



'RED Y' STEADY,

COOK

WHEN PAUL OWEN BECAME HEAD CHEF AT PARC Y SCARLETS, THE NEW HOME OF WELSH RUGBY LEGENDS LLANELLI, HIS BRIEF WAS TO DELIVER A FINE DINING-STYLE EXPERIENCE FOR GUESTS, PLAYERS AND STAFF

With more than multiple corporate events taking place at the same time involving hundreds of guests, Event Management Catering (EMC) provides quality dining on an almost industrial scale. But walk through the kitchens on matchday and you don't feel the stress of a brigade under pressure. Head chef Paul Owen puts much of the calm and focused atmosphere down to the layout infrastructure and specification of his three new kitchens.

EMC chose kitchen design and installation specialist Space Catering Equipment to provide the facilities to cater for a mix of corporate, business and private customers. The team at Space configured a solution that not only enables Owen and his team to create piping hot, impressive fresh cuisine on a large scale, it also delivered efficiencies that increase gross profit, improve team morale and generate extra time with bought-in dishes replaced by home-cooked fare.

Costing £500,000, the work to install three kitchens spread over the four floors of the south stand, took 14 months. Space's Dave Griffin says: "Early in the design process we determined that the best location for the production kitchen, the heart of the catering operation, was on the ground floor, where the kitchen would benefit from larger space and good access to all parts of the ground.

"Understanding the style of service expected by EMC allowed us to design the kitchens around an efficient production process - cook, rapid chill then plated regen.

"We knew something substantial in terms of equipment

was required, so we specified a Storer roll-in blast chiller and two Convotherm combination ovens (40 and 20 gastronorm size) capable of delivering easily the quality and quantity of meals EMC needs.

"We also built an extensive run of walk-in cold and holding cold rooms, as well as frozen and ambient storage, bringing vital flexibility and efficiency to the operation. It's a well-planned and meticulously executed concept."

Levels two and three now each have an extensive regeneration kitchen, where plated food from the ground floor production kitchen is heated in 40 gastronorm Convotherm combination ovens, at a rate of 114 plates in six minutes.

"Downstairs the ovens are fantastic – they allow us to keep everything fresh," says Owen. "We take food straight out of the oven and put it into the blast chiller taking it down to a core temperature in less than half an hour. This means we can prepare full meals in advance and simply reheat them in minutes. We recently had an event where we prepared 224 meals for service in just 10 minutes."

Time efficiency gains have changed the way he runs his kitchen. "As everything is done in advance, we have more time to spend on garnish and creating fresh sauces. And team members also have time to come up with menu ideas."

Space Catering Equipment: www.spacecatering.co.uk
EMC: www.eventmanagementcatering.com

ABOVE:
(Left) Paul Owen busy in the kitchen;
(right) chefs have more time to spend on garnishes and sauces