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## ICI Real Estate

# COM DEV scores with soccer dome

BY JAN DEAN

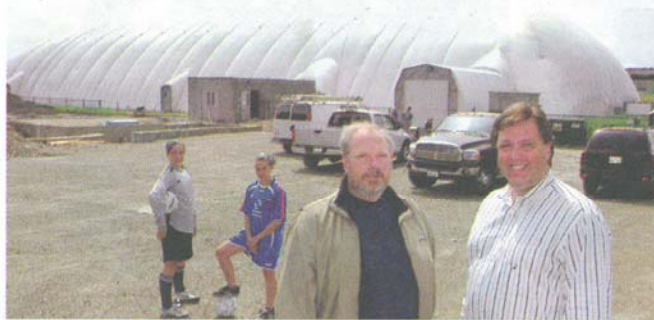
It's always nice to see the name of your company on a building, according to Mike Pley, chief operating officer for COM DEV International. But putting the company name on Cambridge's new indoor soccer facility achieves a lot more than that.

COM DEV is known for its support of community – on a corporate and individual employee level. Pley says employees can apply to their managers to spend up to 10 per cent of their working time doing volunteer work on the company tab. The company also supports a range of causes in Cambridge that focus on youth and education, and Pley says the soccer facility fit the bill for both.

It also had strong appeal because so many of the company's employees have children playing in the Cambridge Youth Soccer organization and themselves volunteer as coaches and managers for teams.

The corporation was approached first through Rob Darwin, COM DEV vice-president of corporate HR about the possibility of supporting the project. "Every so many years we pick a major project," says Pley. "We were just finishing our commitment to the Cambridge Hospital as well as the One Voice One Vision campaign in the local area."

The soccer project fit well – and COM DEV was able to bridge the funding gap for the city and for the soccer organization with a gift of \$150,000. "People like myself grew up playing lots of sport and I believe personally that sports, and team sports are a great thing," says Pley. "Sports promote good health and teamwork. You can hire any engineer to work on something, but the goal is to hire an



Top: Jim Hughes, Soccer Dome project manager for PM Contracting (left) and Mike Pley, COO of COM DEV International, in front of the sports facility they helped build in Cambridge. Above: Under the dome are (L-R) Glenn Gedge, Cambridge manager of Customer Services, Jim Hughes, Mike Pley, Cambridge Youth Soccer Board member Karen Buttistone, and players Alyssa and Courtney Davis. Photos by Peter McCusker

engineer who can work as part of a team – that's something sports like soccer teach young people".

It also makes a big contribution to the community – Cambridge was the have-not city in terms of indoor soccer – Kitchener has Budd Park, and Waterloo has Bechtel Park and RIM Park.

Pley says having those kinds of amenities in the city make it easier to recruit the talent his company needs because it's quality of life that often lands the best candidate.

Pley understands that since both his sons play soccer at the Dome. But the facility is used by a range of sports teams, including football.

Construction started on the COM DEV Soccer Dome on a five-acre site on Fountain Street North late in 2007. Kitchener-based PM Contracting which is part of PM Ltd. with about 50 full-time employees and annual revenues of \$20 million, got the contract. Jim Hughes was the PM project manager for the site. It was the first air-supported structure the company had tackled. Hughes says that "the foundation is the single most important component for that kind of structure because the roof is always trying to sail away." Over the course of about six months Hughes says there were about 35 to 40 people working on the site.

Despite the air-filled dome, all the traditional trades had to be coordinated: concrete, mechanical, and even roofing for the entranceway to the dome. The vinyl insulated roof was produced by Yeadon Air Supported Structures in Guelph. Yeadon is the industry leading producer of state-of-the-art air supported structures sports and recreation, warehousing. Cont. on page 11

# *Good for city and business*

Cont. from page 10  
military and construction usage.

The first stage of construction was completed on time and on budget for \$1.8 million. That saw the outside membrane and soccer field with artificial turf installed, along with an area for practice drills and training. There was limited parking and users of the facility had to use temporary washrooms, but it was a major hit with the Cambridge Youth Soccer Club – more than 50,000 spectators and participants used the facility in less than five months.

Now Hughes and PM are starting the second phase of construction that will see the parking area expanded to 163 spaces and good lighting throughout. A new clubhouse and new washroom facilities will also be built; and within the clubhouse a large boardroom will

allow for business meetings and recreational events like birthday parties. The final touch will be landscaping and construction of a new mini-field in front of the facility.

Pley is looking forward to the COM DEV Soccer Dome's completion along with every other parent and soccer play in town. Good things can happen when business and communities work together.

"Support from corporations like COM DEV continue to build upon the partnerships that help to enhance the community services and bring a new level of cooperation to the fore," says Jim King, commissioner of Planning for the City of Cambridge. He notes that the Toyota Room in the Cambridge Centre for the Arts is another example of the City working with a corporation to make the community better.