

Out Of The 'Kennel'

Gonzaga University Completes Athletic Center For Bulldogs

For more than a decade, the Bulldogs, Gonzaga University's men's basketball team, have been among the elite in the nation. With the \$25 million McCarthy Athletic Center and its 6,000-seat arena, completed in the fall of 2004 in Spokane, WA, the program and its supporters now have the first-class venue they deserve.

The 148,500-square-foot McCarthy Center was built on the site of its predecessor, the 4,000-seat Martin Centre, affectionately known as "The Kennel." According to GU men's coach, Mark Few, members of the national media couldn't help but think how cute and quaint it was, smaller than the high school gyms they'd played in. Not anymore.

The McCarthy Athletic Center is the work of ALSC Architects in Spokane, WA and Garco Construction. All of the 6,000 seats have backs and are angled toward the maple court, offering near-perfect sightlines; two Daktronics ProStar VideoPlus 9-foot-high by 16-foot-wide LED displays hang at opposite ends of the arena. Fascia-mounted, full-color LED displays presenting additional information, graphics and animation are often synchronized with the two primary video screens and with the audio system



for a multimedia experience. A center cluster of Community loudspeakers, supported by end-court Community clusters, provides primary audio for the arena.

"The owners wanted us to develop a high-quality, high-level audio system, so we were quite specific about loudspeaker make, model and location," said systems designer, Steven Goegebuer of Seattle's Yantis Acoustical Design. "We wanted to be sure that we were giving the owner exactly what they had asked for, and this approach gave us a good degree of quality control over the final product." EVCO Sound and Electronics of Spokane was the systems installer. Rich Williams was the project head.

"Since the arena was also going to be used for entertainment events and commencement ceremonies," Goegebuer explained, "we designed a computer-controllable system that is also switchable to 'stage mode,' where a performance or presentation can originate from at the west end of the arena playing floor." System zones consist of the primary audio clusters, ground and concourse level corridor zones, clubhouse, and exterior public entry zones.

The center cluster consists of six Community SLS980s (3-way speakers with two 15-inch woofers), and two SLS960s (3-way speakers with two 10-inch woofers). The east/west court ends are covered by separate clusters of two SLS980s each. "We were familiar with the Community product that preceded the SLS series," Goegebuer said, "and were happy with both its performance and reliability. This is the first project where we have used the SLS product, and we wouldn't hesitate to use them again."

"The SLS980s and 960s have a good working bandwidth for musical program material, and the M200 2-inch, midrange, aluminized Mylar diaphragm delivers excellent speech intelligibility with warmth and naturalness. We didn't find that subwoofers were even necessary."

Rigging and hardware for the end



Gonzaga University's McCarthy Athletic Center features a center loudspeaker cluster, supported by end-court clusters, providing primary audio for the arena. The clusters consist of SLS series loudspeakers from Community (inset).

loudspeaker clusters and the center cluster are from Polar Focus. "The end-cluster rigging was standard product," said EVCO's Williams, "but the center cluster was completely custom. Mike Akrep at Polar simply took over the framework design and ran with it, and delivered exactly what we needed."

A total of 24 Crown amps drive the arena loudspeakers, used with a Crown IQ system for amplifier performance monitoring—10 Crown CTs600s, eight CTs1200s, one CTs2000 and six CTs3000s. The loudspeakers can be turned on and off individually and in groups both for purposes of troubleshooting and for limiting sound in areas where no one is seated, reducing reverberant sound and increasing intelligibility. Twelve upper-seating Renkus-Heinz fill speakers are switchable as north/south groups, and the concourse speakers can be controlled as groups. All groups are time-delayed against the main clusters.

► **Community...**www.loudspeaker.net

► **Crown...**www.crownaudio.com

► **Daktronics...**www.daktronics.com

► **EVCO...**www.evcosound.com

► **Polar Focus...**www.polarfocus.com

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