

MTV's Music Awards Rides Out a Storm

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Preceding the MTV Video Music Awards (August 29, 2005), Miami's Doubletree Surfcomber Hotel was transformed into Hotel MTV. To celebrate the events, 2005 VMA Awards emcee Diddy (Sean "Puffy" Combs) cut the ribbon, opening the venue on Wednesday, August 24, 2005.

Everlast Productions (Hallandale, Fla.) provided sound and light for the Hotel MTV shows, which included performances by Ying Yang Twins, The Bravery, David Banner, Pitbull and more. The main stage was perched on the far end of the hotel's pool and featured a P.A. built around a Dynacord Cobra modular line array system, Electro-Voice monitors and Midas mixing consoles. The Cobra allowed for quick setup/teardown time, an especially handy trait during the week when Hurricane Katrina moved over Southern Florida.

Everlast special event manager Brian Gallant recalls, "Obviously, the hurricane was on everybody's minds in the week leading up to the awards. We were ready to go on the preceding Wednesday, but were aware that the first night's show might also be our last. Sure enough, after that evening's show, we had to strike the whole outside stage due to the predicted heavy rain and wind. This was less of a headache because we were using our Cobra rigs: No other system is as quick to unpack and stack or teardown and load in than Cobra.

"We combined our Cobra-2 and Cobra-4 rigs to create one large system, extending Cobra's plug-and-play operability by tweaking the parameters on the dedicated CSR drive racks. This simply gives us the same Cobra user-friendliness on a bigger scale. We duplicated the main stage system for a playback rig outside the hotel terrace facing the beach so everyone out there could enjoy the show, too. Though the show schedule got off to a shaky start, we were able to quickly adapt and provide great sound, thanks largely to the long hours our FOH engineer Gus Fuentes put in and the time saved by using the Cobra."

In addition to the main Cobra rigs, Everlast used Dynacord Madras systems in the indoor club area, E-V Xw15 stage monitors (powered by E-V P-RL amps), Midas Legend 3000 consoles for both FOH positions and a Midas Siena for monitors. E-V microphones were used on all the drums.

Though rain didn't stop play for the remainder of the festivities, things still got a little wet and wild. "During Pitbull's act," says Gallant, "the crowd was jumping around like crazy, which tends to happen when the bass is blasting through Cobra PWH subs. One of the Xw15 monitors was accidentally kicked into the pool to be quickly retrieved by the crew—there's video footage of them pulling the box out by the speaker cable! Amazingly, the woofer was still pumping as it was being dragged back to dry land. Sound was still coming out even though it had been completely submerged! That was admittedly a pretty cool effect—to see the water being blasted out through the grille by the moving air. That particular box is still drying out right now, and we'll assess the damage later. We may have to replace some insulation and fix the crossovers, but I wouldn't be surprised if it works just fine after that!"

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