

HK's Olympic architects think small

Thirty bricklayers have been hard at work in a mall getting the stadiums ready in time for the Games, writes **Elaine Yau**

If you can't make it to the Games this month then hop on the MTR to Mong Kok and see what you're missing. Grand Century Place in Mong Kok is home to Lego-brick replicas of some of the magnificent Olympic facilities, such as the "Bird's Nest", the "Water Cube" and our local equestrian venues.

Built in collaboration with the Hong Kong Lego User Group, the miniature stadia are intended to give Hongkongers some idea of the ingenuity behind the groundbreaking architectural designs.

Seven designers drew up the plans and over 30 Lego enthusiasts built the constructions brick-by-brick for more than a month.

From the well-appointed athletes village in Beijing to the ancient Olympic city of Athens, the meticulously-detailed models capture some of the glory of the Games.

"The Olympics are eagerly anticipated by the whole city. These colourful Lego-model displays convey vitality and a festive spirit," said Ray Hui Lung-tat, senior leasing manager with Sun Hung Kai Real Estate Agency, owners of the shopping mall.

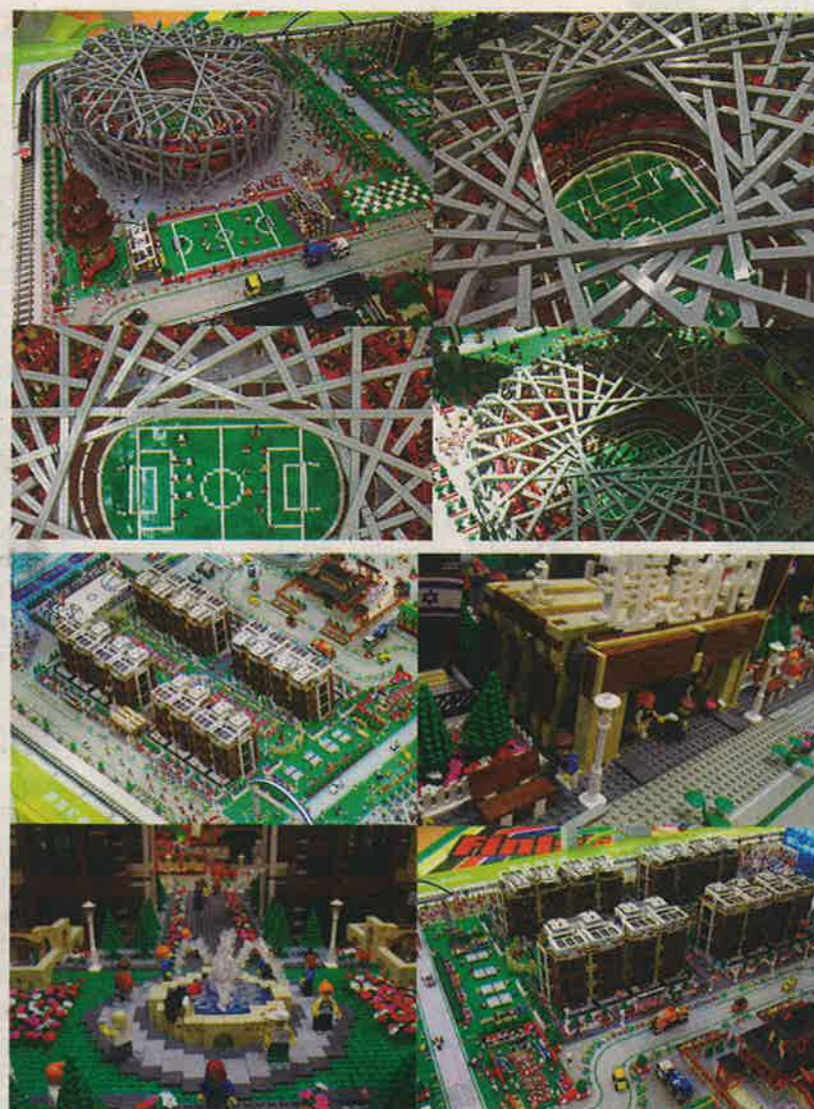
The constructions proved to be a huge challenge to the teams of bricklayers. Joey Kwok Yue-him, co-ordinator of Hong Kong Lego User Group, said the construction of the "Bird's Nest" and the "Water Cube" tested the limits of the tiny brick's flexibility.



SOME OF THE OLYMPIC MODELS BUILT BY THE HONG KONG LEGO USER GROUP AT GRAND CENTURY PLACE IN MONGKOK

"Being circular in shape, the 'Bird's Nest' sports a criss-crossing pattern. We had to use special pliable Lego bricks to make the circular shape. The irregularly-shaped exterior was

the most difficult to build," said Mr Kwok. The glimmering "Water Cube" was another labour of love for the team. "The blue glimmer emanating from the structure



comes from miniature fluorescent lights placed underneath the roof. We did a lot of research online to see how the actual structure was built in Beijing and came up with the idea of using transparent lego

bricks and artificial lights," said Mr Kwok. **The exhibition runs until August 31 at the Grand Century Place at 193 Prince Edward Road West, Mongkok.**

Paper frogs are a hit with Wetland visitors

Hong Kong
Elaine Yau

Visitors to the Hong Kong Wetland Park's 2008 Year of the Frog Thematic Exhibition this month will be greeted by the exhibition's



Department, said the "Wonderland of Frog" origami workshops have been very popular with visitors to the exhibition.

"We wanted to make the exhibition more interactive, and many youths have signed up for the free workshops," said Mrs Chan.

Games scalpers dodge the law in China's running

China
Reuters

Tickets for the Beijing Games have officially sold out, setting off China's own running of the bulls - "yellow bull"



scalpers - *huang niu*, or yellow bulls - are doing.

Officials were not available at the ticketing office phone number and did not reply to e-mailed requests for an interview about widespread profiteering, although a series

S Korea doubts account of tourist

South Korea
Associated Press

South Korea raised more doubts Friday about North Korea's account of how a southern tourist was fatally shot by a North Korean soldier.

Seoul has pressed North Korea to co-operate in its investigation of the July 11 shooting of a 53-year-old South Korean housewife killed while vacationing at the North's Diamond Mountain resort. South Korea has halted the tours, saying they will not resume until visitors' safety is assured.

The North has claimed the woman strayed into a restricted area while strolling on a beach and ignored a soldier's order to halt, instead running away before being shot twice.

On Friday, the South said two days of tests at a beach to check North Korea's explanation of what happened showed the victim was likely shot while standing still or walking slowly.

If she had been running at the time, the shot on her hip would not have penetrated her dress and sweater at the same time because the sweater would