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Allen's words on stadium mistaken

■ **NFL:** Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen's comments on Kingdome misunderstood as threats

SEATTLE — Paul Allen, the potential new owner of the Seattle Seahawks, isn't making any threats by demanding guarantees of a new or improved stadium before the deal goes through, his spokesman says.

"We're not threatening anybody," said Bob Whitsitt, president of Football Northwest. "We didn't come to this situation. We were asked to it. We're not saying this has to work, though we think it can work."

Whitsitt heads the organization created by Allen, billionaire co-founder of Microsoft Corp., to review the option he took in April to buy the franchise from owner Ken Behring by July 1997. Behring tried to move the Seahawks to the Los Angeles area in February.

In a letter this week to about 50,000 season ticket holders, elected officials and business and community leaders around the state, Allen said the Seahawks

needed assurances of a better stadium through "a financial partnership between the public and private sectors, including (King) County and the state" before he would complete the deal.

The letter said the Kingdome presently cannot bring the Seahawks more than about \$3 million a year in funds exempt from NFL profit-sharing, about one-tenth of what Allen believes is needed to make the team competitive.

In a news conference Tuesday before a private Kingdome party for about 150 business and corporate leaders, Whitsitt said Allen probably won't decide whether the Kingdome could be overhauled to produce that kind of money before a \$300,000 football stadium study is completed in November.

Options included in the study are renovating the 20-year-old Kingdome, converting Husky Stadium at the University of Washington for professional as well as college use and building a new gridiron.

Susan Pierson, a spokeswoman for Allen, said more than 100 people had visited a Wide World

Web site he established — <http://www.footballnw.com> — to solicit comment on the issue via the Internet and a 1-800 phone number.

The Web site includes a mock-up of a football stadium resembling the new one in Jacksonville, Fla., and a response form.

Whitsitt said the comments included a suggestion that public financing of any Kingdome renovation for the Seahawks should be limited to 25 percent and the idea of allowing others to buy into the franchise at \$1,000 a share.

Such reaction will be an important factor in Allen's decision, he added.

"This is part of an ongoing dialogue that we hope to have with interested fans and the community," Whitsitt said.

The reception was intended to boost leases of the existing 48 luxury suites at the Kingdome. Last season, 14 were leased.

Boeing president Phil Condit and Seattle Times publisher Frank Blethen announced at the gathering that they would lease suites this year.

—The Associated Press

Outdoors: Beginners to advanced can enjoy

■ **Continued from Page 5**

enough rapids to keep any beginner interested. Of course, there are rivers in Oregon that can offer challenges to any level of rafter. Longer trips on the scenic Rogue River provide plenty of drops and thrills, as do the North Umpqua and the Deschutes.

The Outdoor Program will not be contained by the boundaries of the state, however. They've organized several recent excursions to the Middle Fork of the Salmon River in Idaho, as well as a three-week rafting odyssey through the Grand Canyon in Colorado.

One of the greatest assets of the program, according to Fredette, is that it's limited only by the imagination of those who plan the trips. That's because the Outdoor Program operates on a Co-op system which means that an open schedule is set at the beginning of each semester. Instead, students can initiate what ever kind of trips they dream up, and go ahead with them as long as there's equipment available.

Another benefit of the Co-op system is that it re-

duces the costs to the students' budget level because there are no hired guides.

"You couldn't go on a trip for less, even with your own equipment," Fredette said.

The Outdoor Program also offers learning sessions away from the river where you can practice your skills without the risk of falling into the cold water. For example, every Wednesday night the program offers a kayaking session at a local swimming pool where you can perfect your moves.

The program is not limited to students, but rather is open to anyone who wants to go on trips. The trips are an even balance between students and members of the community. The program advertises as "going on a trip with a bunch of friends you haven't met yet."

So this summer flick off the TV, climb out of that arm chair, let out a barbaric yelp and get ready to head down one of the beautiful blue rivers of the Northwest.

NBA: Anderson, Strickland similar in comparison

■ **Continued from Page 5**

Thursday or Friday, when Wallace and Butler are expected to be in town to take their physicals.

By trading Strickland and Grant, the Blazers freed up \$4 million under the salary cap. If Portland renounces its rights to veteran forward Buck Williams, the team would have over \$5 million to offer Anderson.

Anderson, 25, averaged 15.2 points and 8.3 assists last year for New Jersey and later Charlotte after turning down a six-year, \$42 million offer from the Nets. His best season was 1993-94, when he averaged 18.8 points and 9.6 assists.

Despite having a weak defensive game and a career field-goal percentage under .500, Ander-

son's statistics are comparable to those of the 30-year-old Strickland, who averaged 18.7 points and 9.6 assists last season.

Before the Strickland deal, reports had the Blazers sending guard James Robinson and forward Bill Curley to Minnesota for forward Isaiah Rider, who was arrested June 27 in Oakland, Calif., for marijuana possession.

OPINION

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