

April Parnell

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VENUESToday
The news behind the headlines

Dear April,

May 30, 2007 VOL. VI, Number XVIII ISSN 1547-4143

Welcome to your **Venues Today** weekly e-newsletter, full of the latest live entertainment industry news. This e-news is chock full of original stories on deals, moves, hot tickets and top stops. For more news coverage, look out for our June issue of *Venues Today*. For further information or to subscribe to *Venues Today* visit www.venuestoday.com.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"From our observation, Wes Westley has done a pretty good job in a difficult role, integrating Ogden into a 110-pound gorilla, the SMG Network." — *Harvey Lister, chairman of Ogden IFC, Brisbane, Australia, on Westley's legacy of growing SMG through acquisition prior to its sale to American Capital.*

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JULY is a time to celebrate!

July is going to be our **biggest issue ever** - and

you will want to be involved. This issue, which will be distributed at the **IAAM/NAC Convention in Salt Lake** and to all **INTIX members**, will include the following topics:

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VENUE NEWS



The Hartford (Conn.) Civic Center; Rentschler Field, East Hartford, Conn.

AEG BUMPS MSG OUT OF HARTFORD BUT KEEPS THE TENANTS

AEG has partnered with a Hartford company to take over two Madison Square Garden Entertainment contracts in the Connecticut city.

The first is the Hartford Civic Center, home to the MSG-owned Hartford Wolfpack of the American Hockey League, an affiliate of the National Hockey League's New York Rangers, who play at Madison Square Garden in New York. Despite losing the contract, MSG officials have decided to keep the Wolfpack as tenants in Hartford, said Rangers COO Glen Sather during a press conference Tuesday. The team agreed to stay at least four more years and possibly until 2013, when its lease ends.

The second facility moving to AEG is the 40,000-seat Rentschler Field in East Hartford, home to the University of Connecticut's Huskies Football team. AEG will collect about \$150,000 a year plus incentives to run the facility beginning on July 1, according to Connecticut's Office of Policy Management Senior Policy Advisor Mike Mehigan. Based on performance, AEG could also get a cut of concessions and parking revenue.

The management shift began in March after the Connecticut Development Authority terminated its Civic Center contract with MSG and brought on Northland AEG, a partnership between AEG and Northland Investment Corporation, the largest private property owner in Hartford with \$500 million in assets representing 4.2 million square feet of real estate.

More bad news came for MSG in May when the state announced it was pulling the plug on MSG's Rentschler Field contract, arguing that with a base of operations nearly 100 miles away, MSG had become too "remote."

"Since [MSG] lost the Civic Center deal, they really lost their base of operations up here and we were concerned about them remotely operating this field basically out of New York," said Michael Cicchetti, the state's deputy budget director. A clause in the contract with Connecticut Development Authority allowed either party to terminate the deal should the Civic Center contract no longer be in effect.

The state put out a Request for Proposal in March and received responses from AEG, Global Spectrum and SMG, with SMG later pulling out of the talks.

"We chose Northland AEG because we liked the business model, liked the connection to soccer and that they owned the content was very important to us," said Mehigan. The five-year deal has a \$250,000 guarantee requiring AEG to book 10 non-UConn football events, seven of which will be soccer. For every event AEG doesn't deliver, it will pay a \$25,000 penalty fee.

The Civic Center will continue to host Wolfpack games, with Northland AEG taking over responsibility for the day-to-day business of the team including marketing, sponsorships and ticket sales, while Madison Square Garden and the Rangers will retain ownership of the Wolf Pack and continue to be responsible for on-ice team decisions. Northland AEG's Civic Center contract runs six years and will pay the state \$1.5 million annually in rent, Cicchetti said.

Northland has been working for some time to bring an NHL team to Hartford in hopes of revitalizing the downtown area. Company CEO Lawrence Gottesdiener has said he would like to eventually see a new NHL facility replace the Hartford Civic Center.

But for now, Gottesdiener will try to nurture the Pack. Though they have the AHL's best overall record in their 10-year existence, the team drew an average of only 2,674 fans for four home playoff games this year. In the regular season, the average attendance was 4,563 — 18th of the 27 AHL teams.

