

Overhead Smashed

The USTA National Tennis Center Gets Portable System

by Ryan Abeling

NEW YORK, NY—The USTA Billie Jean National Tennis Center in New York was the site of a new installation in 2006. David Burnor, consultant with Avvit Consulting, has been the facility's consultant since 1994. Much of the center is based on his designs, as was this new one for a portable PA system for some of the field courts. The facility contracted Steven Schlaff of Norcon Communications to put the system together.

Some of the field courts are already equipped with PA systems, but there were several that needed some sort of system for announcements. The facility asked Burnor to find a system that was highly portable, had tight coverage so as not to spill into the other courts, and it had to be interchangeable with the speakers around the facility. Schlaff said,



One of the three stadiums at the USTA Billie Jean Tennis Center in New York City. (inset) The new portable system is powered by TOA's DA Series Amplifier.

“The system was for game announcement, a very local sound system. We had to provide the ven-

ue with reliable equipment, it had to be rugged, and it had to sound good. Since it's out in the field area it had to be portable while maintaining the integrity of all the systems we've put in the whole place.”

Burnor decided on a TOA DA Series multi-channel digital amplifier

for the system. Burnor explained, “I looked at amplifiers and the idea of having more than one or two channels of amplification available, if you had dramatically different speakers, was important. This electronics rack was designed to be interchangeable and used anywhere. We noticed that TOA made these very compact multi-channel digital amplifiers. So those fit the bill, one rack unit high and not particularly heavy being digital, switching power supplies.”

Norcon put together a roadcase with an Ashley mixer, the TOA DA series, and a custom connector panel. The system had to be simple for its multiple users. Burnor said, “It's very quick to setup. Operating in a venue like this is done by union electricians, so simplicity was the key.”

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