

Problems hinder construction of softball field

By BRIEN LAUTMAN
Of the Emerald

The University women's softball field, currently under construction and scheduled for completion Jan. 1, 1979, has been delayed indefinitely. University planning officials will be meeting today to decide on what is to be done about the field.

According to Becky Sisley, women's athletic director and softball coach, the delay is due both to recent rain the area has received and problems regarding field specifications.

"The weather has been a problem, but specifications are really what is holding up construction now," she says. "They (the planning officials) need to know things like how much of the hedge to take out, how high the backstops should be and dugout specifications."

Sisley's concern over the delay is obvious, considering the women's softball team has been forced to use the Amazon Park field for the last seven years. This situation has presented problems for Sisley and the softball program.

"The city park field is a good field," she says, "but availability is a problem. We are forced to com-

pete with the city park leagues and high school area schools for use of the field."

The proposal to build the softball field was first brought up last Feb. 15 and is being built to help the University comply with Title Nine. According to Sisley, the field has been "an area of real concern and need for a number of years."

Sisley also expressed concern that the field may not reach completion before the team's opening softball game in April.

"Our first game is April 10," she says, "and I hope the field will be ready to go by then, but I'm not sure."

But according to Ralph Sunderland, a University budget official, the field should reach completion long before the women's first game.

"There is no doubt that the field will be ready by April," says Sunderland. "The real problem is with field specifications, and how much money there is in the budget to meet these specifications."

Sunderland also questioned the need of the softball diamond to contain dugouts, while also questioning the number of bleachers needed for the field.

"Do we really have to have actual dugouts?" asks Sunderland, "or would benches do just as well

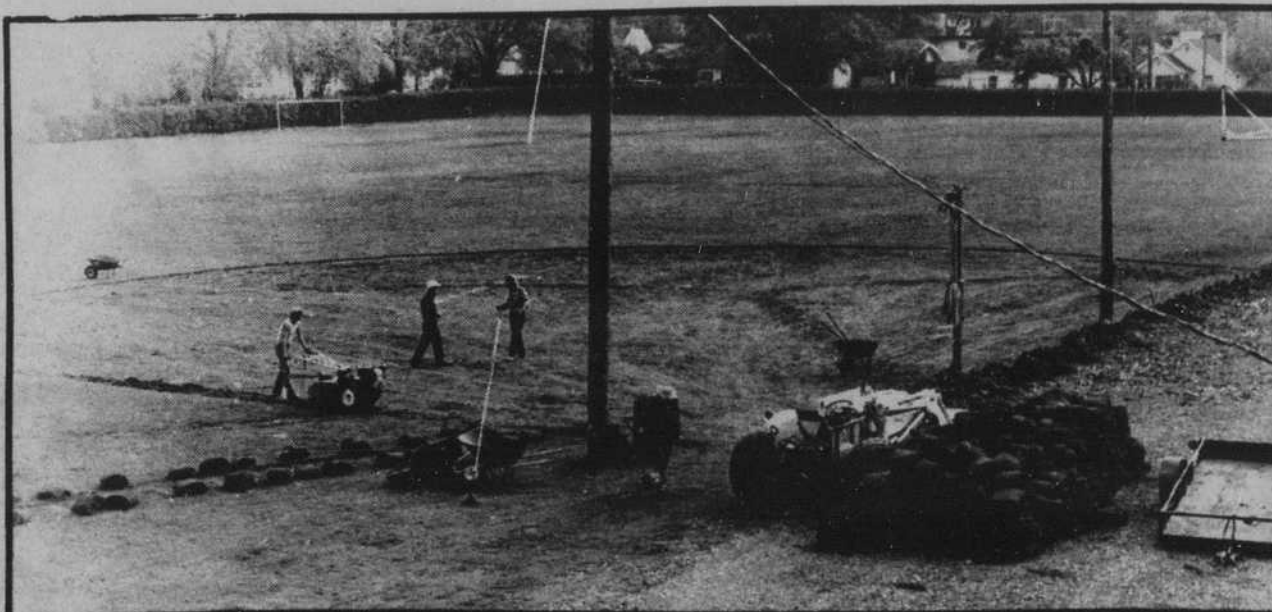


Photo by Keith Allen

The University began construction of the women's softball field in October, but foul weather and problems with field specifications has delayed the project. University officials are meeting today to decide how to complete the field.

for now? And as far as bleachers go, how many are needed? I am not sure how big a spectator sport women's softball is."

Sunderland points out that compromises are being made because of a lack of money, and when more money is available the University will go ahead and install the equipment that was originally planned.

"We knew we needed a good

softball field," Sunderland says, "and we are going to get a good softball field."

"We will start with the necessary equipment, such as a good backstop and field, then go from there. The rest of the field will be completed when the money is available. The University is in a budget reduction and there is a real scramble for dollars."

Other equipment needed to

consider the field complete, according to Sunderland, includes a loudspeaker system, bleachers, dugouts, a scoreboard and an equipment shed.

Sunderland expressed his concern for the softball field by saying that the women's softball program should have as good a facility as the men do for baseball, and the University is attempting to accomplish just that.

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