

Butch Leidl Field Naming & Locker Room Addition: Field Dedication set for Nov. 15

PLATTEVILLE -

The University of Wisconsin-Platteville has announced its effort to raise funds to secure a naming of its field in the name of legendary coach Lester “Butch” Leidl. Leidl coached all three major sports over a total of 41 years from 1927 to 1968 and retired from the University in 1969. Leidl is known not only for his efforts as a coach but also as a mentor to student-athletes.

On November 15th, 2008 Butch Leidl Field will be dedicated. Thereafter the field will be called ‘Butch Leidl Field at Ralph E. Davis Pioneer Stadium’. A program prior to the 1:00 football game is scheduled and all interested people, and in particular Leidlmen, are invited to attend.

As part of this tribute, the university announced plans to expand the athletic facilities at the stadium to include a new locker room and multi-purpose area to better serve the growing number of students and athletes that use the facility. The new facility will be used not only by the varsity football and soccer teams, but also by club sports’ teams and during high school tournaments and games.

Many of Coach Leidl’s former student-athletes are pleased with the plans and feel it is well deserved. As Mike Routhieaux, a 1965 graduate and former football player explains “He (Leidl) was a special guy. One of the people in your life you never forget. I remember how much he respected his players and their decisions even if he didn’t agree with them.”

Gil Lindloff, a 1948 graduate and former football and baseball player, fondly remembers Coach Leidl’s great one liners. “‘Sleep nights’ was a phrase I heard quite a bit.” Lindloff also remembers Leidl’s care and concern for his players. “He made sure we had a place to stay and looked after the ones that

were away from home. He was helpful when we were looking for jobs during college and after we graduated. Many of his players' first jobs were because of his referrals.”

As a college student, Leidl lettered in football at UW-Oshkosh and then at UW-Madison where he held the school record for the long distance place kick for many years. He is an inductee into both the UWP Hall of Fame and the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame. A decorated veteran of World War I, Leidl is also remembered for his emotional support of players leaving for duty during World War II.

“Butch was a pretty tough cookie,” says long time friend and former University assistant Chancellor Lloyd Linden, “he was full of fire and brimstone on the field but he was a really good fella to be around. He made sure his players were taken care of and felt like part of a family.”

Leidl died in 1980. He is survived by a son, Jim, and a granddaughter. He also had one daughter, Mary, who is deceased.

The goal of the UWP Foundation is to raise one million dollars for the naming and renovation project, and so far pledges and donations have been brisk. To date over \$260,000 has been pledged. Currently the project's funding comes entirely from private gifts and not tax-dollars so construction cannot begin until a significant portion of the total cost is available for use. Fundraising will continue through 2008 and throughout most of 2009. Tentative plans call for construction to begin in summer of 2010 as long as the needed funds are available. Construction could occur sooner if funds are available at an earlier time.

For more information on the naming, locker room project, or dedication on November 15th contact Holly Kaiser at the UW-Platteville Foundation, 608.342.1879, or email kaiserh@uwplatt.edu. ###