

## Athletic Spending

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) - At a time when Iowa's state universities are being squeezed by tight budgets, athletic officials still found money for building projects and Iowa football coach Kirk Ferentz got a 53 percent pay raise.

The three state universities had \$42 million less to work with this year, forcing them to cut staff and cram students into bigger classes, yet each of the three athletic departments got more from the schools' general funds.

Iowa State added lights at Jack Trice Stadium, installed a new video scoreboard and bleachers and will break ground soon for an indoor practice facility. Iowa has added three new football practice fields.

Athletic officials insist they're not running amok at the expense of academic pursuits and are just trying to keep up with their competitors, many of whom take in \_ and spend \_ far more.

They also note the Iowa and Iowa State athletic departments generate almost all of their own revenue and get very little from the university. But those university funds are still needed, Iowa athletic director Bob Bowsby said.

"It's easy to forget sometimes when we're in the Big Ten, but our budget is maybe 50 percent what Ohio State's is," Bowsby said.

"We're the smallest state university in the least populated state in the grandest aggregation of universities in this country. In some ways, we come in with a shorter stick."

Board of Regents member Sue Erickson Nieland believes that stick already is too long. It's time to rein in athletic spending, she said, adding that Iowa should try to become an example for others.

"They call this an arms race," Nieland said. "Well, are we going to lead this race or are we just going to go along with what everybody else is doing?"

"Right now we're just kind of going with the flow. The state can't really afford to do that."

Nieland particularly objects to putting money from the universities' general funds into athletics.

Iowa received 12.6 percent more from the general fund this year, but it still represents only 6.3 percent of the athletic department's \$38.4 million budget. Iowa State received a 1.1 percent increase in state money and Northern Iowa got 1.9 percent more.

General fund money accounts for 11.4 percent of Iowa State's budget and 48 percent at Northern Iowa, which receives far less television and conference money than the two others.

Bowsby said most of the state money coming to his department goes to women's programs, particularly rowing and soccer.

"It's great to say we should be self-supporting, but those dollars are vital to maintaining the quality of our program," Bowsby said. "These are fundamentally student programs. What better place to put university support than student programs, ours and others across campus."

That argument doesn't wash with Nieland.

"Title IX is 20 years old. Let's stop using it as an excuse," she said. "They should be able to fund women's athletics, or make it a priority to fund women's athletics, without having their hands out."

The pay increase for Ferentz announced in July, from about \$595,000 to \$910,000, raised the hackles of some faculty members at Iowa, in part because of the timing. The university has cut 315 jobs since July.

History professor Katherine Tachau said those who supported giving general fund money to the athletic department might feel betrayed by the increase for Ferentz.

"We're cutting things that no one can deny are important things to the university to be able to fund something that is not part of the university's general plan," Tachau said.

Athletic officials say ticket sales, television revenue and donations cover more than half of Ferentz's salary. The rest comes from camps, endorsements, apparel deals and radio and TV programs. No university money is used.

Bowlsby, whose salary jumped \$12,000 to \$345,000, said keeping good coaches is critical to success. Winning football teams put more fans in the seats, which generates more money for other sports.

"Football and men's basketball directly or indirectly generate 94 percent of our revenue," Bowlsby said.

Bowlsby acknowledged that coaches' salaries "have gone well beyond what anyone might have expected 10 years ago" and said athletic departments nationwide need to find way to curb spending.

He also said the university owes its sports programs the financial support they need to be competitive.

"If we're going to be involved in orthopedics, let's have the best orthopedics program we can," he said. "If we have a Writer's Workshop, let's put on the best one we can. The same goes for athletics. We want our programs to be as good as they can be."

Iowa State gave football coach Dan McCarney a \$25,000 raise in July, taking his salary to \$625,000. It also has spent about \$2.4 million on recent improvements, including the new lights, scoreboard and bleachers at the football stadium.

Donations and corporate advertising at games funded most of those projects. An increase in student fees, agreed to in return for more close-in seating for students at basketball games, helped pay for the lights and some creative financing funded the bleachers.

Iowa State had been spending \$100,000 a year to rent portable bleachers. Athletic director Bruce Van De Velde is using that \$100,000, which already was budgeted, to make the annual payments on the debt for the new seats.

"Everything we did was money that was just redirected or it was new business," Van De Velde said.

Athletic officials say alumni are more prone to donate when their teams are winning, but it costs money to field winning teams.

"They have accepted several million dollars that wouldn't have come if it weren't for athletics. That's great," Nieland said.

"But let's draw the line so people can be comfortable and faculty members can feel OK about what they do and not resent the athletic department."