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CEZ Arena - First Ethernet Robe ColorSpot 1200 AT installation in the Czech Republic

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The project was part of a major technical upgrade that's been in progress at CEZ Arena for the last 9 months, designed to bring the 20 year old venue into the 21st century. The fixtures were supplied to installers InterSono SG by Robe's Czech distributors, KVS.

CEZ arena - owned by the City of Ostrava - is used frequently for high profile ice hockey events - one of the most popular spectator sports in the Czech Republic. The new technical infrastructure has now put Ostrava centre stage in the world of ice hockey, and the first major sporting event to make use of the new lighting rig were the recent International Ice Hockey Federation World Championships.

InterSono won the contract after the project was put out to competitive tender. Their lighting design and specification was based on the need to provide dynamic lighting effects facilities for many different applications, including the boosting of light levels for televised events; the offering the potential of building additional 'live' atmosphere and ambience for sporting events; and also having the latest technology available for other events like concerts and presentations.

European ice hockey matches are now mimicking the US model more closely, with the whole event becoming a more razzmatazz affair, complete with cheer leaders and pre-show and half-time entertainments, etc. The need for moving lights to add colour, movement and pizzazz to any show is more important than ever, explains InterSono's MD Petr Menšík. It was the first time InterSono has used Robe products, and they are extremely pleased with the results. They wanted to specify the best automated lighting system for the project and budget, and so conducted shoot outs between all the equivalent leading brands. Robe came out top in terms of brightness and dynamics.

They also visited the Robe factory in Valasske Mezirici, just 60 Km away from Ostrava, and were impressed with the set up there, which clinched the deal for Robe. *"We're always looking for the best quality solutions for our installations"* says Menšík, *"and the ColorSpot 1200 AT is perfect for this situation."*

InterSono also contacted other Robe users, who confirmed that the 1200s were extremely robustly constructed, a prerequisite for any permanent installation. The fact that it's a native Czech brand further underlined their decision, as they knew the service would be better, faster and more efficient than they could expect from others. The project was overseen for InterSono by Miroslav Gruber.

This is the first Ethernet-controlled installation of ColorSpot 1200 ATs in the Czech Republic. Ethernet connection enables smooth and flexible control of the fixtures via a standard LAN network, either to consoles supporting Ethernet - in the case a GrandMA, or to a computer running PC-based lighting software.

A big advantage of Ethernet control is the facility to run a safety backup connection (cabling) to the fixtures, so if the standard DMX cabling fails, the fixtures remain working. This is ideal for installations in large spaces like arenas, where the access to fixtures is often complicated once installed.

The CEZ Arena re-opened last month with a massive inaugural laser and lighting show, followed the next night with a sold-out concert by Jose Carreras.

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