

JUL 15 2016

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena

Other names/site number Kemper Arena (preferred)

Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

2. Location

Street & number <u>1800 Genessee Street</u>	N/A	not for publication
City or town <u>Kansas City</u>	N/A	vicinity
State <u>Missouri</u> Code <u>MO</u> County <u>Jackson</u> Code <u>095</u> Zip code <u>64102</u>		

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Toni M. Prawl 07/12/16
Signature of certifying official/Title Toni M. Prawl, Ph.D., Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- other (explain:)
- determined eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register

[Signature] 9/9/16
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
1		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Entertainment
Facility

LANDSCAPE: Parking Lot

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Entertainment
Facility

LANDSCAPE: Parking Lot

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Late-Modern

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Metal

roof: Metal

other: Glass

Asphalt

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Areas of Significance

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance

1974-1996

Significant Dates

1974

1996

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

C.F. Murphy Associates (Architect)

J.E. Dunn Construction Co. (Builder)

HNTB Corporation (Architect – alterations)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Kemper Arena
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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 24.3

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (See Continuation Page)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 39.093433 -94.604822 3 39.092908 -94.603611
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

2 39.093360 -94.603879 4 39.092394 -94.603037
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

_____ NAD 1927 or _____ NAD 1983

1 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Rosin, Principal

organization Rosin Preservation date August 2016

street & number 1712 Holmes Street telephone 816-472-4950

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

e-mail Elizabeth@rosinpreservation.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
 - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Kemper Arena

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: Kemper Arena

City or Vicinity: Kansas City

County: Jackson State: Missouri

Photographer: Brad Finch, f-stop Photography

Date

Photographed: October 2013 and April 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 28:** East and south elevations. View to southwest from Beardsley Road.
- 2 of 28:** East elevation. View to west.
- 3 of 28:** North and west elevations. Soffit vent visible under upper mass. View to southeast.
- 4 of 28:** North and west elevations. View to southeast.
- 5 of 28:** West elevation. View to east.
- 6 of 28:** West and south elevation; trash dock visible on right. View to northeast.
- 7 of 28:** Southwest corner at concourse level. View to east.
- 8 of 28:** Arena bowl. View to south.
- 9 of 28:** Arena bowl. View to north.
- 10 of 28:** Floor level seating riser cubbies. View to north.
- 11 of 28:** Typical private suite.
- 12 of 28:** Typical upper level deck with painted mechanical vents.
- 13 of 28:** Corner entrance vestibule at main concourse level.
- 14 of 28:** Main concourse (typical).
- 15 of 28:** Typical concourse concession stand.
- 16 of 28:** Intact concourse just west of 1996 atrium. View to south.
- 17 of 28:** Access point between concourse and 1996 atrium. View to northeast.
- 18 of 28:** 1996 atrium and entrance. View to north.
- 19 of 28:** Access point to arena bowl (typical).
- 20 of 28:** Mid-level ramp/bridge to Club Level concourse (typical).
- 21 of 28:** Club Level concourse (typical)
- 22 of 28:** View of main concourse from Club Level bridge (typical).
- 23 of 28:** Ground level entrance (typical).
- 24 of 28:** Ground level concourse (typical).
- 25 of 28:** Locker room (typical).
- 26 of 28:** Box office. View to northwest.
- 27 of 28:** Storage structure. View to east.
- 28 of 28:** Storage Structure interior. View to west.

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Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

Figure 1: Site Map. *Source: ArcGIS 2013.*

Figure 2: Contextual Map. *Source: ArcGIS 2013.*

Figure 3: Photo Map – Exterior

Figure 4: Photo Map and Current Plan – Concourse Level

Figure 5: Photo Map and Current Plan – Club level

Figure 6: Photo Map and Current Plan – Upper Seating Deck

Figure 7: Photo map and Current Plan – Lower Level

Figure 8: Partial Site Plan for Kemper Arena, Sheet A-1.3 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

Figure 9: Concourse Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.4, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, 23 July 1973.

Figure 10: Upper Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.6, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, [1973].

Figure 11: North Elevation and Transverse Section of Kemper Arena, Sheet A-3.1 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

Figure 12: Current Plan, Lower Level. Sheet A 1.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 13: Current Plan, Club Level. Sheet A 1.3, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 14: Current Plan, Upper Seating Deck. Sheet A 1.4, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 15: Typical Elevations, Sheet A 3.2, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 16: Section at Mid Point, Sheet A 4.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 17: Historic Site Plan. (*Source: "R. Crosby Kemper, Jr. (sic) Memorial Arena Kansas City, Missouri," Architectural Record, March 1976, 109.*)

Figure 18: Kemper Arena, Late Summer or Fall 1974, View to Northwest. (*Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013*)

Figure 19: Kemper Arena Following Roof Collapse, 13 June 1979 (*Source: Vertical File, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013*)

Figure 20: Municipal Auditorium, Kansas City, Missouri, 1950. (*Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 1 April 2015*).

Figure 21: Municipal Stadium, Kansas City, Missouri, 1955. (*Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 1 April 2015*).

Figure 22: Truman Sports Complex, date unknown. (*Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 31 March 2015*).

Figure 23: Bartle Hall Convention Center, Kansas City, c. mid-1970s (*Source: Robert Askren Photograph Collection, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013*).

Figure 24: Complete List of Concerts Held at Kemper Arena, 1975 - 2011 (*Source: Concert Database, http://www.liquisearch.com/kemper_arena/concerts, accessed online 24 February 2016*).

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Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

SUMMARY

The R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena (Kemper Arena) occupies a 24.3-acre site in Kansas City's industrial West Bottoms. The 1974 arena, designed by C.F. Murphy Associates of Chicago, is comprised of two distinct components -- the concrete substructure and the superstructure. The substructure is largely hidden by an earthen berm that rises from the parking lot. The superstructure sits atop the berm. The arena bowl, seating risers, interior concourses and lower level functional spaces are integral elements of the poured concrete substructure. The superstructure includes three oversized trusses that rise from the berm to cross the mass of the building. Inside the building a secondary system of bar joists and trusses hangs from the superstructure and carries the load of the roof deck. This approach allowed designers to achieve a 324-foot clear span inside the arena. Metal panels mounted on steel mullions clad the exterior. The enclosed mass of the superstructure has upper and lower components. The lower block is an oval that reflects the shape and dimensions of the arena bowl and its encircling concourse. Resting on top of the oval is a rectangular upper block with rounded corners. All elements of the superstructure are white, giving the arena a cohesive appearance. A narrow enclosed tubular storage structure, part of the original construction, connects to the arena floor through the south end of the berm. A box office and trash dock were incorporated into the south side of the berm at an unknown date (between 1987 and 1996). A glass atrium and parking level entrance were added to the east elevation in 1996. As part of this work, the central truss was altered to accommodate additional seating on the east and west sides of the arena bowl. The modified truss was designed to visually complement the two flanking, original trusses. The significant elements of the building design otherwise remain intact. The nominated property has one secondary resource that supports its historic function: the historic parking lots north and east of the arena and the road system that navigates the property are a contributing structure.

ELABORATION

SETTING

Kemper Arena sits at the center of a large, flat patch of ground in the southwest corner of Kansas City's West Bottoms industrial district (*Figures 1-2*). The state line separating Missouri and Kansas runs immediately to the west of the property. To the east, steep bluffs present a wooded slope toward the property and the Kansas (Kaw) River, which flows just west of the state line. The river channel makes a deep curve at a point aligned with Kemper Arena. A concrete levee lines the river bank. Open lots covered with gravel and/or grass fill most of the open ground between the levee and the state line. There are a few clusters of industrial buildings in this area south of Kemper Arena.

Kemper Arena functions as part of the American Royal complex, which includes several buildings and large paved parking lots, roughly bounded by 17th Street on the north, Wyoming Street on the east, and American Royal Drive on the west and south. Within this cluster the arena and its adjacent parking lots are publicly owned, while the rest of the complex is privately owned by the American Royal, a not-for-profit organization that promotes and educates about the area's agricultural heritage. South of Kemper Arena within the boundary of the complex there are several large event halls associated with the American Royal, including Hale Arena and the Governor's Exhibition Hall. Shared drives run between the American Royal buildings and Kemper Arena with access to both Wyoming Street and American Royal Drive. The large asphalt parking lots north and east of Kemper Arena are part of the historic site plan, while the parking lots south of Hale Arena were added to accommodate patrons to the event halls. The boundary

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for this nomination follows the drives that encircle the arena and its associated parking lots, excluding the non-historic American Royal buildings and their associated parking lots.

Two modern vehicular viaducts cross the Kansas River. One carries 23rd Street over the southern tip of the Kemper Arena-American Royal complex; the other carries I-670/I-70 near 12th Street, a few blocks to the north. There are also several historic truss bridges in the vicinity of Kemper Arena. Active rail lines cross the river on truss structures near 25th Street and north of 12th Street; there is also a vacated vehicular truss bridge just north of 23rd Street.

The blocks north of the Kemper Arena-American Royal complex retain vestiges of the commercial/industrial district that historically flourished in the West Bottoms. Just north of 17th Street is the prominent historic Stockyard Exchange Building. Much of the open land lying west of Genessee Street was the historic stockyards. East of Wyoming Street is the very active alignment of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and a small yard of rail spurs (*Photo 1*). Kansas City's original union station and a roundhouse once stood in this area near 14th Street.

ARENA (CONTRIBUTING BUILDING)

Exterior

Kemper Arena rests on a grass covered berm that rises approximately 25 feet above the grade of the surrounding parking lots (*Photos 1-6, Figure 3*). The berm covers the underlying lowest level of the arena structure. A wide concrete sidewalk encircles the top of the berm (*Photo 7*). Wide ceremonial concrete stairs that access the concourse align with the four corners of the arena and the original building entrances (*Photos 3 and 6*).

Three additions are integral to the south side of the berm, through which they connect directly to the interior of the arena. The box office has an arched metal roof supported on round tubular posts (*Photo 26*). To its west, stairs rise to the sidewalk encircling the arena. A concrete loading dock sits west of the box office (*Photo 6*). Extending south from berm is a long narrow one-story metal-clad storage structure with four large vehicular bays (*Photo 27*). The structure has tubular structural elements and a barrel-shaped roof clad with corrugated metal. Large overhead doors fill the vehicular bays in the west elevation. The floor inside is dirt (*Photo 28*). The north end of the structure connects to the floor of the arena via a tunnel through the berm, providing covered space for event staging. While the 6,600 square foot structure was not part of the original arena plan, it was added to the design and built concurrent with the arena when operators realized the need for such a space to facilitate transitions between events held inside the arena (*Figure 17*). As such it is considered a historic part of the resource. The additional space was especially critical when consecutive uses required different floor surfaces.¹ The box office and loading dock were added after 1987 and before 1996.

Two stacked geometric masses form the body of the arena (*Photos 3-5*). The lower oval mass reflects the shape of the arena bowl and its encircling interior concourse. The rectangular shape of the upper mass extends the main oval to accommodate mechanical equipment in the four rounded corners. Panels of seamed metal clad the walls of both forms and the soffits at the corners of the upper mass. There are slit vents and can lights in these soffits below the mechanical equipment. The entrances in the four corners of

¹ Mike McGraw, "Addition of Storage Area Approved for New Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 6 July 1973, Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library.

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the arena have white metal slab doors that blend with the skin when shut (*Photo 7*). Inside each entrance is a vestibule formed by a parallel bank of glazed doors (*Photo 13*).

In 1996 the east elevation of the arena was altered with the addition of an entrance at-grade with the parking lot and a large glass "mask" that covers the central portion of the facade (*Photo 2*). The mask has a gently convex shape and a sloped form that extends slightly from the skin of the building. A metal-clad parapet rises above the glazing and the original roof line to accommodate additional seating at the top of the arena's upper deck. Below the glazing, a bank of entrance doors is set into the berm and framed with concrete. Inside this entrance, patrons rise to the main concourse via escalators and stairs (*Photo 10*).

Three huge trusses composed of triangular modules cross the arena from east to west at regular intervals (*Photos 1, 5*). They are the primary structural elements that support the roof and walls. Tubular members ranging from 30 inches to 48 inches in diameter compose the trusses. The north and south trusses are identical. They rest on tapered concrete pylons, which are the visible tops of concrete footings, integral with the substructure, that extend 60 feet into the ground below the berm (*Photo 18*). The central truss was modified in 1996 to accommodate the expanded seating bowl inside the arena. The vertical legs were moved away from the east and west building walls to anchor into concrete footings at-grade with the base of the berm (*Photos 2, 4, 6*). Using members with a similar configuration to the original trusses, the central truss rises above the original parapet (and added wall section on the east), connecting to the original truss on the roof of the arena (*Figure 16*).

Interior

Inside Kemper Arena, a wide concrete concourse encircles the arena bowl at midlevel (*Photo 14, Figure 9*). The original corner entrances provide direct access to the concourse (*Photo 13*). Concession stands and restrooms project from and recess into the concourse walls at periodic locations (*Photos 14-15*). Installation of the "mask" on the east elevation removed the metal wall cladding to create a bright, naturally lit, two-level atrium (*Photo 10*). Within the atrium all of the steel structural elements are exposed and coated with spray-on fire-retardant material. The alterations did not significantly impact the volume of the historic concourse, which remains very legible, referenced by headers that extend across the opening between the atrium and the concourse (*Photos 16-17*).

Kemper Arena has seating for roughly 18,000 spectators. Access to the arena bowl occurs at regular intervals along the concourse. Both the upper and lower seating levels are reached from the same entrance points (*Photo 19*). Each entrance has a central run of concrete stairs heading down to the lower level seats. This access is flanked by two parallel runs of concrete stairs that rise to the upper level seats. In between these access points, other doors in the concourse wall access the private viewing suites that encircle the arena at the top of the lower bowl.

The minimal historic finishes of the concourse are substantially intact (*Photos 14-16*). Square ground-face concrete tiles clad the concourse walls. The concourse has no ceilings, except in front of the four building entrances, which have dropped hard surface ceilings with can lights. In other locations the tiered concrete risers of the upper level seats form the ceiling (*Photo 16*). Large functional light fixtures hang from the exposed structure.

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The arena bowl is a column-free space, 324 feet wide (*Photos 8-9*). Within the bowl blue plastic seats are attached to concrete risers at both the upper and lower levels. The bottom edge of the lower level seats, at or near the arena floor, can be modified as appropriate for each particular event. The aisle can end in stairs that take attendees to the floor; when floor access is not desired metal railings can be installed in front of the bottom row of seats and at the base of the aisles. When needed, additional bleacher seating can be brought out from storage areas under the lower level seats (*Photo 10*). The bottom of the upper deck terminates in a concourse that encircles the arena in front of this seating level. A metal pipe railing attaches to the edge of the deck at the front of the concourse. At some locations along this midlevel point there are concrete bridges that cross over the main concourse to access secondary concession stands and additional restrooms that were added in the mid-1980s (*Photos 20-21, Figure 13*).

At the rear of the lower level seats, at-grade with the midlevel concourse, a series of twenty-five private viewing boxes or suites encircles the arena (*Photo 11*). The concourse at the bottom of the upper deck forms the ceiling for the suites. They typically have ground-face concrete block or painted drywall partitions; concrete or carpeted floors; and dropped ceiling grids, although some suites have custom finishes such as wood paneling or wood parquet floors. A partial-height plexiglass wall forms the front of each suite and perpendicular full-height glass panels separate the suites.

Finishes and fixtures in the arena area are highly functional. The concrete floor allows for the installation of alternate materials as required by specific events – ice for hockey; wood for basketball; and dirt for rodeos and horse shows. Exposed steel trusses and bar joists form a grid at the ceiling (*Photos 8-9*). Sound absorbing panels are placed within most of the grid squares. This is an original design detail. Large runs of exposed ductwork encircle the perimeter of the arena at the top of the upper deck (*Photo 12*). Once painted a vibrant red, the color of the ductwork has faded over time. A large score board hangs from the center of the arena ceiling. Smaller scoreboards are attached to the front of the upper deck concourse at the four midpoints. None of the scoreboards is original. Primary banks of lights hang from the ceiling aligned with the long edges of the arena floor. Smaller banks of lights hang in other locations throughout the arena.

Large openings centered in the short, north and south ends of the lower seating bowl lead from the arena floor to a lower concourse that accesses administrative offices, locker rooms, and other back-of-house spaces (*Figure 12*). There is also an original restaurant/bar space on this level near the north entrance. The functional lower level spaces (concourse, offices, locker rooms, etc.) have painted concrete block walls; concrete, vinyl composition tile or carpeted floors; and dropped ceiling grids with acoustical lay-in tile. Slab metal doors access locker rooms. Offices have some storefront glazing facing the concourse (*Photos 23-25*).

ARENA ALTERATIONS

Kemper Arena experienced the following episodes of alteration since 1974.

1976 – Roof Repair

In May 1976, after an exceptionally heavy spring storm, a section of the arena roof collapsed (*Figure 19*). Forensic investigation pointed to weakened bolts between the secondary trusses and hangers as the cause of the failure. Accordingly, adjustments were made to the entire roof structure as part of the repair. The roof surface was also modified to slope outward toward the edges of the building rather than inward

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toward the center of the building. None of these repairs is evident to the casual observer, and they do not impact the significance of the building's historic function as a mid-twentieth century multipurpose entertainment venue. The primary structural elements and significant exterior and interior finishes were undamaged by the collapse and were not altered during the course of repairs.

1987 – Concourse Amenity Upgrades

In the mid-1980s a Club Level concourse was added under the eaves at the perimeter of the building to provide additional women's restrooms and concession stands. These locations are accessed via concrete bridges at the base of the upper level deck in the four corners of the arena. The bridges cross the main concourse to the Club Level, which is stacked above the built-out spaces (concession stands and restrooms) on the main concourse. The volume of the main concourse remains unobstructed but for the bridges themselves (*Photos 19-21*). This alteration is highly unobtrusive and does not impact the qualities that render the building historically significant.

1987-1996 – Box Office and Trash Dock

Two elements were added to the arena in the late twentieth century. Both are built into the south side of the berm and connect to the interior of the arena at the lower level.

The box office is built into the berm immediately adjacent to the south stairs (*Photo 26*). Only the front (south) elevation and small portions of the side elevations are visible. The flat roof rises about two feet above the top of the berm. The structure is cast-in-place concrete with no ornament. Sloped concrete retaining walls flank the ticket counters recessed under the projecting roof. The five rectangular ticket window openings have a continuous concrete counter and concrete mullions. Metal roll-top security gates cover the windows. A free-standing canopy covers the box office waiting area. White tubular steel members compose the canopy frame. Steel trusses support the barrel vaulted roof, which is clad in metal panels.

The trash dock is built into the southwest corner of the berm (*Photo 6*). Cast-in-place concrete retaining walls frame a recessed area with large trash bays. Rectangular openings in the north wall access interior loading areas. A canopy with tubular steel framing and steel trusses, similar to the canopy over the box office, rises above the concrete roof of the trash dock.

1996 – Additional Seating and East Entrance Modifications

The desire for additional capacity spurred alterations to the arena in 1996 (*Figures 12-16*). Roughly 1,500 seats were added in a block above the upper deck on the east side of the bowl (*Figure 14*). Rising slightly above the original roof line, the block is clad on the exterior with white metal panels matching those of the main building walls (*Figure 15*). A two-story glass curtain wall was installed below the seating block. The original building skin was removed in this location. A new building entrance at the base of the curtain wall provides a direct connection between the historic east parking lot and the building interior.² The entrance leads to a two-story atrium where escalators access the main concourse. Expansion of the building mass to add seating required altering the central exterior truss. New vertical piers were anchored east and west of the berm and rise over the height of the new seating block (the designers anticipated a future, similar addition on the west side of the bowl), where it anchors to the original space frame, which remains intact

² The original design had primary entrances in each of the arena's four corners rather than a single main entrance. The original entrances are intact and used for exiting (see Photos 7 and 9).

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across the roof of the arena. The design mimics the configuration of the original webs, as seen in the flanking piers.

