

We're Hotopp—a design firm with more than 30 years of experience in branded environments, attractions, live/stage events, and studio television. No matter the job at hand, we focus first and foremost on helping people achieve their creative vision, because we believe anything is possible.



**When the National Hockey League approached us Mid-May 2020 during the initial planning stages for their Return To Play we faced one of our most challenging design & production feats to date.**

## Obstacles:

- 1) "Fill" an Arena without fans
- 2) Maintain a high level of energy that can translate both for broadcast and players on the ice
- 3) Execute design/build/production in a finite amount of time – games started July 28th
- 4) Host cities were unknown until two weeks prior to load-in
- 5) Two locations – In a foreign Country – During a Worldwide pandemic

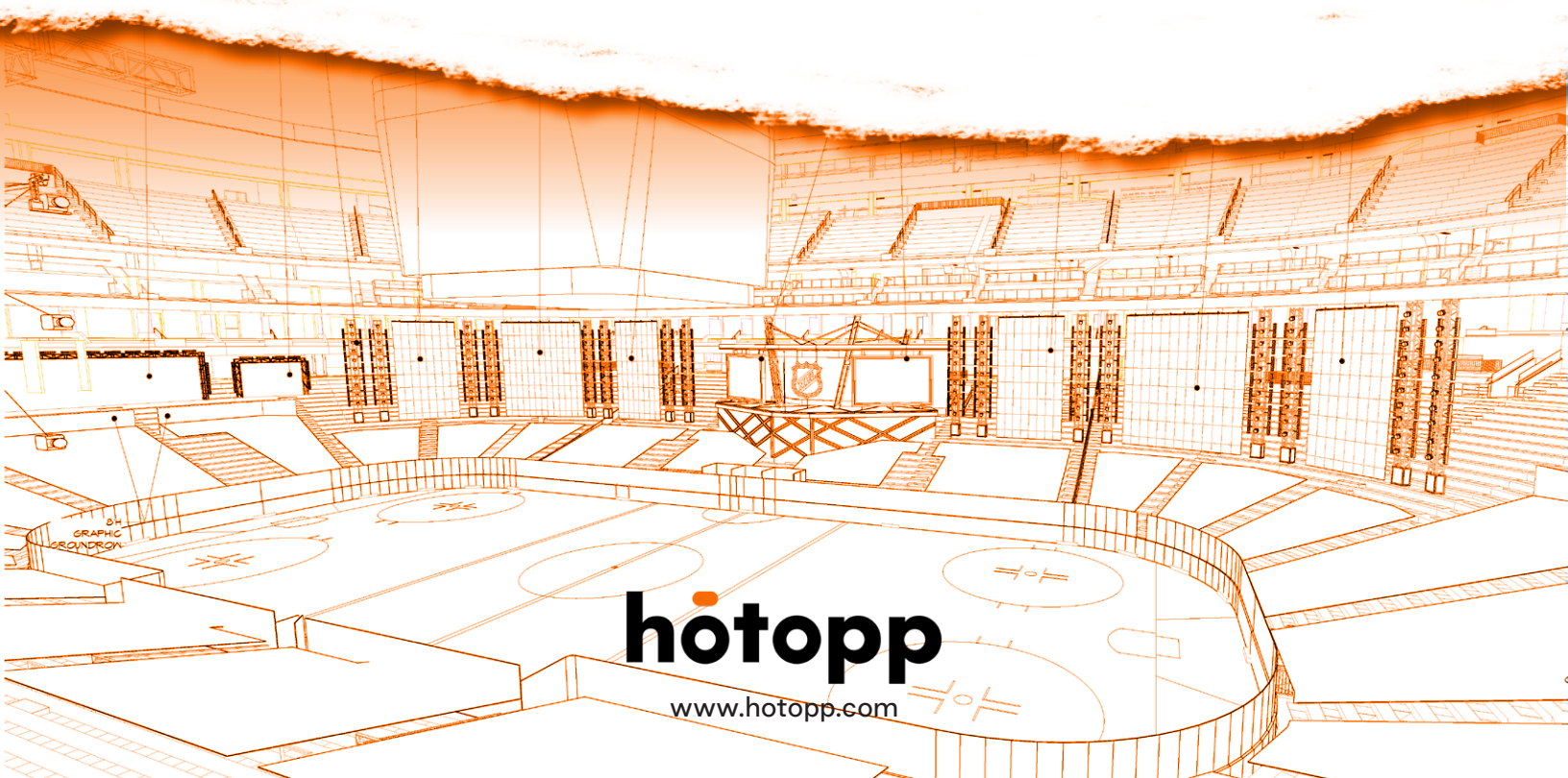
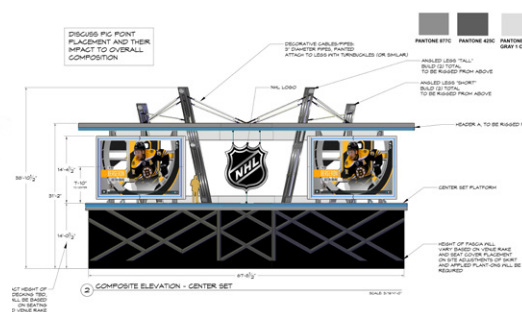


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Our client, NHL Chief Content Officer Steve Mayer, expressed his vision for this new frontier of sports entertainment; we worked with him diligently to make it a reality.

To address the empty seats we covered the first ten rows with a graphic wrap, the light color of the graphic allowed the puck to stand out against the background. We added layers of Semi-Transparent screens, lighting towers, and built a central stage as an iconic backdrop for play. The screens provided the perfect canvas for content from teams and fans to activate the arena in between play, the lighting design further energized the space and created hundreds of new looks that had never been possible for broadcast before.





