

# Standing on top of 'The Pit'

By Erick Studenicka  
and Marion Sutor  
Emerald Writers

Seventy-two steps up from the Oregon home court floor exists the most unique seating section in all of college basketball.

It is the only seating section in the country that comes with a warning:

**NO CHILDREN IN FRONT ROW SEATS.**

It is the only seating section in the country that has wooden benches better suited for a park than an athletic arena.

And it is the only seating section in the country that gives spectators the feeling they are literally "on top of the action."

The usual name of the section is the third balcony of McArthur Court. But other terms such as "the cheap seats" and "the nose-bleed level" could just as easily describe the section.

The balcony was built in 1975 to raise the capacity of Mac Court to its present day limit of 10,068. The height of the balcony is equivalent to that of a four-story office window. Although the seats may be the "cheapest" in the building, from the balcony's vantage point one can view the entire court clearly, something not always possible from many student and reserved seats.

One student said the balcony seats, which are offset from the court by only 20 feet, are the best seats in the house.

"I love the view from up here," said freshman Mark Corcoran. "I can actually see (Oregon coach) Jerry Green drawing up the plays."

Sophomores Charlie Minich,



Photo by Dylan Coulter  
**Duck fans get a bird's eye view from the top level of McArthur Court. The seats may be "cheap," but to many they're the best in the house.**

Ryan Hartrell and Ryan Vanderhoof said they sit in the balcony so they can lean over and pound on the balcony's wooden front when the crowd's rhythmic clapping begins.

"Plus, we sat here when the team beat Washington," said Minich. "So we're going to sit here as long as the winning streak continues."

Because a fall from the balcony's height would cause serious injury, the balcony is fenced in by wire to prevent accidents.

Steve Baldwin, a University law school graduate who was attending the Washington State game with his seven-year-old daughter Skylar, said he takes the "No Children in the Front Row" warning seriously.

"As you can see, I'm sitting in the third row. Up here, if my daughter slips while she's playing, it's a one row fall," Baldwin said. "If she's down on the edge, it's the end of the story."

For those fans who find the student section a bit claustrophobic, the third balcony provides an escape.

"We're seniors, and we got tired of the student section thing," said Michael Freudenthal. "And we can get here two minutes before the game and still get front-row seats."

Matt Tierney, a seventh-grader at Cal-Young Middle School, said he and his friends sit in the third balcony because of their

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