PARKING LOT AND NETWORK OF ROADWAYS (1974 – CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE)

Two striped asphalt parking lots occupy open land north and east of the arena. Grassy strips dotted with mature deciduous trees and edged with concrete curbing and metal chainlink fences bound each parking lot. Four metal attendant booths set on concrete bases regulate entrance to the east parking lot. One such booth stands at the entrance to the north lot. The one-person booths are very small in scale and are excluded from the resource count. A network of two-lane asphalt roads encircles the arena and the parking lots, providing access to each element on the property. There have been no significant alterations to the parking lots or the road network. (*Figure 17*)

INTEGRITY

Kemper Arena remains a unique local example of the mid-twentieth century enclosed multi-purpose entertainment venue, distinguished from other recreation facilities in the city and in the region by its column-free interior and functional adaptability to accommodate a wide variety of events. The majority of features that contribute to its significance and that communicate its exceptional significance as a resource less than fifty years old remain intact. It is highly visible in its historic location and setting, prominently sited in the flat, former stockyards of Kansas City's West Bottoms. Key aspects of its design that define the property type (an efficient structural system that provides unobstructed views; tiers of seating surrounding an oval floor; functional spaces on a lower level) are unaltered. The addition of a secondary concourse and seating at the top of the bowl do not change the organization or function of spaces inside the building. They complement the original design and materials and, most importantly, have not changed the visitor experience on the concourse or in the seating bowl. Alteration of the central truss and the addition of a glass curtain wall to the east elevation in 1996 was an effort to extend the commercial viability of the arena during a period when many venues of a similar vintage were demolished. The nominated resource clearly communicates feelings about and associations with its period of construction and the area of significance for which it is nominated.

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SUMMARY

The R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena (Kemper Arena) at 1800 Genessee Street in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for the area of ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION. It also meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration G for buildings that are less than fifty years old. It is an exceptional local example of the enclosed multipurpose entertainment arena, a property type that evolved in the mid-twentieth century to include functional elements of a traditional auditorium, a music venue, and a sports facility. The City of Kansas City, Missouri developed Kemper Arena to provide a modern, year-round venue for athletic and performance events. At the time of its construction, the multipurpose arena was considered a requisite civic resource for a thriving city. Comparable local entertainment venues extant or planned when Kemper Arena was under construction were either much smaller (Municipal Auditorium), appropriate for only a limited range of events (various downtown theaters and the Bartle Hall convention center), or open to the elements (Kauffman and Arrowhead stadiums). Kemper Arena provided a multipurpose location for a wide array of entertainment experiences that was unique in size, facilities, and amenities to the Kansas City region. Over the next forty years, the variety and importance of events hosted by Kemper Arena created an inexorable connection to nearly every resident of the Kansas City metropolitan area as well as to many from a much broader region, the boundaries of which were defined by arenas of comparable size and draw located in Omaha, Denver, Oklahoma City, and St. Louis.

The venue played a critical role in the community's collective experience during the period of significance, which begins in 1974 with the opening of Kemper Arena and ends in 1996. As Kemper Arena entered a period of decline in the mid-1990s, the venue hosted fewer A-list performers and events and struggled to retain longstanding stalwart users and regional attractions, such as the Big 12 Basketball tournament. A 1996 renovation, added seating to the upper level of the arena bowl, widened the east concourse, and added the entrance on the extended east façade in an effort to extend the economic life of Kemper Arena. These changes supported the historic function of Kemper Arena and did not alter the physical or functional qualities for which it is nominated and significant, but ultimately, the alterations were not successful in staving off economic obsolescence. Kemper Arena remained the city's most important enclosed sports and entertainment venue for another decade, until its role was supplanted by the opening of the Sprint Center in 2007. Replacement of Kemper Arena reflected a shift in arena economics, rather than functionality, that led to the demolition of many venues of similar vintage across the country. The nationwide loss of mid-twentieth century multipurpose arenas enhances the rarity and significance of Kemper as an example of its property type.

ELABORATION

THE MID-CENTURY MULTIPURPOSE ARENA

The urbanization of the United States after the Civil War was accompanied by an increase in both leisure time and disposable income. New commercial ventures offered patrons ways to spend their free time and spare money. Itinerant theater groups, circuses, horse races, athletic events, political rallies and agricultural fairs were popular attractions. In the late nineteenth century these events were housed in temporary facilities (e.g. tents or fields) on the edge of town or in an existing building with a stage or floor for performances and ample seating, such as a town hall or theater. By the start of the twentieth century enclosed sports arenas became more common as the new game of basketball gained popularity.

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Advances in refrigeration technology enabled the production of indoor ice sheets, also elevating ice hockey to an indoor spectacle.

Nationwide there was a sharp rise in the number of multipurpose arenas constructed after World War II. Most of the existing facilities dated from the first quarter of the century and were aging. At the same time, communities without a venue for large civic and recreational gatherings sought to add one. America had experienced almost two decades of lean times. The federal government funded a variety of public development projects during the 1930s through the New Deal programs, but there was little private construction. Then, in the early 1940s construction materials were diverted to the war effort. By the time World War II ended and the national economy rebounded in the 1950s there was a pent-up demand for new buildings to signal the prosperity of the post-war era.

A multipurpose arena was the perfect expression of the times. An arena signaled an affluent local population with both time and money to spend on leisure activities and escapist pursuits.³ In less populated parts of the country the variety of performers and events also drew visitors from the surrounding area. Kansas City had grown after the Civil War into an economic hub at the junction of the Midwest, Plains, and Southwest regions. In addition to its commercial services, visitors came to Kansas City from rural areas of Missouri, Kansas, and surrounding states for shopping and entertainment where, as Rodgers and Hammerstein wrote, everything was up to date.

By the late 1950s, most latent community infrastructure needs had been met and bountiful economic times allowed for public spending on civic luxuries. Such assets promoted a positive public image of the city center to counter the significant increase in suburban development. Writer Frank Deford also credits the modern multipurpose arena with enhancing the visibility of professional and collegiate athletics, taking the circus and the ice show to new profit levels, and creating a viable livelihood for musical entertainers and performers.⁴ The arena offered something that would appeal to everyone, young and old, women and men. Advocates of a new Kansas City arena boasted that the venue could host over 200 events annually.⁵ From the outset there would be a season's worth of professional hockey and basketball games, visits from three circuses and a couple of ice shows, as well as basketball tournaments and, of course, the annual agricultural shows of the American Royal. The American Royal was a locally hosted event that drew attendees from throughout the Midwest and Plains states. It was held in conjunction with the national Future Farmers of America convention, drawing young people to Kansas City from around the country.⁶ The biggest hurdle to the success of any individual event was the multitude of entertainment options available and the finite amount of time at a patron's disposal.⁷

An arena was a big ticket item. While most arenas operated profitably, it took a long time to offset the initial construction costs. Unlike the theaters built by entrepreneurs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the high cost of arena construction in the post-war era was of little interest to the private sector. This left these projects in the hands of the local government or a public-private civic partnership. When the voting public hesitated to approve the large sums required to build an arena,

³ Frank Deford, "Your Time, Not Your Dollar," *Sports Illustrated*, May 12, 1969, 74.

⁴ Keller, 237.

⁵ William McCorkle, "Thompson Asks to Build Posh Suites in New Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 7 May 1973.

⁶ Lynn Cheatum, "Kemper Arena to Provide Setting for Many Events," *Kansas City Star*, 13 October 1974.

⁷ Deford, 75.

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municipalities used public relations campaigns, often emphasizing the economic synergy of the project, to bring success at the polls.⁸

This was very true in Kansas City. There was general consensus in the early 1950s that the booming metropolitan area would soon outgrow Municipal Auditorium, opened in 1937. In 1954 voters approved a \$6 million bond measure to support construction of a new arena. For almost two decades after this vote more pressing local needs held sway, and the bond funds remained unspent. In part there was little external pressure to replace Municipal Auditorium. It remained one of the largest entertainment venues among the cities with which Kansas City competed for convention and arena events, communities as far flung as St. Louis, Des Moines, Omaha, Denver, and Oklahoma City. That dynamic began to shift in the early 1970s when Oklahoma City opened a new 14,000-seat arena, St. Louis refurbished and expanded its pre-war arena (soon to be renamed the Checkerdome), and Denver voters approved bonds for a new 18,000-seat arena. As the National Hockey League (NHL) looked to expand, the time became right for Kansas City to take action. Local elected officials and civic boosters began advocating heavily for a new arena in 1971, hoping to ride the coattails of an NHL expansion team to generate action.⁹

Arena construction and capacity had surged in the 1960s. By the end of the decade, nationwide there were over 355 arenas with seating capacity of 5,000 or more and 100 arenas that could seat double that number. Two-thirds of these had been built after World War II; almost 25 percent were built after 1964.¹⁰ By the early 1970s a new arena typically sat 10,000 – 20,000 spectators.¹¹ The flexible layout easily adapted to the array of entertainment offerings it hosted. Kemper Arena provided this venue for Kansas City. It offered a column-free seating bowl in a flexible venue that could accommodate between 15,000 and 18,000 patrons, nearly double the 9,500-seat capacity of Municipal Auditorium. Venues of comparable size and function were three or more hours away from Kansas City, in cities such as Des Moines (Veterans Memorial Auditorium, 1955), Omaha (Ak-Sar-Ben Coliseum, 1929, demolished 2005), St. Louis (Checkerdome, 1929, demolished 1999), and Denver (Denver Coliseum, 1951).

As was the case with almost all post-war development, parking was a critical component of a successful plan. Many new arenas were located away from the city center in new development districts cleared of older structures to accommodate the new buildings and the requisite parking.¹² A large form set in a sea of parking, the modern arena was ideally poised to host guests from far and wide. After much debate about its proposed location, Kemper Arena took advantage of such a site in Kansas City's West Bottoms. Free from the restrictions of a street grid or proximal buildings, the venue became a beacon to attendees and a regional entertainment destination.

As envisioned for Kemper Arena, a typical multipurpose venue hosted events upwards of three nights per week year-round, offering an array of entertainment options that appealed to all segments of the community. According to Deford, the arena quickly became an integral part of a community's psyche and self-perception. He wrote, "The arena, more than any other, is the building for this time.... It is a phenomenon that all by itself is changing the entertainment habits and sporting interests of millions." Carson Bain, Mayor of Greensboro, North Carolina, echoed Deford, describing arenas as "necessities for

⁸ Deford, 82.

⁹ Joe McGuff, "Sporting Comment," *Kansas City Star*, 23 January 1973.

¹⁰ Deford, 72-73.

¹¹ Joseph R. Warlick, Jr, "A View from the Bleachers," *Modern Steel Construction*, vol. XI, No. 3, Third Quarter 1971, 3-5.

¹² Keller, 194-195,

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the cities of the '70s.... America needs them for the happiness of a community, and in the long run... for civic peace as well."¹³ It was this sentiment that had propelled Kansas City's civic leaders in 1971 to renew their advocacy to replace the aging Municipal Auditorium. As a *Kansas City Star* editorial noted, "the region will gain an impressive indoor amphitheater with a seating capacity large enough to accommodate national events. Jobs are at stake as well as the welfare of the local economy."¹⁴ Another article, written shortly before Kemper Arena opened concluded, "Kansas City's image as a convention center and sports mecca will take on added sheen when the Kemper Arena is ready."¹⁵

From its inception, Kemper hosted a wide variety of events. The underlying concrete floor was easily topped with ice, wood, turf, or dirt as required by the program. Major league sports teams who called Kemper home included the Scouts (National Hockey League), the Kings (National Basketball Association), and the Comets (Major Indoor Soccer League). When the Scouts left after two seasons, minor league hockey teams took up residence. Kemper hosted WWE wrestling events, Women's Flat Track Roller Derby bouts, amateur figure skating competitions, and gymnastics championships. Muhammed Ali staged an exhibition bout at the venue shortly after regaining the World Heavyweight title from George Forman. You went to Kemper to see the circus, the ice show, the rodeo, and monster truck rallies. Bob Hope performed two benefit concerts at Kemper Arena. It was the site of the 1976 Republican National Convention. An annual highlight was the regional agricultural and livestock events hosted by the American Royal and, until 1998, the annual convention of the National FFA Organization (formerly the Future Farmers of America). But, college basketball was consistently one of the arena's biggest draws. For years it hosted Big 8 (later Big 12) basketball playoffs, and in 1988, the 50th anniversary of the NCAA men's basketball tournament, it hosted the Final Four, which was won by the local University of Kansas in a riveting defeat of arch rival University of Oklahoma.

Of equal importance to basketball was Kemper's role as the regional venue hosting premiere touring musical performances. Missourians could see shows of this caliber in Kansas City or in St. Louis. These performers made few stops elsewhere in the region. Kansans might see a big outdoor concert at Veterans Field on the Wichita State University campus or at an arena in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Dallas or Denver. Iowans might see a performance at the Veterans Auditorium in Des Moines. There was War Memorial Stadium in Little Rock, Arkansas, and Ak-Sar-Ben Coliseum in Omaha. But, for the majority of people living in the small cities and rural towns of the eastern Plains, Kansas City and Kemper Arena were THE destination for big musical performances.

Jethro Tull headlined the first rock concert at Kemper Arena in January 1974. Over the years, Kemper hosted performances by everyone from Frank Sinatra to Michael Jackson and U2. Elvis Presley, Paul McCartney & Wings, the Rolling Stones, ZZ Top, The Who, Aerosmith, KISS, Pink Floyd, Alice Cooper, and Rod Stewart; Yes, Queen, and Rush; Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel, AC/DC, Journey, the Police, Metallica, Motely Cure, Ozzy Osbourne, Boston, and more.¹⁶ The roster of performances reads like a who's who of late-twentieth century popular music. Figure 24 shows a list of rock concerts held at Kemper

¹³ Deford, 74.

¹⁴ "Equitable Plan to Build an Arena and Save the Royal," *Kansas City Star*, 21 March 1973. Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁵ Lynn Cheetum. "Kemper Arena to Provide Setting for Many Events," *Kansas City Star*, 13 October 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁶ Concert Database, www.pf-db.com/index.php?list_venue&choice=113, 26 January 2015; Rick Hellman, KC Rock History Project, personal communication, 1 January 2015.

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compiled by the website liquisearch.com. For a pop or rock concert, no other Kansas City venue could offer the size or facilities that Kemper did. Older venues, such as Municipal Auditorium, Memorial Hall (Kansas City, Kansas), Cowtown Ballroom, and the Folly Theater were significantly smaller and unable to accommodate the equipment that was inherent to large stadium concerts beginning in the 1970s. Arrowhead Stadium, Starlight Theater (at Swope Park), and Sandstone Amphitheater (Bonner Springs, Kansas) hosted a limited number of seasonal outdoor concerts and music festivals, but the vast majority of top rock shows were staged at Kemper.¹⁷

By the mid-1990s, there was a growing trend across the country to replace mid-century arenas. The big change was not about overall seating capacity or views (most arenas from the 1970s had ample column-free bowls), but rather it was a question of amenities. The high dollars commanded by luxury seating at major sporting events was the driving force. When Kemper opened, a professional basketball or hockey game typically drew 6,000 – 8,000 spectators. In an effort to increase revenues in the late 1980s, NBA and NHL team owners devised the idea of luxury boxes, comfortable living room-like spaces with food and beverage service that could be sold for significantly more money than a standard stadium seat. The original design for Kemper was cutting edge. It included twenty-five “suites,” perhaps more aptly described as viewing boxes (*Photo 11*). These were small private spaces partitioned from the general stands at the top of the lower bowl. The open room had movable plastic chairs, a plexiglass railing, and a very modest array of amenities. In 1996 the suites at Kemper leased for \$7,200 - \$14,500 a year, and there was a waiting list. If all were rented at top dollar, this would net \$362,500 per year. By contrast a new arena with 200 suites outfitted with club seating, high-end finishes and luxurious amenities could generate \$24 million a year. The fee was often shared with the owners of the local NBA or NHL team, who used the money to hire star players and hopefully improve their shot at a championship. The first arena to implement the luxury suite was the Palace of Auburn Hills in Michigan. Opened in 1988 for the Detroit Pistons, each of its 180 suites generated up to \$200,000 a year for the team, significantly enhancing the ability of team owners to attract star players.¹⁸ Perhaps coincidentally, the Pistons won two national championships after moving to their new arena. By 1996 this scenario was playing out across the country. Almost every city with an NBA and/or NHL team (as well as cities, such as Kansas City, hoping to – again - attract a franchise) contemplated a new arena.

This trend also documented a shift in the purpose of arenas. Most of the older arenas were publicly-financed and owned. They typically operated in the black, but required long-term financing to cover construction costs.¹⁹ For this reason, their development had been a civic endeavor, with the cost of construction borne by the community as a whole through the sale of bonds. As public buildings, arenas were programmed to serve the entire community, offering a broad array of events – family entertainment, music concerts, as well as sporting events. By the mid-1990s this was no longer the case. The demands of professional sports teams became the driving force behind building new arenas and, to a lesser degree, renovating older arenas. In contrast to the egalitarian atmosphere that led to the construction of arenas in earlier decades, the focus on high-priced seating and amenities limited access to the arena.²⁰ Not everyone could enjoy the luxury facilities, and rising ticket prices reduced the number of events that most

¹⁷ “Kemper Arena Concerts,” http://www.liquisearch.com/kemper_arena/concerts, 24 February 2016.

¹⁸ Randy Covitz, “Outclassed,” *Kansas City Star*, 17 March 1996, C2:1.

¹⁹ Deford, 74.

²⁰ Covitz, *Outclassed*.

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patrons could afford to attend. The public purpose of the arena was lost for the sake of securing the revenue stream demanded by the professional sports teams.

Kemper was one of many mid-century multipurpose arenas built with the aim of providing accessible entertainment to a broad array of public interests. As communities evaluated the new model posed by the Palace at Auburn Hills, many took the fiscally prudent first step of “improving” their existing arenas by squeezing in additional seats and luxury amenities in an attempt to preempt economic obsolescence. The renovation of Kemper Arena in 1996 followed this trend. At the time, arena general manager Carolyn Foxworth stated succinctly, “There is nothing wrong with Kemper Arena.”²¹ Another NBA executive described a parallel situation as economic obsolescence, not physical obsolescence.²² Aside from the week-long Big 12 basketball tournament, the arena had plenty of capacity for its regular tenants – minor league hockey, indoor soccer, and NCAA men’s and women’s basketball. It filled up for special events – American Royal rodeos, FFA conventions, concerts, circus, and ice shows. The addition of seating and the alteration of the east façade undertaken that year were an effort to forestall the inevitable.

It was soon apparent that the band-aids were insufficient. By the late 1990s and well into the 2000s, new, fully outfitted arenas were under construction across the country. A current list of municipally-owned arenas identifies fifty-two with capacity for 15,000 or more patrons. Of these forty-four were constructed after 1990, in the wake of Auburn Hills. During this wave of construction, the role of older arenas was at best diminished, but many were demolished. The same list identifies fifty-four additional venues as “historic,” meaning they have been demolished or are no longer in use.²³ Regional losses included McNichols Sports Arena in Denver, one of the venues that spurred construction of Kemper Arena, and the beloved Checkerdome in St. Louis. Other notable losses include the Jacksonville [Florida] Coliseum (1960, demolished 2003), the Pittsburgh [Pennsylvania] Civic Arena (1961, demolished 2011), the Philadelphia Spectrum (1966-67, demolished 2010), the Atlanta Omni (1972, demolished 1997), the Capital Centre in Landover, Maryland (1973, demolished 2002), and Market Square Arena in Indianapolis (1974, demolished 2001). Each of these venues was replaced by a new arena constructed on or near the original site, attesting to the continued importance of the multipurpose arena as a functional property type to the local community. Almost universally, the desire to replace the existing arena hinged on commercial obsolescence, rather than functional obsolescence.

Kansas City could not remain immune to the “need” for an updated entertainment and sports venue. Well before the 1996 renovation bonds were retired, civic leaders began planning to replace Kemper in the hope of luring an NHL or NBA team back to town. The Sprint Center opened in 2007 as the public component of a larger privately-developed entertainment district created on the south side of downtown. Since then Kemper Arena has sat largely unused, despite assurances that it would continue to house “dirt” events (rodeos, monster trucks, circus, etc.). For the time being, Kemper Arena stands as a testament to the ideals and enthusiasms of the mid-twentieth century, the apex of the leisure economy.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ The list does not stat the seating capacity of the “historic” arenas; some of these may have capacity less than 15,000. “List of Indoor Arenas in the United States,” Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_indoor_arenas_in_the_United_States, accessed 10 August 2016.

