

My D.I.Y. Project

AT THE END OF JULY 2008 I DECIDED TO START A SMALL POOL RENOVATION PROJECT. THE POOL WAS BUILT WITH A SUNDECK, AND THUS VERY HIGH AT THE BACK. ANOTHER ISSUE OF THE ORIGINAL DESIGN WAS THE POSITION OF THE POOL PUMP AND THE FILTER. RIGHT NEXT TO THE LONG EDGE OF THE POOL. EVIDENTLY THE POOL FILTER (AN OLD STAINLESS STEEL 3 BAG FILTER) WAS CORRODED AND LEAKING. THE POOL PAVERS HAD ALSO CRACKED OVER THE YEARS, AND SOME AREAS WERE SAGGING QUITE SERIOUSLY. THE ORIGINAL DECISION WAS MADE TO BREAK OFF THE SUNDECK, AND REPAIR AREAS OF CONCERN, SO THE HOSEPIPE WAS PLACED IN THE POOL TO COMMENCE THE DRAINING OF THE WATER, AND I HELPER STARTED LIFTING PAVERS....

I NOTICED THAT THE MARBELITE WAS IN A BAD CONDITION, AND SOMETHING HAD TO BE DONE. I STARTED INVESTIGATING MY OPTIONS. I LOOKED AT RE MARBELITE, FIBRE GLASS, PAINT, EPOXY, AND TILES.

THE FIBREGLASS AT R380M2 WAS NOT AN OPTION AT THIS STAGE, AS THIS PROJECT WAS UNPLANNED AND AT A COST OF R380M2 DEFINITELY NOT AN OPTION. RE MARBELITE SEEMED TO BE MY ONLY OPTION. IN-DEPTH INVESTIGATION INTO THE PROCESS, APPLICATION AND COST FOLLOWED WITH ONE CONCLUSION. ALLOT OF HARD WORK AND EXPENSIVE. ALL THE ORIGINAL MARBELITE HAVE TO BE CHIPPED OLD 50c PIECE SIZES IN DIAMETER, WITH THE SAME SPACE IN BETWEEN. I TRIED THIS, AND BELIEVE ME; CHIPPING 20 YEAR OLD MARBELITE IS NO JOKE! AND NO PNEUMATIC AID CAN BE USED WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE STRUCTURE. PAINT WAS A CONCERN AS WELL, AS NO ONE I SPOKE TO REALLY ADVISED POOL PAINT.

I THEN FOUND THE POOL SOLUTIONS WEBSITE AFTER ABOUT A WEEK OF SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS. I SPOKE TO CELENE AND AFTER AN HOUR ON THE PHONE SHE COMFORTED ME ADVISING ME THAT THERE IS HOPE. EPOXY?? I KNEW NOTHING OF THE PRODUCT, OR THE APPLICATION. I THEN STARTED MY RESEARCH. I FOUND VERY INTERESTING INFORMATION, AND IT WAS QUITE CLEAR THAT IF DONE CORRECTLY, IT MIGHT JUST BE THE OPTION.

AS THE CONSTRUCTION PROGRESSED, I DECIDED TO LIFT THE COPING CLAY PAVERS, REMOVE THE ORIGINAL GLASS MOSAICS, AS ADD ANOTHER STEP IN THE POOL. THIS WAS A HUGE UNDERTAKING. THE GLASS MOSAICS HAD TO BE CHIPPED AWAY ONE AT A TIME AND WITH CUTS AND BRUISES LEFT AT THE END, STILL WORTH THE EFFORT. ONCE THE SUNDECK WALL WAS DIAMOND BLADE CUT AWAY, AND HAMMERED TO THE GROUND, IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE RING BEAM WAS NON EXISTENT, AND HAD TO BE RE BUILT. THE COPING PAVERS ALSO BROKE THE RING OF THE REST OF THE POOL.



I have to admit that I was very scared and hesitant using epoxy because things could go wrong. And they did.... More later...

