

University of Texas eyes bigger stadium

AUSTIN (AP) — The University of Texas, which already is preparing to expand the Big 12 Conference's largest football stadium, is dreaming of even bigger things: a 115,500-seat arena with 200 luxury boxes.

A college football stadium that size would be the nation's largest.

It also would cost far more than the nearly \$92 million in Royal-Memorial Stadium renovations and other UT athletics projects now under way.

In a story published Monday by the Austin American-Statesman, UT athletics officials said the dream, outlined in a stadium master plan, is merely a vision for the future. The package doesn't even have a price tag yet.

"We haven't put pencil to paper," said Doug Messer, senior associate athletics director in charge of finances.

Austin Gleeson, a physics professor and chairman of the campus master plan committee, said he had heard various estimates — ranging from \$130 million to \$150 million.

He said it was his impression that the additional expansion would begin when the current projects are completed, in 1999. But athletics department officials said there is no formal timetable.

"Our children might not see this happen,"

Messer said. But he added, "I'm optimistic that, probably, we can."

At present, UT is focusing on a stadium expansion project that will seat up to 85,000. Royal-Memorial currently seats 75,512. The expanded stadium will include 66 new luxury skyboxes. The UT Board of Regents has approved those projects.

The rest of the master plan — expansion to 115,500 seats and other amenities — has been accepted in principle only.

"We certainly don't have the wherewithal ... to do that (now)," said DeLoss Dodds, UT athletics director.

The stadium expansion and other athletics projects have been a lightning rod on campus in recent months.

Some professors say sports already are overemphasized. They argue that the fund-raising priorities should be on academics.

"I call it the edifice complex," said Karl Galinsky, a classics professor who serves on the campus building committee.

Galinsky said that while most of the current projects probably could be justified, he worries about public perception. "It's costing us credibility," he said.

The 10,000 new stadium seats, along with

"I call it the edifice complex. It's costing us credibility."

**Karl Galinsky
Member of UT's
campus building committee
on fund-raising priorities**

improvements to concessions, restrooms and other interior space, are part of a \$91.57 million athletics construction program. That latest estimate is up from \$71.3 million last year.

UT has installed a \$1.25 million natural grass field in the stadium and spent \$1.3 million on a soccer-football practice field. It is moving on a \$9.2 million renovation and expansion of the Neuhaus-Royal Athletic Complex in the stadium's south end zone, and on a new \$12.2 million track and soccer stadium. The grandstand renovations and skyboxes are estimated at \$51.6 million.

Revolution-era boat discovered

FERRISBURG, Vt. (AP) — A Revolutionary War gunboat, part of a small fleet commanded in a strategic battle by Benedict Arnold before he turned traitor, has been found nearly intact on the bottom of Lake Champlain, officials said today.

No decision has been made yet on whether to leave the ship in place or to raise it, said Art Cohn, head of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. The ship's exact location in the 115-mile-long lake and its depth were not released.

The 54-foot vessel, whose name is not yet known, is "in an excellent state of preservation, sitting upright on the bottom, its mast still standing over 50 feet high and its large bow cannon still in place," Cohn said.

It was found in early June during a sonar survey of the lake bottom, he said.

Only four vessels survived out of the 15-ship squadron led by Arnold in the Battle of Valcour Island in 1776.

Cohn told reporters today he went down on the first dive to the ship. His attention was focused on

the complicated dive procedure he said, but "at the same time there was a voice screaming in my head 'Oh my God, this is the gunboat! Benedict Arnold probably walked on this deck!'"

The newly discovered ship was identified as one of Arnold's fleet because it matches another of the gunboats, the Philadelphia, which was found in 1935 and is at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History.

Peter Barranco, the historian on the discovery team, said he was sure what they had found as soon as he saw it on the sonar. "Everything was crystal clear even on the sonar image. There was never a doubt in my mind that it was there," he said.

"This could prove to be the most significant maritime discovery in American history in the last 150 years," said Philip Lundberg, curator emeritus of naval history at the Smithsonian's American History Museum. "The apparently excellent condition of the gunboat is highly unusual for an artifact this old and is one of the reasons the discovery is so significant."

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