

SPECIAL REPORT

MASTER BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

CONSTRUCTION AWARDS

Track record of excellence

INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS
\$10 MILLION TO \$20 MILLION
FDC Construction and Fitout
ASICS

AN OLYMPIC-grade, four-lane running track cutting a swath through an office complex was part of the unusual brief for the fitout of the Australian head office and warehouse of the world's third-largest sports footwear manufacturer, ASICS.

"This was the first time we've ever been asked to put a running track indoors anywhere," the general manager of the construction division for FDC Construction and Fitout, Sean Gibbeson, says.

The company also installed badminton and basketball courts on the same floor as the staff lunch room. And sporting themes were etched on glass panels throughout the meeting and VIP rooms of the new Eastern Creek complex. Other staff facilities include a gym, Nintendo Wii room, a Japanese garden and a sports field.

The high-quality workmanship in this unique office and warehouse won FDC the Best Industrial Building,

\$10 million to \$20 million, award. A Master Builders Association judge, Richard Pugh, says the company met all the criteria for excellence in construction.

"They were also given the fitout brief just 12 weeks before the project completion date, which in itself was a challenge, so they did an amazing job," he says.

The main challenges FDC faced were the tight time frame for the unexpected, highly intricate, fitout and that much of the "devil in the detail" was underfoot.

The construction team had to pour and grind the polished concrete floors of the ground-floor reception, corridor and main staircase while installing the running track, which was freighted in by air at the last minute.

In the warehouse, the team had to create ultra-flat floors that adhered to ASICS's strict international occupational health and safety standards. "We used a laser screed, which is a machine that you place on the concrete when you're levelling it so it is very flat," Gibbeson says.



Good start ... ASICS indoor running facility is used by employees as an aid to health and fitness and is also handy for product testing by elite athletes.

"There are no dips and, therefore, no questions that a forklift will ever wobble when carrying a pallet." The attention to detail was worth it, he says, as the project has set a new

design and quality benchmark for western Sydney. "It's more like something you'd see in the CBD for Google or other companies like that," he says. "Most people who visit love it

because they don't expect to see something so extravagant, and at such a grade-A level, out here." As well as providing staff with opportunities to develop their health

and well-being and improve productivity, the running track is used by marketing and sales and elite athletes to try new products. Melinda Ham

Work worth bottling

HEALTH BUILDINGS
\$55 MILLION TO \$75 MILLION
Buildcorp Contracting NSW
Australian Red Cross Blood
Service NAPS project

WHEN building a facility designed to test and process almost a third of Australia's blood and blood products, there is no margin for error.

Add to that stipulations that the facility must be operable for four days following a major earthquake, in 42-degree temperatures, and to accommodate a year 2031 population and you have, as senior project manager Steve Taunton says, "a very complicated project".

The Australian Red Cross Blood Service manufacturing and testing centre combines laboratories, storage areas and open-plan office space over almost 14,000 square metres.

Taunton says simultaneously installing



Solid design ... the foyer's four-storey concrete spiral staircase.

the fitout and constructing the base building proved a challenge. Freezers used for blood storage were gradually turned down over 15 days to their operating temperature of minus-35 degrees to prevent the internal slab from cracking. Blood-storage areas also had to be tested to ensure they functioned in accordance with the Therapeutic Goods Administration's requirements.

A judge, Tony Wood, says completion of the project within 19 months was "a remarkable achievement". The building also won the Best Use of Concrete Award for its facade and spiral staircase.

Paddy Wood

Centre of attention, minimum of fuss

RETAIL BUILDINGS
\$30 MILLION OR MORE
Lend Lease Project
Management and
Construction
Top Ryde City

COMPLETING a multimillion-dollar shopping centre on time with no interruption to movements on a busy intersection was an impressive feat – one of the main reasons Lend Lease Project Management and Construction took out this year's \$30 million or more retail building category.

The design and construction of Top Ryde City, Australia's largest retail development, started in 2007, with the first stage opening in November 2009 and the second in March last year. The



final stage of the \$495 million project opened four months later. The finished building houses 78,215 square metres of retail space, 290 retailers and 3055 car parking spaces.

Almost 4 million man hours were completed on the 3.5 hectare site and a staggering 330 development applications were made.

The sheer size and complexity of the retail development required

meticulous planning and management. But it was the innovative construction methods that most impressed the judges, from building three vehicular tunnels under Lane Cove Road with no impact on traffic during normal working hours, to creating the two pedestrian overpasses and a large-scale atrium over the live shopping centre.

The construction of the overpasses required a high degree of collaboration with the Roads and Traffic Authority, the City of Ryde council and the police department, from design to installation.

Most of the construction had to be done in consultation with the centre management team and out of hours

to eliminate the risk to the public. All surrounding tenancies remained open and weren't adversely affected by the works at any stage.

For Lend Lease to finish the project on time, facing such strict site constraints, was a "masterful piece of planning" judge Richard Pugh says.

"It was a colossal effort," he says. "The lifting of the escalators and structural steel supports was a tremendous effort and the innovation used in the installation of equipment like escalators was very impressive."

Lend Lease Project Management and Construction also took out the award for commercial buildings costing \$50 million or more for the Mid City Centre in George Street.

Keeli Cambourne



Tall order ... Top Ryde City used innovative building methods.