



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA - BERKELEY SIMPSON CENTER

Date opened: **January 2012**
 Total area: **142,500 square feet**
 Student athlete population: **450 based at Center, 850 total**
 Athletic options: **13 sports**
 Staff: **24 head coaches**
 Awards: **2011 – 3rd place in Directors Cup from 164 universities**
 Total cost: **\$153 million**

Sport Architecture
 (USA)

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA – BERKELEY HAS A GLOBAL REPUTATION FOR WORLD-CLASS ACADEMICS, COACHES AND STUDENT - ATHLETES. IN 2012, THE BAR WAS RAISED ONCE AGAIN WITH THE OPENING OF THE SIMPSON CENTER FOR STUDENT ATHLETE HIGH PERFORMANCE.

This 142,500 square-foot facility was designed to accommodate the 'holistic' needs of student – athletes, Cal priding itself on striving to ensure the student- athlete experience is world class in every way. The state-of-the-art **Simpson Center** is home to the 850 high performance athletes, including many who won medals at the 2012 Summer Games in London.

CAL HIGH PERFORMANCE

The **Cal High Performance** Initiative was implemented in 2006 by Athletic Director **Sandy Barbour** and has now evolved into Cal High Performance – a philosophy, mindset and systematic approach to world class performance throughout Cal Athletics and a world-class student athlete experience. "Rather than copying what was happening with other collegiate sports, we wanted to raise the bar by embracing world's best practice in Olympic and Professional sport and bring a truly high performance mindset to Cal ," says **Keith Power**, high performance director.

"A key part of our goal is to be world class in four specific areas – communication, collaboration, data driven information and innovation. We want to be thought leaders in terms of the way we do things."

Power says the university's philosophy is very different than any other college experience or environment and they needed to build a facility that represented that. "The first aspect of this philosophy is having all Cals coaches and their support staff working together in collaboration. For example, the expectation is that all of our 29 programs have weekly or bi-monthly performance team meetings that bring all coaches, support staff and experts together in the same room. This includes the strength and conditioning coaches, the sports medicine people, the coaches, academic support staff and sports scientists. These meetings cover the overall performance of the student athlete in every aspect of their life."

MONDO ADDS TOUCH OF CLASS

With an irregular curve shape to the Simpson Center, Power says Mondo was the right choice to accommodate the building. It was installed in 80



percent of the floor surface. "Prior to moving to California, I was familiar with Mondo products for many years. I was competing over 30 years ago and I remember at the athletic events, the best surfaces were Mondo.

"I was really aware of what Mondo offered for the indoor surfaces, but after careful consideration for the Simpson Center, we felt Mondo had the best results in terms of surfaces and longevity. It suits us because all the things we have here are cutting edge."

HIGH PERFORMANCE ZONE

Mondo was installed in the high performance zones weight room area to accommodate extreme foot traffic. "We have a special pod system that includes four lifting platforms at each of the six stations for a total of 24 stations," says Power. "Having Mondo installed is important for the high traffic created. If we want to, we can train the entire football team at the same time. We can also have multiple teams using the weight room, with short intervals between their arrivals and departures."

Efficiency was the key theme behind the weight room's design. "The student athletes will spend minimal time to get maximum results which allows them to focus on their academics or other parts of their program."

Mondo **Ramflex 10mm** and **Sport Impact 10mm** were used throughout the Simpson Center. Wood design inserts include the blue Cal logo and the weight room has with a grey floor and black platforms. At the back of the room is a grey floor and a wood-style Mondo floor behind the text insert – California Golden Bears. "Visually, it is quite spectacular," says Power. "In fact, the whole facility is a huge wow factor for our student athletes. Recruits who have come through the facility are blown away by everything offered in this space."

PERFORMANCE INTEGRATION

The Simpson Center is first and foremost for training and performance integration. The High Performance Zone has three sport science labs – biochemistry, sports physiology and biomechanics. There is also a small medical center, x-ray clinic, rehab pools and two large athletic training rooms.

"We are very cutting edge with the high-performance zone," says Power. "Because of the way the building is designed it fosters a philosophy of collaboration and integration. We have sports medicine, strength and conditioning, coaches, sports scientists, academic study center, all within 50 yards of each other."

Power says the administrators at the Simpson Center are collaborating with other departments in the university to find ways to utilize the center to the fullest. "We are offering options such as using the sports science labs for Cal faculties that are considered premier programs in their own right, such as integrated biology and engineering."

WINNING PHILOSOPHY

"Being from the U.K., the attraction that brought me to Cal was the high performance vision of our athletic director, Sandy Barbour," says Power. "When I got here just over three years ago, the facility was not much more than a hole in the ground, but I knew what it was going to look and feel like. Everyone was excited about its potential.

"Now I look forward to coming to work every day, not only because of what is happening at the High Performance Center but also for what we are doing as an athletic department". We are looking at high performance student -athletes in a different way. We want to make sure these athletes get the best experience as a student, an athlete and a person. That is the mantra we live by during the four years the students are here. We want to create a wow factor for them as well."

Adding another incentive for students' success is the Wall of Fame that runs throughout the facility, highlighting both historic moments and past student athletes.

2012 LONDON GAMES HONORS

The University of California – Berkeley, is known worldwide as having world-class academics, coaches and athletes. "We are incredibly fortunate here because Cal, as a university, at the **2012 London Games** finished 8th in the tally with 17 medals, including 11 Gold. We had five coaches and three assistant coaches in London." At the moment, the university has 10 coaches who are current or former Olympic or head International coaches. "The fact that we have this calibre of people within our 24 head coaches is great." The south end of the Simpson Center is home to a variety of large training rooms to accommodate teams training for Olympic glory. These include softball, men's and women's golf, men's and women's crew, field hockey, men's and women's gymnastics, rugby, and men's and women's soccer.