## Two Locations – Foreign Country – Pandemic

Splitting 24 teams into two hub cities meant that we needed to design for two locations and make them as similar as possible on camera. This was no easy task as the two buildings were very different in layout and seating rake. Each production team faced different challenges based on location – in Toronto it was a lack of venue drawing information and rigging points – Edmonton was more remote which created difficulty for vendors to source materials and equipment.

This was uncharted territory for everyone involved. After weeks of working remotely we had set the final plans into motion – then we had to turn our attention to making sure the production environment would be as safe as possible. We traveled 19 supervisors to Canada to lead this effort on the ground, and have proven that with the right guidelines in place, production during Covid-19 is entirely possible.

The bubble is no joke. Leading up to departure everyone was tested three times. Once inside the bubble we were tested daily and expected to follow strict protocols to keep ourselves and everyone else as safe as possible. Masks and social distancing were required, hand sanitizer was always within reach. We were not able to leave the clearly defined areas of the bubble without risking not being allowed re-entry. It took focus on behalf of everyone to stay in the game and get the job done.



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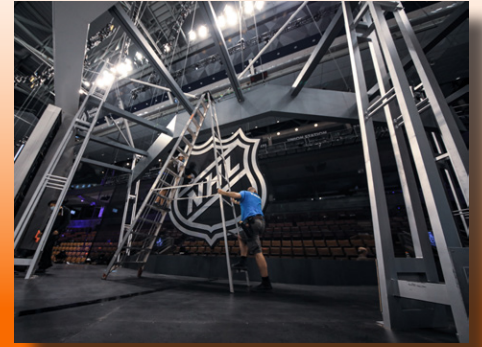
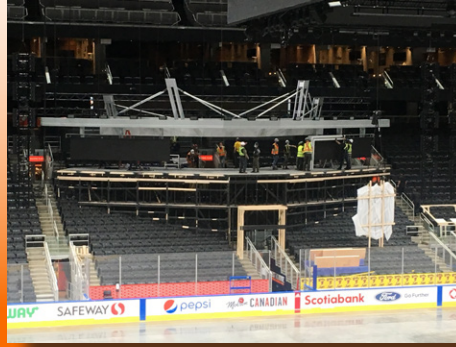


A Finite amount of time.

With the landscape of public health shifting daily, the National Hockey League did not confirm their host cities until 2 weeks before we planned to load in.

We quickly partnered with vendors who were just as excited as we were to help the NHL Return to Play in a way that was historic and groundbreaking. No one had ever attempted to rig 30' tall LED screens and a giant stage in the seating sections of either arena; we were told more than once that it could not be done. These are the folks who worked around the clock with Hotopp to pull it off.

Lighting Design:	Tom Kenny
Lighting Equipment:	Solotech
Fabrication:	F&D Scene Changes, Great Lakes Scenic Studios
Video:	Worldstage
Rigging:	United Staging



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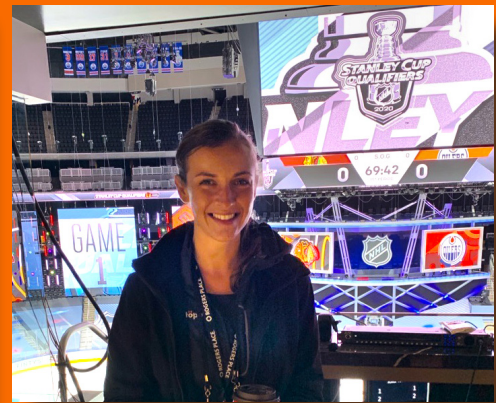
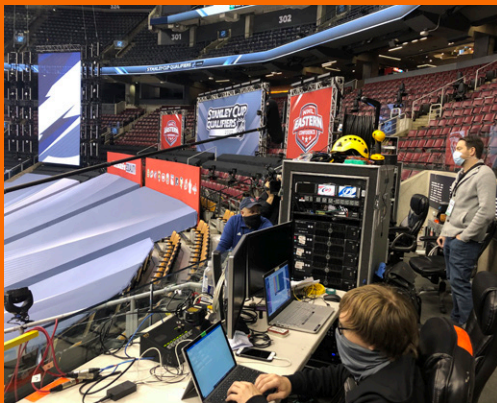
## Teams on the ground inside the bubble:

### Edmonton

Production Designer/Producer:	Gary Wichansky
Designer/Art Director:	Christina Fremgen
Production Manager:	Steven Dalton
Technical Director:	Denis McCubbin
Lighting Designer:	Tom Kenny
Lighting Director/ME:	Kurt Wagner
Light Board Op/Programmer:	Brent Clark
Lighting Tech:	Mark Singelis & Denis Ayotte
F&D Scenic Tech:	Lance Chenier & Ben Wojcik
United Staging Rigging:	Mauricio Moreno (Head) & Brent Nyland (Second)
World Stage LED Tech:	Anthony Louis Vannicola III & Dennis Arthur Menard

### Toronto

Producer:	Rachel Davis
Designer/Art Director:	Elke Schnittker
Production Manager:	Anthony Jusino
Technical Director:	Geoffrey Quart
Lighting Designer:	Tom Kenny
Lighting Director/ME:	Corey Tom
Light Board Op/Programmer:	Eric Belanger
Lighting Tech:	Kevin Chan & Samuel Stuart
Great Lakes Supervisors:	Matt Eaton & Pat Fields
United Staging Rigging:	Chris Whitacre (Head) & Nick Fedeli (Second)
World Stage LED Tech:	John Joseph Denion & Devin Hopkins Carroll



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