



Men's basketball
Kentucky at Vanderbilt,
ESPN (34), 6:30 p.m.

DELAYS CONTINUE



The Ed Mosbofsky Sports Center is beginning to shape up, as evidenced by the addition of the roof the past couple of weeks. The facility will not be ready for use until this summer.

"Being behind in the schedule has hurt us dramatically in recruiting this year."

Mike Bellotti
UO head football coach

AMANDA COWAN/Emerald

Permits, budget problems slow construction

Head football coach Mike Bellotti said building delays have hurt recruiting this year

By Alex Pond
Sports Reporter

Oregon athletes will have to brave the elements of the state's unpredictable weather for at least one more spring.

And Oregon head football coach Mike Bellotti is not too happy about it.

The Ed Mosbofsky Sports Center, Oregon's new indoor practice facility being constructed next to the Casanova Center, was scheduled to be completed for use this spring, but construction delays have pushed that date back three to four months, Oregon athletic director Bill Moos said last week.

The entire \$13.8 million project also includes two outdoor natural grass practice fields for football and soccer.

"I think we'll probably have [the indoor facility] ready to use in June or July," Moos said. "The entire project will probably not be done until around this time next year because we've got to add some of the ancillary aspects of the building."

Bellotti said he was told from the outset the

facility would be ready for spring football practice, which begins April 6, and was told late last week it would not be done until summer.

"I'm very frustrated by that, and I'd like to know why that is," Bellotti said Saturday. "Obviously, I'm just happy to have it there. When it will be done, I'll be happy. The problem is, originally it was gonna be done in November so we could use it for bowl game practices, then it was gonna be done for spring."

"I know that there were probably permit problems or there were problems containing some of the permits that just take time. ... It just frustrates me that the timeline that I'd been given has not been able to be adhered to."

The potential recruiting benefits, primarily for football, were a major factor in deciding to build the facility, officials have said all along.

Bellotti said he had hoped to reap the benefits in this year's recruiting class, much of which will be announced Feb. 4, the first day players can sign a national letter of intent. But because of the delay in construction, Bellotti said it hasn't been much of a factor for this year's class.

"It's gonna be a tremendous boon to recruiting next year," Bellotti said. "To be honest with you, I haven't seen as dramatic an effect as I would have hoped to see. Recruiting's basic-

ly over and the roof's not finished and it's just beams. Being behind in the schedule has hurt us dramatically in recruiting this year."

In addition to problems receiving the proper building permits, Moos said the project was delayed by budget problems.

"The projection of the budget did go over [\$13.8 million], that's why we had to cut back on certain aspects of the building, so that we can get the core of the building done and usable for our student-athletes, then come back in and address the ancillary areas later."

Moos said items that were causing cost projections to go over the budget included additional equipment storage space, meeting rooms and landscaping. He said those items are expected to be added once the main facility is done.

The Oregon football team will be the primary tenant of the 117,000-square foot facility, but the facility will also be used by the majority of the University's athletics teams.

Moos said the facility will include a track straightaway for conditioning and sprint work, netting for the softball and golf teams, and the capability to bring in high jump and pole vault equipment.

For months the facility seemed no more than

carefully leveled ground, but the outer structure and parts of the roof have sprouted up over the past couple of weeks, providing a look and feel for how the complex will look, Moos said.

"It's coming along quite nicely," he said. "I think the recent erecting of the roof really gives people a feel for the magnitude of that building."

As far as spring practice goes, Bellotti said the Ducks will just have to brave the elements once again.

"We'll just have to keep doing what we have been doing," Bellotti said. "It sounds as if at this point we won't have a choice. We'll practice on the grass when it's available, and we'll practice in the stadium when it's not."

Moos said having spring practice outdoors really shouldn't be that big of a deal this time around.

"We've had spring practice for 100 years without an indoor facility," he said. "It just would be nice, based on the weather in recent years, to have had it finished. Certainly, it will be a great benefit for future springs. I think more important will be this time of year right now, when our athletes can be in there working individually on their skills in a controlled environment."

Cal, ASU not headed to NCAAs

This week marks the halfway point for the Pacific-10 Conference season, and barring a few major upsets, the conference should again have four representatives in the NCAA Tournament.

It would be the fifth consecutive season in which the Pac-10 sends at least that many teams.

But don't hold your breath for a fifth representative from the conference, as has happened two of the last three seasons. Arizona State and California are tied for fifth in the Pac-10 and each has little chance of qualifying.

The Real McCoy?

UCLA center Jelani McCoy played a meager 14 minutes in the Bruins' 88-82 win over Louisville on Sunday, including just five in the second half. Neither the school nor head coach Steve Lavin

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has made any official statements due to privacy issues, but speculation abounds that McCoy is having trouble kicking his pesky dope habit.

Misbehavior in practice is another possibility for the disciplinary action, and while the question of McCoy's expulsion from UCLA has come up, another suspension seems likely.

McCoy and teammate Kris Johnson were suspended earlier this season for violating team policy, but both were reinstated before the conference season began.

Rob Moseley is a sports reporter for the Emerald.

Bears, OSU playing for last in Pac-10

There is much debate about which team is the best in the Pacific-10 Conference, but what about those poor souls doing some bottom feeding in the cellar of the conference?

They need some publicity, too.

So, who is the worst team in the Pac-10 this season?

It's basically a two-team race, with Oregon State (6-11 overall, 1-7 Pac-10) and California (5-12, 1-6) battling it out.

Cal has lost five straight games and eight of its past nine. Oregon State has lost four straight and nine of its past 10.

The Bears are last in the conference at scoring, scoring margin, three-point field-goal percentage, three-pointers made and assist-to-turnover ratio.

The Beavers are last in free-throw percentage and turnover margin and ninth in

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scoring, scoring margin and steals.

OK, at this point they're both not very good.

But let's give the Bears the benefit of the doubt. They did beat the Beavers 77-64 on Jan. 4. Maybe the teams will settle the issue for good in their rematch March 5 in Corvallis.

Home sweet home?

Get UCLA in its home arena and Pac-10 teams might have a chance. The Bruins are 2-2 at home in conference play but a perfect 3-0 on the road. They are the only Pac-10 team undefeated on the road during conference play.

Alex Pond is a sports reporter for the Emerald.