

# DESIGNDETAILS

By Paul Steinbach

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By design, multipurpose activity courts are confined spaces — their dasher systems often relegated to out-of-the-way reaches of a recreation center’s footprint. In some cases, MACs are completely enclosed rooms of floor-to-ceiling cinderblock. Not so at the University of Alabama’s Student Activity Center at Presidential Village, where the MAC — and the activities it accommodates — is on full display. Glass dashers standing eight feet tall surround most of the synthetic playing surface lined for basketball, hockey and soccer, with netting extending to the rafters to keep projectiles in and out. Convertible goals can be recessed for soccer or brought into the field of play for hockey (with glass added to close off the rink end walls). The MAC is situated as one of three courts in an otherwise hardwood gym on the center’s second level. It’s the first element visitors see as they reach the top of a monumental staircase. Says Dave Larson, senior vice president and director of design for Bloomfield Hills, Mich.-based TMP Architecture Inc., “We wanted a transparent element that wouldn’t break up the flow of the space visually.”