

Ballpark May Be Renovated; Class B Talk at White City

Parks Department Preparing Plans to Overhaul Stadium

The fairgrounds ballpark, more commonly known as the Cheney Studs ballpark, may be in for a complete overhaul if plans now being prepared by the county parks and recreation staff receive final approval.

The baseball stadium, located south of Medford on Highway 99, has long been in a state of disrepair. During the recent windstorm in the valley one of the baseball field light poles collapsed and took a section of the stadium fence with it.

Although the stadium is on fairgrounds property and is owned by the county, it has been maintained and operated in recent years by the Cheney Studs, a trademark of the sports-minded Cheney Forest Products company, Central Point.

Repairs Proposed

The county parks and recreation staff would change this. City-County Parks Director Robert Haworth told the Mail Tribune last week that it is proposed to repair many of the stadium facilities, including the playing field, and make it available for any group that wants to use it.

County welfare labor crews are being tapped to provide the labor for renovation of the stadium. One crew spent two days at the ballpark last week doing preliminary clean up and maintenance work.

Haworth said it is not known just how much of the stadium will be renovated. Some improvements, such as leveling of the playing field, and replacement of seating facilities, have already received tentative approval, he said. Other improvements have not yet been approved, pending determination of their cost.

Estimate Not Available

An estimate of the total cost of the stadium renovation is not yet available, Haworth said, although it should not prove prohibitive since welfare workers will be providing the labor.

The stadium was built in July, 1951, following a fire that same summer which destroyed the previous ballpark, then the home of the Medford

Rogues professional baseball team.

Original cost of the stadium was small, since it was constructed with donated lumber and labor. It has a seating capacity of 1,000, and was intended to last only two or three years.

When the Rogue baseball team folded after the 1951 season, the stadium lay idle for several years. Then the Cheney Studs made an informal arrangement with the county fair board whereby they would use and maintain the stadium. It has been used in recent years by American Legion baseball teams and an occasional semi-pro team. The Cheney Studs made considerable improvement of the appearance of the stadium when they took it over.

A misunderstanding arose Wednesday over the county's intended use of the stadium. Several persons felt the county would prevent its use by American Legion teams, and when a work crew tried to enter the stadium Wednesday, an unidentified man barred their way.

Straightened Out

By the next day, however, the misunderstanding apparently had been straightened out, and the work crew entered the stadium without incident.

Haworth declared that the county will not prohibit use of the ballpark, to any group, including the American Legion. On the contrary, he said, as many groups as possible will be encouraged to use the facility. Playing schedules of the various groups would be arranged so that all could play, he said.

Haworth said also that a representative of the Cheney Studs claimed the group had a written agreement with the fair board whereby they could use and maintain the stadium for as long as they wanted. However, no evidence of a formal or written agreement has turned up, he said.

Have No Objection

Bill Askwith, superintendent at the Cheney mill and a local backer of American Legion ball, told the Mail Tribune



TO BE RENOVATED — The Fairgrounds ballpark, located on Highway 99 south of Medford, is due to be renovated, according to plans now being prepared by the county parks and recreation staff. The stadium has a seating capacity of 1,000, and, in recent years, has been operated by the Cheney Studs under an agreement with the county fairboard.

that the Cheney Studs have no objection to the county's taking over operation of the stadium. He did say, however, that Haworth failed to make it clear to him what the county proposed to do with the stadium when he first approached him on the matter.

If complete renovation of the ballpark is approved, it would include replacement of the existing seating facilities; reinforcement of the grandstands; replacement and realignment of stadium fences; replacement of the grandstand roof; improved sanitation facilities; new baseball team dugouts; and installation of a new protective wire mesh screen in front of the grandstands.

Haworth said that in addition to making the baseball field playable, the ballpark will also have to be made into a safe facility for public use.

Offer To Sell

Haworth said he understands the Cheney Studs, who own the ball field lights, have offered to sell them to the county. Some reinforcement

of the light poles is needed, he said.

One group that is eyeing possible use of the stadium in the near future is the Medford High school baseball team, whose own baseball field is scheduled to undergo renovation this spring.

Russ Atchison, assistant superintendent of the Medford schools, said if the high school does decide to use the fairgrounds ballpark it will be on a temporary basis only, until its own field is again in good playing shape. The high school would assist in renovating the ballpark playing field.