"We have the best of both worlds - the best of the AHL while we pursue the NHL and a new arena," Gottesdiener said in a statement. "It's a win-win, and we're looking forward to more championships."

AEG is considering bringing a new Major League Soccer franchise to Rentschler, said AEG's Sims Hinds, vice president of business development.

"We plan to use the space for exhibitions for MLS soccer and we see the potential for a franchise," Hinds said. "The facility is close to two MLS teams being the [AEG-owned]

New York Red Bulls and D.C. United. Hartford seems like a natural market.”

Hinds said AEG is ready to grow Hartford, which is the biggest television market without a major league franchise, according to a 2004 report by Nielsen Media Research. Hinds said he wants to use Rentschler Field for international soccer matches, a potential Major League Lacrosse team and music festival on par with the AEG-owned Coachella and Stagecoach festivals in Indio, Calif., and the AEG-booked Bumbershoot Festival in Seattle. UConn is also the alma mater of AEG Facilities COO Bob Newman.

The stadium will also be looking at hosting some concerts in a 33,000-seat configuration, although the talent-pool for events of that size is limited, Hinds said. Rentschler Field is currently booked to host the Police Tour, and Hinds said AEG is in the process of developing a stadium network with its own soccer-specific facilities for AEG-sponsored touring acts.

Hinds said the company will maintain the majority of employees at both facilities, although it has yet to name a general manager for either facility. Northland AEG will be headquartered at the Hartford Civic Center.

Hinds said the new management partnership will make several improvements to both facilities. The Civic Center will get some new signage, along with an improved concessions point-of-sale system. Rentschler Field will see \$200,000 in improvements, including a possible multi-function marquee. Rentschler Field will also gain an improved tailgating area in its parking lot with bathrooms and some concession stations. Hinds said Northland AEG is actively pursuing naming rights deals for both facilities.

Interviewed for this story: Michael Cicchetti, (860) 418-6501; Sim Hinds, (336) 841-0371; Mike Mehigan (860) 251-8141 x 103



Schematics of the new Oakland A's ballpark

AFTER STRIKING OUT IN OAKLAND, A'S FIND NEW HOME IN FREMONT

In early May, the Oakland Athletics finalized its purchase of land in Fremont, Calif., putting the Major League Baseball team one-step closer to opening a new ballpark there.

As early as 2010, the Oakland Athletics hope to move to a new stadium with the fewest seats of any Major League Baseball park.

Once slated for a high-tech business park, the roughly 226-acre property in Fremont is destined for a 32,000-seat stadium named Cisco Field plus a retail and residential village. The team pegs the cost of the stadium between \$400 million and \$500 million,

with the "Ballpark Village" costing \$1.8 billion.

"The one thing about our park that I think is going to be really special is the intimacy created," said Oakland A's Vice President of Venue Development Keith Wolff, whose father Lewis Wolff is co-owner and managing partner of the team.

Wolff said the A's found that while clubs across the country build large stadiums, often with more than 40,000 seats, two-thirds of teams average just 26,000 fans a game, with Oakland averaging around 24,000.

"We didn't want to build a bunch of empty seats," Wolff said. "We'd rather have this intimate stadium that every time you go it feels great."

To do that the team is working with 360 Architecture and Gensler, another architectural firm, to design a stadium broken into "neighborhoods" in a dramatic shift from the team's current home, McAfee Coliseum, which the A's share with the Oakland Raiders of the National Football League.

Wolff said designs for Cisco Field call for putting club seats in the first 15 rows. At the 16th row level, the team will build luxury boxes, making them closer to the field than the vast majority currently in baseball stadiums. In addition, they will seat just four to six fans, and appeal to companies and small groups of friends.

A terrace under the scoreboard will allow fans to gather and grab a drink or pretzel at the concession stand. Passersby can peer under raised outfield stands to see the action.

"The one thing we really found about most of the stadiums is people really liked to stand and hangout and move around and watch the game," Wolff said.

For those who prefer to sit, designers are readying plans to put posts through the lower level of the stadium in order to move the upper deck closer to home plate. Installing posts creates obstructed views for a few fans but Wolff said he's confident the closeness to the action will make up for it.

