

Sports arena: Presidents eye Mac Court's successor

Boyd:

By RICHARD SEVEN
Of the Emerald

"Packing the Pit" may soon be a phenomenon of the past if a study conducted by Athletic Director John Caine and University Pres. William Boyd proves that building a new basketball arena would be feasible.

"I do not want to be associated with a failure," Boyd told the Register-Guard, Friday. "But if we believe we have support for such an undertaking, then we will launch a drive immediately. There is a sense of urgency."

The sense of urgency is a result of what Boyd calls "major structural problems" in MacCourt. He listed major problems as the constant feuding over the facility's use, the lack of space for sports teams and the federal government's demand that the University upgrade its sports facilities for women.

Caine and Boyd says money for the building would have to come from student funding, private contributions and gifts in kind, such as lumber and other materials. They say they doubt the taxpayers would help with the arena funding because they prefer a smaller Performing Arts Center.

Caine says such facility could be built for \$10 to \$15 million by using more wood than steel. Not only would the use of lumber decrease the cost of construction, but many of the potential donors are lumber businessmen, Caine says.

Although no decisions have been made on the type of structure to be built, Boyd has

outlined a few ideas for the project.

He says a likely site for the new arena would be a parcel of land at Alton Baker Park that is owned by the University. It should be able to hold 17,000 spectators — the minimum requirement needed to host the NCAA finals — yet keep the intense seating arrangement that stimulates players and fans, he says.

"And I would like very much if it made a dramatic use of wood," he adds.

Caine said the project has three phases.

"First, we have what I call the technical phase," Caine says. "We must determine the site we would use, the building concept we would follow and how long the operation would take. Secondly, we must raise the necessary money and third, we must seek gifts of kind."

The important thing, Caine says, is to decide quickly and go ahead with construction if decided upon, because of rapidly rising construction costs.

Caine estimated the Ducks could immediately sell nearly 8,000 basketball season tickets to the public if the new facility were built.

In addition, the arena could be used for University assemblies, concerts and other entertainment activities.

So if the plans become reality what will happen to historical MacCourt?

"We would still use MacCourt," Caine says. "It would still be used for P.E. classes, intramurals, club sports and smaller concerts. We would simply be taking the pressure of large crowds off of MacCourt."

Caine says he expects to find out if financing the new arena will be feasible within the next two weeks.



William Boyd and Gary Feldman

Emerald photo

Feldman:

By KEVIN HACKETT
Of the Emerald

Before the University plunges into plans for building a new sports arena, ASUO Pres. Gary Feldman intends to make sure student input is weighed concerning the potential uses of the facility.

Feldman is also investigating the methods in which students may help fund the facility.

Pres. William Boyd has said the university would support the construction of a 17,000 seat arena at a cost of between \$10 and \$15 million. Boyd said funding for the venture would come from both students and private donations. Boyd has requested a report from Athletic Director John Caine on the feasibility of funding the arena in this fashion.

Feldman wants to make sure no hassles over policy and control of the proposed arena arise as has been the case with MacCourt.

"I would insist that policy arrangements are worked out prior to construction," he said. "I would want a clear, definite policy so student control doesn't slip out of our hands like it did with MacCourt."

Feldman says he favors the

creation of an arena committee to study the needs that should be fulfilled by the facility. He said the committee should include representatives of the students, the university, the Athletic Department and the community.

"Mr. Caine should recognize that other parties are involved here. We should make an effort to weigh the wants and needs of all interested factions."

"There have been real desires displayed for a facility that will house cultural events as well as basketball. I would fight for a facility that would satisfy a combination of these desires," Feldman said. "I don't want another building constructed with strictly bas-

ketball in mind."

"More than anything we have to be certain as to what we're proposing before we go around asking people for money."

Feldman is unsure how student funds would be raised to help the cost of construction. He said he may borrow the method used by students in 1926 to finance MacArthur Court — issuing ASUO-backed bonds.

Students raised over \$200,000 through the sale of bonds to help finance the construction of MacCourt. Feldman believes that may be the most feasible alternative available today.

"We could try to draw money from incidental fees but I feel it

would do irreparable harm to the EMU and the ASUO programs."

He said a special arena fee could also be established but he didn't think that it would be equitable in that current students would pay for a facility they may never

use.

Until the athletic department completes its funding study, the students' share of the funding can't be determined. Feldman said that until then, all methods of financing will be explored.

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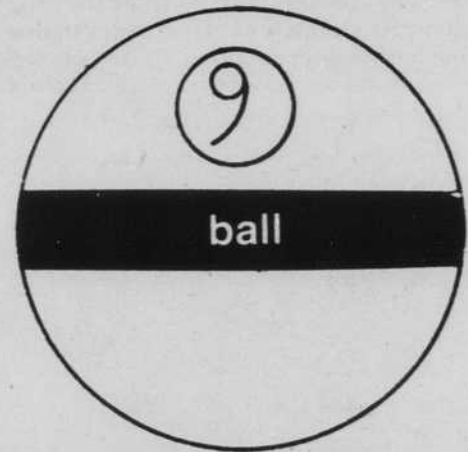
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