State Files Suits Of Condemnation For Right-of-Way

A series of condemnation suits have been filed in the Jackson county circuit court by the state highway commission for the new Highway 99 freeway right of ways.

The right-of-ways are sought for the Seven Oaks-Neil creek section. The land sought is in the Phoenix-Talent area.

Condemnation is sought on two parcels of land owned by Norman and Lucile Glascock, one containing 4.5 acres and another .94 acre. Value is estimated at \$8,050. The complaint alleges the Glascocks own a total of 11.1 acres and a roadway connecting with a county road.

Another condemnation suit seeks 22 acre owned by George L. and Jane Doe Wing. The value of the property is estimated at \$400, according to the complaint.

8.06 Acres Needed
A parcel of land containing 8.06 acres and valued at \$11,750 is sought from Walter S. and Jane Doe Gerner.

The highway commission is also seeking condemnation of 10.5 acres owned by David H. and Susan Holmes with true cash value estimated at \$15,000. Certain easements are allowed for Talent Irrigation district and Medford Irrigation district facilities.

The highway commission has agreed to construct a private access road to the remaining property of Scott B. Zachary and Kathryn Zachary after it removes two parcels for rights-of-way. One parcel is 4.68 acres and the other .33 acre. True value is estimated at \$17,250.

50 Influenza Cases Reported in County

Fifty cases of influenza were reported to the Jackson county health department last week, according to Dr. A. Erin Merkel, public health physician.

Eighteen of the flu cases were reported in Central Point, 15 in Medford, 9 in Ashland, 2 in Jacksonville and Trail, 3 in Phoenix, and 1 in Rogue River.

Thirty-six cases of other communicable diseases were reported throughout the county.

They included strep throat, Jacksonville 1, Medford 3; chicken pox, Ashland 1, White City and Shady Cove 2 each; pink eye, Medford 1; German measles, Ashland 1; pneumonia Medford and Jacksonville 1 each; infectious mononucleosis, Medford 1; tuberculosis, White City and Central Point 1 each; mumps, Ashland 2; Talent 5, Medford 10, Shady Cove 1; and measles, Medford 2.

National Forest Timber Sold at 7 Auctions This Year

More than 12 million board feet of national forest timber has been sold for \$372,128 in seven auctions held since the beginning of 1961, according to Rogue River National Forest Supervisor C. E. Brown.

Competition was widely variable — from none to extreme with no timber offering left unsold. The average bid was 14 per cent above appraised prices. Total appraised and advertised price for the seven sales was \$325,537.75.

In addition to the seven sales made by the forest supervisor, numerous smaller timber sales have been made by the six district rangers. Sales of less than \$10,000 in value are usually handled by the district rangers using sealed bid procedure.

Purchasers of the seven auction sales were:

Bought By GP Firm

(1) Brecount Brothers, loggers of Grants Pass, were the only bidder at an auction for an estimated 1,690,000 board feet of right-of-way logs in decks along the lower portion of the new Lake of the Woods forest highway. Brecount Brothers bid the logs in at the appraised price, which on the estimated quantity totaled \$58,282.50.

(2) McGrew Brothers, sawmill operators of Medford, were the only bidder for a second offering of right-of-way logs on the Fish lake end of the same highway project. The estimated quantity was 930,000 board feet. Appraised price was \$29,197. McGrew Brothers' bid totaled \$29,213.

(3) Double D Lumber company, Inc., Central Point, was high bidder for an estimated 1,110,000 board feet of standing timber in the Pinecrest unit, Applegate district. The bid totaled \$29,971.50. The forest service appraised and advertised price totaled \$30 less. Brown Brothers Lumber company of Williams

bid the appraisal price on this sale.

(4) A and H Logging, Inc., Medford, was high among six bidders at an auction for 945,000 board feet of timber in the Lodgepole unit, Butte Falls district. High bid in this sale totaled \$34,312 compared to forest service appraisal price of \$28,329.

(5) Steve Wilson of Medford was high among five bidders at another auction for 4,000,000 board feet of timber in the Jack Springs unit of Butte Falls district. Wilson's bid was \$123,300, a slight raise over the forest service appraisal price of \$123,180.

(6) Arnold Ragsdale, logger of Trail, was high among six

Rogue river valley sports fans will get several samples of Class B professional baseball during the coming season if a proposal now being considered becomes a reality.

The proposal is use of the Veterans Administration Domiciliary's Memorial field at White City for a number of Northwest league games.

