

Molalla gym future uncertain

by Jim Titus
Copyeditor

Molalla High School's athletic program is struggling to cope without a gymnasium, even with the support of Clackamas Community College.

The Molalla boys' basketball team has been using Clackamas' Randall gym to play home games since their gym was claimed by arson last April. Voters in the Molalla district have defeated the last two bond levies that would have, along with a \$1.4 million insurance claim, financed construction of a new facility.

Molalla's athletic director, Mike Crauder, feels that the situation has been hardest on the students. The loss of their gymnasium is only part of a problem that includes loss of funds for spring

sports.

"The kids are struggling with the unknown," Crauder said. "Young people have a hard time with uncertainty."

After the failure of the last levy the district trimmed the request to \$1.2 million.

Having to play home games fifteen miles away at Clackamas has also been rough on Molalla.

"We have to provide transportation for our players, pep team, and dance line. We end up using three or four buses for a home game," Crauder remarked. "We had more people attend our last game in the old gym than the first seven at Clackamas."

"It's tough to get a lot of school spirit because of the transportation problem. A lot of kids have things to do on Friday nights, other

than driving in here (to Clackamas)," commented Denver Harris, one of the members of Molalla's basketball team.

Molalla will be using Randall Hall for some time. Even if a levy is passed in March they won't have a usable gymnasium until the spring of 1990, according to Crauder. But Crauder feels Clackamas has made a difficult situation as pleasant as possible.

"The college has adopted us. They have bent over backwards to help us out," Crauder said.

Crauder hopes voters will find out the facts for themselves before the next election, stating that they should, "take the time to ask questions before assuming the worst. People in Oregon don't understand how public agencies are funded."

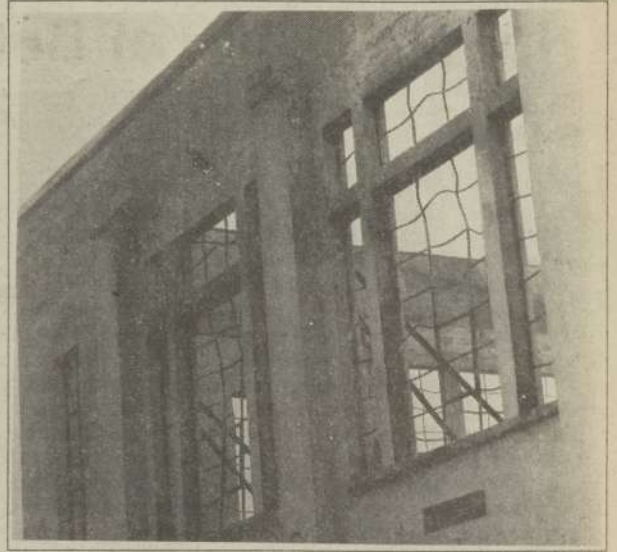


Photo by Jim Titus

This is what is now left of the Molalla High School gym. The school currently uses Clackamas Community College's Randall Hall as the sight of their home games.

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