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Other Entertainment Venues in Kansas City

Kemper Arena is a distinct entertainment facility within the local built environment. Designed to fill a functional void, it served as the primary indoor entertainment venue until the 2007 opening of the Sprint Center. Four extant resources within the geographical context of Kansas City, Missouri share similar entertainment values. Additional non-extant resources hosted athletic or cultural events prior to the construction of Kemper Arena. All of these buildings were constructed for limited uses, either athletic **or** cultural; in size and scale they paled in comparison to Kemper Arena.

One of Kansas City's earliest multipurpose venues was Convention Hall, a large brick building in the downtown convention hotel district with capacity for over 22,000 attendees. After fire destroyed the original Convention Hall in 1899, the community rallied to rebuild the facility in a span of three months to host the 1900 Democratic National Convention. By 1928 when Kansas City hosted the Republican National Convention, Convention Hall revealed itself to be woefully out of date.

Municipal Auditorium opened in 1937 across the street from Convention Hall, replacing the aging auditorium as Kansas City's primary large-scale downtown indoor entertainment venue (*Figure 20*). The replacement was functional and literal. Convention Hall was demolished after Municipal Auditorium opened, and a parking garage and plaza were constructed on the block it had occupied. Municipal Auditorium housed three distinct venues (a 10,000-seat arena; a 2,400-seat music hall; and a 400-seat theater) that accommodated a range of activities: college basketball games and tournaments, wrestling and boxing matches, musical concerts, dramatic performances, and other special events. Yet, by the early 1970s, the city had outgrown the facilities Municipal Auditorium offered. Municipal Auditorium is extant and continues to host theater productions, limited athletic events (volleyball, gymnastics, bowling, roller derby, etc.), graduation ceremonies, weddings and other private events.

Elsewhere around downtown Kansas City, theaters constructed from the 1880s to the 1920s hosted dramatic, musical, and dance performances. These buildings varied greatly in size, with the largest accommodating around 2,500 patrons. The Midland Theater, the third largest theater in the country when it opened in 1927, had 4,000 seats.²⁴ While many have been demolished, extant historic theaters include the Folly, the Lyric, and the Midland.

While Municipal Auditorium became the leading venue for indoor athletic events, Kansas City's primary outdoor sports venue was Municipal Stadium (originally Muehlebach Field, *Figure 21*). Located a couple miles east of downtown at 22nd Street and Brooklyn Avenue, Municipal Stadium was constructed for minor-league and Negro League baseball in 1923. When the Kansas City Athletics Major League Baseball team began playing in Kansas City in 1955, a 30,000-seat double-deck stadium replaced the older single-deck ballpark. The Kansas City Chiefs National Football League team began playing at Municipal Stadium in 1962. While Municipal Stadium occasionally hosted a musical performance (most notably the Beatles in 1964 following a herculean effort by the stadium owner to impress his teenage daughter), its primary function was baseball and football games.²⁵

²⁴ Loew's Midland Theater and Midland Building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 28, 1977.

²⁵ Jay Spangler, "Beatles Press Conference: Kansas City 9/17/1964," *The Beatles Ultimate Experience: Beatles Interview Database*, <http://www.beatlesinterviews.org/db1964.0917.beatles.html> (accessed 21 August 2014).

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By the early 1960s Kansas City's major entertainment and recreation facilities had become outdated. As was common throughout the country after World War II, local governments assumed control of planning, funding, and maintaining what architectural historian George Ehrlich describes as "the assets that produce a positive national image – the so-called major league status."²⁶ These assets included the large-scale gathering spaces and facilities that were capable of hosting regional and national events.

Municipal Stadium was not large enough to support the surging popularity of professional football, and the inner-city location was not attractive to Kansas City's growing suburban population. Within twelve years after completing the stadium expansion, the city began to discuss building a new sports venue. In 1967 Jackson County voters approved bonds to fund two new, larger stadiums for Kansas City's professional baseball and football teams.²⁷ The Truman Sports Complex was built at the eastern, suburban edge of the city (*Figure 22*). Arrowhead Stadium for the Kansas City Chiefs opened in August 1972 with more than 78,000 seats. Kauffman Stadium opened the following spring with roughly 40,000 seats.

Like cities across the country, Kansas City experienced rapid suburban growth in the 1950s. Retail businesses followed the thousands of families making an exodus from the historic city center to new and burgeoning communities on both sides of the state line. As the central business district lost its primacy as the area's commercial retail hub, city leaders focused on making downtown a convention destination, a tactic embraced by many localities to offset the loss of retail traffic to the increasing number of suburban shopping centers.²⁸ Bartle Hall, first conceived of in the 1960s, was designed to fill the gap in available convention facilities left by the demolition of Convention Hall in 1937. Modern convention centers required acres of uninterrupted exhibition space for booths and product displays, which Municipal Auditorium was not designed to accommodate. When it opened in 1976 after eight years of planning, design, and numerous construction delays, Bartle Hall boasted a 435,000 square-foot convention floor, much of it clear of structural members (*Figure 23*).²⁹ While it continues to host conventions, meetings, shows (auto, boat, recreational vehicle, etc.), and similar events, it has never hosted performances similar to those offered at Kemper Arena.

Historic theaters continued to operate in downtown Kansas City after World War II. Movement in the industry away from live entertainment to film and the subsequent rise of the suburban multiplex cinema provided substantial competition and led to the closure of many venues. Theaters were limited in the entertainment options they could offer. Their facilities were best suited to live performances of music, dance or theater, and their size limited performances to smaller audiences. They were wholly unable to accommodate the large arena concerts that became popular in the 1970s. Renovations to upgrade technology and update finishes were not able to overcome their inherently single-use function.

With the construction of Kauffman Stadium, Arrowhead Stadium, and Bartle Hall, Kansas City's civic leaders remained focused on developing facilities to meet specific entertainment needs. Kemper Arena was the last piece of the puzzle, providing a climate-controlled indoor venue that was adaptable to a broad array of event types and allowing for nearly continuous year-round use. The proximity of the site to interstate highways and the vast expanse of adjacent parking lots provided easy access to the arena from

²⁶ George Ehrlich, *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990*, Revised and Enlarged Edition (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 230.

²⁷ Ehrlich, 153.

²⁸ Ehrlich, 162.

²⁹ Ehrlich, 164.

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inside the city as well as from surrounding suburban and regional communities. Kemper Arena was integral to the city's ability to meet the entertainment needs of residents and visitors. It was the newest, largest, and primary multipurpose arena in the Kansas City region for over thirty years.

DEVELOPMENT OF KEMPER ARENA

Talk of building a new arena began in earnest in 1971, around the time that construction started on Bartle Hall. There was particular interest in developing a venue that could attract a National Hockey League (NHL) franchise to the area and that would supplement the aging facilities of the American Royal, a Kansas City institution that held an annual Livestock and Horse Show in the West Bottoms. In the early 1970s new arenas opened in Oklahoma City and Denver, and a refurbished and enlarged St. Louis Arena (a.k.a. the Checkerdome) was selected to host the 1973 NCAA basketball championships.³⁰ Kansas City voters had approved bond financing for the convention center, but beyond a limited pool of money remaining from a 1954 sports arena bond, no public funding was available. Revenue bonds were proposed as the funding mechanism, which would allow individuals and corporations to contribute toward the project's estimated \$10 million price tag.³¹ Civic leaders discussed multiple sites for this venue – within the Truman Sports Complex, downtown next to the new convention hall, deep in suburban Johnson County, and on a piece of former stockyards land in the West Bottoms.³²

At the end of November 1971 a group of investors emerged who supported building an arena in the West Bottoms on the condition that Kansas City obtained an NHL franchise team. The new arena would house sporting events, with a focus on hockey, and also support the programs of the American Royal. The arena and associated parking would occupy a 50-acre parcel of land that would be purchased from the stockyards company. Backers anticipated that construction could start within ninety days of approval and would take twenty months to complete.³³ It would be another year before plans gelled.

In the late Fall of 1972 the Kansas City city council was leaning heavily toward approving the stockyards proposal for the new arena. On November 30 a committee interviewed four architect-contractor teams with previous experience in arena design. Each team presented preliminary ideas for this specific project. The schedule was tight. The NHL was meeting in January to discuss moving a franchise to Kansas City. The committee would need preliminary plans by that date in order to sway the NHL.³⁴ Before the end of the year the committee announced the selection of Chicago-based F.F. Murphy Associates and local builder J.E. Dunn Construction Company for the project. C.F. Murphy was already engaged to design Bartle Hall and had local offices. The team was given until January 22 to develop a guaranteed price for a 16,000-seat multipurpose arena.³⁵

With just forty-eight hours until the NHL finance committee meeting, the city council voted to allocate \$5.6 million in general obligation bonds, the balance of the 1954 voter-approved bonds, to the project. This was

³⁰ Randy Covitz, "Outclassed."

³¹ A Strong Downtown Bid to Tie Down Sports Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 9 Sept 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

³² Robert Carroll, "Complex Web of Sites, Bids for Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 22 April 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

³³ John T. Dauner, "Royal Arena Site Backed," *Kansas City Times*, [3] January 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

³⁴ Dauner.

³⁵ William L. McCorkle, "Panel Recommends Firm for Design of Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 30 December 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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the final piece of a \$19.7 million financing package that also included \$7.5 million in revenue bonds; \$2 million of private funds pooled from an investor group; a \$1.2 million capital contribution from the American Royal; \$2.5 million gifted by the Kemper family; \$400,000 earned interest from other money in the package; and \$900,000 in federal aid for street improvements.³⁶ The local press heralded the decision as assuring the future of both the American Royal and an NHL expansion team. "The region will have an arena of the size needed to compete for the biggest conventions and the large national entertainment and sport events," the *Kansas City Star* boasted.³⁷

Less than three months later the planning process was moving swiftly forward. *The Star* published a site plan and architect's model on February 4 that showed the exterior structure rising over the arena.³⁸ On a 4 April 1973 the newly formed American Royal Arena Corporation purchased 53 acres of land from the Kansas City Stock Yards Company for \$3,650,000 and borrowed just shy of \$1 million to purchase an additional 13.6 acres. The loan cleared the way for J.E. Dunn Construction Company to start preparing the site for construction.³⁹

Ground was broken on 14 April 1973. When the *Kansas City Times* published a photo on 1 August 1974 showing the distinctive bowl and truss structures in place it was possible to envision the completed building.⁴⁰ The \$23 million R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena was dedicated on 18 October 1974, just eighteen months after construction began (*Figure 18*). Remarkably, the fast schedule was achieved despite a labor strike that interrupted construction for five months.

The dedication program noted that "Cooperation and civic pride within the Community have made the... Arena become a reality."⁴¹ The Kansas City Scouts NHL team played their first home game at Kemper Arena just two weeks later, followed shortly by home games of the Kansas City Kings basketball team. College basketball tournaments were highly anticipated, as was the 1975 American Royal.

The "gargantuan" and "gleaming white arena" was an instant landmark in the old stockyards.⁴² It had a footprint measuring 424 feet by 310 feet, and the top of the structure rose 95 feet above the surrounding parking lots. Inside the column-free space no seat was farther than 200 feet from the arena floor. Although it appeared smaller, Kemper Arena boasted twice as many permanent seats as Municipal Auditorium, the venue it replaced.⁴³ The official seating capacity was 17,000 for basketball and 16,000 for hockey. Events that required more floor space (track, rodeo, etc.) could still accommodate 15,000 patrons. This capacity placed it among the top venues in the country.

³⁶ McCorkle, "Panel Recommends..."

³⁷ "City Hall Makes the Big Decision to Build Sports Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 24 January 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

³⁸ "Arena Site Plan," *Kansas City Star*, 4 February 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

³⁹ "Arena Group Schedules Beginning of Construction," *Kansas City Star*, 4 April 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴⁰ Joe Willington, Jr., "Arena Framework," *Kansas City Times*, 1 August 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴¹ Dedication Program, R. Crosby Kemper, Sr., Memorial Arena, 18 October 1974. Vertical File. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴² David Zeeck, "Kemper Arena Dedicated," *Kansas City Star*. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴³ Joe McGuff, "Rich Tradition of Auditorium Gives Way to new Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 8 November 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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The inaugural event at Kemper Arena was an NHL game between the Kansas City Scouts and the Chicago Blackhawks on 2 November 1974 attended by 15,000 fans.⁴⁴ It was just the first of a wide array of events that Kemper Arena hosted over the coming decades. In addition to professional hockey and basketball teams, three travelling circuses, several ice shows, and the NCAA Big Eight basketball tournament were slated to use the facility. The Big Eight Conference was particularly excited about moving their tournament from Municipal Auditorium to Kemper Arena. The increased seating capacity alone greatly improved public access to the tournament, and Assistant Commissioner Jack McClelland was pleased with how the building separated back-of-house activities from the event-attending public, resulting in a better organized, less chaotic event. Before long, Kemper was hosting close to 200 events per year. Indoor soccer, arena football and roller derby teams played games there. Kemper hosted national championships for gymnastics and figure skating. It was the site of the 1976 Republican National Convention that nominated Gerald Ford for president and Kansan Bob Dole as his running mate. Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, the Rolling Stones, and Michael Jackson were among the plethora of musicians whose concerts filled the venue to capacity. Through 1998 the National FFA Organization (FFA) held their national convention at Kemper, bringing as many as 37,000 visitors to town and pumping upwards of \$14 million into the local economy.⁴⁵ And, there were annual rodeos and horse and livestock shows as part of the American Royal. By 2005, it was estimated that 30 million spectators had attend events in the building.⁴⁶

In the early 1990s, city officials feared that the NCAA would pull its prestigious Big 12 basketball tournament from Kansas City after the organization expressed reservations about the limited capacity of Kemper Arena. The FFA, who had been meeting in Kansas City since the 1920s, began voicing similar concerns.⁴⁷ In an effort to stave off a potentially huge economic loss, the city added 2,000 seats to the arena. Three-quarters of these were built above center court; the remaining 450 seats were placed in the corners of the floor. To house the seats above the bowl HNTB Corporation designed a curved extension on the east exterior side of the arena that also provided a new glass-front atrium and parking level entrance. The center truss of the exoskeleton was reconfigured to accommodate the change, its legs moved out from the building's east and west walls and the top chord rose higher over the edge of the roof. On the roof it connected back to the original truss. This provided for the additional seating on the east side of the bowl and made room for a similar, future expansion the west side of the arena.⁴⁸

The improvements to Kemper appeased the NCAA for another decade. The Big 12 Men's Basketball tournament was played at Kemper through 2002 and again in 2005. The additional seating, however, was not enough to keep the FFA in Kansas City. After eighty years of Kansas City conventions, the organization chose not to return after 1998. This was a blow to community psyche; the invasion of FFA blue jackets every fall was part of the local identity.

⁴⁴ William D. Tammeus, "Big-Time Hockey Scores First Goal for Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 3 November 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴⁵ Associated Press, "Kansas City may lose FFA convention," 22 February 1996, http://www.postbulletin.com/kansas-city-may-lose-ffa-convention/article_45696c55-8e5d-5607-bf48-ff6e18d30822.html, accessed 15 July 2015.

⁴⁶ Randy Covitz, "A Storied History Amid Hoopla," *Kansas City Star*, 13 March 2005. Vertical File, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, A8. National FFA Organization, "A Brief History of the National FFA Organization," https://www.ffa.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/about_ffahistory.pdf, (accessed 15 July 2015).

⁴⁷ John Dvorak, "With No Bolts, New Arena Roof May Sport a Different Slant," *Kansas City Times*, 24 August 1979. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴⁸ While the structural change anticipated expansion on the west side of the arena bowl this change was never made. Matt Campbell, "Panel Supports \$20 Million for Arena Renovation," *Kansas City Star*, 28 December 1995, A1:5.

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Even before the improvements were completed in the spring of 1997, there were rumblings in the civic community to replace Kemper Arena. Since 1971 Kansas Citians had debated the merits of a downtown arena. Many considered the West Bottoms to be an awkward location and that the venue itself was outdated, despite the recent improvements. While Kemper Arena was built with twenty-five private suites (a novelty in 1974) and all of these were leased, these spaces were woefully inadequate when compared to the luxury boxes appearing in new arenas around the country.⁴⁹ Luxury boxes in newer arenas brought in hundreds of thousands of dollars more than standard seating, which enabled professional sports team owners (especially basketball) to hire star players who increased the likelihood of a championship for the home team. While it remained fully functional as a multipurpose venue, Kemper Arena could never compete with the economics of newer arenas. Like many of its peers nationwide, it was deemed economically obsolete.

The Sprint Center opened in 2007, just inside the highway loop in the southeast corner of downtown Kansas City. The following spring the NCAA Big 12 Men's Basketball Tournament returned to Kansas City to play at the new venue. Despite promises to continue using Kemper for "dirt events" (rodeos, circus, monster trucks, etc.) the older arena sits mostly dark. In 2015 the American Royal moved their annual barbeque contest from Kemper to Arrowhead Stadium, and in 2016 they announced that the event would permanently move to Wyandotte County, Kansas. It remains unclear if the organization will continue to use Kemper Arena for its fall Livestock and Horse Show.

CONCLUSION

For over three decades, Kemper Arena was the primary multipurpose enclosed arena serving Kansas City and the surrounding region. It met the broad range of entertainment needs for which it was designed and hosted myriad professional and amateur athletic events, family entertainment performances, popular music concerts, political conventions, livestock shows, and more. In the 1990s, a wave of new arenas across the country replaced those built in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Improvements to Kemper Arena in 1996 attempted to extend its viable life, although they could not completely forestall the economic obsolescence of the venue in an era when owners relied on revenues from premium seating to supplant standard income from ticket sales. Yet, the experience of attending an event at Kemper Arena is unchanged from 1974. It remains fully functional for the use it was designed to perform. The loss of contemporary venues across the country enhances the significance of Kemper Arena as an example of the mid-twentieth century multipurpose arena property type.

⁴⁹ Randy Covitz, "Outclassed," *Kansas City Star*, 17 March 1996, C2:1.

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ADDITIONAL LATITUDE/ LONGITUDE COORDINATES

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6	<u>39.091140</u>	<u>-94.602799</u>	13	<u>39.090765</u>	<u>-94.605947</u>
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
7	<u>39.090525</u>	<u>-94.603484</u>	14	<u>39.090762</u>	<u>-94.607107</u>
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8	<u>39.090517</u>	<u>-94.603719</u>	15	<u>39.092497</u>	<u>-94.607103</u>
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	Latitude:	Longitude:			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the nominated resource is defined by the ring road that encircles and defines Kemper Arena and its historically associated open space.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the eligible resource and the open land adjacent and historically associated with it.