"We're trying to break up the ballpark into these smaller pieces or neighborhoods, which I think really goes against the philosophy of many arenas that say try and get as many people as possible in the lower level," Wolff said.

The team is also working to weave the design of the stadium in with the surrounding 2,900 condominiums and townhouses and 550,000 square feet of commercial development, the sale of which will help finance construction of the park. Decks off nearby buildings will allow fans to watch the action and the street behind the outfield will close during games and become a concourse with shops and restaurants catering to fans.

One company firmly on board is Cisco Systems, which sold the A's the development rights to 143 acres of the property after dreams of a high-tech business park crashed with the dot-com bubble bust.

Although terms of the land deal have not been disclosed, Cisco did announce it agreed to pay \$4 million a year for 30 years to secure its name on the stadium

"The plan is to incorporate Cisco networking technology throughout every aspect of that stadium and what that means to us is trying to create the greatest fan experience possible," Cisco spokeswoman Robyn Jenkins-Blum said.

Although Cisco has not decided exactly what technologies to deploy, it recently outfitted the Arizona Cardinals' new home, the University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale. Cisco delivered more than 750 IP phones and digital video technology that allows team members and coaches in Glendale to communicate with peers at the team's training facility in Tempe, Ariz.

"This is sort of the first of its kind as far as what we're doing as sort of a ground up approach," Jenkins-Blum said. "This is definitely the most comprehensive to date."

Once the stadium is complete, Jenkins-Blum said Cisco plans to host a showroom, a proving ground of sorts for Cisco technologies. There, stadium managers can explore the next generation electronic toys before catching a ballgame.

Economically, a stadium could annually bring the county \$109 million, put \$3.6 million in the city's general fund and provide \$15 million for the Fremont Redevelopment Agency, according to a study commissioned by the team. The entire project is expected to create 13,000 full-time-equivalent annual jobs.

"It will do a great deal for the city," Wasserman said. "We are financially strapped. We do not raise enough revenue and we're not able to and we're limited in the ways we can raise revenue."

Early on, Wasserman saw a stadium as a way to bring hotel and sales tax revenue to the city and became particularly interested in the idea after the team put his city on a short list of potential sites. On the advice of a fellow official, Wasserman went to a meeting where Lewis Wolff presented a proposed village park to Oakland and Coliseum officials.

"You didn't have to be a genius to see they weren't interested," Wasserman said.

So Wasserman took the initiative. He introduced himself to Wolff. Perhaps his city, Wasserman said, might be more receptive to the idea Wolff just pitched.

The conversation set off a flurry of communications between county and city officials and the team. When Oakland couldn't find enough land for the team, the A's turned to Fremont.

The team and city still need to conduct traffic studies and finalize design plans for the village but locals are wasting little time snapping up property around the site.

"I like to kid people and go down there and yell out 'A's!' and the property value goes up \$1 a square foot," Wasserman said with a laugh. — Chris Barrett

Interviewed for this story: Robyn Jenkins-Blum, (408) 853-9848; Bob Wasserman, (510) 284-4011; Keith Wolff, (310) 966-2367

INDUSTRY REACTS TO SMG SALE TO AMERICAN CAPITAL

Officials at SMG, Philadelphia, and American Capital, Bethesda, Md., are still mum with the press on the acquisition of the private management company by the venture capital firm, but SMG's clients have been contacted and the buyer has been named. The deal is presumably still being finalized. SMG is being purchased from current owners, the Hyatt Corp. and Aramark.

Reaction in the industry around the world has focused on the pricetag, which is very unofficially somewhere between \$400 million and \$600 million, though a few have

weighed in as having heard it was north of \$600 million. No one in the industry expressed anything but admiration for the deal Wes Westley, president and CEO of SMG, is making.

"From our observation, Wes Westley has done a pretty good job in a difficult role, integrating Ogden into a 110-pound gorilla, the SMG Network," said Harvey Lister, referring to the company's history. Lister, chairman of Ogden IFC, Brisbane, Australia, was very close to those transactions in 1999, when SMG acquired most of the Ogden private management accounts while Aramark, part owner of SMG, took the catering portion. Lister and Rod Pilbeam were partnered with Ogden at the time, having merged their own International Facilities Corp. with Ogden. They ended up buying back that portion of their firm, which continues to operate at Ogden IFC.

