



File Photo

Emeralds General Manager Bob Beban feels the time is right for bringing a Class AAA baseball club to Eugene. The Emeralds are currently Class A.

Ems' GM feels AAA team would survive in Eugene

By Kym Gilhooly
Emerald Reporter

Although Class AAA baseball struck out in its first Eugene stint, Eugene Emeralds General Manager Bob Beban thinks the 1990's will be a whole new ballgame.

Beban met with the Eugene City Council last Wednesday to discuss the possibility of attracting a AAA baseball franchise to the Eugene area.

Beban told council members that major league expansion is likely to occur in 1992, creating a "window of opportunity" for cities that wish to attract Class AAA teams. Expansion will cause what Beban called a "trickle-down effect," with newly-formed minor league teams needing homes.

Eugene's first experience with AAA baseball came in 1969, when the Philadelphia Phillies placed an affiliate here.

Beban said the AAA club left in 1973 because "they were losing money and didn't think they could do any better here." The community wasn't large enough in the 1970's to support the team, Beban said.

"I think times have changed," he said. "The demographics in Eugene are different and we're not as dependent on one industry as we were in the past."

"In addition, the Renaissance of the game has come in such a way that a larger percentage of the population is exposed to baseball. I think that a AAA baseball team would succeed now, especially with a new facility."

Beban said AAA teams in the United States draw an average of 4,200 people per game, and the Emeralds, which is a Class A ball club, drew an average of 3,900 fans per game last year.

"We've led the nation in attendance three of the last four years for short season Class A baseball," Beban said.

The Emeralds' present home,

Civic Stadium, is owned by the Eugene 4J school district and will need major renovation if the community wishes to attract a AAA team, Beban said.

Beban has met with school district officials to discuss the possibility of renovating the stadium to accommodate AAA baseball, high school football, and various community events.

Beban said the city would need to offer potential teams a 7,000 seat stadium, with room for expansion. Civic Stadium now seats 6,400, but Beban added that much of the current seating would need to be upgraded.

Beban cited Buffalo, New York as an example of a city whose Class AAA team has rejuvenated its downtown area.

"The stadium is an anchor for the entire redevelopment of the downtown area because the stadium brings traffic to that area," Beban said.

"The success of Buffalo's Pilot Field is something that can be duplicated in Eugene," he added. "We'd get more people familiar with the downtown area and that would rejuvenate all the business in that area."

Chuck Stolsig, director of facilities management for the Eugene 4J School District, said he is accepting design proposals from architectural firms to convert Civic Stadium to a multi-purpose stadium.

"The model we're developing would bring high school football and soccer into the stadium, and the plan includes the single A Emeralds," Stolsig said.

Stolsig said design plans would be compatible with any future decisions to add a AAA team, but added that the school district wants to maintain the ambiance of Civic Stadium.

Bill Sloat of Eugene's Planning and Development Department said any discussions about Eugene's ability to attract a AAA team are "very preliminary," and that the city will

need to take a comprehensive look at Eugene's sports facility needs before making any final decisions.

"I think what you'll see first are discussions concerning funding and how baseball will fit in with other projects and community needs in general," Sloat said. "But I think there's definitely an interest out there."

Eugene City Council Member Debra Ehrman said the council

Turn to Team, Page 12



GET A 14" 1 Item

only \$5.00 CARRY OUT SPECIAL

686-8600 • 1432 Orchard Behind McDonald's on Villard

Soda or Seafood Items not Included. No coupon Necessary 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

Goldworks



1502 Willamette

Mon.-Fri.: 10 am-6 pm

Sat.: 10 am-4 pm

343-2298

...at the heart of it

All Work Done on Premises

- Custom Design Jewelry
- Professional Restoration
- High Quality Gem Materials

SPEND SPRING TERM ON THE COAST

All University of Oregon students are invited to consider a Spring Term of small classes, enthusiastic professors and lots of individual attention. Interesting classes include course work and projects in a carefully integrated study of real problems of people and natural resources on the Oregon Coast. Live, work and study on the newly remodeled field station of the University's Oregon Institute of Marine Biology in Charleston, a small fishing village at the mouth of Coos Bay. Tuition is the same as the main campus. Room and Outstanding meals cost \$90 a week. More information is available in Suite 1 EMU or call Patti Crump at 686-5987 or 343-6413.

Political Science

Intro. to Political Science PS 207
Intro. to Political Analysis PS 321
Field Studies PS 406G

Environmental Studies

Introduction to Envir. Studies
Environmental Measurement Research

Landscape Architecture

Design Studio
Landscape Analysis

Geography

Cartography
Research

Biology

Marine Biology Bi 243
Lab projects, Coastal Biology Bi 408G
Field Methods in Biology Bi 406G
Coastal Problems Bi 497G
Research

- Spend a day at the Coast
- Tour the Facilities
- SAT. FEBRUARY 10th
- Cost \$4.00
- More info Suite #1, EMU