

The bases are loaded at the Little League Baseball® World Series.

Long-term partnerships with Little League® International ensure athlete and spectator safety at the world's premier youth sporting event.



Organization:

Little League®
International

Location:

Williamsport,
Pennsylvania USA

Industry segment:

Stadiums and venues

Application:

Safety and security, crowd
control

Axis partners:

Milestone, Extreme
Networks, Lenel

Mission

Every August, Little League® International brings close to 500,000 visitors to the small town of Williamsport, PA for the Little League Baseball® World Series (LLBWS). With a population of 6,500, providing ample security for athletes, visiting dignitaries and spectators could easily overwhelm the community's resources. Even though the LLBWS hires auxiliary security personnel and receives support from volunteers, local, state and federal agencies, Little League International believes cutting-edge surveillance technology is an essential element of its total security program.

Solution

Each year the bases are loaded with an all-star team of solution providers integrating the newest technologies for the highest-level of situational awareness. Extreme Networks supports wired and wireless connectivity across the complex for Lenel's access control system and Axis surveillance solutions that operate through Milestone Systems' XProtect® video management software.

The day and night superior image quality of Axis network cameras enable the security team to improve incident responses with less equipment and maintenance costs. Axis thermal and radar technologies also add another layer of protection around the perimeter without disrupting the residential neighborhoods.

Result

Little League International maintains top-notch security while delivering the ultimate LLBWS experience for athletes, families and fans alike. With these advanced solutions, the Little League International Complex transforms from a rural ball field into one of the safest sports venues. The team's next home run will be integrating analytics for operational efficiencies and enhancements to the overall LLBWS experience.



Global experience. Small town atmosphere.

Since 1947, Little League® International has been hosting the premier sporting event for youth sports in the small town of Williamsport, PA. Back then, there were only a few local teams competing for the national tournament. Fast forward 70 years to the renowned Little League Baseball® World Series (LLBWS) televised on ABC and the ESPN Family of Networks every summer with the top 16 teams from around the globe.

The growing spotlight has created a fan base and turned the experience into a dream for many young athletes and their families. With that success comes a tremendous responsibility to stay ahead of cutting-edge security solutions that maintain a safe and secure environment throughout this 10-day event. An overwhelming task for any security and operations teams, especially as the threat landscape continues to evolve.

"Our town of 6,500 people booms to almost half a million over the course of this annual event. Making sure it is both fun for families, and safe for all who take part, is of utmost importance," said Jim Ferguson, Assistant Director of Risk Management, Little League International.

An all-star team

Little League International can't achieve this mission alone. With an all-star team in place to present the newest innovations, the LLBWS is in good hands to work with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to ensure that the athletes and guests experience youth baseball the way it's meant to be played.

"Security is obviously a very important matter for Little League International and we always want to make sure that we're doing everything we can to monitor our entire complex," said Brian McClintock, Senior Director of Communications, Little League International. "Year after year, we're constantly looking for ways we can be better, to improve, and to work even more closely with great companies and local law enforcement to make sure that it all comes together properly."

Given the many years of partnership with Lenel, Extreme Networks and Axis Communications, there is a strong knowledge of the vicinity's infrastructure, security and operational needs.

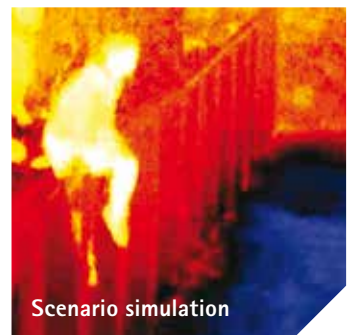
This enables quick system design, installation and configuration to optimize the new technology to meet the event's demands as well as bring new talent onto the roster, such as Milestone Systems in 2017.

Doing more with less

Life happens and incidents are bound to occur with close to 50,000 people on the complex at a given time. For quick responses, the security team upholds a heightened-level of situational awareness. That's quite an undertaking across 72-acres with 2 stadiums, the *World of Little League® Museum*, parking, concessions, retail shops, sponsor booths, dormitories and all the other facilities.

As a nonprofit dedicated to keeping the LLBWS a family-friendly experience with no admission fees, the second challenge is doing more with fewer resource and maintenance costs. Rather than having more cameras, cabling and electricity, the multi-sensors of AXIS Q60 PTZ (pan/tilt/zoom) Network Camera Series enable one camera to provide a wide, 360° view for greater surveillance coverage.

Dark environments were a challenge for video cameras to provide the details needed to address situations. Early on, IR illuminators were installed to improve image quality. Over the last few years, the IR Illuminators were removed and replaced with Axis Lightfinder technology embedded on all the Axis cameras to produce high-resolution, colored images in almost complete darkness.