Soon thereafter, in 2000, SMG merged with Leisure Management International (LMI), which was owned at the time by Wayne Huzienga, Mike McGee and John Blaisdell.

SMG has built quite a portfolio, a major percentage of it through acquisitions, Lister observed. "It's the type of business private capital looks for, where there is opportunity for further consolidation and growth," Lister said. For SMG, the acquisition may mean more capital with which to expand, particularly if the only thing holding it back was access to capital, he said.

Robert Napoli, an analyst who follows American Capital Strategies for firm Piper Jaffray, said American Capital Strategies saw a slight surge in its stock price on the Nasdaq stock exchange following early announcements of the SMG acquisition. The company currently trades under the ACAS symbol and is the second largest U.S. publicly-traded alternative asset manager with approximately \$11 billion in assets under management.

Napoli said he wasn't sure what American Capital Strategies was trying to accomplish by investing in a mature industry like public facilities management, but said that the company has a history of investing in underperforming assets, mixing cash infusions with sell-offs.

"[American Capital Strategies] is a popular stock with investors because they tend to yield a pretty high dividend for their investors, typically in the 7-to-9 percent range," Napoli said. "Typically with any asset they acquire, there are generally some performance adjustments."

Peter Luukko, Comcast-Spectacor/Global Spectrum, who like Lister is used to bidding against SMG for management contracts, noted that any venture capitalist who pays a lot of money expects a return. "As a competitor, the acquisition has no major effect," he added. "Management will have to fulfill an obligation, so they will have some more pressure."

Like Lister, Luukko was on the other side of a merger involving SMG. The private management industry officially started, most agree, with Facility Management Group (FMG), and its lucrative contract to manage the Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans. Spectacor Management Inc., Philadelphia, entered the game, and in 1988 FMG and Spectacor merged, becoming Spectacor Management Group, later just SMG. It was owned by the Hyatt Corp. (the Pritzger family) and Ed Snider (Comcast). In 1990-91, the two firms sold one third to Aramark. In 1998, Comcast sold its third to Hyatt and Aramark. Two years later, after the non-compete ended, Comcast-Spectacor re-entered the private management business, buying Globe Facility Services and establishing Global Spectrum.

And if that's not enough merging and acquiring, both Lister and Luukko agreed the

economy is ripe for even more. "The economy is in acquisition mode right now," Luukko said.

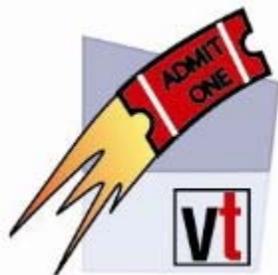
"All venue management companies get approached every week by private equity and interest banks," Lister said. They can get a good rate of return or they wouldn't consider it. "Access to capital is a good thing," he said, but there isn't a player in the game today that doesn't have access to capital.

It's the human capital that is the thing, "growing people from within. You can have all the cash in the world, but it's the human capital that delivers at the other end of the deal. That's the biggest challenge facing all of us. And running 180 buildings takes a lot of human capital," Lister said. — Linda Deckard and Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this story: Harvey Lister, 61-7-32655888; Peter Luukko, (215) 389-9530; Robert Napoli, (612) 303-6000



BOOKINGS



HOTtickets

DIVERSITY DEFINES THE SUMMER TOUR SEASON

HOT TICKETS is a weekly summary of the top acts and ticket sales as reported to **Venues Today** e-newsletter. Following are the top 20 concerts and events, the top 5 in each seating capacity category, which took place since May 8, 2007. To submit reports, e-mail HotTickets@venuestoday.com or fax to (714) 378-0040.

