Ross-Ade renovations nearing completion

BY ISRAEL SCHUMAN
Sports Editor

For its 100th birthday, Ross-Ade Stadium got a facelift. The host site of Purdue home football games days away from the total completion of what has been dubbed “Phase 1 construction” by Purdue Athletics. The renovations come with a bill of $45.4 million, funded completely by donors.

As The Exponent has previously reported, major additions include connecting bleacher sections on the south end zone and a new tunnel for players to emerge from before kickoff. Construction began in December, and the Athletics Department has maintained that the stadium would be ready for Saturday’s season kickoff against Fresno State. The added seating on the south end zone will add about 4,500 seats to capacity, allowing the stadium to fit a total of 64,442 fans — good for 12th out of 18 teams in the conference when it expands next season.

According to Athletic Director Mike Bobinski, the renovations are important in raising Purdue Football’s national prominence, an increasingly important factor since the advent of NIL-alloewance.

The new tunnel, dubbed the “Tiller Tunnel” after historic coach Joe Tiller, will be be stylized after historic coach Joe Tiller, will be stylized as the most advantageous for players to emerge from before kickoff.

The majority of fans expect the team to win fewer games than it did last year. The most common response was five to six wins, boasting on the edge of a bowl game.

If the Boilermakers could get to that six-win threshold, it would continue a strong trend started by Brohm. In Brohm’s tenure from 2017-20, the football team went to four bowls in six years. The last time Purdue went to four bowls in six years was from 2003-08 during the glory days of Joe Tiller, the winningest coach in program history.

The headliner of Purdue’s long off-season was offensive coordinator Graham Harrell.

The uncertainty presented itself as fertile ground for a fan poll, and that is exactly what The Exponent has done, putting out a series of questions on Twitter for users to answer.

Most polls got about 200 responses, with results covering a multitude of topics:

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What is your opinion of offensive coordinator Graham Harrell?

What is your opinion of the team’s decision to add the NIL allowance?

What is your opinion of the team’s decision to expand Ross-Ade Stadium?

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Sports
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Volleyball, soccer head west

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Two of Purdue’s fall sports will be away for the weekend, with the volleyball team leaving on Wednesday for Kansas and soccer going to Los Angeles and Colorado.

Soccer LA, Colorado bound

The Purdue soccer squad is going on a road trip out west that could help define their non-conference seasons. The Boilermakers (2-4) are set to tangle with the No. 19 ranked USC Trojans (2-1), followed by a showdown against the Colorado Boulder Buffaloes (3-2). The USC offense presents a multi-faceted threat that demands vigilance for Purdue’s defense. Head coach Doug Reff emphasized the significance of stout defense play.

“We’ve got to have defended really well individually because they have some special players,” Reff said. “The challenge of playing really good teams is you make that one mistake and they’ll punish you for that mistake.”

After the dust settles from their clash with USC, the Boilermakers will turn their attention to the Buffaloes, a team boasting an impressive 3-1 record thus far. In contrast to USC’s strong offense is the Buffaloes’ defense. Four games into the season, just a solitary goal has been given up. “As much as we need to defend well, if we’re only defend- ing, we’re going to lose,” Reff said. “When we get opportunities to show our chances we really need to dig in and be ready.”

Volleyball off to Kansas for Invitational

Coming off a 2-2 weekend against stiff competition, there will be little rest for Purdue volleyball. The team will play in the Kansas Invitational, a round-robin tournament similar to last weekend’s. In attendance are No. 25 Purdue, No. 23 Kansas and No. 19 Marquette.

“Our team had better be getting geared up and ready to play,” Purdue head coach Drew Shondell said on Monday. The Boilermakers know what they have in their outside hitters, sophomores Eva Hudson and freshman Chloe Cline, as well as junior middle-blocker Raven Colvin. That trio led the team in most offensive categories last weekend.

An area of concern for Shondell is his setter position, where freshman Taylor Anderson has inserted herself into the compe- tition for playing time.

“Tyler Anderson, who everyone knows is a big time pro- spect, she’s really come along and played like she’s been there many, many seasons before,” Shondell said. “We actually have three setters who are playing well.”

What is the trajectory of the Purdue football program?

FORECAST
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With a brand-new coaching staff and quar- terback, Purdue is coming into a new era. This will be the first season it all comes together. Coaches have been shown how the quarter- backs and coaches have performed on their own at previous steps, informing fans along with the off- season chatter coming out of West Lafayette.

With all the informa- tion that fans have, a stag- ering 73.5% thought the program was on the rise, evidence that the shine has not yet worn off the Boiler navy look.

The other two Shondell mentioned are graduate student and transfer Lorrin Poulter and redshirt sophomore Sydney Yim. Poulter started last weekend, and according to Shondell is “ahead of schedule” in her recovery from offseason surgery. Yim, Shondell said, is “chomping at the bit because she’s taken a big leap up.”

The decisions for the Boilermakers this weekend will be narrowing down the wide field of talent on the roster.

“We’ve got a lot of good players,” Shondell said. “I think I had 53 people on the floor this weekend. It’s really important to get that narrowed down a little bit so they can learn to feed off each other.”

Junior forward Gracie Denenwayshits the ball into the goal during a scramble in the Wake Forest box.