ANZ STADIUM

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA
ASIA/PACIFIC/OCEANIA

Officially opened in 1999 as part of the Sydney Olympic Park for the Sydney 2000 Olympics, ANZ Stadium today is used to host rugby, football and cricket matches as well as large-scale music concerts. Obviously the stadium was kitted out with an audio system in the late '90s and it was given an approximate 15 year lifespan, so a couple of years ago it was time to begin planning the audio upgrade.

ANZ Stadium is surrounded by a number of other venues capable of hosting similar kinds of events so there is definitely local competition, which is why the stadium management were so keen to make a statement with the refurbishment. The management had already begun the process of enhancing the visitor experience by installing

the largest LED screens that would fit into the space available. They wanted to continue on the same path and offer the customers a high-end quality sound experience.

Simon Davies, General Manager of ANZ Stadium explained: "We took an active decision to up the stakes, to make our venue a much more exciting venue in which to enjoy the great sporting events we stage. To do that we had to break a few rules; people have avoided putting high performance audio into stadiums for a number of reasons, not least cost. Could we achieve a better experience for our customers? That was the big question."

With a proven track record in designing audio systems for the 2003 and 2011 Rugby World Cup, the Athens 2004 Olympic Ceremonies, the Melbourne 2006 and Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games, the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, the Doha 2006 Asian Games and 2011 Arab Games and the London 2012 Olympic Ceremonies, Scott Willsallen, Director of Auditoria was well equipped to act as the

RENOWNED IN THE STADIUM WORLD, AUDITORIA DIRECTOR SCOTT WILLSALLEN WAS TASKED WITH UPGRADING THE SOUND SYSTEM AT A STADIUM WITH HISTORY OF OLYMPIC GLORY AND HIS UNCONVENTIAL DESIGN FOR A STADIUM APPLICATION IS SET TO MAKE HISTORY AGAIN FOR ALL THE RIGHT REASONS.

consultant for the ANZ Stadium upgrade. Scott's involvement with the capacity conversion from 110,000 to 80,000 during the time he was employed by The P.A. People - the company which carried out the first installation and this one too - was yet another reason to appoint him. For Scott, although he has plenty of experience in stadium sound, this is the first time he has headed up the design team for a permanent installation in a stadium, so the project is quite a personal achievement.

Simon continued: "More than many individuals, Scott's experience is closer to the event based side of sporting presentation. Having been responsible for PA design for the opening and closing ceremony of the Olympics, the Commonwealth and the Asian Games, he has that understanding of using stadium audio to enhance the visitor experience; to use it as a dramatic tool. That's exactly the level of excitement we wanted for our stadium so we made the decision to raise the bar, to properly address major sporting events, to evoke

more interest, and provide more enjoyment."

Scott was keen to use as much of the existing infrastructure as possible for the new design, this included the cabling, rigging points, amplifier room and signal distribution points. This would not only reduce the risk of causing any damage to these areas but would also leave a larger budget for the sound system itself.

The design brief for the audio was high performance for a stadium but fairly generic in so much that it was equivalent to a high performance auditorium design. The loudspeaker system was required to deliver high intelligibility for speech content and a concert-like experience of high SPL, full bandwidth, impact and envelopment for live performance, music replay, advertisements and video playback.

Scott explained further: "I released a call for designs package which consisted of the performance requirements, an EASE model of the building, how many circuits we have at each position and where the positions are in the venue, and how much power we have in the ▶