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Figure 1: Site Map. *Source: ArcGIS 2013.*



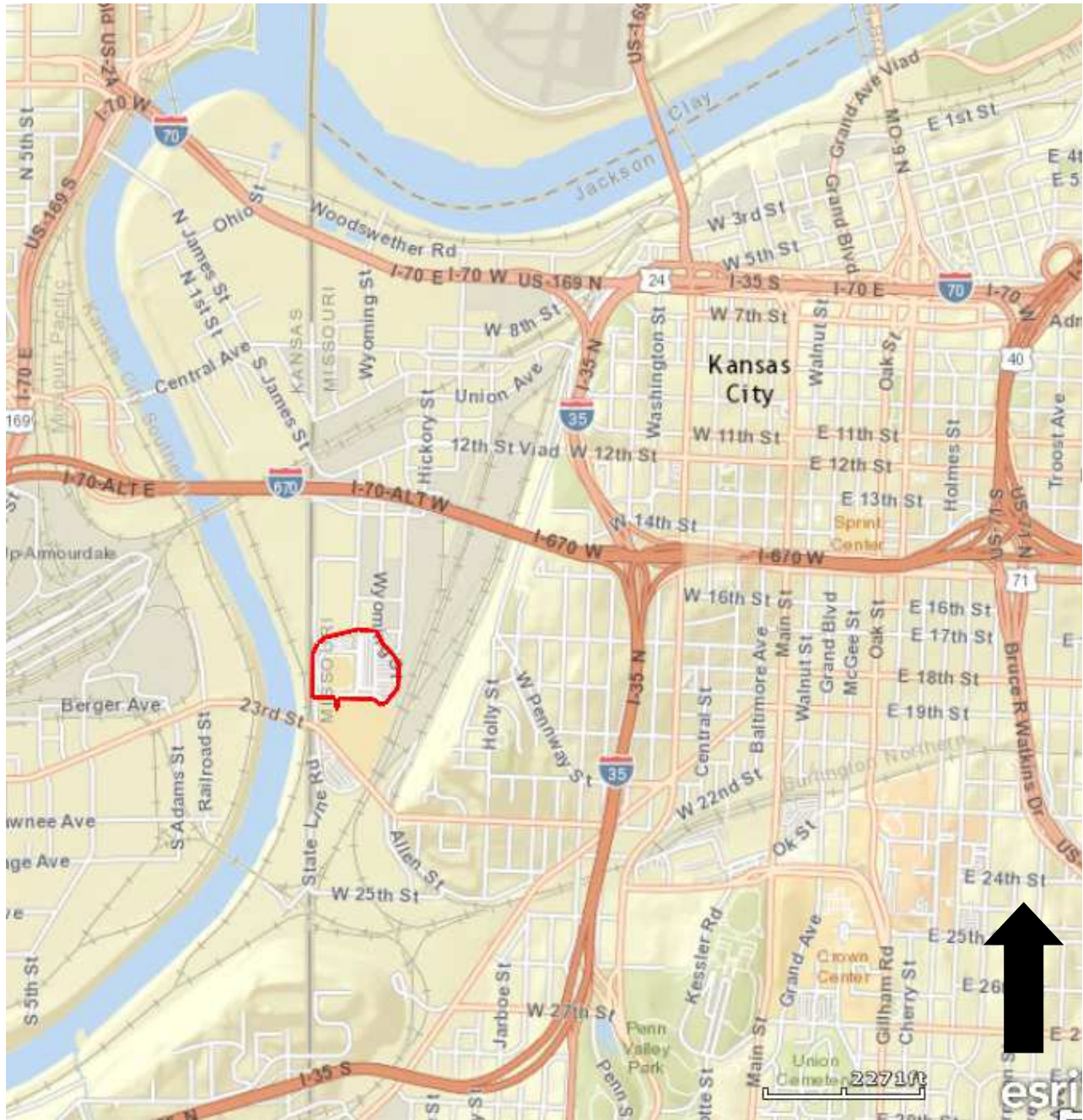
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Figure 2: Contextual Map. Source: ArcGIS 2013.

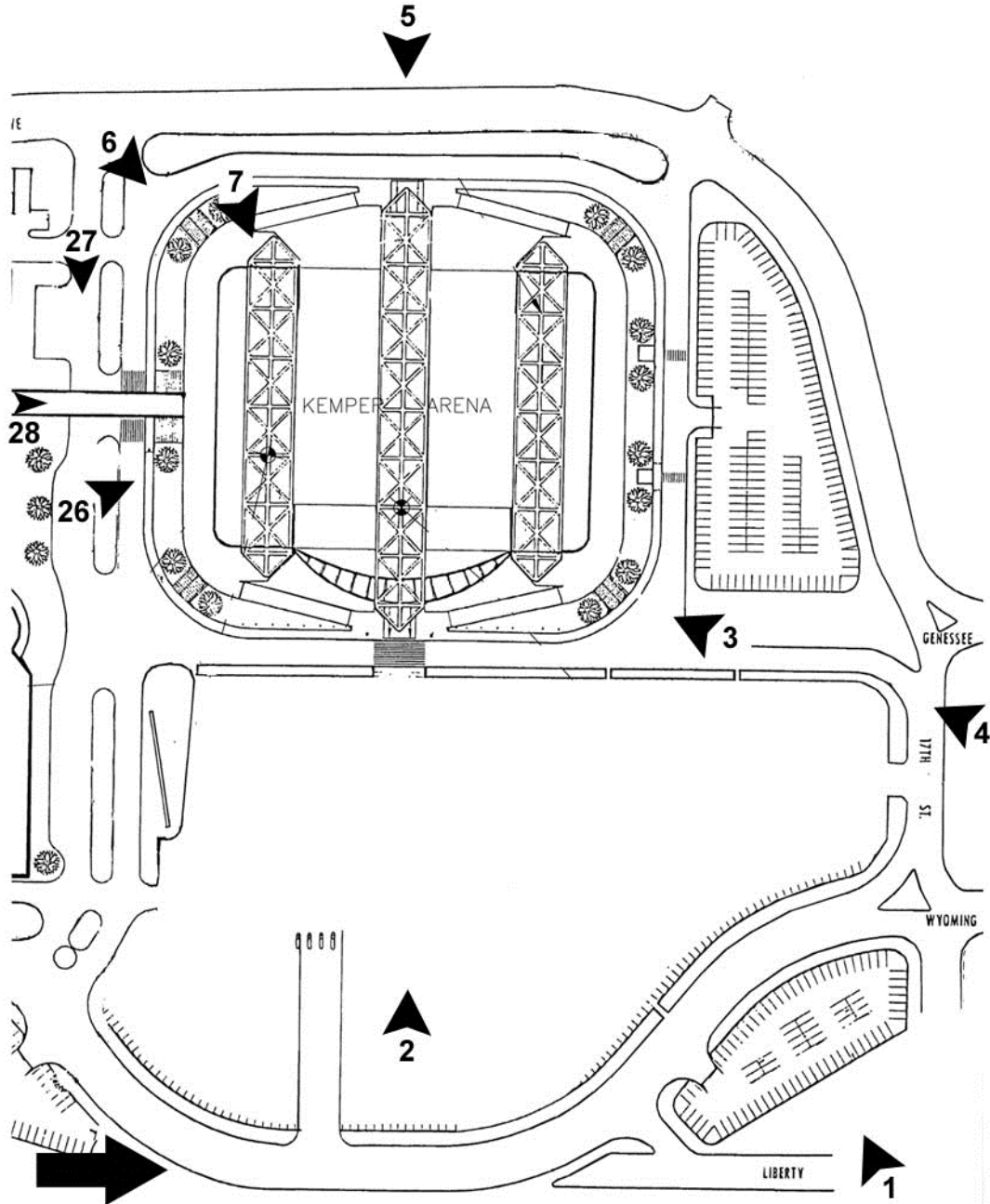


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Figure 3: Photo Map – Exterior



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Figure 4: Photo Map and Current Plan – Concourse Level

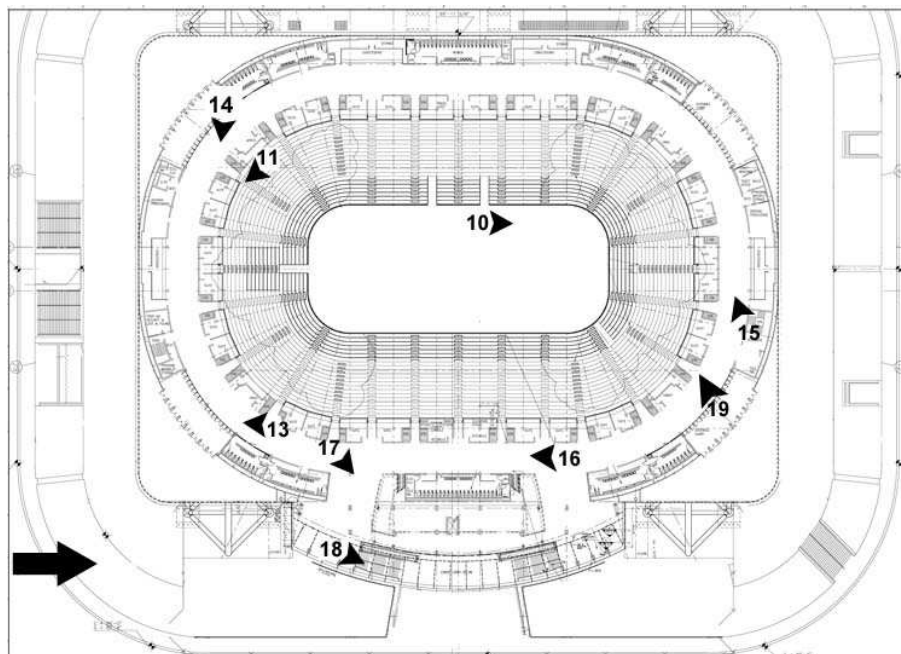
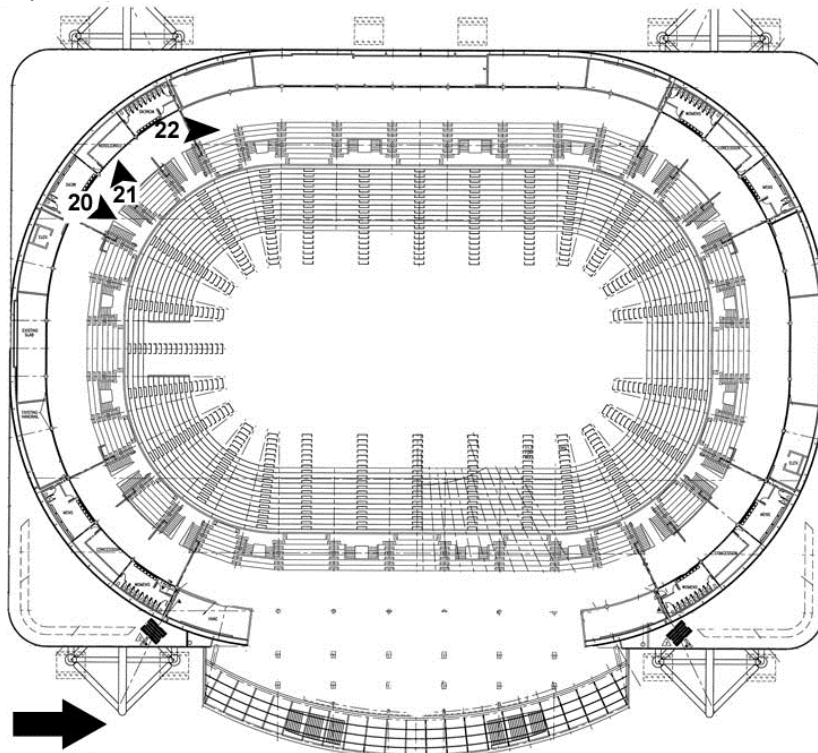


Figure 5: Photo Map and Current Plan – Club level



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Figure 6: Photo Map and Current Plan – Upper Seating Deck

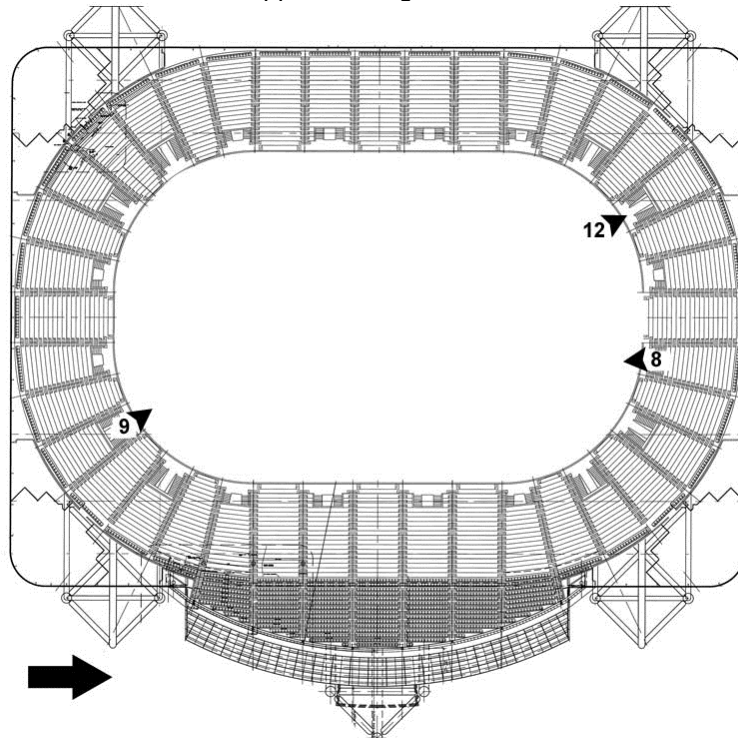
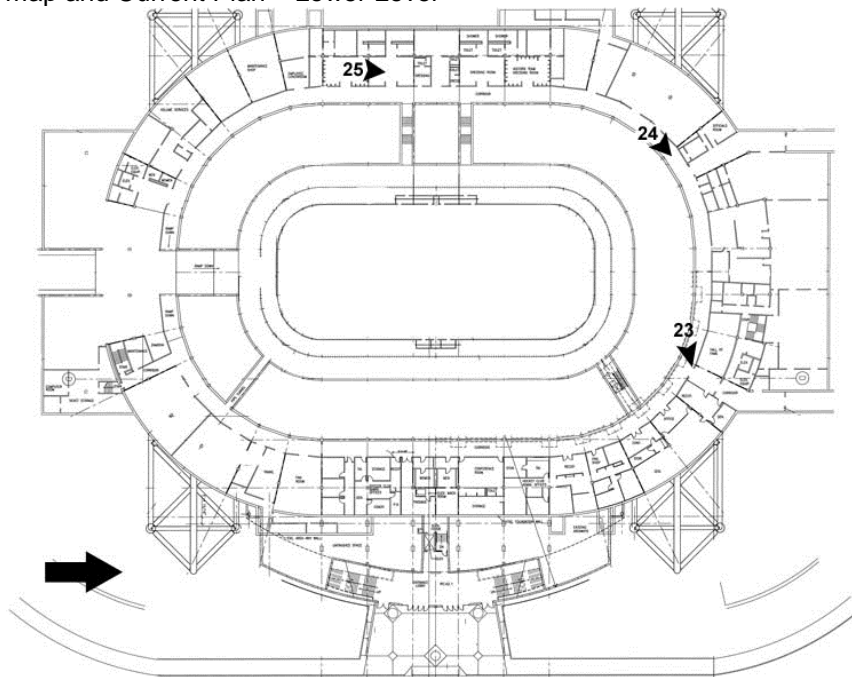


Figure 7: Photo map and Current Plan – Lower Level

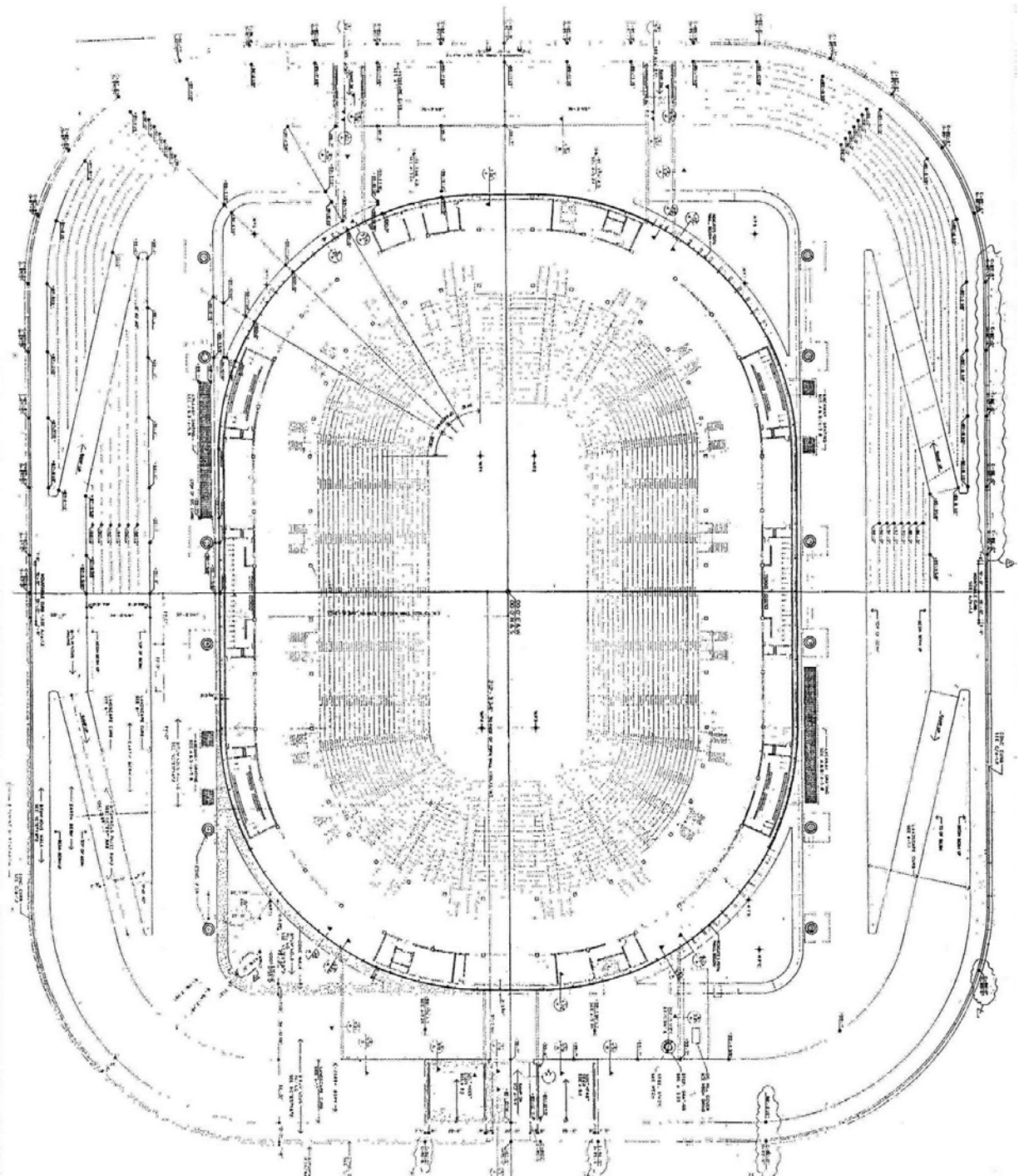


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Figure 8: Partial Site Plan for Kemper Arena, Sheet A-1.3 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

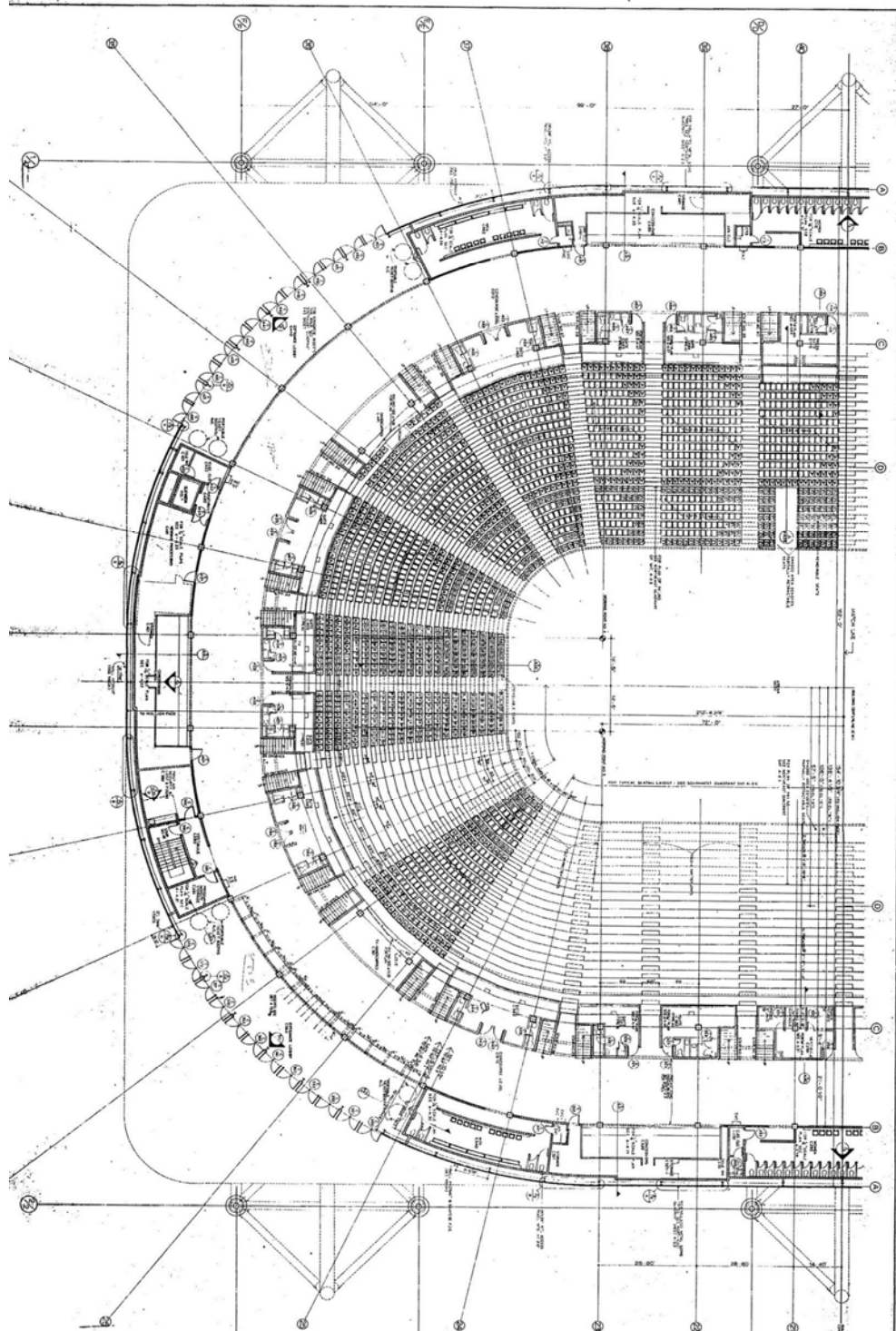


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Figure 9: Concourse Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.4, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, 23 July 1973.

