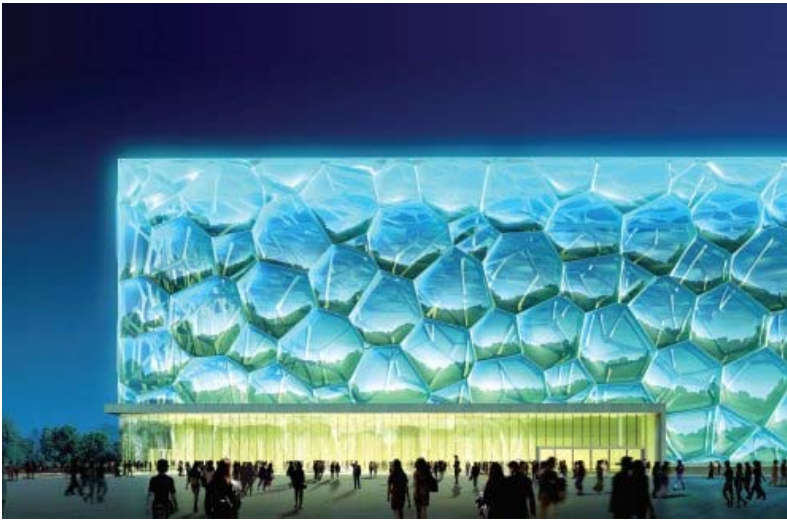
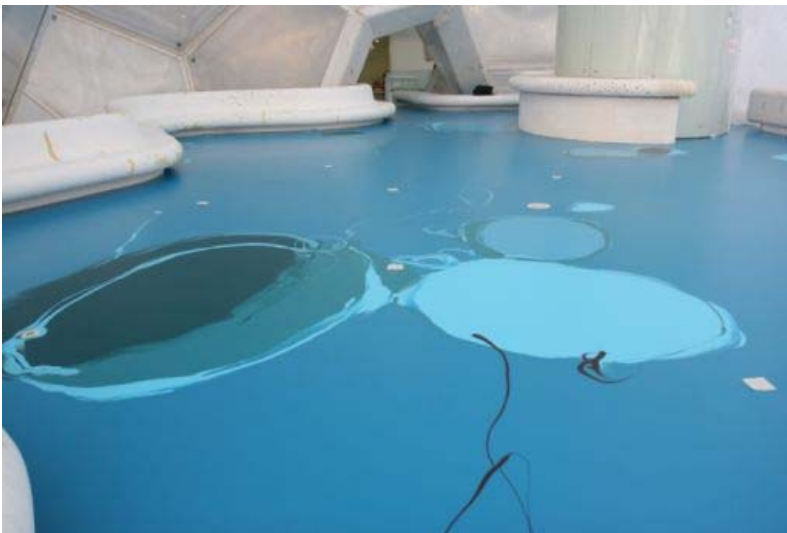


Half a year to go

In half a year, the Olympic Games in Beijing will begin. As far as the Chinese are concerned, we will mainly remember these Games for being modern and eco-friendly. Many of the sports facilities have been built in a sustainable way.



The Watercube, the Olympic Swimming Pool, in which Pieter van den Hoogenband will try to win an Olympic gold medal for the third time in succession in August, is the most striking example of this new way of building. The Watercube was completed a week and a half ago. From the outside, the building looks like a rectangular shoe box, but not in any way dull. The outer layer of the building comprises 3,000 high-tech luminous plastic bubbles. This semi-transparent membrane structure is capable of letting in sunlight to heat the water in the pool. Less steel was needed, because the weight of the plastic is only 1 % of that of glass.



The hall has a seating capacity of 17,000 and with 100,000 m² of plastic used, it is the most complex structure in the world. In addition to the use of innovative materials, an ingenious water collection system makes it possible to filter water. A sophisticated lighting system allows the Watercube to be illuminated in any colour at night. The futuristic venue costing well over 100 million Euros will only be used for two weeks.

Note: Bolidt was commissioned by BayerMaterialScience to install their Bolidtop[®] Bubblebar flooring in the VIP bar of the Olympic Pool. It is the only place where the luminous plastic bubbles can be touched.

Source: The major part of this news item has been extracted from the column by Bert van Dijk in the Financieel Dagblad of 11 February 2008.