



A combination of moving heads from Robe Show Lighting, and motors from LTM has given Chelmsford's Riverside ice rink a powerful - and easily accessible - effects lighting rig to spice up its varied programme of events.

Lee Baldock reports . . .

## Lighting on Ice

UK - Riverside Ice & Leisure in Chelmsford has recently undergone a complete technical revamp, and as part of that, Phill Knight of Knight International, who has worked for the rink's owners Chelmsford Borough Council for several years, was called in to design and install the new trussing and lighting system.

The venue is in constant use, hosting ice discos four times a week, plus practice sessions and home games of the Chelmsford Chieftains ice hockey team - not to mention a large annual pantomime.

Knight's brief was to produce a multi-purpose rig, and have enough equipment in-house to jazz up the discos, illuminate the panto' without needing large amounts of additional lighting and also to provide general lighting for the public and team hockey sessions. The venue also wanted to use show lighting to add some 'razzmatazz' moments to elements of the games, such as the teams' entrances and exits.

Knight suggested a rig that could be brought in easily and worked on at ground level for maintenance, refocussing and swapping fixtures in and out. To achieve this, he chose a combination of Robe moving lights and Lodestar motors, supplied by Robe UK and Lift-Turn-Move (LTM) respectively. LTM also supplied the 8-way motor controller, one of their new Guardian range. ("Great brands, well engineered, very reliable, excellent value for money and they could all be delivered on time," he says.)

The eight Lodestar motors, rigged in the roof void and not visible from below, are suspending a 45 x 16m box truss constructed from Milos M390L heavy duty trussing, complete with the 30 Robe moving lights and other effects. This has accelerated the speed at which maintenance and any necessary changes to the rig can be undertaken. "Putting the Lodestars in has made the whole space and the process of lighting and staging a multi-purpose event far more dynamic, versatile and efficient in terms of production values," says Knight.





Above: Phill Knight of Knight International (left) with lighting programmer and operator Chris 'Wiz' Wisbey.

Knight has a long-standing relationship with LTM's John Jones, stretching back to before the formation of LTM by Jones and others in 2004. He's always used Jones to supply Knight's rigging requirements and comments, "You can't beat a Lodestar", adding, "and you can't beat service from LTM either - their attention to detail is impressive and they have a completely positive attitude - nothing is too much trouble."

When it came to the lighting design, Knight chose 12 Robe ColorWash 575 ATs, and eight 575 Scan XTs, plus four Dominator 1200 XT centrepieces and six ClubRoller 250 CTs. These are spread across the box truss hanging over the ice rink. They are controlled by an Avolites Azure 2000 console which has been programmed by Chris 'Wiz' Wisbey, who is also one of the regular operators.

Knight has used Robe equipment on numerous previous occasions and his was one of the first UK companies to invest in the flagship 1200 AT range. He observes: "There's a lot more Robe around now, and it's no coincidence that the brand has earned such a respectable name in such a short space of time."

Functionality was also important. The fixtures needed to offer a wide range of effects to be utilised on the variety of shows and events - from theatrical productions to ice hockey games. Knight also likes the brightness of the 575s and thinks they make a great general purpose stage light.

Reliability was again a key factor in choice of equipment - not just because the fixtures get heavily used, but also because Knight International runs the rig and is responsible for its upkeep and maintenance. Naturally, they wanted lights that were guaranteed to be low maintenance. He was also confident that both Robes and Lodestars would be resilient in the harsh working environment, which features up to 74% humidity as well as extreme cold.

The Dominator effect, he says, offers great "bang for buck". With a six-fold multi-scanner at the core of the fixture, six arms, moving mirrors and barrel mirrors, great 'retro disco' looks can easily be created - which go down a storm with audiences and performers. The rotation-speed of the barrel mirrors is fully controllable, and there's also a three-facet prism-effect, six gobos and three different dichroic colour filters.

Having the ice as stage and projection surface means the impact from fixtures' gobo effects can be maximised, while the beamy looks are also enhanced by truss-mounted fog machines.

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