

CASHION'S CORNER

by Nick Cashion

Tomorrow the Utes meet Arizona in Rice Stadium and all the color and spectacle of a big-time college game will be witnessed and experienced by everyone who attends. Not quite. The teams, cheerleaders, band and "spectators" will all be there, but that is where the resemblance ends.

Spirit and enthusiasm, the only bonds between players and fans, are dead at the University. Junior guard Bill Powers likes the word "dormant" better, and maybe he has a point. After all, the crowd always comes alive when something important happens, like the cheerleaders throwing little red footballs into the stands.

Spirit lacks

Attribute it to whatever you like; personal inhibitions, religion, or the fact that the University lacks student unity. The results are always the same—20,000 "spectators" staring silently across the AstroTurf at each other.

At Michigan in 1969, the press was critical of the spirit exemplified by the fans when only "60,000" showed up on a rainy Saturday. In that same year an attendance record of 104,488 was set against Ohio State. Some 35,000 Ohio fans attended by way of a car caravan from Columbus to Ann Arbor.

Quarterback Brownie Van Galder, one of the most colorful players to play at Utah in a long time, is concerned about the lack of enthusiasm. "I don't understand it. We scored 59 points last week and there was virtually no excitement." He added. "It has gotten better since last year." He's being nice.

Plays need enthusiasm

Many of the players on the team have views on the subject, but most are unprintable. It's understandable that they should feel that way since they put in an average of 20 intensive hours a week in preparation for the games. Then comes the "big day" and the "big letdown" on Saturday.

It's a pretty sad state of affairs when players would rather play an away game, but that feeling is not unjustified when you consider what the football team has to look forward to when playing at home. "The fans are louder away than they are here," stated a player who preferred to remain anonymous. "At least you feel like you're in a football stadium and not a morgue."

Football is supposed to be a vicarious experience for the spectator; a chance to let off some steam and the pressures of daily life. If you have been releasing those tensions before Saturday, do yourself and the team a favor—save them for the game.