Three members of the citizens' stadium committee discussed the idea with officials at the domiciliary Thursday. Committee Chairman John Weisbrod said that Northwest league President James Fleishman will present the program for discussion today at a league meeting in Eugene.

Weisbrod reported that domiciliary officials indicated interest in the plan but pointed out that there are technicalities that must be ironed out before the government facility can be put to such use.

The domiciliary, according to Weisbrod, will await the Northwest league's decision on the matter and if that decision is favorable will seek more information from the league.

'Exploratory Stage'

The proposition was described by the committee chairman as being in the "exploratory stage." Purposes behind it are to give residents of this area an idea of what Class B baseball is like and to try to keep the Medford area "in the picture" of the Northwest league.

One of the problems to be taken care of is arrangement for added seating. The stadium has around 1,200 capacity. One of the VA domiciliary rules has been that members at the station have the privilege of free admission to games in the stadium.

The chance of getting a

bidders for 1,580,000 board feet of timber in the Silver Camp unit of Union Creek district. Ragsdale's bid totaled \$64,324.50 nearly doubling the forest service appraisal price of \$33,477. McGrew Brothers were runner-up in the auction.

(7) Steve Wilson was high among seven bidders at an auction for 930,000 board feet in the Bearpen Springs unit of Butte Falls district. Wilson's bid totaled \$32,722, compared to the forest service appraisal of \$23,150.75. Runner-up was Fir-Ply, Inc.

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Medford team in the Northwest league in operation is past for this year but, "if we can get a stadium here anywhere in the near future we can end up with a very good baseball program," Weisbrod said.

Designated In January

The present citizens' stadium committee was designated at a meeting in January at Kim's restaurant to continue work of an earlier group and to further study the possibilities of a large multiple-purpose facility for this area. Members asked the Jackson county court for official recognition and for \$5,000 to pursue the studies. Both requests were turned down. The court said that it felt that the stadium matter is one for the registered voters, not for the court, to decide.

Weisbrod remarked that the committee could do its job so much easier and so much more thoroughly if it had had

court support. Committeemen meeting with VA officials along with Weisbrod were Lee Ragsdale and Bill Askwith. Other committeemen are Harry Chipman and Alex Petersen.

Weisbrod advocates a stadium in an excavated area at the site of the present ballpark at the fairgrounds. The excavated material would be sold as fill dirt under his proposal.

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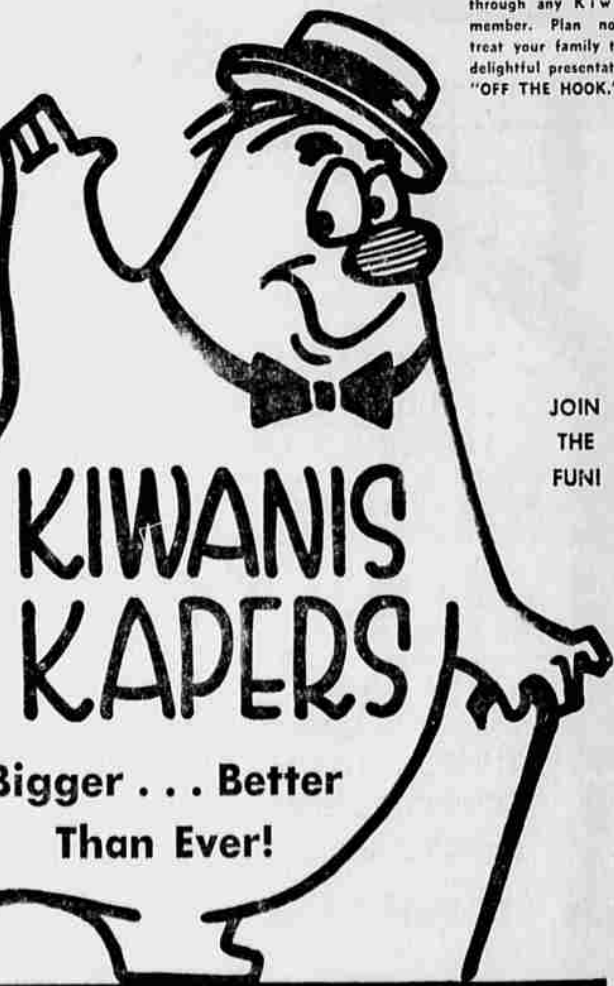
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