The **Hot Tickets** this week as reported to **Venues Today**:

15,001 or More Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$905,158; *Event:* Keith Urban; *Venue:* **AcerArena, Sydney, Australia**; *Attendance:* 10,290; *Ticket Range:* \$98.71-\$70.72; *Promoter:* Chugg Entertainment; *Dates:* May 15; *No. of Shows:* 1

2) *Gross Sales:* \$899,277; *Event:* Wango Tango; *Venue:* **Verizon Wireless Amphitheater, Irvine, Calif.**; *Attendance:* 16,004; *Ticket Range:* \$199-\$40; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* May 12; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$551,171; *Event:* Lynyrd Skynyrd; *Venue:* **The Palace Of Auburn Hills (Mich.)**; *Attendance:* 10,795; *Ticket Range:* \$69.50-\$25; *Promoter:* Palace Sports & Entertainment; *Dates:* May 12; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$473,124; *Event:* Ricky Martin; *Venue:* **Amway Arena, Orlando, Fla.;** *Attendance:* 6,684; *Ticket Range:* \$76-\$46; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* May 20; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$406,058; *Event:* The Killers; *Venue:* **Verizon Wireless Amphitheater, St. Louis;** *Attendance:* 16,298; *Ticket Range:* \$29; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* May 12; *No. of Shows:* 1

10,001-15,000 Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$357,836; *Event:* Tool; *Venue:* **Kansas Coliseum, Valley Center;** *Attendance:* 7,352; *Ticket Range:* \$52.50-\$49.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation, Mammoth Live, In-house; *Dates:* May 11; *No. of Shows:* 1

2) *Gross Sales:* \$263,414; *Event:* Bill Gaither; *Venue:* **Van Andel Arena, Grand Rapids, Mich.;** *Attendance:* 10,353; *Ticket Range:* \$36.50-\$19.75; *Promoter:* AEG Live; *Dates:* May 12; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$200,969; *Event:* WWE Smackdown Live! with ECW; *Venue:* **John Labatt Centre, London, Ontario;** *Attendance:* 5,621; *Ticket Range:* \$65.20-\$18.63; *Promoter:* WWE; *Dates:* May 29; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$176,617; *Event:* Three Days Grace; *Venue:* **Verizon Wireless Arena, Manchester, N.H.;** *Attendance:* 6,404; *Ticket Range:* \$29.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation, In-house; *Dates:* May 15; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$162,432; *Event:* Fall Out Boy; *Venue:* **Verizon Wireless, Kansas City, Mo.;** *Attendance:* 6,209; *Ticket Range:* \$33; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* May 12; *No. of Shows:* 1

5,001-10,000 Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$539,461; *Event:* Steely Dan; *Venue:* **Chastain Park Amphitheatre, Atlanta;** *Attendance:* 6,549; *Ticket Range:* \$88-\$34; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* May 11; *No. of Shows:* 1

2) *Gross Sales:* \$528,870; *Event:* Ricky Martin; *Venue:* **Laredo (Texas) Entertainment Center;** *Attendance:* 8,968; *Ticket Range:* \$74-\$34; *Promoter:* Live Nation, Latino Event & Marketing Services, In-house; *Dates:* May 11; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$370,831; *Event:* Tool; *Venue:* **DeSoto Civic Center Arena, Southaven, Miss.;** *Attendance:* 7,813; *Ticket Range:* \$164-\$39.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* May 15; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$332,946; *Event:* Bjork; *Venue:* **Red Rocks Amphitheatre, Denver;** *Attendance:* 6,518; *Ticket Range:* \$59-\$53; *Promoter:* Kroenke Sports Enterprises, Live Nation; *Dates:* May 15; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$309,901; *Event:* Tool; *Venue:* **AmericanBank Center, Corpus Christi, Texas;** *Attendance:* 7,070; *Ticket Range:* \$49.50-\$39.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, The Messina Group; *Dates:* May 22; *No. of Shows:* 1

5,000 or Fewer Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$3,185,700; *Event:* Elton John, Red Piano; *Venue:* **The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas;** *Attendance:* 19,387; *Ticket Range:* \$250-\$100;

Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West, In-house; *Dates:* May 8-13; *No. of Shows:* 5

2) *Gross Sales:* \$1,182,143; *Event:* "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels"; *Venue:* **Sacramento (Calif.) Community Theatre**; *Attendance:* 23,818; *Ticket Range:* \$67-\$15; *Promoter:* California Musical Theatre; *Dates:* May 16-27; *No. of Shows:* 16

