



West Bromwich Albion's indoor training ground in practice

Inside edge: West Bromwich Albion's new training facility

occer team, West Bromwich Albion Football Club, now has an impressive new football training centre, care of Rubb Buildings. Relegated from the UK's Premier League at the end of the last season, West Bromwich Albion has got off to a positive start this time around, beginning the new season with a number of new players and an impressive new indoor football training centre. "We had two main reasons to look into this project," says Mark Miles, facilities manager at West Bromwich Albion. "In order for the club to obtain academy status, we needed to have an indoor training facility measuring 100m. Also, the first team training was often hampered when the pitches were flooded and during inclement weather." The club bought the land at a premium, it was decided to build the training centre on the 'Tommy' site, a vacant plot of land adjacent to Hawthorns, the home stadium of West

Bromwich Albion. "The club already owned the land so it was a fairly straight forward decision," explains Miles.

Experience

Rubb Buildings was awarded the contract following a process of tender and site visits to view the work produced by various companies. The initial visits were carried out by Mark Miles and his team and a second round of visits was concluded by club finance director, Mark Jenkins and chairman, Jeremy Peace. Rubb's 35 years of experience in the indoor sports building market, with a number of prestigious soccer facilities already under its belt, made it a natural choice for the project. Previous Rubb successes include the Durham Soccarena (50 x 138m), the largest sports facility of its type in Europe; and Newcastle United's impressive 67 x 90m indoor football ground.

The construction for the full turnkey project was far from straight forward, however, involving site clearance, excavation, muck shift, formation of the ground, construction of foundations and pre-landscaping, levelling of the ground, and creating earth bunds surrounding the facility, which were to be grassed over and to have trees planted on completion.

Construction started in February 2006, with extremely poor ground conditions. The initial work continued through some of the most adverse weather conditions of the winter and early spring.

Historically, drainage on the site had not been a serious problem, with the rain-water running off the disused land to soak away into the nearby fields. Erecting a building on the site would now prevent the dissipation of the water. "We needed to restrict the storm water flow into the outfall," recalled Rubb's sales manager, Ray Colby. "On clearing the site, our next major task entailed laying a complete drainage system with 250m of piping leading back to the road and the installation of a 2 x 60m attenuation tank to provide a hydro brake to limit the flow of