

Installation Profile



ASHLY AUDIO FR-8 AND FR-16 FADER REMOTE CONTROLS KEEP IT SIMPLE AT NORTH CAROLINA'S AG CENTER

FLETCHER, NORTH CAROLINA - With multiple, well-booked indoor and outdoor event spaces, something exciting is always happening at the Western North Carolina Agricultural Center (WNCAG). On any given day, equestrian shows, dog shows, or gun shows may run in parallel with conventions, meetings, or workshops. For a week-and-a-half every summer, the North Carolina Mountain State Fair celebrates life in the Blue Ridge Mountains at WNCAG. The center recently updated the Davis Arena, which boasts 45,000 square feet of exhibition space plus meeting rooms and hospitality suites. In order to deliver reliable, sophisticated sound reinforcement, local A/V integrator B&R Audio deployed Ashly Audio amplifiers and signal processors, including a Pema Multi-Channel Amplifier with on-board Protea(tm) DSP Processor. To give the non-technical staff a transparent user interface, the company provided WNCAG with Ashly's new FR-8 and FR-16 Networkable Remote Fader Controls.

"The Davis Arena supports a huge diversity of events," said Bruce Jensen, president and owner of B&R Audio, who led the design and installation. "The center needed a very flexible sound reinforcement system that would allow any member of the staff to play music from a variety of input sources and deliver announcements that would be clearly intelligible. In a nutshell, they asked for input volumes and mutes as well as output volumes and mutes to a number of zones, including several far-flung buildings. But perhaps even more importantly, they wanted something that would not intimidate even the most technologically bashful user." Jensen had worked with Ashly Audio before and caught wind of the FR-8 and FR-16 before they were officially released.

"Ashly's FR-8 and FR-16 remote controllers were perfect for this installation," continued Jensen. "And because Ashly's support is so complete and reliable, I had no fear that I'd be stranded with a semi-functional beta if I pressed the company for an early model." The FR-8 and FR-16 offer eight and sixteen faders and mutes, plus a master fader. The integrator has full control over which input, output, or mixer volumes are controlled by each fader. The individual faders have Integrator-defined range limits and defaults. An Ashly ne24.24M DSP Matrix Processor handles all of the complex input processing, matrix logic, and output processing behind the scenes. Jensen was careful to set the fader limits and the ne24.24M's output protection limiting in such a way that even a complete novice can do the system no harm.

Four Ashly Audio amplifiers provide power to the Davis Arena's distributed loudspeakers. A ne2400.70 Two-Channel Networkable Amplifier rated at 1200W into 70V feeds the outdoor loudspeakers. A ne800.70 Network Amp covers the bathrooms and corridors, with ne1600pe.70 and ne2400pe.70 Networkable Amplifiers powering the main exhibition hall. Both main exhibition hall amplifiers deliver loudspeaker conditioning with integrated DSP. "Like everything with Ashly, when I buy the amps, I know I'm also getting the company," said Jensen. "The stuff is solid, and on those rare instances when there is a problem, the people at Ashly are on it right away. Ashly installations always run smoothly."

Because several of the buildings that require a music and/or announcement feed from the Davis Arena are quite distant, Jensen convinced the WNCAG to forego the miles of speaker cable (literally!) they had been using in favor of fiber optics. "They weren't sure that they wanted to commit to fiber optics, so we did one trial run," said Jensen. "They love it, and we'll be upgrading the other distant feeds in the near future." Every aspect of B & R Audio's installation is future-proof. Jensen continued, "One of the nice features of the Ashly ne24.24M is that the input and output count is totally modular. So when the needs of the event center change, we can accommodate those changes without having to rip everything out.

As part of the renovation, the WNCAG added three classroom spaces that are large enough to require sound reinforcement. "It was the perfect application for Ashly's Pema Multi-Channel DSP Amplifier," said Jensen. "Because the Pema has everything I needed inside a two-rack space unit, the installation was simple, quick, and reliable." The Ashly Pema 4250 four-channel delivers input conditioning, switching logic, and loudspeaker conditioning. Similar to the FR-8 and FR-16 in the big room, each classroom has an Ashly neWR-5 wall-mounted remote control that allows users to easily select inputs and volumes.

