

Inside the Fieldhouse

PHOTOS BY MARTIN BEALES
STORY BY BRENT JANG



Ross Macnab defends the bright yellow panels chosen for the exterior of the Fieldhouse like Vidal Sasson defends transparent jeans.

"There are an awful lot of people who like this color," said University vp liason Macnab, "it's a love-hate relationship."

Such a superficial discussion doesn't show the initial confusion that took place over where to build the \$23 million fieldhouse, which is to be used for basketball during the World University Games.

The site that was finally picked, south of the West Pool and Gymnasium, turned out to be too small for the proposed structure. The second version of the facility is thus much smaller than the first: 140 meters by 68 meters (by 78 meters in height) versus 150m by 120m by 78m.

Other sites mentioned were North Garneau, University Farm, fields south of Corbett and Lister Hall, and the parking lot between Humanities and Law.

Actually, the ideal site would have been the Jubilee Auditorium parking lot but the provincial government said 'no' to that plan.

"It's a bit of a compromise," said university vp Planning Ron Phillips, "the fieldhouse will be right up against the south wall (all window) of the pool. This will block out much of the sunlight in the pool."

"The site's not ideal," said U of A President Myer Horowitz, "but it's our (the administration's) view...that this is the right decision."

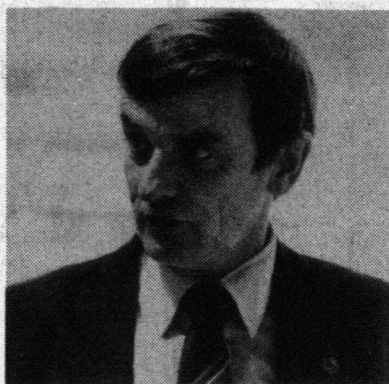
Despite such early reservations about its location, Macnab says the fieldhouse's many links to the existing Physical Education

Complex have turned out to be an architect's marvel.

In comparison with the Kinsmen Fieldhouse, the Universiade Pavillion (as the facility has been named) is more of a multi-purpose recreation center. The biggest difference is made possible by nylon-netting that goes around the inside of the track. Thus, while people are jogging, there can be four intramural basketball games (inside the track) and four badminton games (on the outside) going on at the same time.

Macnab says sports like basketball, track and field, volleyball, gymnastics, and tennis will eventually hold their national championships at the Universiade Pavillion. He adds that student registration in September and the Fall Convocation in November have already been scheduled for the Pavillion.

The building will be ready by June 1st, giving athletes, Universiade officials, and the project consultants (Ragan, Bell, and McManus) thirty days to 'test' the facility before the Games' official opening.



Ross Macnab.

