

Vélodrome

The Vélodrome, where the indoor Floralties will be held May 17 to May 29, 1980, is part of the stunning Parc Olympique complex conceived by the French architect Roger Taillibert.

In 1912, the municipality of Maison-neuve, then a suburb of Montréal, set aside 2,040,000 square meters of land (21,960,000 square feet) to develop a sports and recreational area to be called Parc Maison-neuve.

Forty-two years later, a team of landscape architects drew up a master plan and out of it emerged the first two elements of the proposed complex--the Aréna Maurice Richard and the Centre sportif Maisonneuve, renamed the Centre sportif Pierre Charbonneau in 1976.

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In 1970, when Montréal was awarded the 1976 Summer Olympic Games, it was decided to incorporate the two buildings in the projected Parc Olympique. A breathtaking architectural ensemble was designed combining a stadium, aquatic centre, and the Vélodrome in two integrated units occupying one-seventh of the total land surface of the 557,481-square-meter (6,000,000 square feet) park.

Located less than five kilometers (3.11 miles) from the downtown area, Parc Olympique is served by two Métro stations integrated with the other structures.

While the Vélodrome was specifically created for bicycle training and racing, the huge main floor and peripheral areas lend themselves to a wide variety of applications and use. Since the Olympics, the Vélodrome has been the site of political meetings, concerts, roller-skating and karate competitions, the Salon de la Femme, the Salon de la Moto, etc.

Design of the Vélodrome was governed not only by the need for its architectural integration with the stadium but also the physical demands of enclosing a regulation cycling track 7.5 meters wide and 285 meters long (25 by 935 feet).

The building itself is an intricate structure of prestressed and poststressed prefabricated concrete which has made it possible to enclose the surface of the Vélodrome--some 13,500 square meters (145,300 square feet)--without any interior supports. The roof--the most original and striking feature of the building--is in the shape of a perforated dome with a radius of 160 meters (524 feet).

The roof permits a light penetration factor of 70 per cent, the curved skylights serving to heighten the spacious effect created by the lattice-like roof. Made of a translucent plastic material--a layer of polyurethane pressed between two sheets of acrylic--the skylights not only ensure a uniform diffusion of light throughout the whole of the building but also act as thermal insulators.

Under the roof's exterior arches, huge sheets of glass form the lower walls of the Vélodrome. Rubberized joints between the panes ensure tightness and also absorb expansion and contraction of the shell arising from changes in temperature and from shrinking of the concrete.

Inside, 18 air-conditioning and ventilation outlets are distributed throughout the building above the stands, allowing utilization of the Vélodrome at all times regardless of the temperature outside. Metal walkways suspended beneath the roof hold the lighting and sound systems. For telecasting purposes, light intensity at the surface of the Vélodrome is 200 foot candles.

The Vélodrome can accommodate 5,824 spectators in permanent seats. A further 1,676 seats may be installed on the main floor for special events.

Parc Olympique has two underground parking garages with space for 3,800 automobiles.