



THE RIVERFRONT stadium will be enclosed under a dome 872 feet in diameter with an open plaza under the rim.

Best Stadium Features 18,000 Portable Seats

By W. W. EDGAR

The long-awaited domed stadium, now virtually assured for the Detroit riverfront, will be the envy of multi-millionaire John E. Fetzer, owner of the Detroit Tigers, for it.

Flanked by Detroit Mayor Roman Gribbs and Tom Adams, chairman of the Wayne County Stadium Authority, when he announced the signing of a 40-year lease, the Tiger chief emphasized: "This will be the best stadium of its kind in the country, and you can be assured of that."

Amid the cheers of several hundred guests at the Tigers' annual press party, he added:

"I waited a long time before deciding on the long term lease. I wanted to make sure it was the best thing for Detroit and our loyal fans. I have that assurance now and faith in the future to make the stadium the envy of the world."

TO BE BUILT at an approximate cost of \$126 million, the stadium will have a seating capacity of 52,000 for baseball and 62,000 for football.

"Among the features of the facility," Adams explained, "aside from the permanent dome, will be a section of 18,000 portable seats.

"We will be able to move these seats in close to the permanent stands," he pointed out, "to provide the same intimacy the fans now enjoy at Tiger Stadium."

"These special seats will be built on a platform that can be wheeled around, and the flexibility of the seating arrangement is the latest concept of sports stadia. We will have the first."

ACCORDING TO the present timetable, the State Legislature is expected to pass the measure this month that will funnel a percentage of race track revenue into the stadium fund. This, along with a county hotel-motel tax of five per cent on accommodations, will be the basis on which the revenue bonds will be offered for sale.

"We expect to go to the bond market late in February," Adams announced. "If we're successful in the sale, ground can be broken some time late in March."

The facility, which will be just west of Cobo Hall, will require three years to build and is expected to be ready for occupancy in 1975.

"And we'll be in it the first day it is ready," Tiger Owner Fetzer promised.

FETZER'S SURPRISE announcement of the lease signing immediately brought up the status of Tiger Stadium, for years recognized as one of the better ball parks in the country.

"Our present stadium is fast deteriorating," Fetzer said. "It had to go some time. It might just as well be now — or as soon as the riverfront stadium is built — and I am all enthused about the move."

No figures were announced regarding the rental, but it was learned that the rate was set on an average daily attendance of 27,000.

No mention was made of having the Detroit Lions as a tenant, either, but Adams admitted, "I wouldn't be a bit surprised to get a phone call."

THERE'S A LOT MORE TO BASEBALL THAN BASE HITS!" Fetzer pointed out after making official announcement of his decision. "A big, new beautiful stadium, for the enjoyment of fans from all over the state, is something that Detroit has needed and this will be another jewel along the river to take its place with Cobo Hall, Cobo Arena and Ford Auditorium."

The Tiger owner and Adams revealed that they had made a survey of all the new stadiums in the country — Atlanta, Dallas, Houston and Washington D.C.

The best features of these facilities will be combined with the best of the later innovations in the riverfront facility.

"Whether the Lions join with us now is a bit beside the point," Adams said.

"We will have synthetic turf, portable seats and areas where major bowling tournaments and basketball can be accommodated."

While waiting any favorable action on the part of the Detroit Lions, who have a contract with the City of Pontiac, in a proposed stadium, Adams let it be known that he is planning football exhibition games and even entertaining the possibility of having a franchise in the Canadian Football League.

"Those things will have to wait," he smiled in company with the mayor and the Tiger boss, "until we get to the bond market and have the bond sold."

"Once that is accomplished, you'll see some real action."



ANNOUNCING THE stadium deal is Thomas Adams, chairman of the Wayne County Stadium Authority, flanked by Detroit Mayor Roman S. Gribbs (left) and Tiger owner John Fetzer.

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