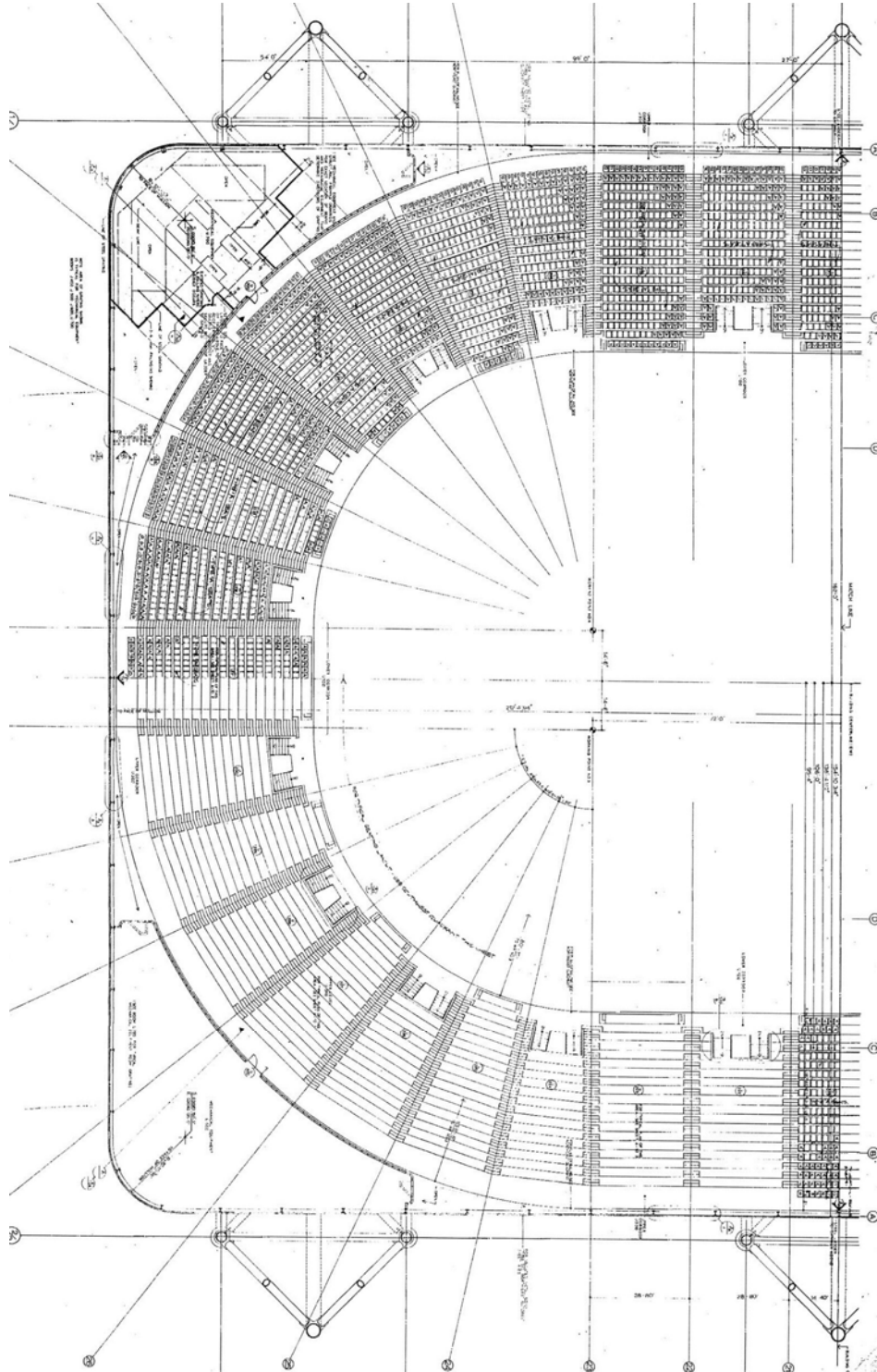


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Figure 10: Upper Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.6, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, [1973].

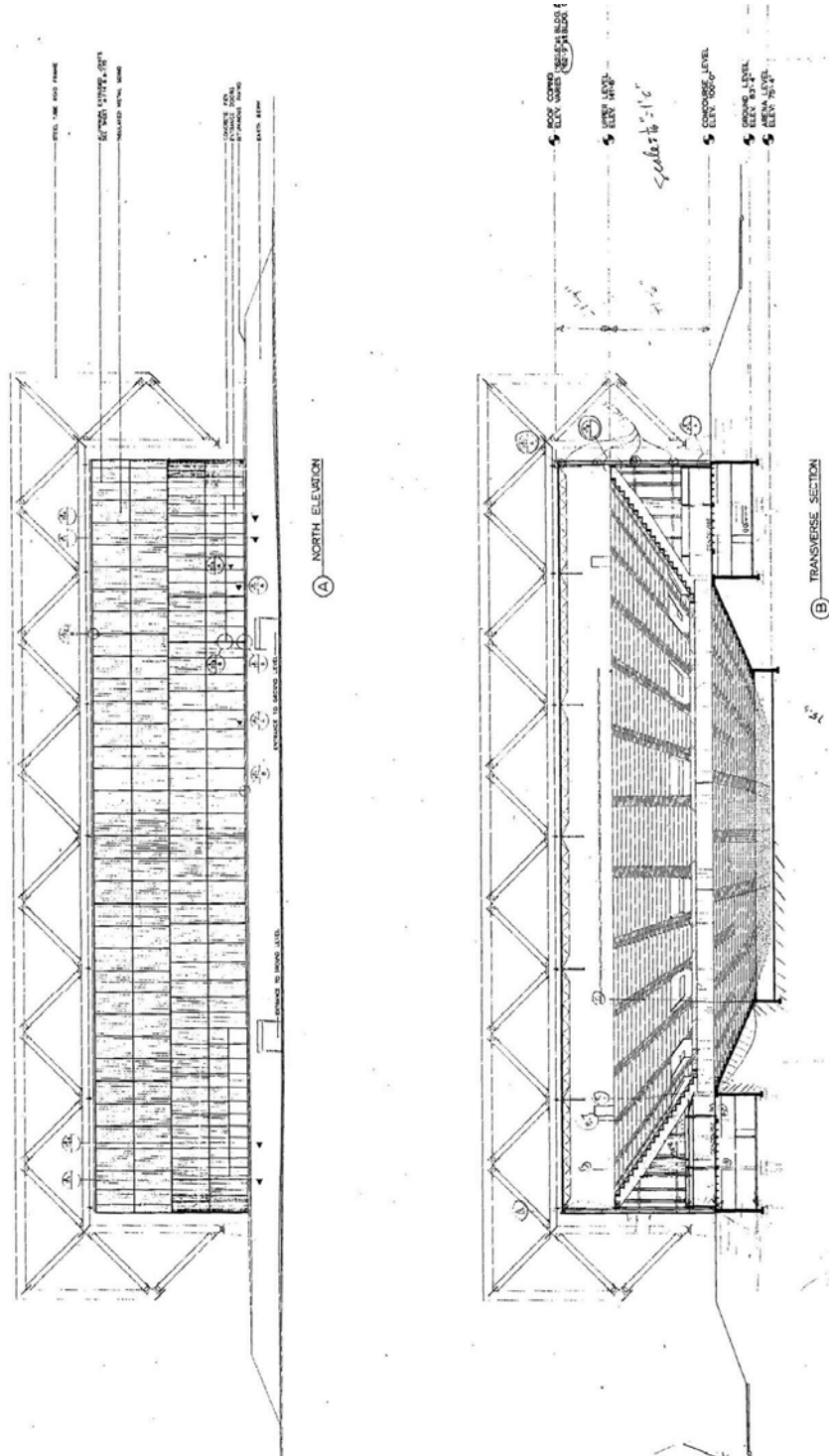


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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 11: North Elevation and Transverse Section of Kemper Arena, Sheet A-3.1 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

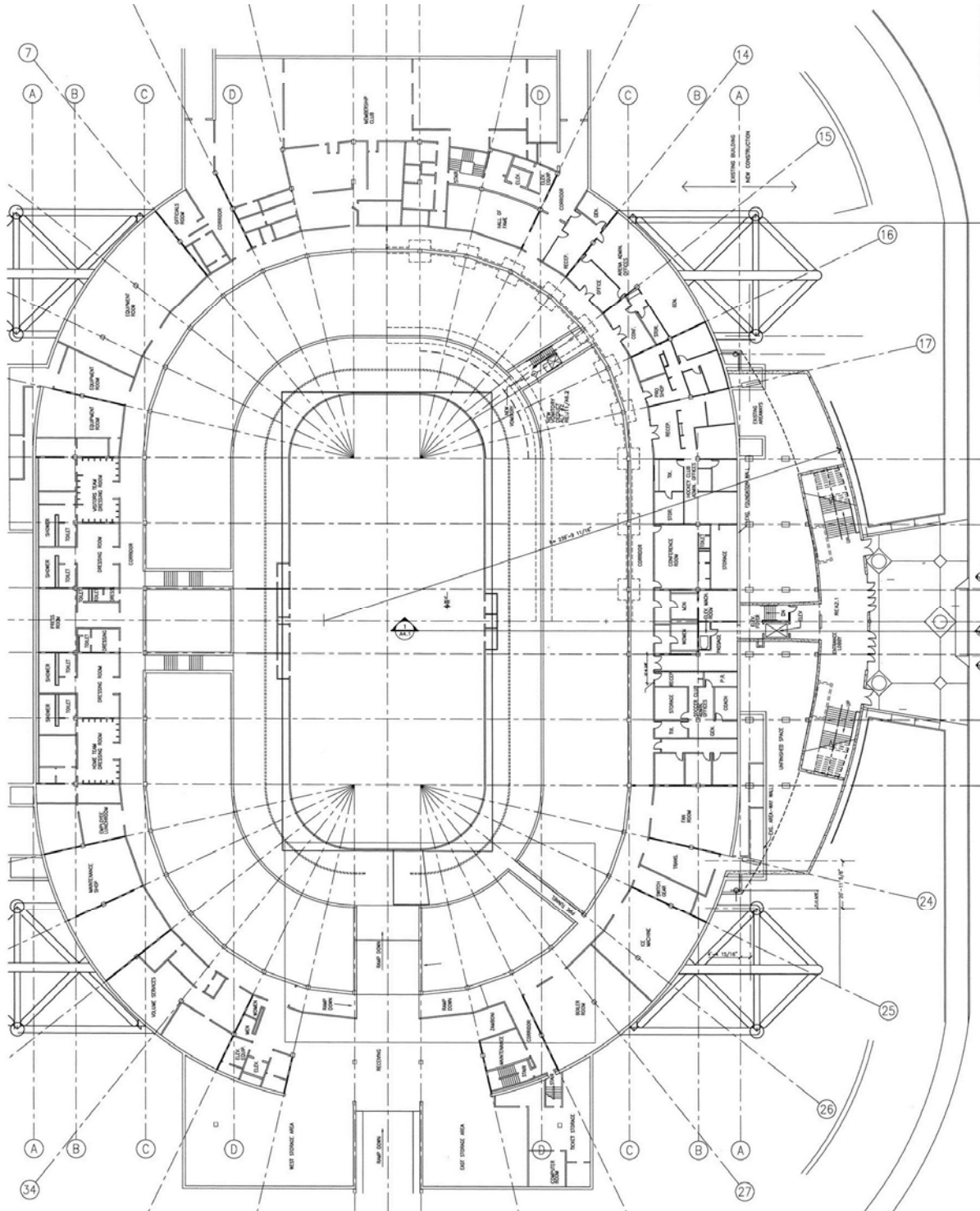


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 33

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 12: Current Plan, Lower Level. Sheet A 1.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

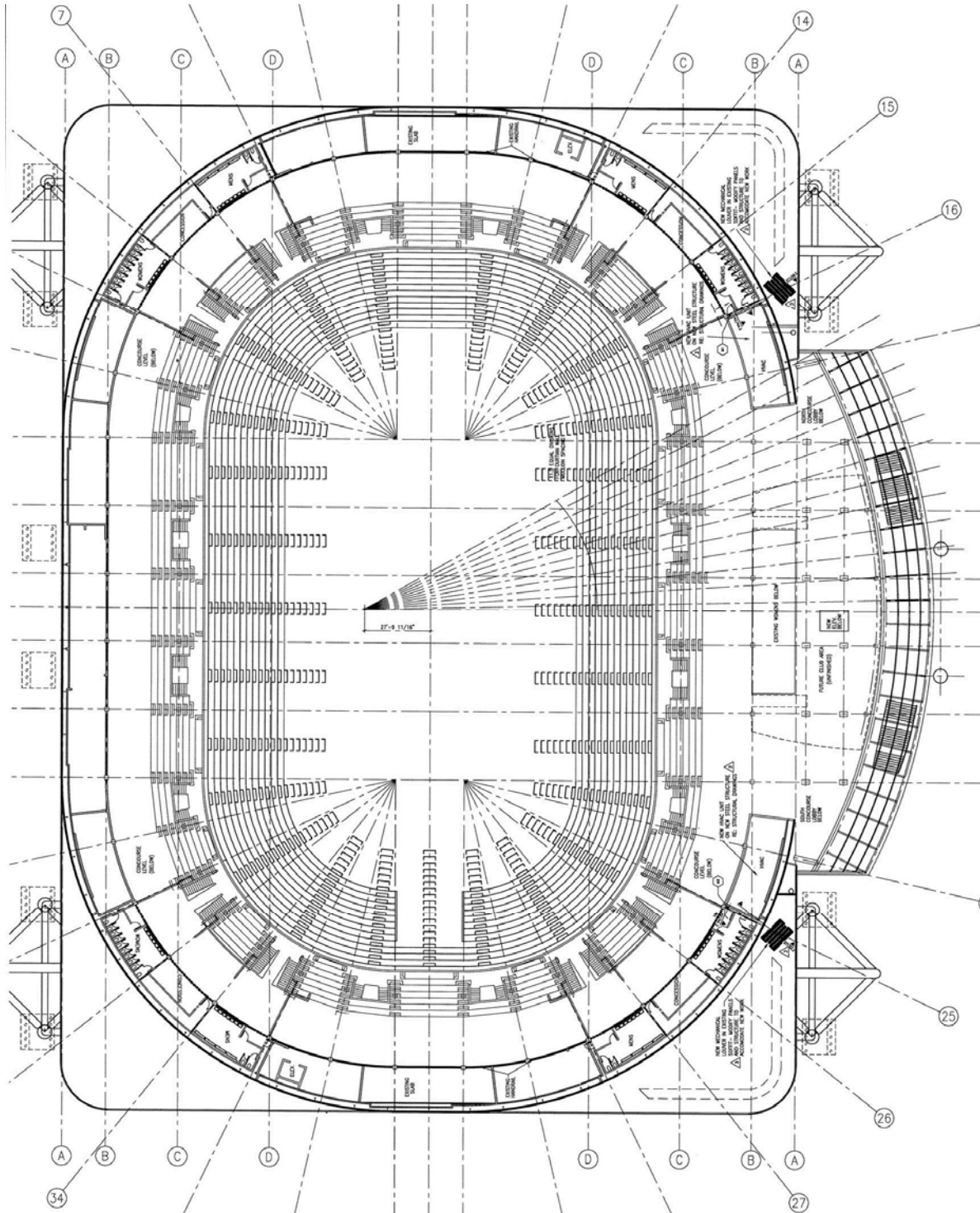


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 34

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 13: Current Plan, Club Level. Sheet A 1.3, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

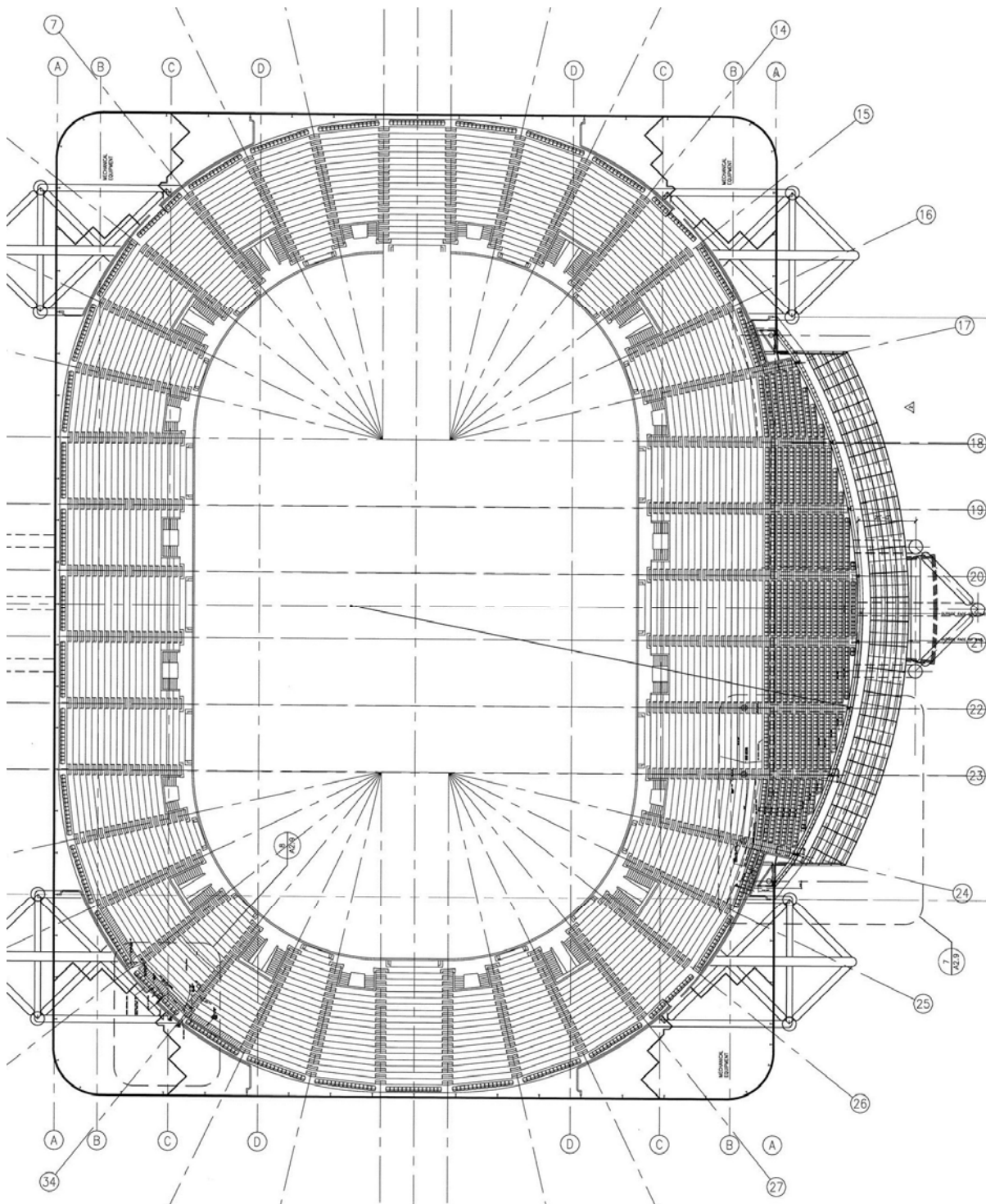


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 35

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 14: Current Plan, Upper Seating Deck. Sheet A 1.4, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

