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Superdome

Page 16/The Battalion/Thursday, February 2, 1984

New Orleans' domed stadium has made 'permanent den'

United Press International

NEW ORLEANS — Just about 10 years have gone by since those whose travels brought them along the interstate from the western outskirts of town began realizing that there was going to be a permanent dent on the horizon.

That route still provides the best view for someone seeing it for the first time.

After driving along for mile after mile, past the airport, past the big cemetery and past the rail yards, the highway lunges upward, making a long, left-hand swing as it nears down-

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And as the road reaches its highest point, the structure suddenly becomes visible. Now it is an everyday part of life. But a decade ago it was a novelty - a modern-day, bulky beanstalk growing skyward, promising riches and delivering controversy.

Domed stadiums of varying size and makeup have popped up here and there since Houston's Astrodome led the way.

But in the world of huge, covered arenas, it is the Louisiana Superdome that has consistently lured the biggest attractions and meant the most to the area in which it was built.

"I don't know what would have happened if the Dome had not been here," said Ed Nebel, director of the department of hotels, restaurants and tourism at the University of New

"But I don't think there is any doubt that it was the cataylst for the change that was felt throughout the central business

TUES. DISC. NIGHT FRI. STUDENT & DISC. I.D. CINEMA III "CHRISTINE"(R) 7:15-9:15 "HOT DOG" (R) 7:30-9:45 (R) "SUDDEN IMPACT" ENDEARMENT"(PG) 7:20-9:50 "SILKWOOD" (R)

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"I don't know what would have happened if the Dome had not been here, but I don't think there is any doubt that it was the cataylst for the change that was felt throughout the central business district."-Ed Nebel, director of the department of hotels, restaurants and tourism at the University of New Orleans.

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award eight \$1,000 scholarships and twenty-

eight \$500 scholarships this year on the basis

of the student's scholastic record, evidence of

creative ability, potential for success in chosen

field, and character. Only members of Phi Eta

Sigma are eligible for these gift scholarships.

National deadline for submitting applications is

March I. Application forms are available from

the faculty adviser to the local chapter. Local

deadline for applications is February 23,1984.

"before" and "after" photo-

graphs.

Before the Dome was built,

the area along Poydras Street, just a short walk westward from famed Canal Street and the French Quarter, was rife with decay. Now it is a classic model of a space-age American metropolis — skycrapers, hotels, huge buildings under construction.

And in the midst of it all sits the stadium itself, its bronze-tinted walls and overall symmetry pleasing to the eye when viewed from afar and its size overwhelming when viewed from up close.

"On balance," said Cliff Wallace, the building's general manager, "it would appear that building the Superdome is one of the wisest decisions any city or state ever made.

There were those, legions in fact, who felt not so long ago that

BREAKFAST

.,Phone 845-3712.

LUNCH

building the Superdome was far

Its construction was approved by the voters of Louisiana in 1966, at which time building costs were estimated to be in the range of \$35 million. When the stadium was opened in August of 1975, four years after construction began and more than one year behind schedule, it had cost \$163.5 million.

The spiraling costs prompted lawsuits which tried to stop construction and they were also blamed in part for defeating former Gov. John J. McKeithen one of the stadium's staunchest backers — in his bid for the U.S.

There are still grumbles from politicians when funds are requested for various maintenance projects at the stadium.

But for the most part, the pro-tests have died because the Su-

7:30am - 10:30am

10:30am - 3:30pm

perdome has done wh proponents said it wo has brought people to Orleans and, in the mir most, it saved the do area from withering.

"I was one of the peop was opposed to the Supe when it was first propos Kent McWilliams, chair the Louisiana Stadiu position District Com that acts as watchguard corporation that manage building.

"But I was wrong. have to do is look around the buildings, hotels and jobs to see that the stadiu been a success."

Despite the city's nation age as a place to go and ha Nebel says tourism was ar looked commodity before stadium was built.

"Ten years ago," he said lieve it or not, you could no any of the movers and sha this city who thought of as an important factor i economy.

"Today they are say not only is tourism a ma of the economy, but that tourism has gotten t which is something understand. Now they tourism creates too man paying jobs and that we more high-tech industries

who doesn't?"
Dollars from tourism flowed into the city at a la rate than those from theo gas industry and from the huge port and the flow of dollars is not likely to slow di

any time soon.

The Super Bowl return
New Orleans year after #
The NCAA's Final Four, # has arguably become the ball ratio Bowl of amateur sport in Auburn United States, was a smash disagree the Superdome two year out on the and will be back in 1987. Ship to I Stadium officials are: Dye

- When

ning a proposal to the position which would call for three and no Final Four trips to the evryondome in the next dozen Mami N The Superdome was was Aubit 270 of the 365 days in 1981 final 1981

is booked every weekend Miami year. Last November, in annual first time ever, the Super Stadium surpassed \$1 million in 18 "At t ceipts for a single month somethic Everybody from the No. 1, it ican Horse Show Assoc justice to (which will show up in justice to the Lions International of the Tig

tion (which has time books toughes 1986) has been lured by facility. Even the talk of am

league baseball franchise been renewed.
"It used to be," said Bill

the stadium's vice presided marketing, "that the marketing baseball people a New Orleans was not just but it was 'hell, no.'

"Now it is not necess nard K 'hell, yes,' but it is not either. I think our change second baseball are better than Wedness ve been at any Stadium officials believe

cost of the building will be scored 5 by the end of the decaded! Knicks' combination of increased Antonio ing revenues and by a career protection motel tax which has been third que effect since the stadium teamma built. But, somewhat surprisi

no one has tried to putapen per at the just how much — in dollaring New Just how much — in dollar ing Nev the stadium has meant to gave th community.

"As a matter of fat."
Nebel, "we are negotiating the stadium people now to contract to do an impactant think an impact study willsh lot of positive things.
"But I think one big!

will show is what everybor see. If anybody had ever that area before the stadi built, they would have to that the Dome was a prime! er in the development b the stadium and the (Mis pi) river.
"It showed that thing that happen here and they have

Battalion

The



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Orleans. What the Superdome has meant to New Orleans can best be demonstrated by a display of

7:15 Barbara Streisand 9:45 "YENTL" (PG)

presents

