



Hockey shrine hosts games

There could not have been a much more appropriate place in Canada to host men's and women's Olympic ice hockey and Paralympic sledge hockey games than the Doug Mitchell Thunderbird Sports Centre at the University of British Columbia. It was here at the university that Father David Bauer helped found Canada's national men's hockey team in 1963. The arena is also home ice for the UBC Thunderbirds men's and women's ice-hockey teams.

While some of the games were played at Canada Place in Vancouver, the UBC facility was dramatically expanded and modernized for the Olympics.

It consists of three arenas: The Father Bauer Arena, the original rink on the site, first opened in October 1963. It was renovated into a 980-seat NHL-sized arena. The new arena with 5,500 permanent seats can be reconfigured to accommodate well over 7,000 seats in either NHL or Olympic ice configurations. In addition, there is a new, 200 seat Olympic ice surface.

Owner UBC Properties Trust contracted with Kasian Kennedy Architect and Bird Construction Co. on a design-build

design-assist contract for this project valued at over \$43.5 million. Construction started in April, 2006 and the new facility opened in July, 2008, four months ahead of schedule. It was the first indoor venue to be completed in the host region.

Removable boards around the rink in the new main arena not only permit the facility to expand its seating capacity from 5,500 to over 7,000, it allows for multi-functional use year-round, including concerts. Since the games, the venue has become a recreational and high-performance multi-sport legacy facility, including varsity hockey.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) practices were used wherever possible, and construction was to LEED Silver equivalency. For example, pre-cast concrete components with insulation on the inside were used for the exterior walls. As well, an integrated HVAC and refrigeration system recycles waste energy used to maintain the ice to heat the building, and the lighting system is highly energy-efficient. It is also close to transit services.

The facility was designed to high standards for accessibility for athletes and spectators with disabilities.

Photo: UBC