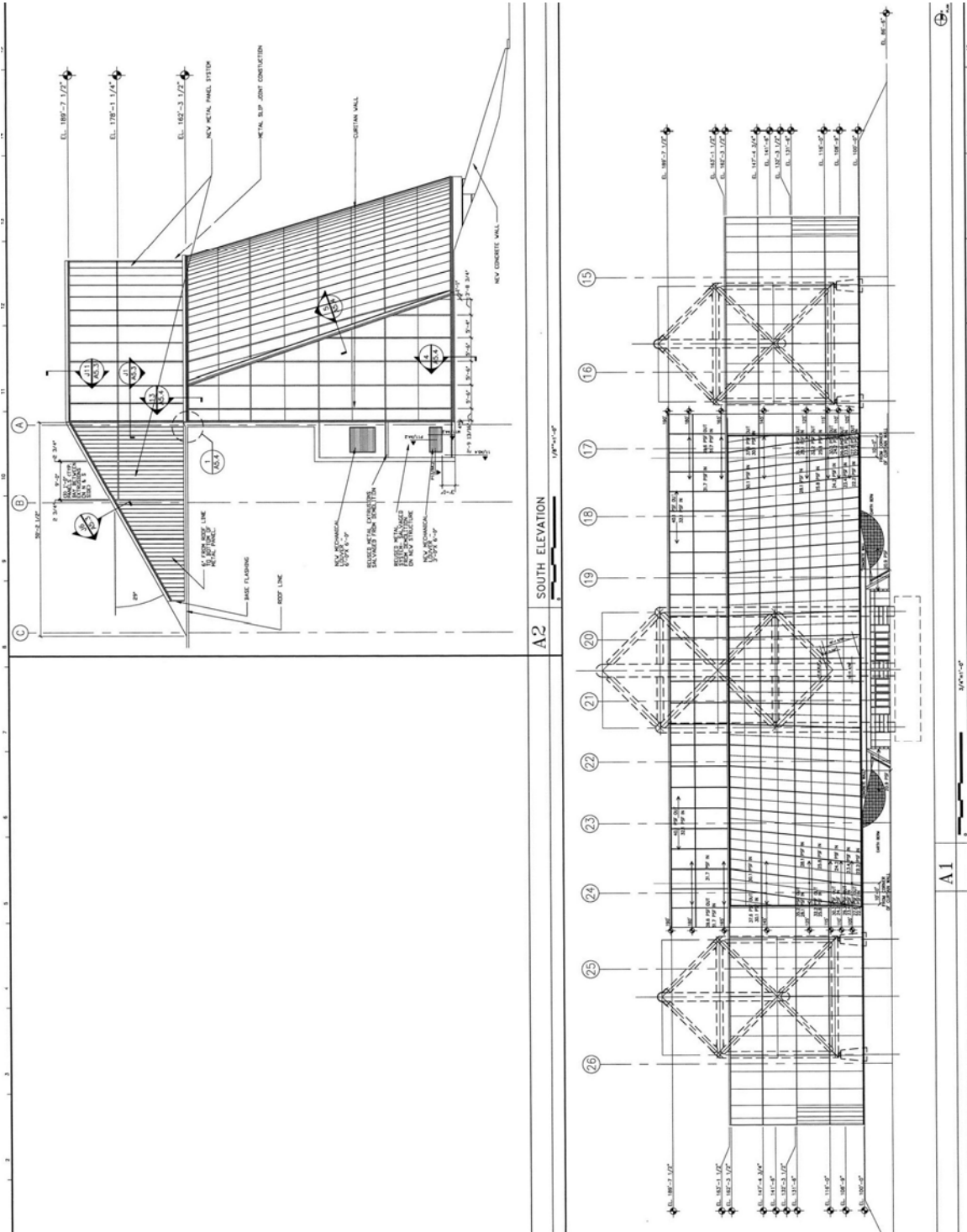


National Register of Historic Places
 Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 36

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 15: Typical Elevations, Sheet A 3.2, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

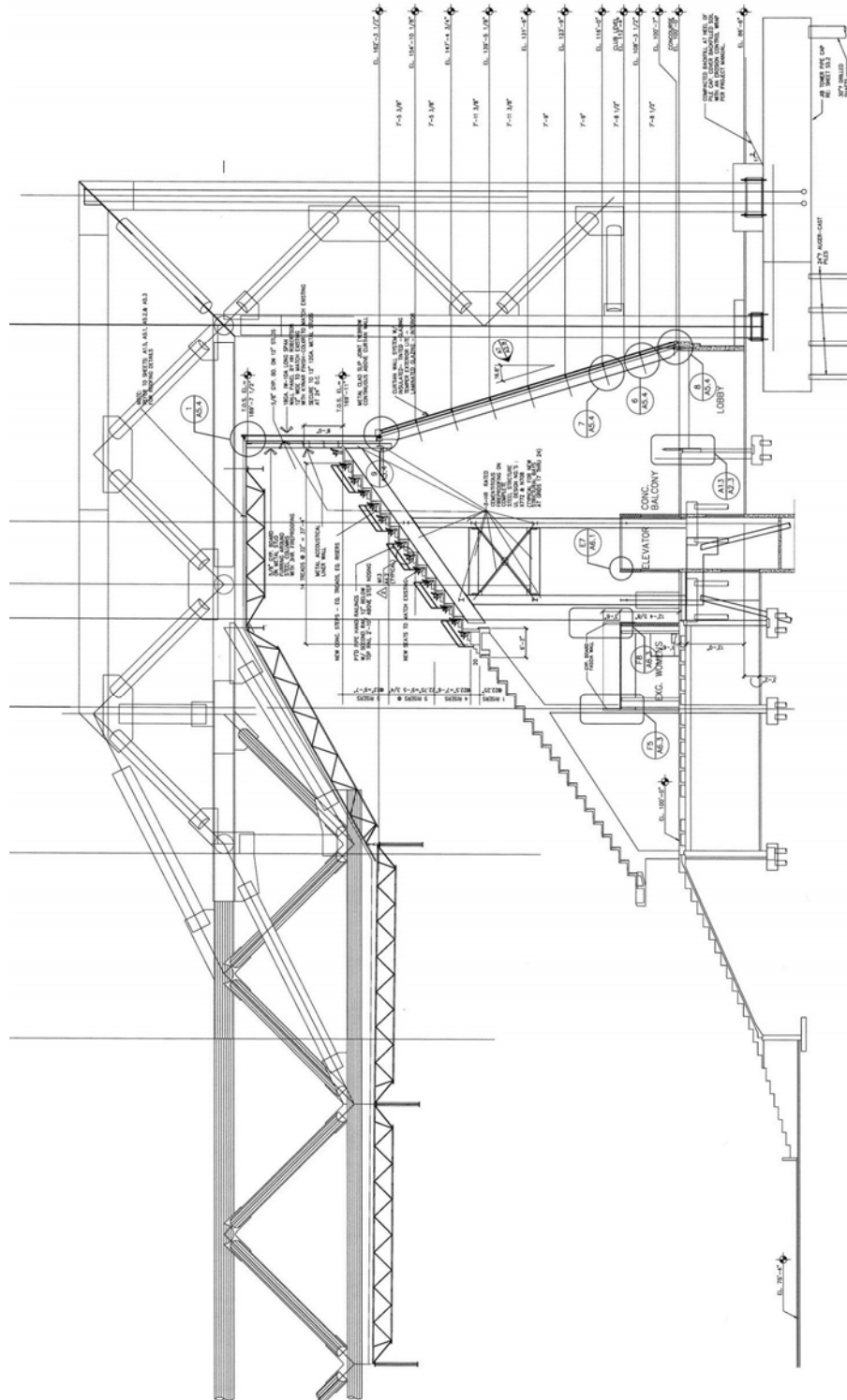


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 37

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
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N/A
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Figure 16: Section at Mid Point, Sheet A 4.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 38

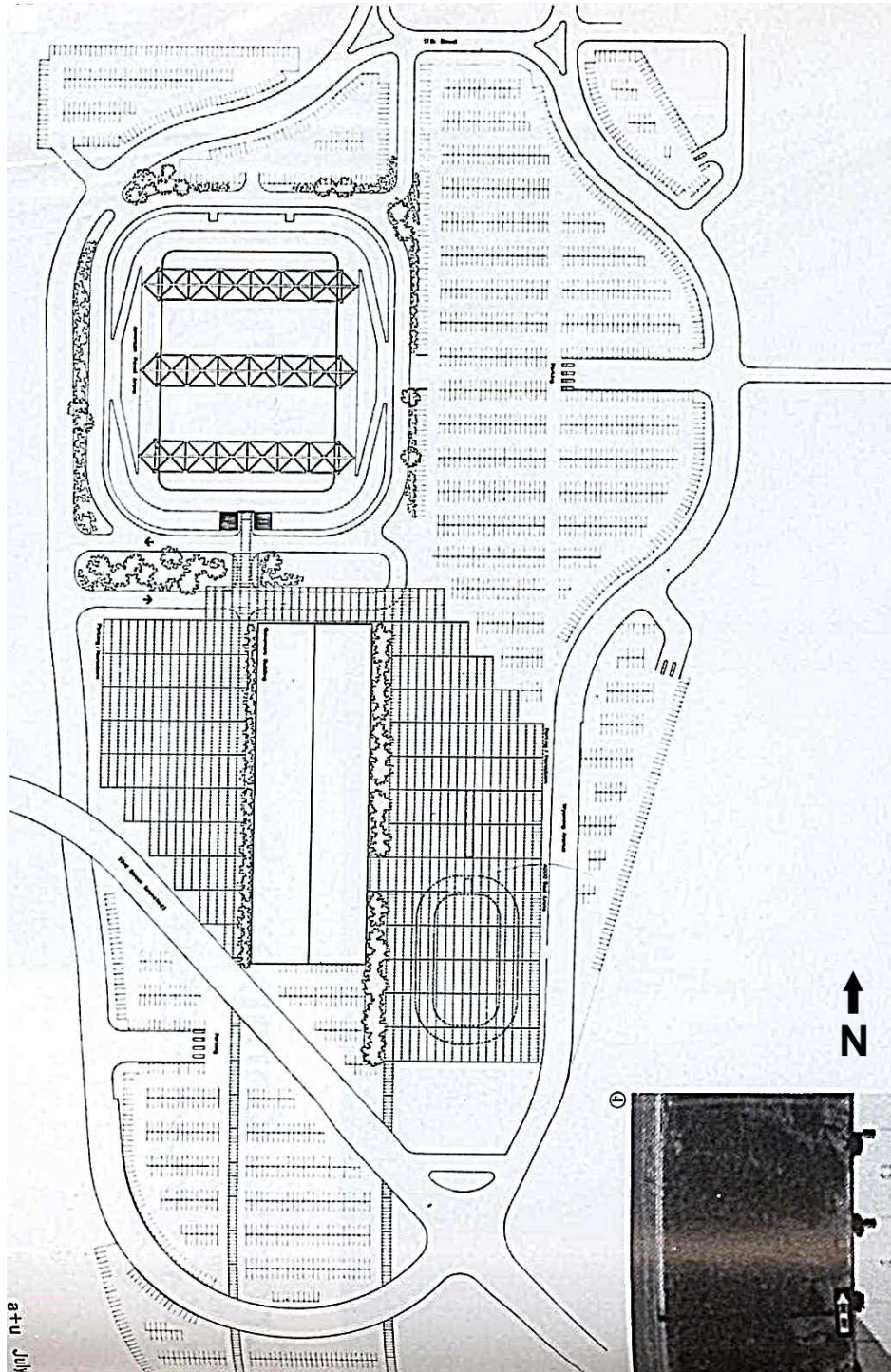
Kemper Arena

Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri

County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 17: Historic Site Plan. (Source: "R. Crosby Kemper, Jr. (sic) Memorial Arena Kansas City, Missouri," *Architectural Record*, March 1976, 109).



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 39

Kemper Arena

Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri

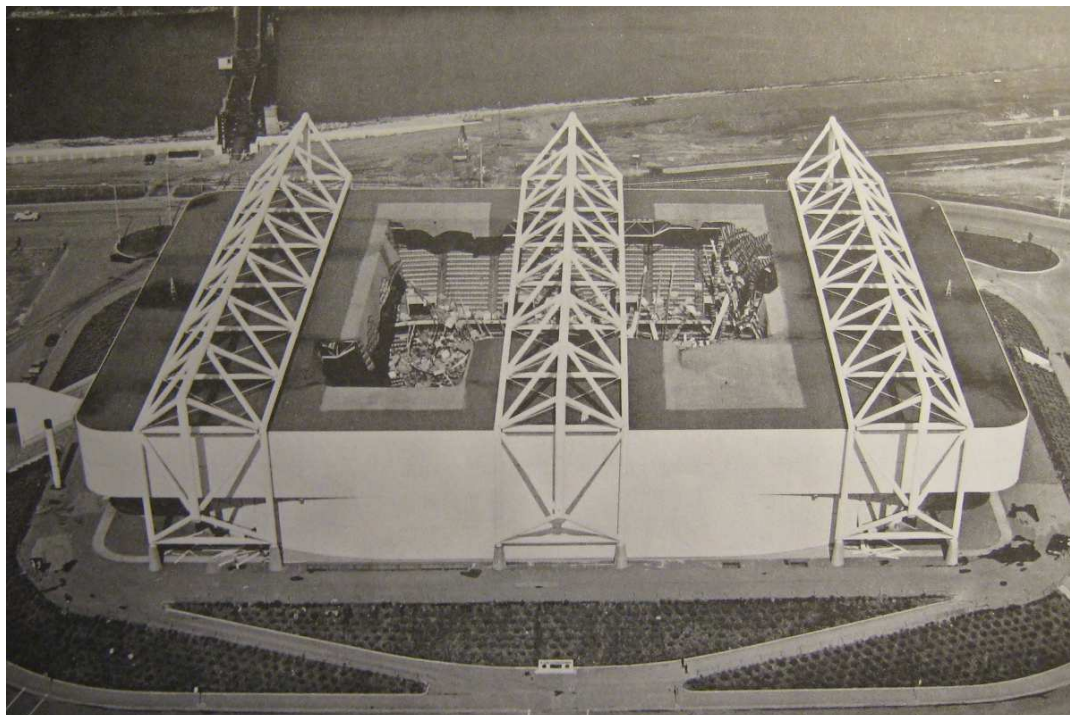
County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 18: Kemper Arena, Late Summer or Fall 1974, View to Northwest. (Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013)



Figure 19: Kemper Arena Following Roof Collapse, 13 June 1979 (Source: Vertical File, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013)



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 40

Kemper Arena

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N/A

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Figure 20: Municipal Auditorium, Kansas City, Missouri, 1950. (Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 1 April 2015).



Figure 21: Municipal Stadium, Kansas City, Missouri, 1955. (Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 1 April 2015).



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Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 41

Kemper Arena

Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri

County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 22: Truman Sports Complex, date unknown. (Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 31 March 2015).



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 42

Kemper Arena

Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri

County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 23: Bartle Hall Convention Center, Kansas City, c. mid-1970s (Source: Robert Askren Photograph Collection, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013).



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 43

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 24: List of Concerts Held at Kemper Arena, 1975 - 2011 (Source: Concert Database, http://www.liquisearch.com/kemper_arena/concerts, accessed online 24 February 2016).

Kemper Arena - Concerts

Concerts

- Jethro Tull — January 28, 1975 and April 23, 1979, with UK
- John Denver — May 1, 1975, April 5, 1980, June 20, 1982 and December 13, 1989
- ZZ Top — October 31, 1975, with Rory Gallagher, August 13, 1981, with Loverboy, June 10, 1983, with Quiet Riot, February 16-17, 1986, with Jimmy Barnes, December 16, 1990, with The Jeff Healey Band and May 8, 1994, with Cry of Love
- The Who — December 1, 1975, with Toots and the Maytals and April 26, 1980, with The Pretenders
- Bachman-Turner Overdrive — February 26, 1976, with The Electric Light Orchestra
- Olivia Newton-John — March 3, 1976 and September 24, 1982, with The Tom Scott Quartet
- Elvis Presley & The TCB Band — April 21, 1976 and June 18, 1977
- Aerosmith — April 28, 1976, with Angel and Slade, June 28, 1978, with The Climax Blues Band, February 5, 1983 and February 19, 1988
- Wings — May 29, 1976
- The Eagles — November 24, 1976, June 23, 1980, with Christopher Cross and July 11, 2002
- Blue Öyster Cult — December 12, 1976, with Bob Seger and Dirty Tricks and October 31, 1981, with Foghat and Whitford/St. Holmes
- KISS — February 9, with Head East and November 27, with Detective, 1977 and July 3, 1996, with Alice in Chains
- Fleetwood Mac — April 1, with Rocky Burnette and September 16, 1977, August 24, 1980, September 30, 1987, with The Cruzados and August 13, 2003
- Pink Floyd — June 21, 1977
- Bad Company — July 15, 1977 and May 26, 1979
- Alice Cooper — July 30, 1977, with The Climax Blues Band and February 19, 1979, with The Babys
- Kansas — November 25, 1977, with Crawler, July 29, 1979, with Night, October 17, 1980 and July 29, 1982
- Rod Stewart — November 29, 1977, January 30, 1982, October 26, 1991, March 11, 2004 and April 13, 2007
- Waylon Jennings — December 4, 1977, with Jessi Colter
- Neil Diamond — December 12, 1977
- Ted Nugent — January 15 and December 17, 1978 and June 18, 1980, with Scorpions and Def Leppard
- Willie Nelson — January 19, 1978, September 27, 1980, September 19, 1983, November 16, 1986 and November 5, 2000
- Emerson, Lake & Palmer — February 28, 1978
- Parliament-Funkadelic — April 8, 1978
- REO Speedwagon — May 12-13, 1978, with Rainbow and No Dice and April 27, 1985
- Boz Scaggs — June 23, 1978, with The Little River Band
- The Electric Light Orchestra — July 2, 1978, with Trixter and October 28, 1981, with Hall & Oates
- Yes — September 27, 1978, June 6, 1979 and March 12, 1984
- Genesis — October 17, 1978, January 29, 1984 (Concert was interrupted by power outage caused by high winds outside the building) and January 21-22, 1987
- Billy Joel — October 18, 1978, April 17, 1984, February 13, 1987, April 2, 1994 and December 7, 1999

