

SPORTS

Ontario schools upgrade athletic facilities

BY JONATHAN GREENAN

OTTAWA (CUP) — Finally, after 20 years of empty promises and shelved plans, the University of Ottawa has officially begun construction on a brand-new sports complex. On Sept. 22, university administrators, local politicians and Sports Services officials launched the \$20-million mega-project that hopes to bring the U of O's on-campus sporting

facilities out of the dark ages.

"This dynamic expansion shows that truly, we have wind in our sails here at the University of Ottawa," said rector Marcel Hamelin. "We have a long tradition of sports here, and want to improve the teaching, training and athletic facilities for our staff and students."

No doubt, the existing sports infrastructure here at the U of O leaves plenty to be desired.

Montpetit Hall was designed to accommodate a student body of 10,000. Minto Arena, former home to the Gee-Gee's hockey team, was built in 1949. Over 115 sports teams at the U of O are in direct competition with each other for time in the gym, on the ice, or in the pool. But in the fall of 2000, when the sports complex first opens its doors, a brand new regulation-sized ice rink (seating capacity of 1,200), a 9,000 square-foot training and sports rehabilitation centre and modern teaching facilities will be available to the university community. By the following spring, a parking

garage, an artificial turf football/soccer field and another ice rink will be added when the second phase of construction is complete.

"We've been waiting a long time for this and finally we're here," commented Luc Gelineau, director of Sports Services. "The overwhelming success of our student-athletes, as well as the demand for new programs and services from the general student population has made this project possible." The new complex will finally give varsity athletes on the men's football and women's soccer and rugby teams adequate practice and training facilities on

campus. "Finally, we'll have a home," said Gee-Gee soccer captain Michelle Davidson. "Some of us will not be able to enjoy this complex as students," added U of O quarterback Phil Côté who 's set to graduate from the Faculty of Administration in April. "But we will definitely be back to support the athletes who will take our place."

After the press conference, the athletes officially kicked off the construction. Davidson drop-kicked a soccer ball and Côté fired a football into the massive crater at the future site of the complex.

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Proper warm-up and cool downs to prevent injuries

Whether playing football competitively or recreationally, it is essential that all practices and games are preceded by a proper warm-up and followed by cool down activities. Both processes are believed to have major implications in the prevention of sport injuries. It is therefore essential that all participants are given the opportunity to properly warm-up and stretch before starting a game.

The process of 'warming up' refers to the use of preliminary exercise activities rather than the use of hot showers, massage, etc. Many believe that proper warm-up is a preventative measure as it helps prevent and/or reduce the number of muscular strains and injuries. This is achieved because the main purpose of the warm-up is to raise both the general body and

the deep muscle temperatures as well as stretch body tissue to allow for greater flexibility. This will help reduce the possibility of muscle tears, ligamentous tears and prevent muscle soreness.

A proper warm-up should consist of 15 - 30 minutes of gradual warm-up activities to bring the body to a state of readiness. The warm-up should consist of two parts. Initially general body exercise such as jogging or skipping should be done until the athlete has increased their body temperature to a point where they start to sweat.

This should be followed by more specific exercises that are related to the activity that the athlete is participating in. It is important to note that on cool days, the warm-up should be increased in

duration and should be performed in warm-up clothing. It is also important to include a stretching routine in the warm-up.

The cooling down process is the gradual diminishing of work intensity, which permits various body functions, (i.e. circulation to return to pre-exercise levels). This should include 30 seconds to one minute of jogging followed by three to five minutes of walking. It is important to include stretching activities in the cool down as well. A proper cool down will help to diminish muscular soreness following exercise.

The next article will discuss the different stretching techniques and which ones are most helpful in preventing sport injuries.

Submitted by
Daniela Rubinger
Physiotherapist, Clinic Director
Physioclinic - Dalplex

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