Celene and her husband were friendly and helpful from the beginning, and never gave up on me. This is unheard of in today's world. Thank you- Poolsolutions.

After the shell was free from old mosaics, I built the new ring beam and coping tiles. I used the Smart stone pavers 200mmx 150mmx60mm. I also re-enforced the ring beam with 60x50 steel channels. (Maybe an overkill) but I wanted it strong. I used 1600kg concrete mix. 40x40x 38m. The pool walls were repaired using a strong plaster mix, and sealed using coprox, before I tiled new ceramic mosaics.

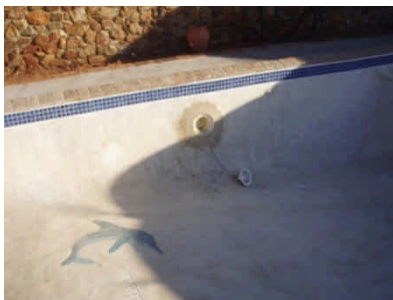


A new step was also added. Using 200kg concrete mix. The broken corner on the top step (see pic above) was repaired drilling 10mm round bar into the structure and plastering on it little by little.

I also decided to build in a weir, as the pool never had one.



Once this was all done, we then did the sanding with the P60 paper. This was not as difficult as I anticipated it being, and only took a day. Thereafter I decided to remove dolphin mosaic on the pool floor and surrounding the light.



The steps were levelled and I used poolpatcing to float it evenly. I also decided to box the paving area, to avoid sagging and weeds. I used Pratley Perlite for this, and it really is a very cost effective way to screed.



We started the epoxy primer, and all went well till I realized that I mixed the first batch using the incorrect formula. I swapped the ratio with the Primer A and B around. I corrected it and proceeded. The next day it was obvious that the first batch would not dry. I called Celene in panic. It was decided that I would reapply the correct mix on top of the sticky mix. This was a mess, as some dry grass, and leaves had stuck to the pool, and it was now going horribly wrong. So I decided to start from scratch, and to sand the pool down again. The P60 paper does not work for this "toffee"!!! I found "cecrop" discs, and wow, this made the sanding Childs play. I used 6 of them.

I replaced all the plumbing, filter and pump. Also consider a new LED light. They are expensive but worth it!

Thereafter I mixed the primer again, and made sure of the mixing ratio and applicator. This was sanded and a second coat was applied, followed by the 1st top coat. After a week, this was once again sanded. I was a bit disappointed to see that I had quite allot of running marks. Celene said this is not so critical, once sanded and the topcoat is applied, it's not that noticeable. We sanded the entire pool, and applied the top coat. After 8 Days, the pool was refilled and WOW!!!!



Tips: I found these things made the project easier for me

1. Use a 115mm angle grinder on the walls. More manageable and not so heavy. PLEASE be careful, because now the guard is removed, and the P60 paper is very rough.
2. If U need to remove epoxy, dry or sticky, use "cecrop" discs. They not so easy to find. Call me if U need some.
3. Use a "Kenwood" food mixer when U need to mix small amounts of epoxy. Not as messy as when using your drill. I found a better mixing consistency as well.
4. Use expensive, decent quality brushes. Hair falling out is a problem when painting epoxy.
5. If possible, paint without a stick, better spread is achieved.
6. DON'T paint to thick. Epoxy runs easily.
7. Use a shade net cover. I had leaves, crass, felt burn residue and even bugs before I covered up. Off cut nets are cheap, use them. I can help in this regard as well.
8. Don't let epoxy come on your shoes, as it will end up on your paving. Use a orbital sander to remove. This works well.
9. Pool renovations always end up as a big project. Take your time and don't be in a hurry. I surely don't think it's a weekend job, and if U prepared to keep to the project, it can be done.

10. If U consider Epoxy, D.I.Y. or installed, use Poolsolutions !!!!!!!
11. I will gladly share my views regarding my experience. Good Luck!!!

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