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 44

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

- Bob Dylan — November 3, 1978
- Styx — November 21, 1978, with The Babys, March 16–17, 1981, May 11, 1983, June 21, 2003, with Journey and REO Speedwagon and October 22, 2005, with REO Speedwagon
- The Moody Blues — December 4, 1978, with Jimmie Spheeris and October 24, 1981
- Queen — December 8, 1978, September 12, 1980, with Dakota and August 28, 1982, with Billy Squier
- Johnny Cash — December 12, 1978
- Diana Ross — May 12, 1979
- The Village People — May 28, 1979
- Rush — February 27, 1980, with Roadmaster, April 23–24, 1981, October 15–16, 1982, with Rory Gallagher, June 16, 1984, with Gary Moore, April 29, 1986, with Blue Öyster Cult, April 7, 1988, with The Rainmakers, March 3, 1990, with Mr. Big, May 23, 1992, with Primus and April 5, 1994
- Foghat — July 29, 1980
- Van Halen — August 22, 1980, with The Katz, October 17, 1981, with G-Force, August 7, 1982, with After the Fire, June 20–21, 1984, with The Velcros, May 31, 1986, with Bachman–Turner Overdrive and July 26, 2004, with Shinedown
- Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band — October 23, 1980, May 19, 1983 and March 21, 1996
- The Cars — October 8, 1980, with The Motels
- Elton John — October 10, 1980, September 20, 1984, June 4, 1999, April 12, 2001, with Billy Joel and April 28, 2005
- Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band — February 5, 1981, November 19, 1984, April 9, 2000 and September 24, 2002
- The Beach Boys — February 19, 1981, with Randy Meisner & The Silverados
- Joe Walsh — June 6, 1981
- The Jacksons — September 8, 1981
- Journey — September 18–19, 1981, with Point Blank and July 12–13, 1983, with Bryan Adams
- Barry Manilow — September 29, 1981 and October 9, 1984
- The Rolling Stones — December 14–15, 1981, with George Thorogood & The Destroyers and The J. Geils Band and April 6, 1999, with Jonny Lang
- The Police — March 25, 1982, with Joan Jett and the Blackhearts and November 24, 1983
- Scorpions — July 10, 1982, with Iron Maiden and Girlschool
- Crosby, Stills & Nash — August 25, 1982 and January 26, 2000, with Neil Young
- Peter Gabriel — December 4, 1982
- Neil Young — July 2, 1983, with The Fabulous Pinks and October 16, 1986
- Stevie Nicks — July 14, 1983, with Joe Walsh
- Jackson Browne — August 24, 1983
- AC/DC — October 26, 1983, with Fastway, October 5, 1985, with Yngwie Malmsteen, August 3, 1986, with Queensrÿche, July 30, 1988, with White Lion, December 7, 1990, with Love/Hate, April 2, 1996, with The Poor and September 3, 2000, with Slash's Snakepit
- Dan Fogelberg — December 18, 1983
- Lionel Richie — January 19, 1984
- Ozzy Osbourne — May 4, 1984, with Mötley Crüe and April 1, 1986, with Metallica
- Ratt — August 27, 1984, February 14, 1987, with Poison and Joan Jett and the Blackhearts and February 12, 1989
- Sammy Hagar — September 26, 1984, with Krokus

National Register of Historic Places
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----- Name of Property -----
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----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable) -----

- Tina Turner — October 26, 1984, October 26, 1985, October 17, 1987, June 22, 1993 and May 17, 2000, with Lionel Richie and Janice Robinson
- Cyndi Lauper — November 30, 1984
- Iron Maiden — December 17, 1984, with Twisted Sister, June 18, 1998 and February 27, 1991
- Deep Purple — February 13, 1985, with Giuffria and May 5, 1987, with Bad Company
- Frank Sinatra — March 28, 1985
- Triumph — May 22, 1985 and October 10, 1986
- Phil Collins — June 15, 1985 and April 12, 1997
- Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers — June 26, 1985, with Lone Justice and February 26, 1990, with Lenny Kravitz
- Bryan Adams — July 28, 1985 and May 2, 1992, with The Storm
- Mötley Crüe — September 7, 1985, July 11, 1987, November 21, 1989, April 3, 1990 and March 15, 2005
- Foreigner — September 21, 1985
- Supertramp — November 5, 1985, with The Motels and Rick Springfield
- Kenny Rogers — December 6, 1985, with Dolly Parton
- Bon Jovi — February 26, 1987, with Cinderella and April 13, 1989
- The Beastie Boys — July 18, 1987 and August 7, 1998
- Boston — October 9, 1987, with Farrenheit
- David Bowie — October 14, 1987, with Peter Frampton
- U2 — October 26, 1987 and November 27, 2001, with Garbage
- Def Leppard — December 10, 1987, with Tesla and December 19, 1992
- John Mellencamp — February 16, 1988
- Michael Jackson — February 23–24, 1988
- INXS — June 14, 1988, with Public Image Ltd
- Jimmy Page — October 14, 1988
- R.E.M. — March 4, 1989, with Robyn Hitchcock and the Egyptians
- Hank Williams, Jr. — April 16, 1989
- Bobby Brown — May 21, 1989
- The Bangles — August 25, 1989
- New Kids on the Block — January 18, 1990, with The Perfect Gentlemen, Tommy Page and Rick Wes
- Janet Jackson — April 11, 1990, August 1, 1998, with Usher and July 14, 2001
- MC Hammer — October 28, 1990, with En Vogue and Vanilla Ice
- Bell Biv DeVoe — March 25, 1991, with Johnny Gill and Keith Sweat
- Metallica — November 28, 1991, with Metal Church, January 31, 1997, with Corrosion of Conformity and May 11, 2004, with Godsmack
- Dire Straits — February 16, 1992
- Eric Clapton — October 28, 1994, with Jimmie Vaughan & The Tilt-A-Whirl Band, April 2, 1998, with Distant Cousins, July 28, 2001, with Doyle Bramhall II & Smokestack and April 2, 2007, with The Robert Cray Band
- Page & Plant — May 5, 1995, with The Tragically Hip and June 6, 1998
- Garth Brooks — May 2–5, 1996
- Kiss - July 3, 1996, with Alice in Chains (last show with Layne Staley)
- The Smashing Pumpkins — September 1, 1996, with Garbage
- Jerry Lee Lewis — November 9, 1997
- Toby Keith — November 15, 1997 and October 27, 2000

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 46

----- Name of Property -----
----- County and State -----
----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable) -----

- Merle Haggard — November 16, 1997
- Prince & The New Power Generation — January 4, 1998 and May 4, 2004
- The Backstreet Boys — July 31, 1998, November 18, 1999 and August 27, 2001, with Krystal Harris
- The Family Values Tour — October 22, 1998 and October 12, 1999
- Alanis Morissette — March 15, 1999, with Garbage
- Celine Dion — March 29, 1999
- 'N Sync — April 1, 1999, with Divine and Tatyana Ali and June 22, 2000, with Sisqó and Pink
- Korn — April 23, 1999, with Rob Zombie and Videodrone, April 19, 2000 and July 21, 2002, with Puddle of Mudd and Deadsy
- Roger Waters — August 28, 1999
- Ricky Martin — November 30, 1999
- Nine Inch Nails — May 28, 2000, with A Perfect Circle and February 18, 2006, with Moving Units and Saul Williams
- Blink-182 — June 30, 2000, with Bad Religion and Fenix TX
- The Dixie Chicks — August 4, 2000, with Patty Griffin and May 10, 2003, with Joan Osborne
- Tim McGraw and Faith Hill — September 24, 2000, with The Warren Brothers and July 18, 2006, with Uncle John's Band
- Montgomery Gentry — October 28, 2000
- Brad Paisley — October 29, 2000
- Creed — November 15, 2000 and February 17, 2002
- Tool — October 21, 2001, with Tricky, October 16, 2002 and September 15, 2006, with Isis
- Cher — July 16, 2002, with Cyndi Lauper and September 22, 2003
- Gary Allan — October 26, 2002 and October 27, 2007
- Carolyn Dawn Johnson — November 1, 2002
- Keith Urban — November 2, 2002 and December 1, 2005, with Nerina Pallot and Richard Winsland
- George Strait & The Ace in the Hole — February 13, 2003, with Tammy Cochran, March 4, 2005, with Dierks Bentley and March 2, 2007, with Taylor Swift and Ronnie Milsap
- The Red Hot Chili Peppers — May 5, 2003, with Queens of the Stone Age and The Mars Volta
- Matchbox 20 — May 28, 2003
- Buddy Jewell — October 23, 2003
- Trace Adkins — October 24, 2003
- Craig Morgan — October 25, 2003 and October 23, 2010
- Emerson Drive — October 31, 2003
- Trick Pony — November 1, 2003
- Shania Twain — November 29, 2003
- Martina McBride — December 21, 2003, October 9, 2004, with Alan Jackson, January 28, 2006 and April 12, 2007, with Rodney Atkins and Little Big Town
- Sarah Brightman — February 15, 2004
- Clay Aiken and Kelly Clarkson — April 15, 2004, with The Beu Sisters
- Joe Nichols — October 29, 2004
- Darryl Worley — October 30, 2004
- Sarah McLachlan — April 30, 2005
- Hilary Duff — August 11, 2005

National Register of Historic Places
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----- Name of Property -----
----- County and State -----
----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable) -----

- Kenny Chesney — August 21, 2005, with Gretchen Wilson and Pat Green
- The Charlie Daniels Band — October 21, 2005
- Sugarland — October 27, 2005
- Terri Clark — October 29, 2005
- The Trans-Siberian Orchestra — December 22, 2005 and December 26, 2006 (2 shows)
- Millionaire — March 23, 2006
- Nickelback — September 16, 2006, with Hoobastank and Chevelle and September 2, 2007, with Puddle of Mudd and Daughtry
- Rodney Atkins — October 20, 2006
- Shooter Jennings — October 27, 2006
- Little Big Town — October 28, 2006
- High School Musical — January 23, 2007, with Jordan Pruitt
- Christina Aguilera — February 24, 2007, with The Pussycat Dolls and Danity Kane
- Hillsong United — April 21, 2007
- T.I. and Ciara — August 12, 2007
- The Casting Crowns — February 9, 2008
- The Foo Fighters — July 19, 2008, with Supergrass and Year Long Disaster
- Thousand Foot Krutch — February 28, 2009
- Paul van Dyk — October 16, 2009
- Abandon — February 19–20, 2010, with Unhindered and February 11, 2012
- Little Texas — October 22, 2010
- Dierks Bentley — October 29, 2010
- Heidi Newfield — October 30, 2010
- Hawk Nelson — February 4–5, 2011, with Group 1 Crew and Britt Nicole
- Jimmy Needham — February 11, 2011







America's Regatta

Welcome to the
American Regatta

1

1

NO PARKING

STOP



Welcome to the
American Royal

AR





AIR

www.air.com

Our Vault is Smoother

4



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American

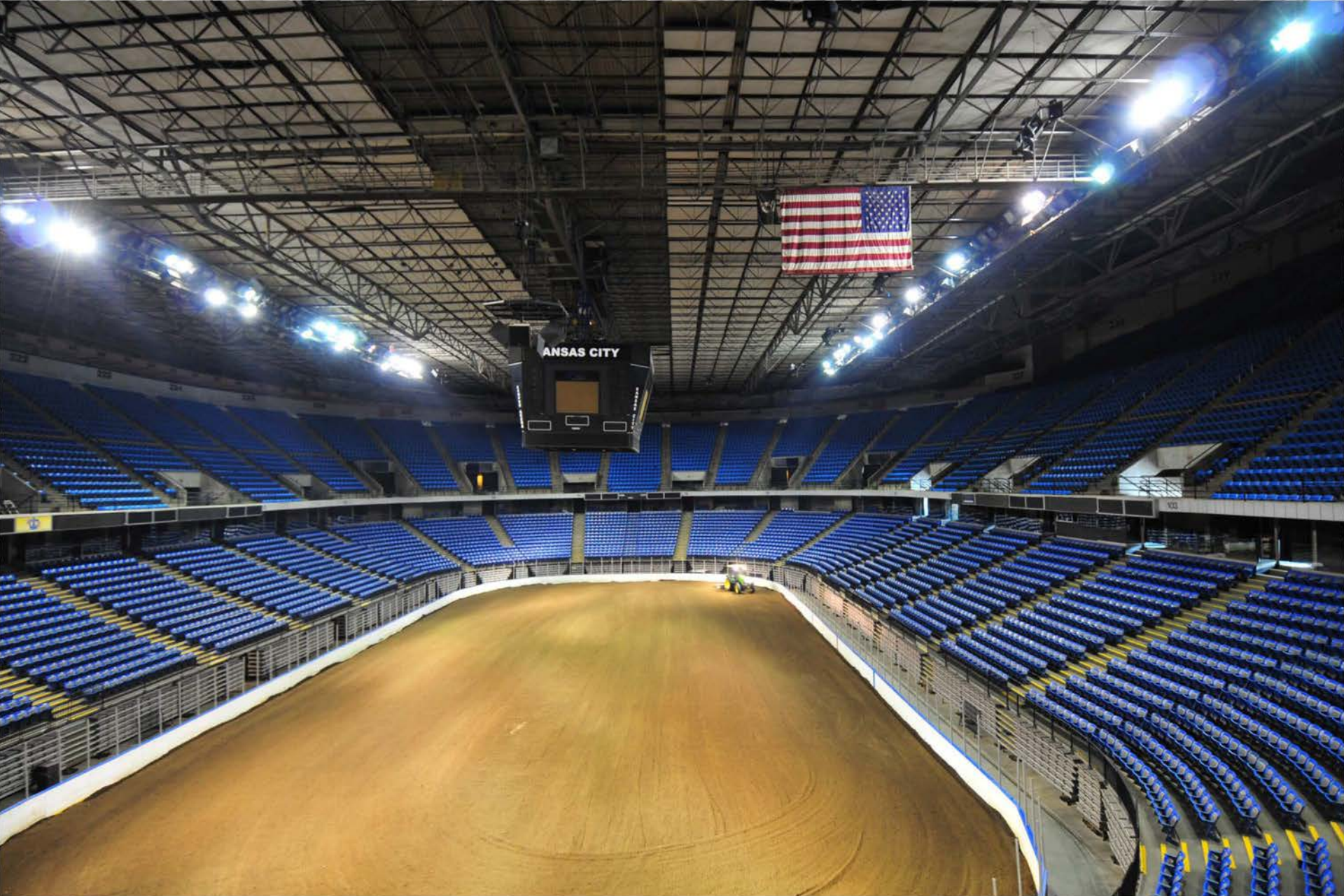
4

4

4



KANSAS CITY



ANSAS CITY





36

37

208

209



EXIT

DESIGNATED
SMOKING
EXIT



EXIT

GUEST SERVICES



ONLY PERSONS

231-233
SECTIONS
115-116

233 232
116

WELCOME TO KEMPER ARENA
No Smoking - Smoking Permitted at Outside Gate

231

28:88
Arena Information / First Aid / Security - Located at Gate 3
Concessions, Restrooms / Located on the Mid-Levels

114

1

Sections 112-116 and 222-235
Suites S - V

Sections 112-116 and 222-235
Suites S - V

Welcome to Kemper Arena
No Smoking - Smoking Permitted at Outside Gate

WHEELCHAIR
SUITE
116




WOMEN

88:88

Arena Information / First Aid / Security - Located at Gate 3
Concessions, Restrooms - Located on the Mid-Levels

240, 239 & 201
SECTIONS
118 & 101

201

101









NO
06
211

NO
06
211





315



MEN



WOMEN



TIME REMAINING
88:88

Welcome to Kemper Arena
No Smoking - Smoking Permitted at Outside Gate

3 Only





↑ ARENA FLOOR &
← ADMINISTRATION OFFICES
LOCKER ROOMS ▶
CONCESSIONAIRE ▶

NO SMOKING - THIS IS A NON-SMOKING FACILITY
CITY ORDINANCE NO. 59050





BOX OFFICE

NO
PARKING
EXCEPT
ON
M





National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Kemper Arena

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MISSOURI, Jackson

DATE RECEIVED: 09/02/16 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16th DAY: DATE OF 45th DAY: 10/18/16

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000160

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT _____ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Strong support by SHPO - Accepted of revised POS
that noted intent intention.*

RECOM./CRITEREA A

REVIEWER [Signature] DISCIPLINE Historic

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 9/9/16

DOCUMENTATION see attsched comments Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon, Governor • Sara Parker Pauley, Director

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

www.dnr.mo.gov



Memorandum

Date: March 4, 2014

To: Keeper, National Register of Historic Places

From: Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO and Director, Missouri State Historic Preservation Office *MAM*

Subject: Kemper Arena, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, National Register Nomination

Our state review board, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, approved the above nomination on February 7, 2014. All owners and appropriate elected public officials were notified and provided at least thirty (30) days to comment on the above proposed nomination in accordance with Section 36CFR60.6, interim regulations, using the exact notification format recommended by the National Register.

Please find enclosed the following documentation:

- 1 Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- Multiple Property Documentation Form
- 23 Photographs
- 1 CD with electronic images
- 1 CD with National Register of Historic Places nomination form, support letters, KMZ file
- Original USGS map(s)
- Sketch map(s)/figures(s)/exhibits not on continuation sheets
- 14 Piece(s) of correspondence (including memo)
- 2 Other: SHPO tally sheet and 2-7-2014 MOACHP meeting minutes for Kemper Arena

Comments:

- Please insure that this nomination is reviewed
- The enclosed owner objection(s) do do not constitute a majority of property owners. However, the owner is of a public building.

Forrest, Temple
1923-1989 - operated
Co. in Texas

Call #
C307.1216 B86 Fe
1985

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

160

MAR - 7 2014
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETIN

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena
Other names/site number Kemper Arena (preferred)
Name of related Multiple Property Listing n/a

2. Location

Street & number 1800 Genessee Street

N/A	not for publication
-----	---------------------

City or town Kansas City

N/A	vicinity
-----	----------

State Missouri Code MO County Jackson Code 095 Zip code 64102

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property ___ meets X does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
___ national ___ statewide ___ local
Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Mark A. Miles (SEE CONTINUATION SHEET) MARCH 4, 2014
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____
Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Sports Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Sports Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Post-Modern

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Metal

roof: Metal

other: Glass

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Areas of Significance

ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

1973-1974

Significant Dates

1973-1974

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

C.F. Murphy Associates (Architect)

J.E. Dunn Construction Company (Builder)

HNTB Corporation (Architect - alterations)

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Chicago History Museum; Ryerson/Burnham Library of the Chicago Art Institute; Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library

Kemper Arena
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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.4

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>39.092492</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.606516</u> Longitude:	3	<u>39.091051</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.605099</u> Longitude:
2	<u>39.092447</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.605050</u> Longitude:	4	<u>39.091098</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.606637</u> Longitude:

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

 NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1
Zone Easting Northing

3
Zone Easting Northing

2
Zone Easting Northing

4
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Rosin, Principal

organization Rosin Preservation, LLC date October 2013

street & number 215 W. 18th Street, Suite 150 telephone 816-472-4950

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

e-mail Elizabeth@rosinpreservation.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
 - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

PHOTO LOG

Name of Property: Kemper Arena

City or Vicinity: Kansas City

County: Jackson County State: Missouri

Photographer: Brad Finch, f-stop Photography

Date Photographed: October 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 23: East and south elevations. View to southwest from Beardsley Road.
- 2 of 23: East elevation. View to west.
- 3 of 23: North and west elevations. Soffit vent visible under upper mass. View to southeast.
- 4 of 23: North and west elevations. View to southeast.
- 5 of 23: West elevation. View to east.
- 6 of 23: West and south elevation. View to northeast.
- 7 of 23: Southwest corner at concourse level. View to east.
- 8 of 23: Box office. View to northwest.
- 9 of 23: Corner entrance vestibule at main concourse level.
- 10 of 23: 1996 atrium and entrance. View to north.
- 11 of 23: Main concourse (typical).
- 12 of 23: Intact concourse just west of 1996 atrium. View to south.
- 13 of 23: Typical concourse concession stand.
- 14 of 23: Access point between concourse and 1996 atrium. View to northeast.
- 15 of 23: Arena bowl. View to south.
- 16 of 23: Arena bowl. View to north.
- 17 of 23: Floor level seating riser cubbies. View to north.
- 18 of 23: Mid-level ramp/bridge to Club Level concourse (typical)
- 19 of 23: Club Level concourse (typical)
- 20 of 23: Typical private suite.
- 21 of 23: Typical upper level deck with painted mechanical vents.
- 22 of 23: Ground level concourse (typical).
- 23 of 23: Locker room (typical).

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FIGURE LOG

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

Figure 1: Site Map

Figure 2: Contextual Map

Figure 3: Photo Map and Current Plan – Exterior

Figure 4: Photo Map and Current Plan – Concourse Level

Figure 5: Photo Map and Current Plan – Club Level

Figure 6: Photo Map and Current Plan – Upper Seating Deck

Figure 7: Photo Map and Current Plan – Lower Level

Figure 8: Partial Site Plan for Kemper Arena, Sheet A-1.3 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 10 December 1973.

