



Main Olympic stadium wrapped in high-tech polyester panels produced with the aid of Dow Chemicals.

 London 2012

hockey pitches were the result of a multi-party technical collaboration, with Dow's polyethylene resins being used by Tapex, a leading sports yarn manufacturer in Australia. The use of linear low density resins in the yarn component of the artificial turf pitches helped create soft, safe and seemingly perfect playing surfaces for the 76 matches at the Olympic Hockey Centre. The yarn was then converted into rolls of Poligras by Advanced Polymer Technology Australasia. The design, installation and maintenance of the turf at the Olympic Hockey Centre was provided by Sports Technology International.

While many of the millions of people who attended the Olympics, only some would have appreciated that Dow was responsible for the external wrapping of the main stadium. The fabric wrap of over 300 individual panels, each about 25 metres high and 2.5 metres wide, was made of lightweight polyester fabric with a low density polyethylene coating. Sustainability was also one of the words associated with the Olympic park and the wrap used fewer raw materials to manufacture, was 35% lighter and had a lower carbon footprint when compared with conventional materials. UV-stable inks replaced conventional inks to cut emissions during printing.

The stadium was designed for change after the Paralympic Games end, where its capacity can be altered as required. One of the changes will be to the external wrap. Of the hundreds of fabric panels many will be recycled; some will go to a project that provides vocational training for former child soldiers in Patongo, Uganda, and others to a welfare initiative in Rio de Janeiro for the next summer Games in 2016. Others will be re-used for youth projects in Britain, while the remainder will be ground down and recycled into new construction material. If the projects deliver the expected results, Dow can expect to receive more requests for charitable assistance.

So who did win the Olympics? In all probability it was London itself, which provided some of the most memorable venues and iconic backdrops ever used to create 'the greatest show on earth'. Oh, and the volunteers. 

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