



Wembley by numbers

-  The new Wembley has a circumference of one kilometer and the new pitch will be four meters lower than the previous pitch
-  There will be 2,618 toilets
-  At 133 meters high and 7.4 meters in diameter, the arch is tall enough for the London Eye to roll underneath it and wide enough to accommodate a Channel Tunnel train
-  If placed end to end, the rows of seating would stretch 54 kilometers
-  The roof alone weighs 7,000 tons
-  Each of the stadium's two giant screens is the size of 600 domestic TVs

Ready for **ACTION**

London's futuristic new Wembley Stadium is to get the ball rolling again after several years on the sidelines, with Akzo Nobel having made an important contribution.

One of the world's greatest sporting venues will welcome back the roar of the crowd this year when it kicks off a new era following a complete rebuild. Famous for being the home of English football since 1923, Wembley Stadium has been transformed into the largest soccer stadium in the world.

Immediately recognizable due to its striking and distinctive arch, the state-of-the-art 90,000-seater venue is scheduled to stage this year's FA Cup Final, which will make it the first major sporting event to have taken place at the site since 2000.

Also renowned as a concert venue—Wembley hosted the UK Live Aid in 1985—a number of high profile shows have also been announced, with George Michael set to start the musical ball rolling in June.

Construction work has been ongoing since September 2002, and although a lot of attention has been focused on the much publicized 315-meter-long steel arch—the longest single span

roof structure in the world—the rest of the stadium (including its partly retractable roof) has also seen its fair share of the action.

Being such a prestigious project, it's only natural that Akzo Nobel, the world's biggest coatings company, became involved. "We supplied a substantial amount of our Interpon® brand, which was applied by an Interpon D approved applicator to some of the bull nose capping around the venue," explains Arthur Moseley, Marketing Manager for Akzo Nobel Powder Coatings in the UK. "Bull nose capping is used to bridge two sections of a building fascia. They finish off a structure and help to make it weatherproof, so the coating is all-important."

Wembley's long and glorious past has earned it almost legendary status. United States-bound former England soccer captain David Beckham has called it "the ultimate stadium," while British Prime Minister Tony Blair has stated that the new venue—which cost close to GBP 800 million—will be "the most spectacular stadium in

the world." The company's Powder Coatings business is also proud to have been involved in the creation of a Wembley for the 21st century.

"As we are continually working with architects and designers on architectural projects, it is really rewarding when we can actually see the results of our efforts on the finished structure," says Moseley. "It is even more satisfying when the building concerned is such a prestigious and instantly recognizable one as Wembley. The stadium is a truly magnificent building and it is great to have been part of making it look that way."

But Wembley isn't the only major sports arena to feature powder coatings supplied by Akzo Nobel. The Stade de France in Paris—completed in 1997—has around 25 tons of Interpon D1000 coatings on its roof and exterior cladding, while the company also provided various powder products for venues and buildings constructed for the 2004 Athens Olympics in Greece, including the main stadium. ■