



# WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT...



## NO. 1 STADIUM EXPERIENCE

According to ESPN's Ultimate Standings national survey, to measure which teams do right by their fans, the Minnesota Wild and Xcel Energy Center ranked No. 1 (out of 123 franchises) for Stadium Experience (friendliness of environment; quality of game-day promotions).

– *ESPN.com 1/20/2003*

## XCEL MARKS THE CONCERT SPOT

### Front Page Headline in Thursday Saint Paul Pioneer Press

“Concert promoters say (Xcel Energy Center) is becoming known as a place with fabulous acoustics, a friendly staff and the ability to make lots of money for the artist.”

– *John Nemo, Freelance Journalist*

“I wish we could put this arena on wheels and bring it back to London with us.”

– *Barrie Marshall, Paul McCartney*

“There's no better arena in the country for selling tickets, taking care of the acts and, most importantly, giving fans a great place to see a show.”

– *Jerry Mickelson, JAM Productions Owner*

“In every great city, you need a place to celebrate excellence and be entertained. The Xcel Energy Center is a user-friendly building that is a joy to visit as a performer. As a skater the ice is perfect. The atmosphere is warm and comforting. And the audiences are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. What else could we ask for?”

– *Scott Hamilton, Four-time World Figure Skating Champion and Olympic Gold Medalist*

“With the hundreds of major arenas scattered across the U.S., just to be one of the eight nominated (for arena of the year) is a major compliment and is even more remarkable for venues located outside the music industry hubs of Los Angeles, New York and Nashville.”

– *Gary Bongiovanni, Pollstar Magazine Editor-in-Chief*

## XCEL MARKS THE SPOT FOR QUALITY SOUND

### Headline in Sunday Star Tribune

“Concertgoers consistently praised the acoustics and the newness of the (Xcel Energy Center)...The best sounding arena ever in the Twin Cities – from all vantage points.”

– *Jon Bream, Star Tribune Pop Music Critic*

## HOUSE OF HOCKEY

“There is no finer hockey arena in North America.”

– *Scotty Bowman, Legendary NHL Coach*

“It’s obvious (Xcel Energy Center) is one of the top buildings in the league. It’s simply wonderful.”

– *Gary Bettman, National Hockey League Commissioner*

“The thought strikes me that when the NHL expands to 10 more cities, the first thing the new franchises should do is visit St. Paul and clone its arena. It’s a marvelous place. What they should also do is hire the Wild’s employees, from the cheerful folks serving the pre-game meals in the press lounge to the people who run their operation. They’re a unique breed doing their utmost to give major-league hockey a good name. It’s easy if you know how.”

– *Red Fisher, Montreal Gazette Sports Columnist*

“The Xcel Energy Center is state-of-the-art without being ostentatious or stuffy. It is comfortable. It feels more like a rink than most multi-purpose venues. Beyond the amenities, though, the people working the venue create part of that feel-good hockey atmosphere. Nowhere - and I mean nowhere - have I seen people more genuinely determined to make the game experience a pleasurable one.”

– *Darren Eliot, NHL Television Analyst*

“St. Paul has set the standard for All-Star Games.”

– *Gary Thorne, ABC/ESPN Play-by-Play Commentator*

“In the past few years, St. Paul has gone from an also-ran to a real rival in the historic competition between the not-very fraternal Twin Cities. It has won the return of the NHL to the state of hockey, picking up a beautiful new arena that has become the choicest big-event venue around.”

– *Nick Coleman, Minneapolis Star Tribune*

“A few years ago, people doubted we would be able to build this wonderful center. Now it’s truly serving as a symbol for Saint Paul and its renewal. The (Xcel Energy Center) has been a critical element in the renaissance of the city.”

– *Former Saint Paul Mayor Randy Kelly*

“This rink is a head-spinner. It’s the nicest arena I’ve ever been in.”

– *Red Berenson, University of Michigan Hockey Coach*

## **ARENA ACCOLADES**

“Best NHL Arena” – *SportsBusiness Journal/SportsBusiness Daily 2006 Reader Survey*

“Best Fan Experience” – *Forbes Magazine “Business of Hockey” 2006 Annual Report*

“Best NHL Arena” – *Sports Illustrated NHL Preview Issue, October 2, 2006*

“No. 1 Stadium Experience” – *2003 ESPN The Magazine Ultimate Standings*

Nominated for “Arena of the Year” – *2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006 Pollstar Magazine Concert*

### *Industry Awards*

2001, 2002, 2003 Prime Site Award – *Facilities & Event Management*

Best Sports Venue in the Twin Cities – *Citysearch.com Best of 2001*

Ranked Second only to Toronto’s Air Canada Centre (2001) – *Hockey Night in Canada*