opinion

Sad but true, sports programs must be axed

While nobody wants to see men's and women's swimming and gymnastics bow to the budget axe, the loss of those programs increasingly appears to be the best way out of an economic morass for the financially troubled athletic department.

The loss of the men's swimming program, which relies little on the athletic department for funds yet continues to produce good teams, is especially troubling. Unfortunately, its elimination, too, can be justified.

"Balancing the budget," a term likely to be forever linked with the 1980s, is at the heart of the sport of program cutting. Like it or not, athletic director John Caine has orders to bring all the numbers together, and in the final analysis, cutting programs is the only sure way to do that.

Seemingly balking at reality, the entire University coaching staff voted unanimously to recommend maintaining all sports. They are all willing to make cuts in their own budgets for the sake of saving the four programs, they said.

But the problem with relying on the coaches' plans is that budgets for individual sports often run over their projected amounts. When that happens, the athletic department must pick up the slack. This year there is no slack in Caine's office.

Caine says he can save $200,000 by eliminating all swimming and gymnastics from the budget.

ours

But even that cut relies on an unusual University refusal to honor scholarship commitments for those programs next year, and on the very tenuous hope that the Incidental Fee Committee will increase the student athletic fee.

With so many financial gray areas, the coaches' promises don't offer Caine the guarantees he needs.

The elimination of men's swimming is hardest to swallow. Except for the coaches salaries, the program raises its own money. In fact, slashing the swimming program will save only $15,000 of the $350,000 Caine must pare from the budget.

But leaving men's swimming intact would only create new problems. While Title IX doesn't require the exact same number of men's and women's sports, parallel sports programs are usually seen as the best way to fulfill the federal mandate.

If men's swimming is left unscathed by the budget axe, strong pressures will develop to spare women's swimming as well. When two programs are saved, the bottom line — dollars — comes back into play and the whole idea must be nixed.

What makes matters worse is that Caine must make his decision by March 2 — time in which to propose alternate plans is rapidly waning.

It's sad but true. More and more, it appears certain that economics are going to get the best of four of the University's best sports programs.

yours

Ignorance

I have been reading in the Emerald letters advocating the United States as being the best country on Earth, while also criticizing other nations. These are written by people who have likely never lived outside the U.S. The ignorance and lack of interest regarding the rest of world in this country is unbelievable.

In the recent past students have subjected a fellow GTF to racial insults while two others have been threatened with physical violence because of their political opinions. Nationalism does not necessarily lead to racism and anti-socialism. Yet, I do perceive among white American young people the growth of values which have led elsewhere to revolution from above. Heil Reagan!

Michael King
GTF, sociology

It's the water

The words rang out clear through the din.

"Water is the source of life for all living things."

A woman sitting behind me groaned loudly and said, "This is getting just too cosmic." Indeed, the reaction was not uncommon as I listened in amazement to the restless concert-goers around me. In an atmosphere that should have been filled with respect and love, I heard only negative remarks. I could scarcely believe what I was hearing.

For the last several days I have been reading letters in this newspaper from concerned students defending the high purpose of this no-nuke gathering of musicians and spokespersons. Immediately after a letter from Darrel Plant which questioned the sincerity of the musical affair, avid supporters of the event responded en masse in favor of this sort of platform. I felt good about that reaction. There are people out there who are willing to stand up and take a chance by suggesting that a community like Eugene is mature and aware enough to realize the special meaning of the gathering. Supposedly, we are tolerant of the many parts which make up the whole of the community. We are more than that. We open our arms wide to the persons pushed to the waxside by a largely intolerant society. The racist and sexist remarks hailing around my ears tore at my faith in our "difference." I closed my eyes and listened hard for the true message of the music. I only heard people slashing out at themselves. I prayed that Mr. Plant had been about us. I wondered . . .

The rain was falling hard as the crowds filed out of Mac Court. Like everyone else, I hunched my shoulders and tucked my head inward to shielf myself from the downpour. As a large, cold drop snuck down my spine, I was reminded of the theme of the concert. I wondered why the people were running from the very thing that gives us life. The water is still with us.

Daniel Henry
GTF, speech

On principle

Dear Karl Ronacher: In response to your letter of Feb. 17, where's back home? Poor dear fellow, your naivete is hanging out so, and for one who might someday pursue a career in business, it would behoove you to learn, precious little is ever done on principle. Only martyrs live and die on principle, alone. And, it's through their suffering that the rest of us enjoy our civil liberties; liberties which must be fought for and won anew by each generation. The RCYB, whom you indict for interfering with your study habits, would likely be doing the same thing were they right now in Gedansk, and no doubt your young Polish counterpart would be denouncing their activities as counterproductive to the collective efforts of the state.

You see, dear Karl, it takes a great deal of will and intensity of spirit to break through our enculturations and really do anything on principle alone. Were you to spend some time in another country, you might learn this is the only way it can really be learned, by living outside the cultural mainstream.

Most Americans are very proud of the revolution of 1776, but have no respect for the revolutionaries of today. You see, Karl, the revolution goes on, no matter how strongly it is resisted by the conservatives, nor how often it is betrayed by the liberals.

Don't worry if it gets a bit noisy now and again. Someone is fighting that someday you might be able to operate a small business in your beloved America, free of the fear that a multi-national cooperation might squeeze you out of business with the touch of a computer keyboard. Someone is fighting, Karl. Someone cares. Someone is acting on principle, and principle alone.

Jackie Gabel
Masters candidate,
music composition

Under attack

According to the February-April 1981 issue of Counter Spy magazine, the U.S. attache for Political Affairs, John K. Knaus, is the CIA Chief of Station in Canada. In addition, Dwight S. Burgess, Rowland E. Roberts Jr., and David C. Whipple, members of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, are also CIA officers.

However I'm not writing this letter to name the names of CIA agents as that would take years. Rather I'm writing to alert people to the attempt being made in Congress to pass the "Intelligence Identities Protection Act" which was introduced last year by both Sen. Moynihan (D-NY) and Rep. Edward Boland (D-MA). Both bills would outlaw the "naming of names" by anyone, even if such information is derived from unclassified public sources such as the one quoted above.

If these bills were law I would be put in jail for three years and fined $15,000 for writing this letter (Section 501C). The passage of these bills, at this time, will open the door to even further erosion and violation of our First Amendment guarantee that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press . . ." and with Ronald Reagan in office, we are likely to see our Constituion under attack from every corner.

David Isenberg
Junior, international studies

'CUTTING DOWN ON FOOD STAMPS—THAT'S OUTRAGEOUS! MOST OF OUR LOWER RANKS ARE ON FOOD STAMPS!'

letters policy

The Emerald will accept and try to print all letters containing fair comment on ideas and topics of interest to the University community. Letters must be typewritten and no longer than 250 words.

Letters must be signed, the author's field of study or faculty status noted and must include address and phone number for verification.