Напрям: Теоретико-методологічні, історичні, соціокультурні, правові, економічні та організаційно-управлінські проблеми олімпійського спорту

**SUSTAINABILITY AND LEGACY OF BEIJING'S 2008 OLYMPICS**

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**Introduction.** Over-spending and under-utilization has long been a footnote to the grandeur of the Olympics, but Beijing set about to break the mold by learning from the past, and planning well in advance. While spending by China in 2008 was by far the most ever showered upon an Olympics – an estimated $42 billion [4], or about 10 times the Athens expenditure – Beijing looks certain to break even on nearly every one of its Olympic arenas.

How it achieved this astounding efficiency isn’t all due to astute planning. Beijing offered a rare urban landscape. Much spending was on big-ticket items like an expansion of the subway system, improvements that were needed even if the Olympics had not been held in China. Other funds bankrolled various environmental measures, as Beijing strove to host the greenest Olympics ever.

**Aim of the research** is to analyze the legacy of the Beijing's 2008 Olympics and its impact into the sustainability.

**Methods**. systematic analysis, comparison methods and analogies.

**Results and discussions.** Beijing reached or exceeded its ecological goals as neatly as it launched a new era of more efficient Olympics facilities. Nearly $2 billion was spent to build 12 permanent and eight temporary venues for the Olympics [1]. Some of these facilities were even more overdue than the subway expansion, guaranteeing that they would remain in use long afterwards. With a population of about 15 million, metropolitan Beijing depended on its old Worker’s Stadium to serve big events, like Asian football (or soccer). The 40,000-seat stadium is cramped and lacks modern boxes, but it was the biggest and best Beijing had to offer [3].

Hence, plenty of pent-up demand greeted the construction of the Bird’s Nest, as the exquisitely designed new National Stadium from Herzog & De Meuron Architekten AG has been dubbed. Chinese sports clubs and civic groups are lining up to book the state-of-the art 91,000-seat stadium.

That iconic facility has become world famous, but practically all other Olympics stadiums have been well received and fill immediate needs in Beijing. Many were built alongside existing universities, where they are already becoming integrated into campus facilities. The wrestling venue became a 6,000-seat gymnasium for the China Agricultural University, while the 6,900 seat badminton gym was turned over to Beijing University of Technology [6]. In coastal Qingdao, the Olympics boating facilities were converted into a public marina and government school for sailors.

Such smooth transitions should not minimize the extent of Beijing’s pre-Olympics planning. Practically from the day China won its bid in 2001, the government set about to ensure that its Olympics legacy was unique.

The best example is probably the press center and broadcasting building, which not only served 21,000 journalists, but also hosted fencing and shooting events. That was during the Olympics. Now, it starts its new life as the China National Convention Centre, with some of the top exhibition facilities in the country. With the addition of hotels and shopping, it became a trendy new tourist and business center in the Chinese capital [6].

Other savings were registered across the board as Olympics facilities endeavored to achieve energy efficiencies under Beijing’s goal of hosting the greenest Olympics ever. The evocative Water Cube, as the National Aquatics Center was dubbed, features an unique exterior of thousands of plastic bubbles. These perform miracles of insulation, using natural sunlight to heat the pool, reducing energy needs by 30 percent - about as much as if the entire roof was covered in photovoltaic cells [3]. The Water Cube also collects and recycles rain water, as do many Olympics facilities. Solar panels in the Bird’s Nest generate enough energy to power lights for the underground parking lot.

Another factor in Beijing’s 2008 Olympic success was the level of coordination and unity over seven years of planning and construction. Engineering firm Arup was behind practically all the Olympic facilities. That helped them tie all the facilities together with an underground road system that not only sped transportation and emergency access, but allowed for coordination of parking, reducing the need for spaces in individual arenas.

Perhaps the best example of confluence between making facilities pay for themselves and realize green savings comes at the athlete’s village. Housing for 16,000 athletes was designed from the start as luxury apartments, complete with the kinds of services – from restaurants to laundry – that are rare in Beijing. As a result, all the apartments sold out well ahead of the Olympics, at prices ranging from $3000-$4500 per square meter, high even in the booming Beijing market [1].

Besides the convenience and quality, the apartments offer another attraction in the location, another within a 580-hectare green belt erected for the Olympics. Given the high levels of pollution in Beijing, residents were keen for housing in the park-like setting, and willing to pay an Olympic premium for it.

**Conclusions.** Weeks in the staging, but nearly a decade in the planning, the legacy of these Olympic Games is likely to be far more long lasting than the TV images. China not only excelled on the tracks and in the stadiums, but showed with the right attention to detail behind the scenes, a grand Olympics can also be green and pay dividends for the host community for years to come.

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