

OPINION

editorials, letters, commentary and perspective

What do you think about the continued expansion of the Oregon football program? Let us know.

▶ SOUND OFF

UO athletic department finally striding toward perfection

OPINION



Mark McTyre

The building of the new indoor training facility is a step in the right direction to bolster Oregon athletics

It's one small step for Oregon, one giant leap for Duck-kind.

The Oregon Athletic Department has finally found the road to glory with its proposed plan for an indoor practice facility that will go alongside the Casanova Center and Autzen Stadium. The facility, if built, will be the first of its kind among Pacific-10 Conference schools and will put the Ducks on the map in the recruiting ranks.

During the past three-plus years, the Ducks have gone from pretenders to contenders in all sports, while moves by the Athletic Department to publicize each team have been less than adequate. The mission of such a department is to make its athletics look as if they are the hottest thing going, even if the teams aren't. Until now, the Oregon Athletic Department has not fulfilled its mission.

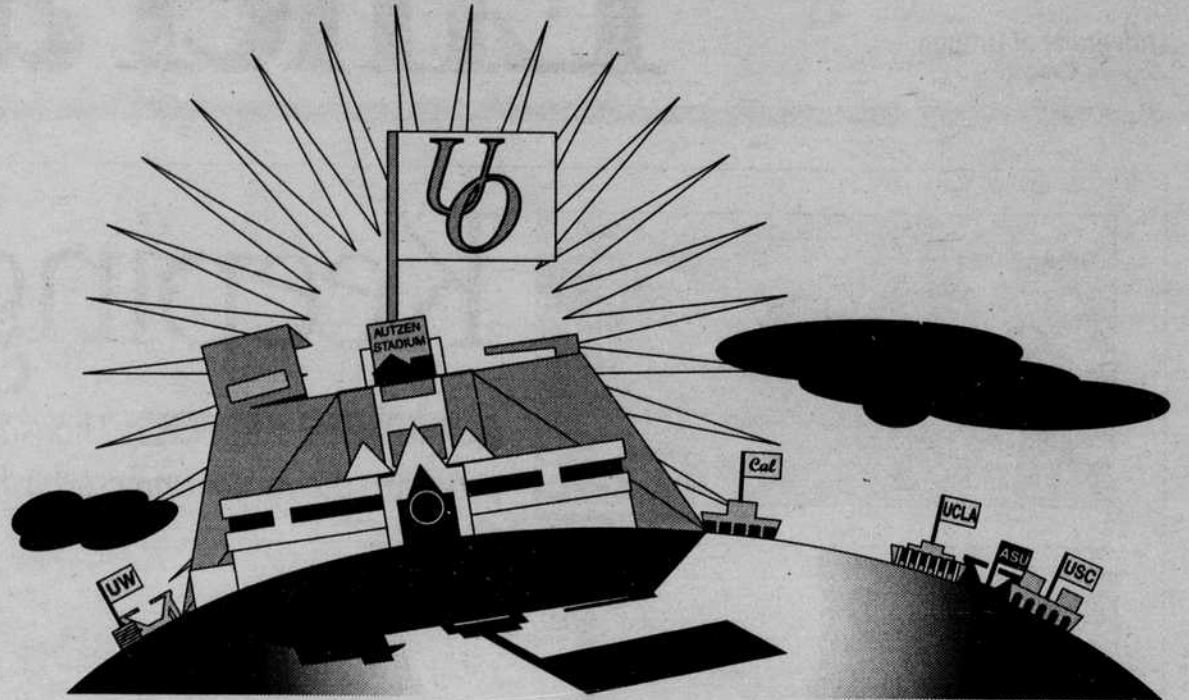
One example is the "Late Night with Jerry Green" show the school puts on to publicize the men's basketball team before the opening of each season. While other schools, like Cincinnati, have their version of "Late Night" televised on national television, and give away one year's worth of tuition, Oregon serves to the younger and older audience — not the student crowd. Instead, fans in attendance — which have been few — are given the opportunity to win free pizza and T-shirts.

I understand the basketball team hasn't reached the prominence of a Kentucky or a UCLA team, but when you're trying to achieve those heights, you must go all out. Remember, it wasn't too long ago when Cincinnati was in the position Green's Gang is now.

With the planned facility, Oregon has gone all out. The facility will include an artificial grass football field, a four-lane straight-away track, a giant net for golf and tennis use and possibly long jump pits. And outside there will be a soccer field for the new Oregon women's soccer team. The facility has everyone excited.

"I think its outstanding," said Oregon football head coach Mike Bellotti. "To have a climate controlled environment is great. All the Big 10 schools have them, and now we'll be set apart from the rest of the Pac-10."

