

Concerts in Autzen may be possible

By MICHAEL KESTEN
Of the Emerald

There has been an unwritten policy in the athletic department for the last four years of holding no rock concerts at Autzen Stadium, according to Steve McBride, events director. That policy may be changing soon but it is not clear exactly when the first big show will take place.

"I would guess there's been talk of maybe five different shows that people have recently proposed putting on in Autzen," said McBride.

"The athletic director (John Caine) came from San Jose State. Its athletic department did sponsor some popular concerts. Caine is interested in exploring the possibilities."

Caine has been out of town but Mike Brundage, assistant athletic director, also indicated the possibility of future concerts at Autzen. "We're going to take a one-year moratorium to gain some knowledge of producing concerts and then we would probably embark on something," said Brundage.

As a state facility, Autzen Stadium cannot be rented to a private party for private gain. It must be handled in much the same way Mac Court shows are produced by the Cultural Forum. A University group would have to sponsor the event, hire a promoter and pay the promoter a percentage.

"The Cultural Forum is not interested in Autzen Stadium," said McBride. "They don't think anything could happen there and the primary draw still be students. In the summer, when these concerts would be held, most students are not on campus."

McBride continued, "We would have to designate some staff member to go out and learn about putting on concerts. Right now we just don't have the staff to spare."

Ned Shafer, program advisor for the Cultural Forum, confirmed that the CF is not interested in Autzen. "The primary focus of the Cultural Forum is University students. An Autzen Stadium concert, in order to be a success, would not be primarily for University students. It would be a region-wide event," he said.

Shafer talked about the awesome task of putting on a concert in huge arena. "That's an incredible undertaking," he said. "You've got to think of ways to protect the turf, of options in case of rain..."

But Shafer said the forum's disinterest in Autzen should not be a deterrent to concerts taking place. He said any "registered or recog-

nized" University group could sponsor a concert in the stadium.

Local promoter Scott Smithrud, of Powell, Thorwald, and Haresnape Advertising Inc., is one of the five parties that has recently approached the AD. He is optimistic of his chances for putting on a concert at Autzen.

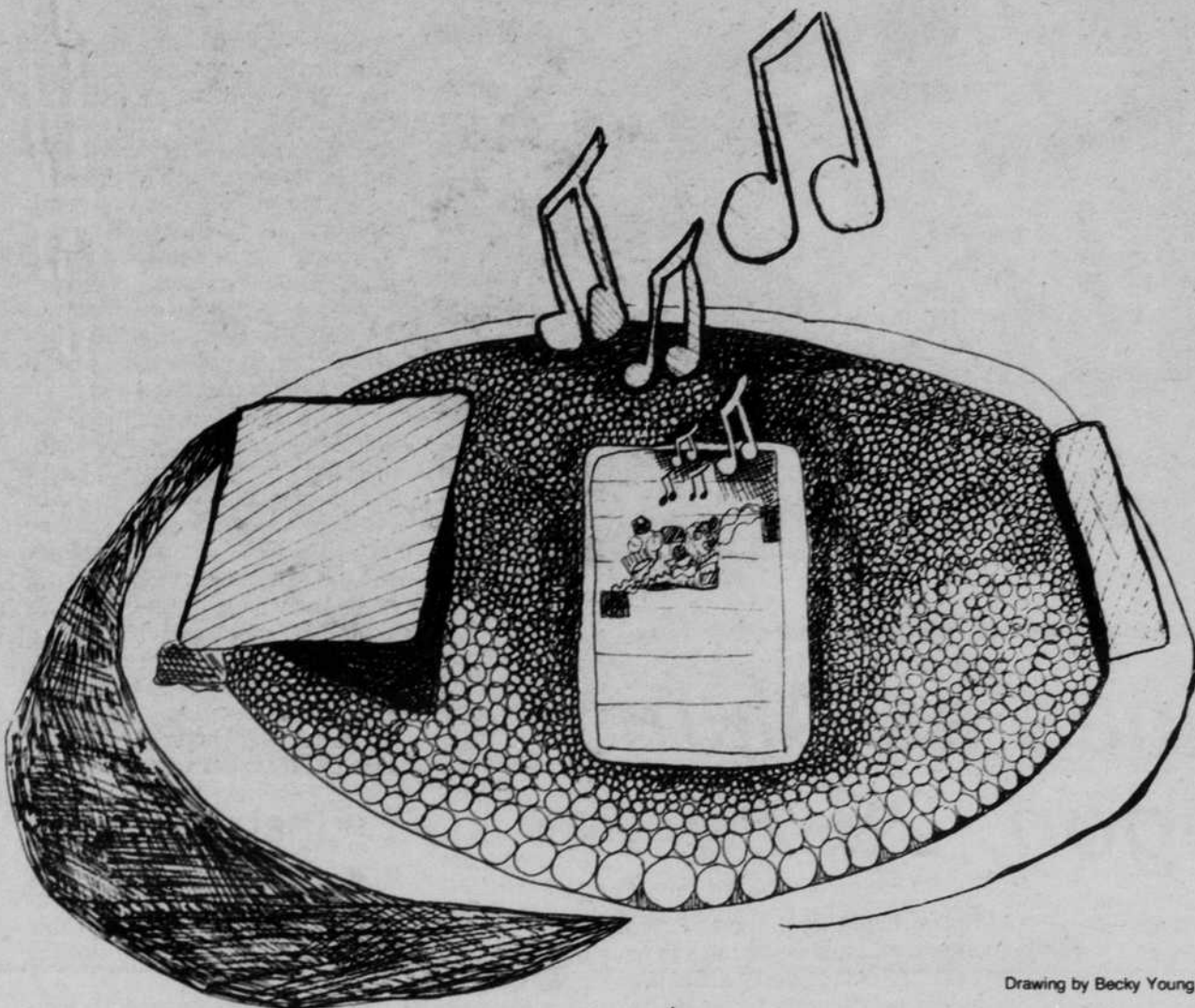
of the gross for a show at Autzen. If a concert drew 20,000 people and each person paid five dollars for a ticket, the gross would be \$100,000. The AD would make \$12,000 just for providing the facility," he said.

He added, "Any University group can contract with a promo-

Smithrud went on to talk about other considerations. "EJD Enterprises is the best security company in the Northwest in my opinion. I'm totally confident they could handle anything any promoter could throw at them," he said.

There is rain insurance, similar to that for golf tournaments, in

certs for spring and fall terms so students would be able to take full advantage of them. "I'd like to think there is a possibility of a dynamite concert coming off in the fall when the students return to school," he said.



Drawing by Becky Young

"From the contact I've had with Caine, I'd say he's fully aware of the opportunity to create revenue for his department as well as entertainment for the surrounding community," said Smithrud.

Smithrud was unwilling to discuss specific dates or names for any upcoming shows but he did shed some light on the money involved. "The AD gets 12 per cent

ter to do a fund-raising performance. The law simply requires that a University group rent the facility."

The apprehensions of the Cultural Forum and the AD do not bother Smithrud. "There's various covers to protect the turf. You pay for it but like everything you do it's the cost of doing business," he said.

case of bad weather, said Smithrud. He also said that his company would guarantee the University against any losses incurred by producing a show.

"I like them (the AD), I understand their position and I think we're making progress," said Smithrud.

Smithrud said he'd be interested in scheduling the con-

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