



Sherwood Athletic Center update in full swing

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By LENEL PARISH Whitman College News Service

WALLA WALLA -- Whitman College's 18-month, \$15 million project to remodel and renovate the Sherwood Athletic Center is well into the demolition stage and especially visible from Park Street, where steps that once led to the courtyard have been reduced to rubble and removed.

The building is surrounded by construction fences and access to the facility is limited, said Peter Harvey, Whitman treasurer and chief financial officer, and will stay that way until the center reopens in fall of 2009.

After the demolition stage, the next step will be to remove the roof over the staff and faculty offices and rebuild the main frame in that area so that by August the volleyball and basketball teams will have full access to the gymnasium, and the rest of the remodeling can continue around them.

The renovation of the 1960s-era center is phase two of Whitman's athletic facilities upgrade, said Dean Snider, director of athletics.

A much-needed second gymnasium will be created by taking the roof off the swimming pool and replacing a structural wall with a beam before filling in the pool, added Harvey.

"This will allow us to create a new multipurpose gymnasium, full size but without bleachers," he said.

The new space will be striped for high school and college basketball and volleyball, added Harvey, and also will be available for such activities as indoor soccer and indoor batting practice, and will make hosting various tournaments possible.

In addition, he said, the locker space, which was built when the college had a football team and very few women's sports, will be rebuilt to reflect the current athletic needs; the training room area will be enlarged to meet current needs; two more multipurpose rooms for aerobics, dance, and martial arts-style activities will be added; a team audiovisual room will be created; and office space will be expanded, both in size and number.

The most dramatic changes to the casual observer will be the enclosure of the climbing wall, the addition of new larger windows and brick over of the outside walls. Enclosing the climbing wall, said Harvey, will make it more amenable to climbers year round.

The bricks over the outside walls will add insulation and make the building fit aesthetically with the rest of the buildings on campus. Numerous trees will be planted, too, and the trees temporarily moved to the lawn of Cordiner Hall will be transplanted back to the Sherwood area.

Opp and Siebold, the company that oversaw the building of the Baker Ferguson Fitness Center, is overseeing the work on Sherwood.

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