

Pacific Athletic Center Expands Facility for Baseball, Softball

By Christopher Brewer / cbrewer@chronline.com | Posted: Thursday, July 17, 2014 11:31 am

A Chehalis sports facility that just opened its doors two years ago is expanding already.

Youth Sports of Chehalis, a nonprofit organization founded by Pacific Mobile co-owners Garth Haakenson and his sister, Gretchen Moore, as well as their respective spouses, has begun work on a new indoor baseball and softball practice complex that should open by this fall.

Chris Moore, co-founder of Youth Sports of Chehalis, said the facility will be a 102- by 102-square-foot building complete with batting cages with new pitching machines, and a room that functions as an office or film room, all in an effort to help youth baseball and softball teams practice year-round and not have to worry about weather.

“Our fastpitch programs at the PAC are practicing in local gyms right now, and that means they have to use different equipment,” Moore said. “This will allow practices to be more true to the game.”

The facility at 2091 Jackson Highway in Chehalis will include a baseball and softball diamond sans outfield, primarily to give infielders needed practice and cut down on the building’s overall size. Moore said the building, valued at \$300,000 according to building permits, can also serve as overflow space for basketball and volleyball tournaments that take place at the original Pacific Athletic Center building, which opened in June 2012.

“We all have young kids still, and we wanted to help our youth who play sports in this community,” Moore said, describing the reason for the expansion.

The Pacific Athletic Center currently sponsors girls fastpitch teams at the 10U, 12U and 14U levels. Baseball is on the table at some point, Moore said.

In addition to the new building going up, crews have refinished the flooring surface at the Pacific Athletic Center’s main building, which is used primarily for basketball and volleyball. Moore said plans for that building include installing a curtain to separate the courts during tournaments to minimize visual distractions.

“We keep getting really busy, and the facility is pretty booked up,” Moore said of the main PAC building.



PAC's New Building

The foundation of a new building is seen on the east end of the Pacific Athletic Center property on Wednesday afternoon in Chehalis. Plans for the new structure include a turf infield for baseball and softball, batting cages and multi-purpose courts. The project is expected to be finished sometime in the fall of 2014.

“We’ve got a lot of clinics and tournaments for kids. We’re still learning the ropes on operating it, but I think we’re getting better.”

To account for the increase in use at the PAC, Moore said, crews have worked to double the parking space at the building, and the nearby Greater Chehalis Food Bank has agreed to let them use their parking lot if necessary.

Ron Sandrini, of Sandrini Construction, serves as the project’s main contractor, and Moore said the goal is to get the building open to the public by the first of September.

“We’re still figuring out how we want to evolve,” Moore said.

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