Scenario simulation



“Our town of 6,500 people booms to almost half a million over the course of this annual event. Making sure it is both fun for families, and safe for all who take part, is of utmost importance. We have every confidence in Axis Communications, Extreme Networks, Lenel and Milestone to help us achieve these goals. They are tested and proven systems, and each of these companies were chosen to protect the players and fans from around the world.”

Jim Ferguson, Assistant Director of Risk Management, Little League International.



Thanks to Extreme Networks' ExtremeWireless™ and ExtremeSwitching™ technology forming the backbone of this state-of-the-art security solution, the team was able to connect and power cameras in remote areas without having to worry about the expense of trenching cable. All these solutions working together survey the entire vicinity more efficiently and effectively.

Finding the lost parent

Superior image quality for enhanced situational awareness has proven successful as many lost parents have been reunited with their families. Utilizing one 20-megapixel AXIS Q1659 Network Camera mounted on the score board of Howard J. Lamade Stadium and Milestone XProtect® Smart Wall, security personnel can search the video footage for clothing color and other specific details about the individual to highlight anyone matching that description.

“We’ve actually been able to find quite a few missing people with the camera system before physical security guards were able to spot them,” shares Ferguson. “It’s really reduced our time-to-find, which, I can assure you, is a big relief to anxious loved ones.”

The command center also has Milestone XProtect® video management software (VMS) to easily share video amongst multiple law enforcement agencies to coordinate an efficient and appropriate response, not just for finding the lost parent, but for any incident that may occur.

Respecting the residents

Williamsport is a small, residential community that has supported LLBWS since its inception. While the security team monitors the stadium's perimeter at night, they must be mindful of the neighborhood and avoid disruptions with bright lights and continuous patrols. Axis thermal network cameras operate in total darkness and can identify and capture if someone is breaching the perimeter of the vicinity.

In 2017, Axis radar detection technology was introduced and installed to augment these cameras for another layer of protection. Due to its full integration of Axis solutions, the team turned to Milestone XProtect® VMS to leverage all the features of AXIS D2050-VE Network Radar Detector. This includes providing alarms through the VMS if an unauthorized intruder enters the facility.

“The radar system allowed us to provide unique coverage in areas that were typically difficult to monitor and enhanced our security and surveillance for the players, families, and fans at the 2017 World Series,” says Ferguson.

Protecting athletes 24/7

To augment the network cameras, Little League International relies on Lenel's access control solution. Upon arrival, each player, staff member, volunteer and vendor is enrolled in Lenel's OnGuard® system to receive a photo identification badge to allow entry into selected areas during the series. If an unauthorized individual were to try entering the grove without access, a red-light flashes and security will escort the individual off the premises.

“We house our athletes onsite in an area we call the International Grove, which includes dorms, dining halls and recreational facilities for players and coaches. Obviously, this complex must be monitored 24/7,” explains Ferguson. “Even with extra law enforcement and security in place, without video surveillance it would be impossible to maintain the level of security parents expect when they entrust their children to our care.”

Creating an unforgettable experience

Given the years of partnerships and latest innovations incorporated into this event, Little League International is able to stand by the security team and focus on delivering the ultimate Little League Baseball World Series experience.

“We can't maintain total surveillance of the complex without the supportive access to cameras and technologies the team provides” said Ferguson. “Many incidents have not occurred because of that surveillance.”

The next challenge for the team is to explore additional capabilities to utilize these technologies for operational efficiencies and enhancing the experience for the fans and athletes. Future plans include incorporating applications from AXIS Store Optimization Suite for people counting, crowd control and allocating resources and staff in the right areas at the right time.

“There are very few sporting events that bring together, on an annual basis, this many cultures and this many countries” explained McClintock. “At the end of it all, it's an opportunity for kids to get together, make great memories, meet new friends and experience different cultures. They get to play high-level baseball, but that really is secondary to the overall experience that we're trying to provide. Not only for our fans, but our players and their families as well.”

About Axis Communications

Axis offers intelligent security solutions that enable a smarter, safer world. As the market leader in network video, Axis is driving the industry by continually launching innovative network products based on an open platform - delivering high value to customers through a global partner network. Axis has long-term relationships with partners and provides them with knowledge and ground-breaking network products in existing and new markets.

Axis has more than 2,600 dedicated employees in more than 50 countries around the world, supported by a global network of over 90,000 partners. Founded in 1984, Axis is a Sweden-based company listed on NASDAQ Stockholm under the ticker AXIS.

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