activities and other events. From the beginning the company's motto has been 'where everything is possible.' "

For Sanchez, stadium director" it is very fortunate to have a stadium as iconic as that of Barcelona, built in 1929, and it's an honor to have the fastest tracks added to this facility, designed to host the city's most prestigious events.

FOUR VALUES

When asked about the values that best represent the new track, Buxadé referred to four: "Reliability, innovation, quality and environmental friendliness."

Buxadé highlights the "high reliability" of materials used. "It's not surprising that Mondo has become a world leader in sports flooring." Reliability should be accompanied by a high degree of innovation, "when you have to replace, in two phases, a historic track that has lasted for many years, with a new track that will have to endure heavy use not just from sports. Innovation in every detail was also essential to achieve this. "

Through the whole process quality remained an important aspect. "From the very beginning, we made it clear that we were expecting this new track would last another 21 years," says the project manager.

Last but not least, Buxadé emphasized his concern that the production and installation of any building material "has minimal environmental impact and energy consumption". He was satisfied to learn that Mondo also shares that concern.

These values have contributed to the expansion and renovation of the Olympic Stadium that has become a symbol and benchmark for international sports. With the 1992 and 2010 sporting events, the old city has been able to show the world its organizational skills, passionate character and undeniable appeal. Perhaps history and mythology are not wrong, and recall the old Monjuïc Olympius itself and its sporting prowess.



