

opinion

It's time for grass, booze at Autzen

Although the scoreboard stayed blank, all the slipping and fumbling by the University and Oregon State football players during Saturday's Civil War showed one thing — it's time to go back to basics, rip up the rug and put natural turf, i.e. grass, in Autzen Stadium.

The present Astroturf playing surface is really showing the wear and tear of its seven years of service. It's like an oven on hot days. It's slick and spongy when it rains — and it does occasionally rain in Oregon.

The surface is more absorbent to rain than it is to impact. Those seven years of heat, rain and hard use have turned the pad under the Astroturf carpet to the consistency of concrete.

Because of that, athletes are apt to receive injury simply from falling, tackling, turning or landing. How many of the injuries on the football team are in some way Astroturf related?

It's generally agreed that the Astroturf in Autzen Stadium is in deplorable shape.

"You just can't stand up on it on a wet day," said Rich Brooks, Oregon football coach. "A new turf should have been put in years ago." Brooks isn't the only one complaining.

"That turf is a farce," said Don Rogers, UCLA safety. "It is really slick, especially when it rains," said Jim Walden, Washington State football coach. "With all the rain and pounding it needs to be replaced."

Even Rick Bay, University athletic director, agrees with the condemnation of the Astroturf. "The turf is in terrible shape. You see players slipping all the time," he said.

Bay is ready with about \$500,000 to replace the Autzen playing surface. Before Bay makes a deal with a carpet salesman he ought to investigate the possibilities of natural grass.

The reasons for synthetic turf are obvious, but certainly not absolute. The ease of maintenance, the constant use and long rainy season make a synthetic surface attractive. Yet, it would only require a little extra effort to maintain a natural turf surface.

A drainage system and grounds covering would be necessary, as would a crew of grounds-keepers. While it may seem the upkeep of a natural surface would entail more money it might prove to be in the same cost range as the \$500,000 Bay estimates for new Astroturf.

The seeding and initial care of the natural surface would be less expensive than installation and cost of new Astroturf. We doubt watering will be much of a problem. The grounds-keepers could be workstudy students.

Lowering the incidence of turf-related injuries to athletes and the integrity of the game itself should be reason enough for Bay to hesitate on purchasing another rug. We urge the athletic department to investigate the possibilities of a natural turf surface. Why buy a carpet that will have the same problems as the one you're replacing?

* * *

We understand, in spirit, the need to search fans at University athletic contests, but really there has to be a better — more legal way.

The warrantless search rule went into effect August 15, on a temporary basis. It will surely be temporary due to the fact that Dave Fidanque, head of the Eugene chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, said recently the inspecting of backpacks and bulky items by University employees is in violation of federal and state law.

Fidanque is not making an idle claim. He noted that in cases in which the "public body attempted to justify the search on the basis of patron consent" courts held that consent was not voluntary when "refusal to allow the search would result in being refused admission to the event." But buying a ticket doesn't allow the University to violate fans' rights with an intrusive, warrantless search.

The justification for searching backpacks and bulky items is to prevent fans from bringing in articles such as firearms and glass containers. Oddly, such a warrantless search could have been legally defensible if beer and wine were to be sold at athletic facilities.

The University needs to rethink this warrantless search while it can do so unscathed.



'LESSEE ... ONE BEIRUT SURPRISE, ONE GRENADA WHOOPÉE, ONE NICARAGUA NIGHTMARE, ONE SUFFERIN' SALVADOR AND ONE BOTTLE OF SOLE SOURCE — AND THEY SAID IT GOES ON YOUR TAB.'

Those polite bleeding hearts

For the past few years a number of people have been kicking around the idea that college students have become more conservative.

I kicked the idea around with Col. Larry Tracy, a department of defense spokesman who has been spending some time explaining the administration's Central American policies at universities all over the country. He was at the University to do just that during the ASUO's educational conference, "Crisis in Central America."

editor's note debbie howlett

By way of description, Tracy is regular army: short hair, good posture and the U.S. seal on the face of his wristwatch. In dress greens, his birds perched on his epaulets, Tracy looks like just another friendly ROTC instructor.

"Of those students that I've met, more are left of center," Tracy says. And by his own definition of conservative, Tracy says he's only encountered a handful. But, he cautions that he is only generalizing, and that there is some room for error in his generalizations.

After sitting through several conference discussions, and attacks on Tracy about administrative policies, I'd say most of Tracy's analysis is nearly perfect.

"While the student body has been relatively courteous, they haven't been supportive," Tracy says.

And that, the man says, is the beginning of the end of the comparison to Berkeley — the campus most everybody defines as the liberal hotbed in the academic realm. "I'd heard the University called that (the Berkeley of the Northwest) before I came," Tracy says. Don't you believe it though, he adds. The

politics may be the same, but University students are at least polite.

"Compared to what my mentor and friend Dr. Kirkpatrick (as in Jeanne, of the U.N.) faced at Berkeley, I wouldn't want to say you were (comparable to Berkeley)... she wasn't allowed to speak, I was allowed to speak."

Tracy also offered some progressive logic about where students are and where they are headed. Political views progress according to one's age, Tracy says with a nice chunk of philosophy.

"There's an old saying" Tracy says in a drawl designed to display his friendly side. "If you're 20, and not a liberal, you don't have a heart. And if you're 40, and not a conservative, you don't have a brain."

I can just see George McGovern wandering aimlessly about his campaign headquarters.

To illustrate that point, Tracy offers an "I've been there too, and I can relate a story."

In the late 1950s "I wanted to drop out of school, drop everything, and go fight beside (Fidel) Castro against (Juan) Batista."

From this man, I would never expect those words. But c'mon, the man has a heart, or had one at some point.

Around 1961 (watch out, here comes the first punch line) Tracy says it became obvious that Castro had moved, toothbrush and all, into the Soviet camp. Tracy says it was then that he wised up.

Now comes the big punch line. "I'm just wondering if we're reliving the same story with the Sandinistas," Tracy says.

Tracy stands by his "oversimplified" but "indicative" cliché. "I think students will become more conservative —" once they graduate, Tracy says.

But that statement seems to lay some implicit groundwork in saying that University students still impress people, especially regular army Colonels, as bleeding hearts. But we're just considerate about where we bleed.

letters

Dismayed

I am greatly dismayed by the *Emerald's* report of the University Assembly meeting in which student representation in the Senate was cut by 10, from 18 to 8. I do

not see how this could be reported under the headline: "Student Senate membership retained." In addition, the lead sentence stated that the Assembly decided "...to neither increase or decrease the amount of student representation..." In the sixth paragraph, the article did state that students were cut from a third to a fifth and from 18 to 8. The article did not explain how this squared with the rest of the article. Apparently the *Emerald* was taken in by what, I thought, was a transparent attempt by a few faculty members to obfuscate the issue, by trying to cut student representation to two.

Gordon Mallon
law, suab

Forgiving

Regarding the recent "comments" article entitled: "A Christian Duty to be Political," I agree with nearly everything the author

said, or perhaps it would be more correct to say I agree with nearly everything she meant.

God does indeed love and forgive homosexuals, Protestants, thieves, Catholics, murderers, the "moral" majority, Buddhists, devil-worshippers, Cubans, Americans, communists, Jews, Maranathas, Rajneeshes and yes, even me — in short, he loves and forgives every human being on the face of earth, because he created us. (See Ex 20:8-12.) He expects us to love and forgive also.

Almost 2,000 years ago someone said it more succinctly, "Whatsoever ye would that men do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." (See Matt. 7:12.)

This covers all human relationships, including becoming involved as a responsible citizen in the political process (even if one doesn't like politics).

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