The biggest effect that will come from the construction of the facility will be revealed in Oregon's recruiting. The main problem



CHRIS HUTCHINSON/Emerald

coaches have faced during recruiting is enticement. The geographic region Oregon is part of doesn't offer sunny skies all year, unlike our foes to the south.

"It will help us a lot in the recruiting area," Bellotti said. "California has the best population base in the country with about 65% of our team coming from there."

Unlike most extravagant ideas, the cost of this one will not gouge students or other programs. The construction is going to be completely funded by the private sector, according to Jim Bartko of Duck Athletic Funds.

All in all, the facility opens a door to the future of Oregon athletics and Eugene. It won't erase the 18-point deficit the Ducks suffered in the 1995 Rose Bowl, and it won't heal the wounds left by Colorado head coach Rick Neuheisel's fake punt call with 1:08 remaining in the 1996 Cotton Bowl. But it will place the state Senator Bob Packwood made famous on the college athletics' national map.

Mark McTyre is the sports editor for the Emerald. His opinions do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.

HISTORICAL

PERSPECTIVE

In 1967, Autzen Stadium opened following former Athletic Director Leo Harris' drive to construct a modern and economical theater for football. The stadium, which replaced historic Hayward Field as the home of Oregon football, was built at a cost of \$2.5 million, close to \$1 million of which was raised from 1,000 stadium sponsors.

In 1988, the Casanova Center, named after legendary football coach and athletic director Len Casanova, was as part of an overall updating project of Autzen Stadium exceeding \$16 million in costs.

In 1997, the proposed indoor practice facility will be the first of its kind in the Pac-10 Conference. It will contain an artificial grass football field, a four-lane straight-away track, a giant-size net for tennis and golf use and possibly long jump pits. The project will also include an outdoor soccer field. The overall cost of the project is unknown at this time.

Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3159, EUGENE, OREGON 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. A member of the Associated Press, the Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union.

Unsigned editorials represent the opinion of the Emerald editorial board; signed columns represent the opinion of the columnist.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rights threatened

I wasn't going to honor this debate with a response; when I'd first heard that city was considering a ban on dogs and skateboards on East 13th, I'd thought it was a joke. No one could be that poorly informed, that openly discriminative here in well-educated, egalitarian Eugene. Legislation designed specifically to single out and deprive one social/cultural group of its civil rights? Blaming a cluster of kids for the deterioration of "the quality of life" in a neighborhood? Just imagine.

Just imagine that the University might not be at fault, with its perpetual inability to supply adequate and affordable housing for its student population. Just imagine that there wasn't an unbelievable fortune to be made from supplying overpriced but conveniently located rental units to students who have little choice but to avail themselves of what's offered, or spend hours on the bus every day from Springfield. Just imagine that anyone but a student could afford to live in the district, and rent long term. Or would want to. Just imagine that the overpriced, rarely open police station parked in the lot at the 7-11 actually insured a world of goodness and niceness for everyone. And imagine that the only thing stand-

ing between truly good and nice people like us and the realized vision of a perfect world in our University district was one little social class: just some malcontents, really, and a few puppies on clothesline leashes.

It takes quite an imagination. Or rather, the lack of one, to come up with such a line of thought.

Shame on everyone who thought this law was a good idea.

I spend part of my day, five days a week, right in the heart of the area that would be affected by the proposed legislation. I've had my turn at being aggressively panhandled, but only once or twice in the remembered past, and I've worked in the district for nearly a decade. That's nothing, just what happens in the course of living one's life. No reason for me to discriminate against an entire group of people, and certainly nothing to be viewed as a menace.

I don't feel a deep solidarity with the "gutter tribes" who gather on the street. I just believe that they have the same civil rights that I have, that they're not doing me any harm by existing, and that they should be left in peace.

And that if their rights are threatened, then mine are surely next.

Beverly Effinger
Eugene

Expand Bottle Bill

This November there will be an initiative on the ballot to expand Oregon's Bottle Bill. This new measure will cover all single-serving, non-carbonated beverages with a five cent deposit. It's about time! It's been 25 years since we passed the original bottle bill, and since then we have been inundated with huge numbers of new non-carbonated drinks. Many of these beverages such as juices, iced teas, and bottled water are not covered under the current deposit system, and are ending up in our roadsides, parks and in our landfills.

Often, when I go to the store to return my containers, I am confused by the physical similarities of the deposit and non-deposit containers and inevitably mix several non-deposit containers in with my returnables. I am surprised that this issue has not come up sooner; however, I am pleased to see that the simple solution to this confusion has been discovered, the expanded Bottle Bill.

I urge my fellow citizens to pass this Measure, expand the Bottle Bill, and keep Oregon clean and green for generations to come.

Michael Arthur
Eugene

Due to the number of written responses regarding the proposed Bottle Bill, we were unable to publish all the letters we received.