

INSIDE THE BUZZ

- 16 Install of the Month
- 17 Contractor's Web Watch
- 17 Newsmakers
- 17 20 Years Ago in Sound & Video Contractor
- 18 Upcoming Events
- 20 Industry News

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The FedEx Forum in Memphis, home to the NBA's Grizzlies, features 680 CRT and LCD displays throughout the building, as well as a Daktronics LED scoreboard and JBL speaker system.



INSTALL OF THE MONTH

FedExForum Memphis, Tenn.

Grizzly Cable Pull

No team in the National Basketball Association enjoyed as much improvement in the 2003-2004 season as the Memphis Grizzlies. This season, the team opens a new stadium, the FedExForum, to showcase its newfound success.

Installers on the project, completed in September, include The HD Group, Williamsville, N.Y., which integrated the broadcast systems, and audio system integrator Ford Audio-Video, Oklahoma City.

Ford AV installed mainly JBL loudspeakers throughout the arena, in areas that include the main bowl, the 60 luxury suites, the three restaurants/lounges, and the team store. In the concourse and restrooms, Ford AV installed the paging system using Bin. Atlas ceiling speakers.

The main bowl's audio system consists of four clusters around the central hanging scoreboard, composed of JBL PD, AM, and Control Series speakers. One ring of 32

delays serves the upper deck, and near the highest seating on the far north and south sides of the arena is another delay ring composed of 32 JBL Control 30s. Eight speakers at the bottom of the scoreboard cover the floor area. Unifying the overall sound for the FedExForum is a DSP system from BSS Soundweb.

Donny Hornbeck, Ford AV project manager in the Oklahoma City office, calls the FedExForum a fairly standard install, but notes some particular challenges of the project. The Grizzlies wanted the central scoreboard to have a very flexible vertical range. To facilitate servicing, the

One of the most challenging aspects of the project was a task that is often overlooked: pulling cable.

scoreboard would be lowered to within a foot of the floor, and to keep it out of the way during concerts and other events, it would be raised to the main fly deck—about 160ft. off the floor. Flying the heavy clusters required extensive rigging.

Ford AV worked with Daktronics, the manufacturer and integrator of the video portion of the scoreboard, to make this happen. Daktronics supplied hoists for the scoreboard, which is composed of 16:9 ProStar LED screens—four main faces and four "ribbon" screens around the cluster.

The HD Group was responsible for three areas of installation: the broadcast interface, the DTV system, and the satellite system. This broadcast wiring supports sports networks and local news trucks, as well as the inhouse DTV and replay system.

One of the most challenging aspects of the project for The HD Group was a task that is often overlooked as less than glamorous: pulling cable. The integrator relied on more than 635,000ft. of Gepco

continued on p. 18

INSTALL OF THE MONTH continued from p. 16

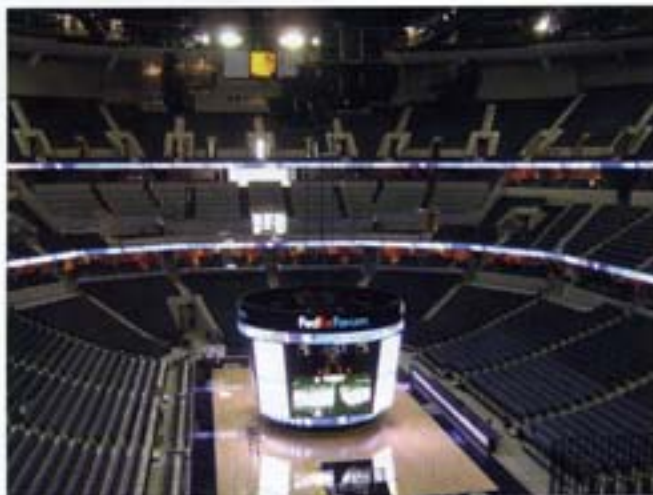
cable. Among other types, Gepco supplied VT61859 Triax camera cables, HDC 920 hybrid fiber-optic cables, GA61812GFC multi-pairs, Gep-Flex audio cables, VSD2001 high-definition video coax, and King's 2065 BNCs.

Bob Ferrulo, president of The HD Group, says that the small number of cable trays throughout the building meant that long cable runs without splicing were common. "In essence," he says, "we had to pull direct runs through seven levels of the building, down from the ground truck level, up to the catwalk of the arena, and some of those pulls were 1,000ft. to 1,500ft." Ferrulo says the durability of the Gepco was especially evident considering the number of conduits and risers that The HD Group had to go through to pull the cable to the proper distribution locations, which numbered 54 for broadcast purposes alone.

He also says that the workflow of pulling cable presented a challenge. The HD Group had to pull cable upward, in opposition to the usual top-to-bottom method that takes advantage of gravity. Hornbeck agrees that pulling cable at the FedExForum was difficult because the AV installation was happening while the building was still being constructed. "The building was built in quads," he says. "You'd wind up having to pull cable part of the way, stop, and wait a few weeks until they completed part of a quad. You'd come back, continue your cable run."

Late in the course of the project, the FedExForum decided on using Sharp monitors throughout the building, partly because a marketing opportunity emerged. The HD Group installed several 13in. to 37in. LCD screens in areas such as luxury suites. Sharp CRT monitors also show the action on the hardwood. In total, The HD Group installed 680 displays.

—Trevor Boyer



The central scoreboard in the main bowl can be lowered to within a foot of the floor for servicing, and raised up to the main fly deck about 160ft. off the floor.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

November

10-11

CEAVCO AV and Digital Video Expo and Seminars

Arvada, Colo.
www.ceavco.com

14-15

I PRO Conference

Independent Professional Representatives Organization
Long Beach, Calif.
www.ipro.org

15-18

Electronic House Expo

Long Beach, Calif.
www.ehx2004.com

15-19

Sound System Optimization and Sound System Design Seminar

San Francisco
www.synaudcon.com

19

Maximizing Home Theater Performance seminar

Long Beach, California
www.sencore.com

December

8-10

DV Expo West

Los Angeles
www.dvexpo.com/west

January 2005

6-9

CES

Las Vegas
www.cesweb.org

10

Maximizing Home Theater Performance seminar

Las Vegas
www.sencore.com

20-23

NAMM

Anaheim, California
www.namm.com

26-28

Integrated Systems Europe

Amsterdam
www.is europe.org