

Work on YSU's sports complex begins at groundbreaking ceremony

by Bill Snier

The dream of a great many community and University leaders finally became a reality yesterday when the groundbreaking ceremonies for the new YSU All-Sports Complex were held at the building site behind Beeghly Physical Education Center.

The traditional "first shoveling earth" marks the beginning of a project that actually had its beginnings in 1948 when the University, then known as Youngstown College, attempted to get the support of the community via the use of the vote to build just this sort of complex.

At that time, the University was thinking in terms of a 35-thousand seat stadium, a six-thousand seat fieldhouse and a ten-thousand seat baseball field. All of this, at 1948 construction rates, would have cost around 1.2 million dollars. Enough signatures were collected to put the issue on the November ballot; however, the issue was defeated by about 600 votes. If it had passed, the money for the complex would have come from the treasury of the city of Youngstown.

Years passed before the idea finally was again undertaken about five years ago. William G. Lyden, Jr., Dr. John Coffelt, and Frank C. Watson undertook the dubious problem of bringing a dead dream back to life again. Through the help of a great number of private citizens, benefactors, and alumni of YSU,

years of hard work was consummated by yesterday's ceremonies.

A great many dignitaries from the state and local level were on hand for the groundbreaking ceremonies. The participants included Governor James Rhodes, Senator Oliver O'Kasic, State Senator Harry Meshel, and Youngstown Mayor J. Phillip Richley.

Governor Rhodes, in his remarks, stated that he had never seen a group work more diligently on a single project to reach a common goal. "The All-Sports Complex demonstrates a new spirit in the Mahoning Valley and for the community as a whole," Rhodes stated. Rhodes also touched on the economic problems now plaguing the Mahoning Valley and stated that "we are going to help steel and we are going to get jobs for the Mahoning Valley." He further emphasized that the only people who have any unkind words for Youngstown are "the people of Youngstown."

Many of the speakers during the ceremonies also emphasized

the same ideas as the Governor. A badge, which was also given to many of the people attending the ceremonies by Mayor Richley, seemed to set the tone for the groundbreaking. The badge simply said "Youngstown - it's alive and well."

Other notable speakers who took part in the ceremonies were John Newman, chairman of the Board of Trustees Building and Property Committee; William G. Lyden Jr., chairman of the Complex Committee; Arnold Stambaugh; Dr. Thomas Shipka, chairman for the faculty and staff fund raising committee; John Carano, Chairman of Student Council; Bishop James Malone; Rabbi Sydney Berkowitz and Frank Watson, Chairman of the fund-raising committee.

The stadium is to be named after Arnold Stambaugh, long a leader in both community and industrial affairs in the Mahoning Valley. The Board of Trustees recently cited Stambaugh for "providing the leadership and inspiration in bringing together

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Stadium

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the leadership of the Community to provide the major thrust in a successful community fundraising drive to make a reality the long desired community dream of a major spectator stadium."

The stadium, which is expected to be completed in the fall of 1980, will be situated on a 17.8 acre tract of land bordered on the north by the Madison Avenue Expressway and on the south by Beeghly Center.

Plans call for softball, soccer and field hockey fields, tennis courts, and an eight-lane all-weather track to adjoin the stadium complex, which will be built behind Beeghly Center.



WORK BEGINS – John Carano, president of Student Government (left to right), Senator Oliver O’Kasic, Arnold Stambaugh and President Coffelt join other dignitaries in Wednesday’s Groundbreaking ceremony marking the beginning of construction for the YSU All-Sports Complex.