Ross-Ade

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An economic plus

For the steadily growing Lafayette-West Lafayette community—declared a Metropolitan Urban Area after the 1990 federal census—the 1924 gift of Ross-Ade Stadium remains a conspicuous yet easily overlooked economic asset.

The Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) commissioned an economic impact study in 2005. The study assumed 55,000 out-of-town visitors nowadays at each Ross-Ade Stadium game. The two cities’ 2,300 hotel rooms now host an estimated 4,600 people on each game date. Another 3,000 people stay a second night. These guests spend about $125 apiece on lodging, meals, a total that reaches $950,000.

About 40,000 people—campers, tailgaters—drive in only for game day. However, on fuel and shopping they spend about thirty-seven dollars each, a figure that totals $1.5 million. And so the CVB did and still does estimate that visitors spend nearly $2.5 million in the community each game weekend, an amount that does not include the cost of game tickets.

The Stadium proper is used only half a dozen or so times a year for games and practices, but suites within the stadium installed in recent years are used for a variety of smaller conference and community events.

Purdue’s athletic empire in this day and age includes even more:

• The Birck Boilermaker Golf Complex for men’s and women’s golf houses two eighteen-hole courses, Ackerman Hills and
Kampen. It is the old Marstellar Farm in twenty-first-century clothing. The golf complex also includes the Pete Dye Clubhouse, Tom Spurgeon Golf Training Center, short game areas, and a driving range. Ackerman Hills is the vintage 1930s “south course,” and Kampen is the rebuilt Linee Fields of long ago.

- The Boilermaker Aquatic Center for men’s and women’s diving and swimming was an addition to the Purdue Recreational Services Center in 2001. The Center includes an Olympic sized pool, diving well, dressing facilities, hot tub, and spectator areas.

- The Dennis J. and Mary Lou Schwartz Tennis Center for men’s and women’s tennis is home to six outdoor and three indoor tennis courts.

- The Intercollegiate Athletics Facility remains the place for volleyball and wrestling competition. In addition to Belin Court, a dedicated surface for volleyball, the IAF houses the Athletic Ticket Office, the Jane P. Beering Academic Learning Center, a weight room, and the football locker rooms.

- Lambert Field is home for the Purdue baseball team, the name again honoring “Piggy” Lambert’s baseball coaching years.

- Lambert Field House now is home for indoor track events. Originally home to the 1938 Boilermaker basketball team and the Purdue swimming team, the Field House now is used solely by men’s and women’s track teams for indoor competition. The original pool has been filled in to make way for a training center for the Purdue wrestling team.
• The vintage 1969 Mackey Arena has been designated for multi-million-dollar enlargement and upgrades in coming years. In March 2006, Purdue Trustees authorized a Kansas City firm to design a much larger Mackey Arena Complex estimated to cost eighty million dollars or more.

• Purdue’s long-range athletics facilities plan calls for adding about 8,000 seats and suites in a deck above the east stands of Ross-Ade stadium.

• The Rankin Track & Field Complex provides for men’s and women’s outdoor competition.

• Purdue also operates a Varsity Cross Country Course for men’s and women’s meets, a Varsity Soccer Complex for women’s soccer, and a Varsity Softball Complex.

Now nearing its fiftieth year, the John Purdue Club became a model that dozens of schools have emulated for sports fund-raising. More than 9,000 John Purdue Club members now raise nearly six million dollars per year to support 500 student-athletes in eighteen varsity sports.