

Cabrillo College Stadium will be used for sports only

By PAUL BEATTY

Sentinel Staff Writer

APTOS — Cabrillo College broke its own long-standing policy by allowing a Christian crusade to use its stadium while continuing to ban musical events on the field, claims a local promoter.

John Sandage of Snazzy Productions said Cabrillo won't let him rent the stadium and set up stages on its carefully guarded turf, but this month allowed the John Wesley White Christian Crusade to set up stages and hold a public event that had the same impact as a large concert.

A Cabrillo spokesman says the rule wasn't broken because it allows for experimentation to determine

which events can be scheduled that won't damage the field.

As it turned out, the college wishes it hadn't let the crusaders march in.

Bonnie Durham, facilities coordinator, said the crusade was an "experiment" that failed. The stage set-up damaged the turf and the crusade is being billed about \$200 to pay the damage.

Further, there will be no more crusades at Cabrillo Stadium, she said, and the ban will continue on concerts to keep the field in good shape for athletic events.

The ban on musical events came in reaction to a rock concert held in August, 1977, when Neil Young and Elvin Bishop delighted crowds all day long.

In part, the ban came in reaction to a nail dropped on the field when the stage was torn down. The nail was picked up by a football player who found it sticking out of his hand.

The following year, Cabrillo College officials relaxed the rule enough to allow a "soft rock" concert sponsored by local businessmen. All profits went to the college.

Sandage said he first approached Cabrillo College two years ago to schedule an event and was told he couldn't do it.

A few months after that, the interim facilities coordinator booked the John Wesley White Crusade for this summer.

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"There's something fishy going on," Sandage said, "the crusade had the stadium for eight nights in a row and they do the same things that are done at a musical event. And they used a big stage and sound equipment."

Durham said there's no preference shown because one event was religious and the other not.

"We can't discriminate in use of our facilities at all. We allow a great variety of uses," she said.

Durham said the crusade was restricted to using a metal pipe-supported stage with no nails, and that it wasn't expected it would damage the turf.

As it turned out, the boards under the metal pipes scorched the grass and the trucks bringing in equipment damaged the grass.

She said the crusade didn't violate its contract, but that the contract didn't cover everything it should have.

"I really can't compare the two

types of events (rock concerts and religious crusades) but certainly there are similarities," Durham said.

She added, "Neither one worked out."

In 1977, she was in charge of ticket sales at the Neil Young concert.

"It was an all-day marathon. The entire field was covered, and some of the people there built bonfires.

"They had a huge stage, 20 feet deep that covered two-thirds of the field; it must have weighted the field. Behind it was the food area from one side of the field to the other and 30 yards deep."

A reviewer of that concert noted: "In the fall, some Cabrillo Seahawk football player might find marijuana plants growing in the lush green turf while he is picking himself up after a head-jarring tackle."

It was beyond the imagination of the reviewer that it would be a nail the Seahawk player would find. The hard way.