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Paper wins top ranking

The Oregon Daily Emerald has won a first place medalist rating in the 1981 Columbia Scholastic Press Association college newspaper contest.

The medalist ranking, the highest award given by the association, is based on the "personality" of a newspaper and is assigned to approximately 10 percent of the first-place newspapers.

In an extensive critique of several issues of the paper, the Emerald was given 912 points out of a possible 1,000.

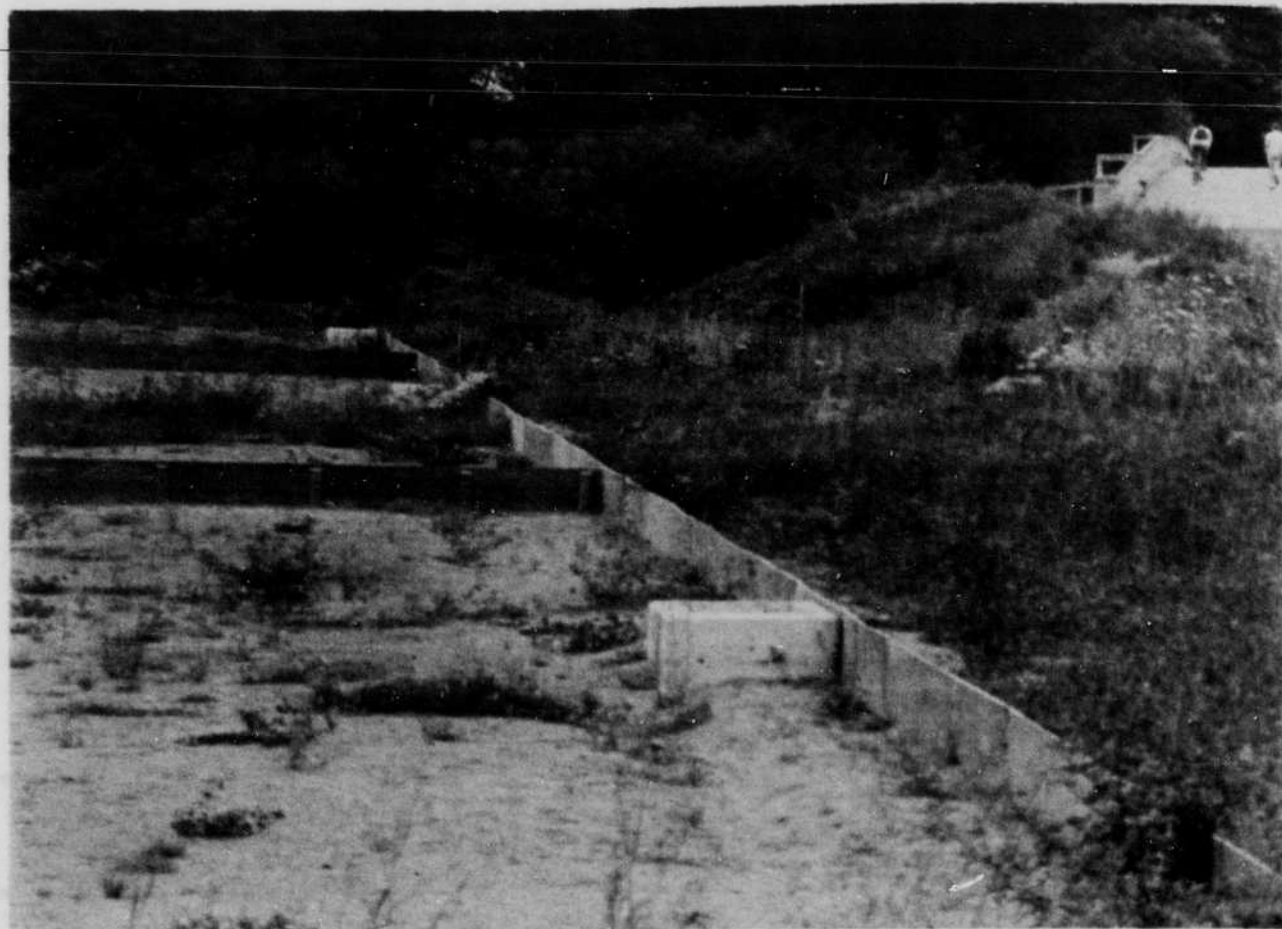


Photo by Mark Pynes

Construction of a new all-purpose playing field along the Willamette includes underground drainage pipes and a special type of sand.

