

Plastic skating rinks: simple, reliable and mobile

A Canadian company is manufacturing a polyethylene surface with properties quite similar to those of artificial ice, reports Michel Nadeau in *Le Devoir*. The cost of constructing a rink using this new process is much lower and maintenance costs are 10 per cent of those required to keep artificial ice in good condition. The rink, produced by Glice Manufacturing Inc., Montreal, can be used all year round and requires no consumption of energy.

Skating can be just as fast, but it takes a little more effort on the Glice rink because of the absence of water. Skate friction is about 85 to 90 per cent of the friction on artificial ice.

The new surface, which is resistant to wear, is guaranteed for eight years (four years on each side). However, experience has shown that its average life is about seven years.

A skate blade breaks regular ice somewhat, while on the plastic it leaves only a groove without removing small chips. All the care a Glice rink requires is a sweep of the broom each day and a cleaning every week. After each cleaning, a conditioner is sprayed on to restore the surface.

The Glice sheet looks exactly like artificial ice with the plastic tinted slightly bluish to give the appearance of natural

ice. There is no difficulty in drawing lines on the plastic.

At least six European cities are using the surface. An Ottawa hockey club has already tried the plastic ice, and has said it liked the results. Negotiations are being carried on with various municipal organizations all over Canada and the United States to purchase the Glice rink.

At the moment, the plastic is about \$150 a square metre, or \$250,000 for a rink of average size, whereas the figure for artificial ice varies between \$225,000 and \$1 million.

Paris Lido buys disco version

The Montreal company has decided to put the surface to other uses, and so "Disco Glice", an adaptation of the polyethylene to a resistant dance floor, has been developed.

The Lido in Paris has already ordered a sheet on which to present its shows. All combinations of colours and sparkles within the plastic are offered. Some plastics are translucent and so allow the light of projectors to pass through.

The Glice rink does need a roof over it because the sun or rain can damage the wood between the two layers of plastic but it is expected that more and more of these plastic rinks will have cement cores.

Cholesterol not all bad

A Vancouver research team has found indications that cholesterol from eggs does not stay in the body as much as previously assumed.

Cholesterol, a fatty substance found in egg yolks, is believed to be a contributing factor in heart disease.

Dr. Darrell Bragg, head of the University of British Columbia's poultry science department, has been working on the development of a low cholesterol egg for over two years.

Dr. Bragg said that although his findings are not conclusive, it does not appear that as much cholesterol from egg yolks stays in the body as has been believed.

The research team has been working with chickens and rats. The chickens are fed a dose of radioactive cholesterol which is absorbed and collected in yolks. The yolks are then fed to laboratory rats to test the level of absorption.

"We're finding that with the radioactive cholesterol, about 50 per cent of it disappears," said Dr. Bragg. It had been assumed that up to 98 per cent of cholesterol from egg yolks remains within the body.

He said the team has also found differences between the cholesterol found in egg yolks and that in pure fat. A large proportion of the egg yolk variety is excreted and does not collect in the blood and heart of laboratory animals, he said.

IIC conference in Canada

Some of the world's most influential experts and policy-makers in the field of communications are expected to gather in Ottawa September 7 to 11, for the 1980 annual conference of the International Institute of Communications (IIC).

A non-profit, non-government body, the IIC links people including senior public officials, broadcasters, industrialists, lawyers, engineers and academics, to exchange views on new world communications issues, policies, technologies and services.

Besides the information revolution, the 350 delegates to the conference are expected to discuss the role of communications in international development and the outcome of the recent World Administrative Radio Conference in Geneva.



Young hockey players in action on the plastic Glice rink.

Geopiam