

Rules limit alcohol consumption

By Paul Morgan
Emerald Sports Reporter

Bans on smoking and umbrellas are part of several new policies for Autzen Stadium instituted Aug. 28 by the University Athletic Department to accommodate the growing popularity of Oregon football, a University official said.

"As games became more popular, umbrellas and smoking have become more of a problem," Senior Associate Athletic Director Sandy Walton.

Smoking will not be allowed in the seating or aisle areas of the stadium, and umbrellas are prohibited from Autzen.

The Athletic Department will also limit access to the parking lot, increase security in the area surrounding Autzen before and after games, and the Alumni Association, which operates independent of the athletic department, will limit the time beer is sold in the alumni tent.

The policies to limit access to the parking areas, and the decision to cut short the time beer is sold at the alumni tent was

in response to growing concerns about alcohol consumption at games.

The parking areas will now be open four hours before kickoff instead of five hours. The alumni tent will sell alcohol 90 minutes before kickoff, stop at game-time, reopen at halftime, and close at the end of the third quarter.

"We want to do our share to encourage responsible behavior on the part of our fans," Walton said. "We don't have the severity of problems other institutions have experienced, but we want to address our concerns before they become problems."

To put these policies into effect, the athletic department has employed two teams of crowd management personnel to patrol the parking lots and continuously watch for illegal sales of food and beverages. They will also monitor the stands and promote responsible behavior among spectators.

The Eugene police department will also provide additional officers to watch the parking lot.

"What we have done about alcohol at Autzen is just cosmetic," Walton said. "But we hope fans will realize this is serious, or more serious measures will be taken. We don't want that to sound like a threat, because we haven't had any serious problems, but we don't want the problems to exceed the handful we have now."

Walton said there were six citations issued for driving under the influence of intoxicants after the last home game, Sept. 15, and 25 people cited for driving with an open container.

Walton said the alcohol problem is caused by a cross-section of fans, and not just students.

"Most people are fine," Walton said. "We just don't want people getting drunk and obnoxious. We don't have to put up with it."

"Use is not the same as abuse," she said.

Walton suggests that fans come with rain gear when bad weather looms over the horizon. The University book store will also sell inexpensive rain gear that will "get the job done," she said.

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