3) *Gross Sales:* \$588,285; *Event:* Camelot; *Venue:* **Bob Carr Performing Arts Center, Orlando, Fla.**; *Attendance:* 12,427; *Ticket Range:* \$64-\$38; *Promoter:* Broadway Across America; *Dates:* May 15-20; *No. of Shows:* 8

4) *Gross Sales:* \$307,253; *Event:* Jerry Seinfeld; *Venue:* **Chevrolet Theatre, Wallingford, Conn.**; *Attendance:* 4,493; *Ticket Range:* \$79-\$49; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* May 12; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$297,618; *Event:* Love In The Nick Of Tyme; *Venue:* **Fox Theatre, Atlanta**; *Attendance:* 9,337; *Ticket Range:* \$49.50-\$29.50; *Promoter:* Marvelous Entertainment; *Dates:* May 22-26; *No. of Shows:* 5

Compiled by Rob Ocampo, HotTickets@venuestoday.com



Counting Crows

CROWS IN ON-DECK CIRCLE FOR MINOR LEAGUE PARK TOUR

Building on a plan that has worked for the past three summers and brought bills pairing Bob Dylan and Willie Nelson and Def Leppard and Bryan Adams into minor league baseball stadiums across the U.S., Chicago's Jam Productions is going for a home run this year with a triple bill pairing the Counting Crows with Live and Collective Soul.

The 26-date "Rock 'N' Roll Triple Play Ballpark" tour, which will also feature Third Eye Blind on select dates, kicks off on July 22 at Daniel S. Frawley Stadium in Wilmington,

Del., and will take the groups to a variety of Triple A ballparks in secondary and tertiary markets that don't have the amphitheaters the Crows would typically play during the hot summer months.

"We were looking for bands to do a ballpark tour and in the process we came across the Counting Crows, who were interested and were able to put together a support package, guarantees and routing that worked," said Jam's Jerry Mickelson, who stressed that packaging was the key to the success of the ballpark outings. "The Counting Crows are a very popular band and in the markets we're going to go into we thought they, along with Live and Collective Soul, would be a good package. For us, it's important to package and have three great bands."

"It's a great combination and let's not forget that the nice thing about ballparks is they have a built-in audience because of the baseball teams that play there," he added. "Minor league ball parks are a very fan friendly experience, because they typically have no or low parking charges, food and beverages are reasonable and convenience fees are reasonable compared to a shed. We like to think there's a great value in playing a ballpark."

Counting Crows fan club members had a chance to buy presale tickets beginning on May 29, with the general public sales opening a few days later. Tickets for the shows are general admission and are priced at \$49.50, with kids 12 and under free. The latter is another big advantage the ballpark tours have over traditional shed dates, in that they encourage families to come out together, increasing the chance that parents who might normally beg off on a show because of child care concerns will attend.

Crows frontman Adam Duritz said in a statement that his experience growing up in a college town inspired the tour. "I've always loved those kinds of places," said Duritz. "That's why Counting Crows has always done so many tours outside the big cities ... This is a big country and, as much as I love a city [Duritz lives in New York], too many bands forget that there's a hell of a lot of America out there that's not New York or Chicago or L.A." The tour is also a chance to play with old friends in Live and Third Eye Blind, whose first-ever show was an opening slot for the Crows at the Fillmore in San Francisco.

Andrew Layman, assistant general manager for the Wilmington Blue Rocks at the Daniel S. Frawley Stadium, said he's been trying to land one of these Jam summer stadium tours for years. "We tried to get one on our schedule before and it never worked out, so we're ecstatic about it," he said. He expects a mix of mostly music and some baseball fans to come out. With Jam bringing along 33,000-square-foot of Terraplast-type of covering to protect the ball field's grass, the stadium's capacity is increased from 5,800 to 9,100 with the addition of 3,300 standing room spots on the field.

The Blue Rocks have a day game on July 19 and right after the stadium will be out of commission for three days to set up and strike the concert, with Layman saying it will be back online the day after, with no games missed. The stadium has hosted concerts in the past and Layman said there have been few problems and given Jam's recent experience he's confident the show will be a rousing success. "It's fun to do 70 home games, but it's also nice to do something else, too," he said. Jam is doing ad buys in local media and the Blue Rocks are handling local flyering and posters to get the word out about the show.

