

Support act: A durable and easy-to-install floor covering allows rock band U2 to hit the ground running at venues on their 360° Tour



U2's 'Claw' support rig sits on eps's Arena Panels, which are secured with counter-sunk bolts (top right) to create a stable base

This summer, U2 will be visiting cities across the USA and Canada on the final leg of the band's 360° Tour – a mammoth operation that events service provider eps has been involved with worldwide.

For three years and nearly 100 shows, eps has provided rental infrastructure equipment for this record-breaking tour, and thousands of square metres of the company's ground cover has toured the world along with the stage, lighting and sound equipment.

Now, as the band sets out across North America, the production set-up will once again use eps's Arena Panels – a pedestrian-friendly flooring system with optimal weight distribution that can cope with the heaviest of loads.

Constructing a massive circular stage on stadium fields requires trucks, trailers, forklifts and cranes – but first of all, it requires ground cover to provide a firm foundation for all this equipment. With only a single day allotted for the ground cover installation at each venue, eps's crews must work fast to lay the panels

needed to bear the weight of the several hundred tonne stage and the support rig known as 'The Claw'.

The light aluminium construction of these panels enables them to be laid by hand with the assistance of forklifts. Although each one weighs only 385 lb, the load-bearing capacity of Arena Panel is 12.9 tonnes per square foot, allowing the ground beneath to support each colossal leg of the iconic stage structure.

Whether it be work crews or concert-goers, the 360° Tour venues will have to be able to stand up to a huge amount of foot-traffic. Arena Panels use counter-sunk bolts to seamlessly secure the panels on all sides, creating a smooth, flat surface without any trip hazards. The textured profile of the panels also provides tread for wet conditions, and special ramps join the edges of the panelled area for additional trip protection, making them ideal for pedestrians and construction equipment alike.

For those high-traffic pedestrian areas on the field that don't require such heavy-duty

ground cover, eps uses its Terraplas ground protection system to protect sensitive surfaces from lighter loads. Similarly equipped with integrated connectors, anti-slip tread and safety ramps, this system is also perforated to allow light and air to reach the turf below – making it a better option in terms of protecting stadium grass.

Since no two stadia are the same, eps worked with production and facility managers to create customised ground cover layouts for each stop on the tour. A combination of Arena Panel and Terraplas are used to completely cover the fields in a unique configuration, based on the stadium's access points. Arena Panels can cover up to 9,300m² per show, while Terraplas can cover up to 8,400m².

Other eps contributions to the 360° Tour have included additional site material such as cable ramps, production vehicles, refrigeration units, industrial fans and, at some shows, flagpoles, security gates, barricades and alternative flooring systems such as Remopla PVC mats. ■

eps

+1 202 506 6036

america@eps.net

www.eps.net

READER
ENQUIRY
REFERENCE
513