

BROADWEIGH FLIES INTO ACTION IN TORONTO

The BroadWeigh wireless load cell monitoring system was used to help determine the maximum dynamic loads placed on the structure during a bounce

22 MARCH 2016

Canada - The Toronto School of Circus Arts offers circus classes for adults and children as an alternative for active lifestyles. The 15,000sq.ft training centre is housed in a renovated airplane hangar and features the most up to date circus arts equipment available.

The School prides itself on its safety record so when the school needed to set up a bungee apparatus in another venue for a performance, the BroadWeigh wireless load cell monitoring system was used to help determine the maximum dynamic loads placed on the structure from an aerial bungee apparatus.

Michael Sorowka, CEO of Paradigm Rigging, BroadWeigh's technical partner in Canada, explained: "A friend of mine is an aerial and trapeze instructor at the school so I was familiar with the venue. Having introduced them to the BroadWeigh system, we arranged an opportunity to demo the units on their trapeze nets. The system got the seal of approval from Decker LaDouceur, owner and director of the school, and it became apparent that it would be the perfect tool for a bungee performance that was being planned."

Decker, a flying trapeze coach continued, "On understanding just how the BroadWeigh system would work for us, I was keen to put it to the test. The bungee act was going to be put on at another venue and the engineers there required solid numbers of the maximum loads placed on the structure during a routine."

The act sees a performer wear a harness that is clipped into two bungees, attached to the building structure. They are lifted up to a static trapeze bar via a scissor lift, and climb onto the trapeze bar while the scissor lift moves out of the way. From this point the performer jumps off the trapeze bar directly downward and uses the bounce to perform a variety of flips and positions in the air. At the bottom of the bounce the performer pushes their weight downward as much as possible and simultaneously pulls on the bungees to launch themselves back upward to continue their act.

Using BroadWeigh load cell monitoring, the school was able to get accurate readings of the weight load that the performer placed on their rigging hardware and support structure overhead. "Previously, the only way of determining these numbers was by rough calculations or sometimes excessive estimates," said Michael. "In fact the circus school was greatly surprised with how little weight was actually put on the structure. They were estimating the maximum weight was in the region of 800lb, however BroadWeigh's measurements gave just slightly above 400lb - half the original estimate."

Decker concluded, "Right from the start, we have been impressed with the ease of installation the BroadWeigh shackles offer. Within a matter of minutes, we were ready for the performer to attach to the apparatus, much less time than it would have taken for a wired system to be put in place."