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▶ Taking HD Where It's Never Been Before



By Dan Ochiva

Challenged by the idea of doing HD production in a place that claims to be the "largest domed indoor sports facility in the world"? That's what Helifilms (www.helifilms.com) faced when it

For the 15th Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, Helifilms provided the requisite POV shots using Iconix Video's compact HD-RH1 compact SD/HD camera head and processor.

won the contract to provide POV shots for broadcasters attending the 15th Asian Games, played out this past December in the tiny Middle Eastern kingdom of Doha, Qatar.

The vast interior of the Aspire Academy for Sports Excellence offers broadcasters a futuristic backdrop, but it adds to the live television challenge. For example, those ubiquitous equipment towers you'll find sprouting up around most U.S. stadiums are at a minimum, limiting potential POV camera platforms. Traditional-style blimps, another big venue solution available to capture the requisite POV crowd shots, wouldn't work well in the confined, tent-like space.

At the games, Melbourne, Australia- and Berkshire, U.K.-based Helifilms devised a solution that combined its relatively small (around 13ft. long) controllable ICE blimps with a newly released camera technology: Iconix Video's (www.iconixvideo.com) HD-RH1, a compact HD/SD camera head and processor. A high-

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speed wireless video link transmitted HD POV shots of the pool feed from the blimps to attending broadcasters.

While the company has flown helicopters as well as its small custom blimps for its aerial production and stock footage operations, Helifilm's Sara Hine couldn't find an HD camera system to her liking — one that was both light and sturdy enough to fly on the blimp. That is until she made a visit to the Iconix Video booth at NAB 2006. "There's simply nothing similar [to the Iconix camera system] that exists and works so well," Hine says. Comparable-quality HD POV cameras, then available from the major players, weighed more and were too bulky, she says.

The complete HD-RH1 system, which prices at \$16,000, weighs less than 3lbs. without lens. The small 2.3oz. camera head employs three 1/3in. progressive square-pixel CCDs. But instead of the usual bulky lenses, the RH-1 uses petite C-mount lenses. A longtime standard for machine vision and surveillance cameras, C mounts also allow the use of cheap, but high-quality 16mm film lenses such as Switar and Cooke.

While it uses relatively small 1/3in. imagers, the camera system's electronics keeps image quality high via the latest technology, such as an improved generation of 14-bit A/D converters, as well as an unusual asynchronous signal processing architecture. The latter allows the CCD to run at a different clock rate from that of the output signal; this enables the codec to output an improved signal when compared to standard cameras, in which synchronous processing and output limit the amount of extra processing time. The system can deliver some 35 flavors of the HDTV spec, including a full 1080/60p, 4:4:4 HD signal via an optional dual-link connection.

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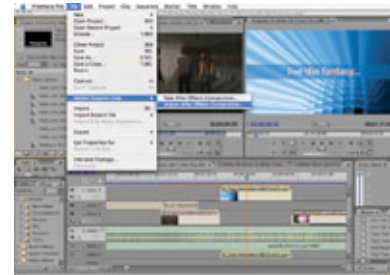
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Adobe Production Studio To Be Available for Both Mac and Windows

Adobe Systems announced that the next version of Adobe Production Studio, the integrated video and audio postproduction tool set that is part of the Creative Suite family, will be available for both the Macintosh and Windows platforms. Film, video, and web professionals currently using Adobe After Effects, Adobe Photoshop, and Adobe Illustrator on the Mac will soon be able to harness the power of completely new Macintosh releases of Adobe Premiere Pro, Adobe Encore DVD, and Adobe Soundbooth — all key components of an upcoming milestone revision to Adobe Production Studio. The software will have its first public demonstration during the Macworld 2007 Conference and Expo at The Moscone Center in San Francisco, Jan. 9-12 (Booth 901). The next release of Adobe Production Studio is expected to ship in mid-2007. ...



Post Logic Studios New York Hires Peter Bavaro

Post Logic Studios, a leading bicoastal independent postproduction and digital intermediate (DI) service facility, has appointed Peter Bavaro to executive director of sales and marketing.

"It's great to have Peter on board with us," says Larry Birstock, CEO, Post Logic Studios. "Peter's depth of production experience will be an invaluable asset in supporting our growth strategy. Post Logic Studios continues to be well positioned to build on its present success and become recognized as one of the industry's most creative, professional, and highest-quality providers of visual effects, postproduction, and DI for film and television projects." ...

Harris Corp. Named Exclusive HD Radio Transmission Vendor For Jefferson Public Radio

Harris Corporation announced that Jefferson Public Radio (JPR), owner of 21 public radio stations in Oregon and Northern California, will exclusively install Harris HD Radio transmitters for its FM and AM stations. Harris will also provide its FlexStar family of HD Radio products (FlexStar HDI-100 Importer, HDE-100 Exporter and HDX-FM Exciter) at all FM stations for future multicasting initiatives, as well as at all AM stations for improved audio quality. Harris NeuStar SW4.0 pre-codec conditioners, powered by Neural Audio, will be installed at all sites for HD Radio audio processing. ...