



## New Field, New Building,

# New Attitude

Trent Community Sport and Recreation Centre

Campaign Kicks Up the Competitive Level

BY DONALD FRASER '91

By all accounts, including mine, the disruption hasn't been too bad.

And by all accounts, especially, Bill Byrick's, the results are going to be astounding.

The construction taking place at the PBS Wilson Athletics Building may have made for a few noisier than usual squash games for me, but when I look forward to what the complex will soon feature, I don't mind at all.

The old building is getting a face-lift you see.

Well, more than a face-lift, really. An entire makeover.

With new squash courts, a sports medicine centre, rowing/paddling tank, climbing wall, "home team" dressing room, café, and classrooms, the complex will hardly be recognizable. Throw in major overhauls to the changeroom and pool areas, and the recent addition of the artificial turf stadium-style playing field, and the University will have a state-of-the-art facility that will serve both Trent and the surrounding community.

It's enough to make Trent's Director of Athletics downright giddy.

"You're not going to believe what this place is going to be like," gushes Byrick. "What we are working on is going to improve facilities, athletic leadership, medical support, university recruitment... It's an incredible endeavour."

It started back in 2002, when Byrick and Athletics Complex staff began hosting "input sessions" on the future of sport and wellness at Trent. An incredible 24 sessions provided plenty of feedback on three main areas

of growth for the complex: the outdoor playing field, the rapidly aging building, and increased use of the waterway and nature areas.

After turning to local landscape architects Basterfield and Associates for assistance in planning, the group moved forward in the small steps that they could accomplish immediately. This included the purchase of new canoes, and a sprucing of the shoreline by the complex.

They then approached the University Board of Governors with plans to first improve the playing fields and then the building itself.

When the Board agreed, they went, cap-in-hand, to the Trent Community. The results were beyond expectations. The results, in fact, were astounding.

*"We want to raise the standard of personal fitness and sport in the entire community."*

— Peter Adams, Campaign Co-Chair

In 2004, The Trent Central Student Association granted them the opportunity to propose a \$50-per-student levy for funding expansion. Byrick and company made a bold statement and vowed, should the students vote "yes," that "next year they'd step onto a brand new state-of-the-art turf."

An incredible 87 per cent of full-time undergraduate students approved.

"This was probably the largest turn-out for a levy vote ever at Trent," exclaims Byrick. "Definitely the largest I've heard of."

And the turf was in place, as promised. On budget. On time.

With both the Trent and Peterborough Community behind them, Athletics Complex staff and supporters sought out something to put them on the map – something they felt could rally support for the changes needed. When they landed the U-19 World Women's Lacrosse Championship, they got just that. The news reverberated not just through the surrounding community, but nationally as well.

Peterborough took notice.

"The new stadium field really opened up Trent to the community," says Byrick. "It has become a home to every sports-based community group around. We have high-school soccer, lacrosse, football, and rugby championships all happening at the same time. It has become a lively community centre."

Shortly after the opening of the new field, the Trent Community Sport and Recreation Centre Campaign swung into high gear, with the appointing of two high profile campaign co-chairs. With former Peterborough MP and Professor Emeritus Peter Adams, former Board of Governors Chair **Gary Wolff '67** and **Rob Marland '83** at the helm, things really took off.

"We had a three-fold mission," says Adams. "We wanted to raise the profile of athletics at Trent, improve the opportunities for wellness and personal fitness for the entire community, and, of course, raise money for the new building."

They then set the bar high. The campaign is seeking \$4 million in order to accomplish their goals.

“And our goals are pretty impressive,” reports Adams. “We want to address the needs of seniors, engage youth, engage people with disabilities, increase the quality of life of both students and community members, increase overall physical fitness. We want to make a holistic centre that will link existing components such as the nature area trail, the waterway, the rowing club, the new Camp Kawartha Environment Centre, the stadium, with the new sports and medicine building.

“In short, we want to raise the standard of personal fitness and sport in the entire community.”

Wolff also draws links between the campaign, the university, and Peterborough as a whole. “As a Trent alumnus, I recognize the importance of providing recreational opportunities for students while they are pursuing their academic careers,” he says. “This new Centre will provide many opportunities for post-secondary students and all students in the community – elementary and secondary – to participate in innovative and award-winning recreational programs at Trent University.”

Byrick relishes the notion of both awards and competition. As a former competitive tennis player, sport still flows in his veins. He wants to see Trent make a bigger impact on the Canadian University sports scene.

#### FEATURES WILL INCLUDE:

- Fitness Centre and Cardio Loft
- Swimming Pool Retrofit
- Family/Disabled Change Room
- Change Room Upgrades
- Team Change Room
- Therapy Pool
- Indoor Rowing/Paddling Tank
- Climbing Wall
- International Competitive Squash Court
- Physiotherapy Rehabilitation Centre
- Multi-Purpose Room
- Flexible Classroom Space
- Improved Access to the Stadium, River and Facilities
- Outdoor Pavilion
- All-Inclusive Memberships



While the new Centre will serve thousands of community members, its construction will be a result of an equal number of generous and dedicated supporters. From staff, to local teams, to campaign leaders, to students and alumni, there are countless people involved in the project.

*As part of the refurbishment of the Wilson Athletics building, a new international squash court is being constructed.*

“If we’re going to be in it, we have to be in it to win,” he says with a glint in his eye.

With the hiring of Brian Greer as a full-time recruiter, Trent’s competitive chances have increased immeasurably. Greer had spent 35 years coaching a variety of sports at the high school level before being brought in to attract young athletes to attend Trent. This represents a new attitude and emphasis for varsity sports at Trent.

There was also the introduction of summer training camps.

“With intensive camps beginning in August, we get ourselves on the same playing field as other schools,” says Byrick.

Then there is the sport medicine aspect. The new building will have a full-time clinic featuring an orthopedic surgeon, full-time physiotherapists, and massage therapists. Trent athletes will be healthy enough to compete with the best schools in Canada.

Finally, there will be an increased opportunity for athletes and community members alike to access top-of-the-line equipment.

“We had nine cardio machines,” reports Byrick, “we’ll have 50. We had 23 strength building stations. This will increase to 55.”

Combined with all the other new features, this will, all of a sudden,

vault Trent into a position of being an innovative leader in the area of sport and wellness.

Of course, some of this still depends on the success of the fundraising campaign.

And this is where the campaign co-chairs hope that Trent alumni will step in. “The students and community have spoken, and have really stepped up to bat,” says Adams. “Now we’re reaching out, casting a wider net.”

Both he and Wolff would like to see former students show their support as well.

“It’s simple,” says Adams. “Call the University for more information. Go online. What you will see is impressive. It is infectious. It will make you want to be a part of the Trent team.”

I’ve been feeling more and more like a member of the team over the past few months. As I watch the new portion of the building take shape, and as I go over the new plans, I can’t help but get excited myself.

Sure, there is a bit of dust in the air right now. But there is also excitement and hope. The campaign is gaining momentum, and the end seems achievable.

As an alumnus and a member of both the Trent and Peterborough communities, I have a feeling that we’re in this to win. **T**