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By **ANN PORTAL**
Of the Emerald

By late August students probably will have a new soccer field to kick around, although weeds now grow on the dirt plots along the south bank of the Willamette River.

Construction on the \$375,000 all-weather field — the first of four playing fields to be built near the Autzen bike bridge — halted last fall because of poor weather and a dispute between the project's contractor and landscape architect over the type of sand to be used.

And the success of the field apparently depends on the sand. "It's not just plain dirt," says University planner David Rowe.

The new type of field — which can be available for play 15 minutes after a hard rain — is a complicated system of soil, sand, plastic liners, drain pipes, growing medium and turf.

Landscape architects McArthur-Gardner of Portland selected

the original sand, which contained a certain percentage of fine grains for proper field drainage. Contractor Wildish Construction Company accepted the landscaper's instructions, but later discovered the sand was not available in the quantity needed.

A search for sand of the proper consistency began, and "in the meantime, tempers began to get a little short," Rowe says.

But a sand has been found and approved by both sides, although the new material does not fit the original specifications. Rowe says samples will be taken as the material is laid and he will "definitely know before the fields are done if it's not OK."

"We won't accept just anything they bring in and put down."

The field will be the first of its kind at the University. Rowe says planners decided on the new type when planning began in 1976. Astro turf originally was considered, but was rejected as being too expensive financially and environmentally, he says. The field is a "fairly new type," but not experimental — Lewis and Clark College in Portland and the Red Skin Stadium both

contain the new playing surface, Rowe says.

Included in the playing field project is a facilities building with restrooms, locker rooms and an outdoor wall for tennis or racquetball practice.

The plan to build the field on the Willamette Greenway — an area designated by the Legislature as a preserved open space on the water front — has drawn criticism from recreational users concerned about river accessibility.

However, Rowe says a pedestrian path will be maintained along the river, and that accessibility probably will be improved.

"We're not doing anything to the river front."

Funds for the first field are part of a University development project that included the Fish-bowl remodeling, Rowe says. But construction of the rest of the complex depends on available funds and it may be years before they are built, he says.

But right now, Rowe is concentrating on the field that's been under construction for more than a year.

"It's now back on schedule," he says. "I hope everything's going to be fine — I think it's a pretty good system."

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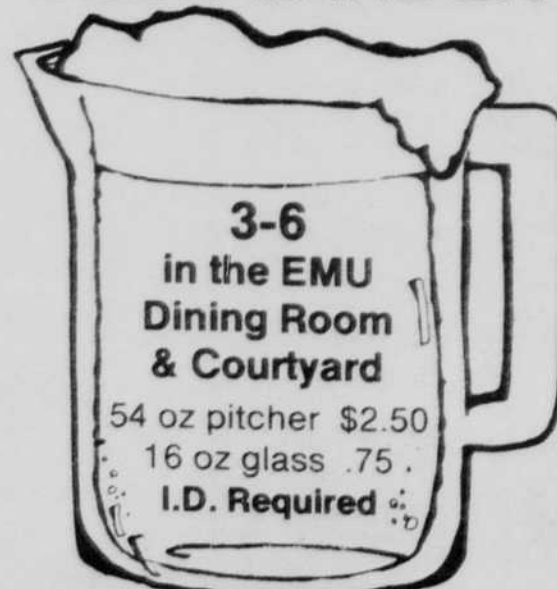
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