

Stadium clock counts down to implosion

The Sun July 12/08

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Frank Clair Stadium's south-side stands have one week to live.

River Coun. Maria McRae and Orleans Coun. Bob Monette invited media on a nostalgia tour of the famed football field at Lansdowne Park before demolition crews implode the stands next Sunday.

City council voted to demolish the south-side stands after a structural review revealed cracks and concrete separation.

The stands were immediately closed to the public, and will be brought down with dynamite at 8 a.m. Sunday, July 20.

'Final goodbye'

"We thought we'd come to say a final goodbye to the stands," said McRae.

The councillors used the opportunity to issue a plea to Ottawa residents to embrace the possible return of a CFL team to the stadium.

"Football is not dead in Canada's capital," said McRae.

A handful of Roughriders alumni were enlisted to help deliver the message, including Dan Dever, Jeff Avery, Ted Smale, Donn Smith and Glenn Kulka.

"These guys all played in different eras, all with one thing in mind: To assist the city to bring football back to Ottawa and have the same feelings that we had back then return again," said Mark Kosmos, another CFL alumnus and Local Heroes owner. "The fans were great, and I think we can all make that happen again."

Focus on future

Kosmos said Ottawa football fans should be buoyed by the ownership group headed by Ottawa 67's owner Jeff Hunt.

"We've never had consistency of ownership and I think we have that now," said Kosmos.

Monette expressed hope that the Design Lansdowne competition would result in a "revitalized stadium."

"We're a bit sad to see the south side in the condition that it's in, but we have hope that it's only the beginning."

The south-side stands, and all 6,648 seats that go with it, will be demolished with 228 sticks of dynamite in a total of eight to 15 seconds. Several roads in the area will be closed to traffic on Sunday.

The demolition will be shown live via webcam at www.ottawa.ca.

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