While Mickelson said he would love to see the tour do 10,000 fans a night, he would not speculate on what attendance would be or discuss what the break-even point for the tour is or what it costs to keep the show on the road every day. He did say that Jam is

bringing along all the staging (including a fold-up Titan 5040 stage that is 50 feet wide by 40 feet deep), as well as the lighting, sound equipment and field covering.

Jam, which will have two set ups leapfrogging each other across the country, will typically go into the ball fields the day before the show to set up and load out right after the gig is over. The production will require six semi-trailers for sound, light and video equipment, as well as staging, barricades and bike rack. The bands will also have four-to-five semis of their own on the road. — Gil Kaufman

Interviewed for this story: Jerry Mickelson, (312) 266-6262; Andrew Layman, (302) 888-2015

OUT WITH THE OLD...AND IN WITH THE NEW.



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MARKETING

IN COST-SAVING MOVE, TWEETER DROPS FROM MULTIPLE NAMING DEALS

Financially troubled home electronics chain Tweeter is dropping its naming rights deals with four venues.

"We are in the process of finalizing agreements with Live Nation to exit our name-in-title sponsorships" said Tweeter Spokesperson Jeff Duhamel, dropping the Tweeter Center title from the Waterfront in Camden, New Jersey; Sound Advice Amphitheater in West Palm Beach, Fla.; Hi-Fi Buys Amphitheater in Atlanta at the end of the 2007 season, and the Tweeter Center in Mansfield, Mass., at the end of the 2008 season.

In the late 1990's, Tweeter launched a massive expansion plan in hopes of rivaling Best Buy and Circuit City. One of the marketing efforts was naming rights – they penned the deals in Mansfield and Camden in 1999 and 2000. To some degree it worked; the regional electronics chain grew to have 153 stores in 22 states, operating under the Tweeter, Sound Advice, Hi-Fi Buys, and Showcase Home Entertainment names.

But the competition proved too tough, especially as prices came down on flat-panel televisions, and Tweeter is now contemplating Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. In March, they let 650 employees go and closed 49 stores in an effort to survive as a 'niche' store, catering to high-end audio and video customers who want custom installation.

Taking their names off the four venues will reduce Tweeter's total future payments by \$7 million, Duhamel said.

Tweeter's losses may be gains for Live Nation, who manages all four of the venues. In 1999, published reports put the Tweeter/Great Woods naming rights deal in Mansfield at \$9 million over 11 years. Duhamel did not confirm or deny that, and declined to discuss the price tag on the other three venues.

John Vlautin, Vice President of Communications for Live Nation, said they wouldn't discuss the financials of their naming rights deals either.

"I will say, however, that since these deals were mostly negotiated some time ago, we feel their prospective value has increased over the years," he said, later adding "We feel confident we will find new clients to take over the name-in-title sponsorship in all of these venues within the year."

A year ago, Tweeter dropped their deal with the Tweeter Center for the Performing Arts in Chicago. That venue has already been renamed the First Midwest Bank Amphitheatre.

"Naming rights tend to increase in value as time goes forward," said Rob Yowell, vice president of Sponsorship Sales for the Bonham Group, a sports and entertainment marketing firm based in Denver. "But there are many factors. If it's a marketable property, and they're bringing in the appropriate acts, it will be attractive."

Yowell said a wide variety of industries could be interested in such a sponsorship opportunity – including telecommunications, financial institutions, and auto makers. "For a consumer retail store that sells music, the venue could be driving traffic back to the stores," Yowell said. "It may also be of interest to a malt beverage company; they have a high interest in live music."

"Our clients range from the telecommunications sector, to banking, to home products, so this opportunity is a good fit for any company who wants an association with live music," Vlautin said. — Liz Boardman

Interviewed for this story: Jeff Duhamel (781) 830-3495; John Vlautin, (310) 867-7127; Rob Yowell, (480) 513-7100

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CONCESSIONS

BY THE NUMBERS: A LOOK AT STANLEY CUP MERCHANDISE

Wednesday marks Game 2 of the Stanley Cup Finals between the Anaheim Mighty Ducks and the Ottawa Senators. Merchandising giant Facility Merchandising Inc. (FMI) is handing product licensing and distribution for the National Hockey League at both the Honda Center location in Anaheim, and Scotiabank Place in Ottawa.

