Carr tennis bubble collapses

By Tony Zamparutti

The inflatable structure covering the J. B. Carr Indoor Tennis Courts collapsed after midnight Thursday morning, during a light snowfall.

Paul Barrett, Director of Physical Plant, said "it's not immediately clear what happened." He added that there probably was a malfunction in the inflation system, the fans that keep the bubble pressurized.

As the bubble deflated, it fell onto the tennis court light posts, ripping the fabric. Barrett said he hoped MIT's insurance policies will cover the cost of replacing or repairing the bubble.

Three of the four fabric pieces of the bubble were damaged, as well as the light fixtures, according to Director of Sports Information Kenneth J. Cerino. Cerino said there is not yet a timetable for the repair of the bubble.

Bird Air Structures, Incorporated, the manufacturer of the bubble, sent an employee to inspect the damage Friday, and will send an engineer to MIT later this week.

The Department of Athletics is transferring all tennis activity to the new Athletic Center. The Carr tennis facility had four tennis courts; the Athletic Center has three.

Cerino noted, "all contract time users are being contacted to arrange, whenever possible, transfer of their time to the Athletic Center." Contract users are those who have paid for court time in advance.

Students will be able to reserve court time on weekends from 2 to 6pm, added Cerino. He noted that the phone at the bubble will be disconnected for several weeks.

The bubble was erected in the fall of 1978 after its predecessor collapsed on January 20, 1976, under the weight of heavy snow.

The present bubble was expected to have a ten-year lifetime.

Bank initiated installation plan

A letter to Trussell from Dickson last month which discussed the possibility of a conflict with Undergraduate Association (UA) plans to institute a student credit union, Bruce A. Kiernan '83, of the UA Special Projects Committee, noted that the credit union was only one of three proposed ideas to provide better financial services to students. He commented, however, that "it may be foolish to limit the machines to one bank.

Dickson indicated that the current proposal originated with Bay Banks, and that requests from other banks would be considered.

Trussell was unavailable for comment yesterday.

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