Both teams have rolled out a number of Stanley Cup commemorative products in partnership with FMI and the NHL.

"Besides the team store, we have 12 merchandise stands set up with three tents outside of the arena," said Honda Center spokesperson Emily Koch, adding that no figures had yet been released on overall sales, but Koch said the items were doing well.

Below are some of the souvenirs being sold at this year's Stanley Cup:

(All items from left to right)



Authentic on-ice Ducks' jersey with Stanley Cup patch by CCM (\$250); Adjustable team hat with both team logos by Reebok (\$29); Men's polo shirt with Stanley Cup logo (\$70).



Official Game 2 puck with specialty packaging (\$20); Stanley Cup commemorative coffee mug with both team logos (\$17).



Men's Ducks Western Conference Champions "Locker Room Edition" t-shirt by Gear

(\$29); Inflatable mock Stanley Cup by JF Sports (\$44); Women's Ducks workout shirt by Reebok (\$31). — Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this story: Emily Koch, (714) 704-2498

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SHORT TAKES

ARAMARK SCORES 2008 SUMMER GAMES

Aramark has been hired to provide catering services for the 2008 Summer Games in China. It marks the 14th time the Philadelphia company has been brought on to serve meals at the Olympic games, going back to the 1968 Mexico City Games. The Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games hired Aramark to provide food services in the athletes' village, media villages, international broadcast center and the main press center at the 2008 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing.

Contact: Dave Frierich, (215) 238-4078

FIRST POLICE TOUR CONCERT A SUCCESSFUL SELLOUT

The Police kicked off their first world tour in more than 20 years, their 30th anniversary tour, on Monday, delivering a two-hour set for 20,000 fans in Canada. The sold-out crowd at General Motors Place in Vancouver, B.C., screamed their appreciation as the legendary Eighties trio dove into one hit after another. With over 1,770,000 tickets sold to date and more concerts to be announced, The Police tour is expected to be the largest tour this summer.

Contact: John Vlautin (310) 867-7127

BEYNON TO CREATE TRACK FOR U.S. OLYMPIC TRIALS

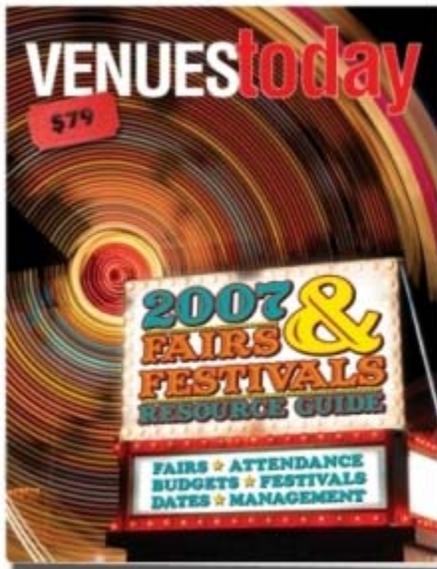
Beynon Sports Surfaces was selected to build the track at Hayward Field at the University of Oregon, where the 2008 Olympic track-and-field trials will be held. The contract was awarded through a comprehensive evaluation and selection process with Beynon winning over both national and international surfacing companies. Beynon's BSS 2000 track-and-field surface will be manufactured and installed in the late summer of 2007 and will consist of approximately 9,000 square yards of surfacing.

Contact: Katherine Smith (410) 962-6442

PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE ADDS WELCOME CENTER TO DUTIES

The Walter Gerrells Performing Arts and Exhibition Centre in Carlsbad, N.M. is transforming its barren foyer into a welcome center. Manager Guy Lutman said he envisioned a pleasant place where people can stop in and ask about Carlsbad and what they can do there. He said it will not compete with the convention and visitors bureau offering.

Contact: Mary Lopez (505) 887-0871



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