Figure 9: Concourse Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.4, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, [March 1974].

Figure 10: Upper Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.6, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, 8 March 1974.

Figure 11: North Elevation and Transverse Section of Kemper Arena, Sheet A-3.1, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

Figure 12: Lower Level Plan, Sheet A 1.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 13: New Club Level, Sheet A 1.3, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 14: Upper Seating Deck, Sheet A 1.4, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 15: Typical Elevations, Sheet A 3.2, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 16: Section at Mid Point, Sheet A 4.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 17: Kemper Arena, Late Summer or Fall 1974, View to Northwest.

Figure 18: Kemper Arena Following Roof Collapse, 13 June 1979.

Figure 19: Pauley Pavilion, UCLA, 1967.

Figure 20: Carolina Coliseum, University of South Carolina, 1968.

Figure 21: Reunion Arena, Dallas, Texas, c. 1982.

Figure 22: Omini Coliseum, Atlanta, Georgia, date unknown.

Figure 23: Market Square Arena, Indianapolis, Indiana, c. 1980s.

Figure 24: Bartle Hall Convention Center, Kansas City, c. mid-1970s.

Figure 25: S.R. Crown Hall, Illinois Institute of Technology.

Figure 26: Rendering of Athletic Facility at Phillips Exeter Academy, 1967.

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SUMMARY

The R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena (Kemper Arena) occupies a 6.4 acre site in Kansas City's industrial West Bottoms. The 1974 arena, designed by C.F. Murphy Associates of Chicago, is comprised of two distinct components -- the concrete substructure and the superstructure, composed of the space frame trusses and building skin. The substructure is largely hidden by an earthen berm that rises from the parking lot. The superstructure sits atop of the berm. The arena bowl, seating risers, interior concourses and lower level functional spaces are integral elements of the poured concrete substructure. The superstructure includes three oversized space frame trusses that rise from the berm to cross the mass of the building. Inside the building a secondary system of bar joists and trusses hangs from the superstructure and carries the roof deck. This approach allowed designers to achieve a 324-foot clear span inside the arena. Metal panels mounted on steel mullions clad the exterior. The enclosed mass of the superstructure has upper and lower components. The lower block is an oval that reflects the shape and dimensions of the arena bowl and its encircling concourse. Resting on the oval is a rectangular upper block with rounded corners. All elements of the superstructure are white, giving the arena a cohesive appearance. A glass atrium and parking level entrance were added to the east elevation in 1996. As part of this work, the central space frame was altered to accommodate additional seating on the east and west sides of the arena bowl. The modified space frame was designed to visually complement the flanking, original space frame elements. The significant elements of the building design otherwise remain intact, and the bold exo-skeleton, shaped building mass, and use of color clearly express the arena's Post-Modern design.

ELABORATION

SETTING

Kemper Arena sits at the center of a large, flat patch of ground in the southwest corner of Kansas City's West Bottoms industrial district (Figures 1 and 2). The state line, separating Missouri and Kansas, runs just west of the property. To the east, steep bluffs present a wooded slope toward the property and the Kansas (Kaw) River, which flows just west of the state line. The river channel makes a deep curve at a point aligned with Kemper Arena. A concrete levee lines the river bank. Open lots covered with gravel and/or grass fill most of the open ground between the levee and the state line. There are a few clusters of industrial buildings in this area south of Kemper Arena.

Kemper Arena is part of the American Royal complex, which includes several buildings and large paved parking lots, roughly bounded by 17th Street on the north, Wyoming Street on the east, and American Royal Drive on the west and south. South of Kemper Arena within the boundary of the complex are several large event halls, including Hale Arena and the Governor's Exhibition Hall. These are associated with the American Royal, a not-for-profit organization that promotes and educates about the area's agricultural heritage. Shared drives run between the American Royal buildings and Kemper Arena with access to both Wyoming Street and American Royal Drive. The large asphalt parking lots north and east of Kemper Arena and south of Hale Arena have roughly 4,000 parking stalls. The boundary for this nomination follows the base of the berm, excluding the non-historic American Royal buildings, the drives and the parking lots.

Two modern vehicular viaducts cross the Kansas River. One carries 23rd Street over the southern tip of the Kemper Arena-American Royal complex; the other carries I-670/I-70 near 12th Street, a few blocks to

not shown
not included on site map

Area streets around labeled on top site plan

no parking?

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the north. There are also several historic truss bridges in the vicinity of Kemper Arena. Active rail lines cross the river on truss structures near 25th Street and north of 12th Street; there is also a vacated vehicular truss bridge just north of 23rd Street.

The blocks north of the Kemper Arena-American Royal complex retain vestiges of the commercial/industrial district that historically flourished in the West Bottoms. Just north of 17th Street is the prominent historic Stockyard Exchange Building. Much of the open land lying west of Genessee Street was the historic stockyards. East of Wyoming Street is the very active alignment of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and a small yard of rail spurs (Photo 1). Kansas City's original union station and a roundhouse once stood in this area near 14th Street.

On axis with the south elevation of the arena is a long, narrow, one-story metal-clad garage with four large vehicular bays. The garage has tubular structural elements and barrel-shaped roof clad with corrugated metal. The ends connect directly to Kemper and Hale Arena. Large overhead doors fill the vehicular bays. Although the garage intersects the base of the berm, it is not included in this nomination.

ARENA

Kemper Arena rests on a grass covered berm that rises approximately 25 feet above the grade of the surrounding parking lots (Photos 1-6, Figure 17). The berm camouflages the underlying lowest level of the arena structure. A wide concrete sidewalk encircles the top of the berm (Photo 7). Wide ceremonial concrete stairs that access the concourse align with the four corners of the arena and the original building entrances (Photos 3 and 6).

The box office is integral to the berm on the south side of the arena (Photo 8). The non-historic box office (date unknown) has an arched metal roof supported on round tubular posts. To its west, stairs rise to the sidewalk encircling the arena. A concrete loading dock is part of the berm west of the box office (Photo 6).

Two stacked geometric masses form the body of the arena (Photo 3). The lower oval mass reflects the shape of the arena bowl and its encircling interior concourse. The rectangular shape of the upper mass extends the main oval to accommodate mechanical equipment in the four rounded corners. Panels of seamed metal clad the walls of both forms and the soffits at the corners of the upper mass. There are slit vents and can lights in these soffits below the mechanical equipment. The entrances in the four corners of the arena have white metal slab doors that blend with the skin when shut (Photo 7). Inside each entrance is a vestibule formed by a parallel bank of glazed doors (Photo 9).

In 1996 the east elevation of the arena was altered with the addition of an entrance at-grade with the parking lot and a large glass "mask" that covers the central portion of the facade (Photo 2). The mask has a gently convex shape and a sloped form that extends slightly from the skin of the building. A metal-clad parapet rises above the glazing and the original roof line to accommodate additional seating at the top of the arena's upper deck. Below the glazing, a bank of entrance doors is set into the berm and framed with concrete. Inside this entrance, patrons rise to the main concourse via escalators and stairs (Photo 10).

Three huge space frame trusses cross the arena from east to west at regular intervals (Photo 1, 5). They are the primary structural elements, supporting the roof and walls. The north and south space frames,

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*Bone a
"main" entrance*

*grand
entrance
main
entr*

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spaced roughly 300 feet on-center, are identical. Each measures 27 feet tall. Tubular members of varying sizes compose the trusses. The top chords are 48 inches in diameter, the bottom chords are 36 inches in diameter, and the web members have a diameter of 30 inches. The space frames rest on tapered concrete pylons, which are the visible tops of concrete footings, integral with the substructure, that extend 60 feet into the ground (Photo 7).

The central space frame was modified in 1996 to accommodate additional seating inside the arena and the new parking level entrance. The vertical element was moved away from the east and west building walls to anchor into concrete footings at-grade with the base of the berm (Photos 2, 4, 6). On the east this is in front of the new parking level entrance. The space frame rises above the original parapet (and added wall section on the east), connecting to the original truss on the roof of the arena (Figures 7 and 8). The members that compose the new space frame have a similar configuration to those of the original flanking trusses.

Inside Kemper Arena, a wide concrete concourse encircles the arena bowl at midlevel (Photo 11, 12, Figures 11 and 13). The original corner entrances provide direct access to the concourse. Concession stands and restrooms project from and recess into the concourse walls at periodic locations (Photo 13). Installation of the "mask" on the east elevation removed the metal wall cladding to create a bright, naturally lit, two-level atrium (Photo 10). Within the atrium all of the steel structural elements are exposed and coated with spray-on fire-retardant material. The alterations did not significantly impact the volume of the historic concourse, which remains very legible, referenced by headers that extend across the opening between the atrium and the concourse (Photo 14).

Kemper Arena has seating for roughly 18,000 spectators. Access to the arena bowl occurs at regular intervals along the concourse. Both the upper and lower seating levels are reached from the same entrance points (Photo 11). Each entrance has a central run of concrete stairs heading down to the lower level seats. This access is flanked by two parallel runs of concrete stairs that rise to the upper level seats. In between these access points, other doors in the concourse wall access the private viewing suites that encircle the arena at the top of the lower bowl.

The minimal historic finishes of the concourse are substantially intact (Photo 11-13). Square ground-face concrete tiles clad the concourse walls. The concourse has no ceilings, except in front of the four building entrances, which have dropped hard surface ceilings with can lights. In other locations the tiered concrete risers of the upper level seats form the ceiling (Photo 12). Large functional light fixtures hang from the exposed structure.

The arena bowl is a column-free space, 324 feet wide (Photos 15-16). Within the bowl blue plastic seats are attached to concrete risers at both the upper and lower levels. The bottom edge of the lower level seats, at or near the arena floor, can be modified as appropriate for each particular event. The aisle can end in stairs that take attendees to the floor; when floor access is not desired metal railings can be installed in front of the bottom row of seats and at the base of the aisles. When needed, additional bleacher seating can be brought out from storage areas under the lower level seats (Photo 17). The bottom of the upper deck terminates in a concourse that encircles the arena in front of this seating level. A metal pipe railing attaches to the edge of the deck at the front of the concourse. At some locations along this midlevel point there are concrete bridges that cross over the main concourse to access

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secondary concession stands and additional restrooms that were added in the mid-1980s (Photos 18-19, Figure 13).

At the rear of the lower level seats, at-grade with the midlevel concourse, a series of private viewing boxes or suites encircles the arena (Photo 20). The concourse at the bottom of the upper deck forms the ceiling for the suites. They typically have ground-face concrete block or painted drywall partitions; concrete, carpeted, or parquet wood floors; and dropped ceiling grids, although some suites have custom finishes such as wood paneling or wood parquet floors. A partial-height glass wall forms the front of each suite and perpendicular full-height glass panels separate the suites.

Finishes and fixtures in the arena area are highly functional. The concrete floor allows for the installation of alternate materials as required by specific events – ice for hockey; wood for basketball; and dirt for rodeos and horse shows. Exposed steel trusses and bar joists form a grid at the ceiling (Photos 15-16). Sound absorbing panels are placed within most of the grid squares. This is an original design detail. Large runs of exposed ductwork encircle the perimeter of the arena at the top of the upper deck (Photo 21). Once painted a vibrant red, the color of the ductwork has faded over time. A large score board hangs from the center of the arena ceiling. Smaller scoreboards are attached to the front of the upper deck concourse at the four midpoints. None of the scoreboards is original. Primary banks of lights hang from the ceiling aligned with the long edges of the arena floor. Smaller banks of lights hang in other locations.

Large openings centered in the short, north and south ends of the lower seating bowl lead from the arena floor to a lower concourse that accesses administrative offices, locker rooms, and other back-of-house spaces (Figure 12). There is also an original restaurant/bar space on this level near the north entrance. The lower level (concourse, offices, locker rooms, etc.) has painted concrete block walls; concrete, vinyl composition tile or carpeted floors; and dropped ceiling grids with acoustical lay-in tile. Slab metal doors access locker rooms. Offices have some storefront glazing facing the concourse.

ALTERATIONS

Kemper Arena experienced the following episodes of alteration since 1974.

1976 – Roof Repair

In May 1976 after an exceptionally heavy spring storm, a section of the arena roof collapsed (Figure 18). Forensic investigation pointed to weakened bolts between the secondary trusses and hangers as the cause of the failure. Accordingly, minor adjustments were made to the entire roof structure as part of the repair. Hangers were welded rather than bolted to the trusses; and supplemental steel bars were sistered to the hangers with welds to increase rigidity and strength. The roof surface was also modified to slope outward toward the edges of the building rather than inward toward the center of the building. The repairs also specified a different type of steel than that which was originally used. None of these repairs is evident to the casual observer and they do not impact the significance of the building's design. The space frame trusses and building walls were undamaged by the collapse and were not altered during the course of repairs.

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1987 – Concourse Amenity Upgrades

In the mid-1980s a Club Level concourse was added under the eaves at the perimeter of the building to provide additional women's restrooms and concession stands. These locations are accessed via concrete bridges at the base of the upper level deck in the four corners of the arena. The bridges cross the main concourse to the Club Level, which is stacked above the built-out spaces (concession stands and restrooms) on the main concourse. The volume of the main concourse remains unobstructed but for the bridges themselves (Photos 19-21). This alteration is highly unobtrusive and does not impact the qualities that render the building historically significant.

1996 – Additional Seating and East Entrance Modifications

The need for additional capacity spurred alterations to the arena in 1996 (Figures 12-16). Roughly 1,500 seats were added in a block above the upper deck on the east side of the bowl (Figure 14). Rising slightly above the original roof line, the block is clad with white metal panels matching those of the main building walls (Figure 15). A two-story glass curtain wall was installed below the seating block. The original building skin was removed in this location. In the berm at the base of the curtain wall is a new building entrance at parking level.¹ The entrance leads to a two-story atrium. Expansion of the building mass required alterations to the central space frame. New vertical piers were anchored east and west of the berm, and rise over the height of the new seating block (the designers anticipated a similar, future addition of seating on the west side of the bowl), where it anchors to the original space frame, which remains intact across the roof of the arena (Figure 8). The design mimics the configuration of the original webs, as seen in the flanking piers.

*new
entrance*

INTEGRITY

Despite the changes described above, Kemper Arena remains a unique Post-Modern interpretation of the enclosed sports arena, distinguished by its white shell, bold exoskeleton, and column-free interior space. The majority of features that contribute to its significance and that communicate its exceptional significance as a resource less than fifty years old remain intact. It is highly visible in its original location and setting, prominently placed atop an earthen berm in the flat, former stockyards of Kansas City's West Bottoms. Signature aspects of its design, materials, and workmanship, as envisioned by architects C.F. Murphy Associates, are largely unaltered. The oversized exo-skeleton and solid white arena mass make the building a singular example of its property type. Alteration of the central space frame and addition of a glass curtainwall to the east elevation in 1996 do not detract from the visionary reinterpretation of the property type. The organization and fabric of the functional interior are intact, and the experience of the visitor on the concourse or in the seating bowl is unchanged since the arena opened in 1974. Kemper Arena was an immediate icon of the Kansas City built environment when it opened in 1974 and remains such today. The nominated resource clearly communicates feelings about and associations with its period of construction and the innovative early years of Post-Modern design.

¹ The original design had primary entrances in each of the arena's four corners rather than a single main entrance. The original entrances are intact and today are primarily used for exiting (see Photos 7 and 9).

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SUMMARY

The R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena (Kemper Arena) at 1800 Genessee Street in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri is locally significant under National Register Criterion C for the area of ENGINEERING. It also meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration G for buildings that are less than 50 years old for its ground breaking application of space frame technology, which allowed designers to reinterpret the sports arena, a subset of the sports facility property type. Kemper Arena was developed by the City of Kansas City as a multipurpose venue for athletic and performance events. A key requirement of the project was a minimum 320-foot column-free arena bowl. Designers from C.F. Murphy Associates approached the project by first developing a structural solution to the long clearspan, then designing the arena enclosure around the structure. Their novel adaptation of space frame technology reinterpreted the sports arena as a bold, yet graceful Post-Modern sculpture. National and international engineering and architecture publications lauded the innovative design; scholarly assessment was overwhelmingly positive. While it was not the first arena to use space frame technology to achieve a long span, nor was it the first large building with an exo-skeleton, the innovative application completely broke with convention, distinguishing Kemper Arena from all previous sports facilities. Around the country, a few subsequent arena projects also used space frame technology as a vehicle to add freedom to their designs, but these were executed with much less success. Kemper Arena is unlike any building in Kansas City area built before or since and has no surviving national parallels among arena structures. The light, artistic form of Kemper Arena is an exceptional example of structural innovation in the Post-Modern era. The period of significance is 1973-74, the period of construction.

ELABORATION

PROPERTY HISTORY

By the late 1960s Kansas City was feeling the impact of new commercial construction outside the Interstate 35/70/670 highway loop that encircled downtown. The Crown Center development near Union Station, as well as growing nodes of retail and office space in the burgeoning north and south suburbs left civic leaders looking for ways to draw people back downtown. It was agreed that the city needed a modern exhibition hall to attract larger conventions, which could help recoup some of the income lost when retail activity moved out of the city center. Bartle Hall, designed by C.F. Murphy & Associates became this venue. Planning for Bartle Hall began in the late 1960s, although labor unrest delayed its opening until 1976.

There was also an expressed need for a multi-purpose enclosed arena to replace the aging PWA-era facilities of Municipal Auditorium (1937). Talk of building a new arena began in earnest in 1971, around the time construction of Bartle Hall got underway. There was particular interest in developing a venue that could attract a National Hockey League (NHL) franchise to the area. Voters had approved bond financing for the convention center, but beyond a limited pool of money remaining from a 1954 sports arena bond, no public funding was available. Revenue bonds were proposed as the funding mechanism, which would allow individuals and corporations to contribute toward the project's estimated \$10 million price tag.² Multiple sites were discussed for this venue – within the Truman Sports Complex, next to the new

² "A Strong Downtown Bid to Tie Down Sports Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 9 Sept 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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convention hall downtown, deep in suburban Johnson County, and on a piece of former stockyards in the West Bottoms.³

At the end of November 1971 a group of investors had been assembled who supported building an arena in the West Bottoms on the condition that Kansas City obtain an NHL franchise team. This proposal required no public money, other than improvements to access roads. The new arena would house sporting events, with a focus on hockey, and also support the activities of the American Royal, a Kansas City institution that held an annual Livestock and Horse Show in the West Bottoms. The arena and associated parking would occupy a 50-acre parcel of land, to be purchased from the stockyards company. Backers anticipated that construction could start within ninety days of approval and would take twenty months to complete.⁴ It would be another year before plans gelled.

In the late fall of 1972 the Kansas City city council was leaning heavily toward the stockyards site for the new arena. On November 30 a committee interviewed four architect-contractor teams with previous experience in arena design. Each team presented preliminary ideas for this specific project and information about other arenas on which they had worked. The schedule was tight. The NHL was meeting in January to discuss moving a franchise to Kansas City, and the committee would need preliminary plans by that date in order to sway the NHL.⁵ Before the end of the year, the committee announced the selection of C.F. Murphy Associates and J.E. Dunn Construction Company, a prominent local builder, for the project. Chicago-based C.F. Murphy was already engaged to design Bartle Hall and had local offices in Crown Center.⁶ The team was given until January 22 to develop a guaranteed price for a 16,000-seat multipurpose arena.⁷

With just forty-eight hours until the NHL finance committee meeting, the city council approved by a vote of 10-to-3 to allocate \$5.6 million in general obligation bonds to the project. This was the final piece of a \$19.7 million financing package that also included \$7.5 million in revenue bonds; \$2 million of private funds pooled from an investor group; a \$1.2 million capital contribution from the American Royal; \$2.5 million gifted by the Kemper family; \$400,000 earned interest from other money in the package; and

³ Robert Carroll, "Complex Web of Sites, Bids for Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 22 April 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴ "Investors Back Stockyards Site," *Kansas City Star*, 28 Nov 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁵ John T. Dauner, "Arena Selection Panel Favored," *Kansas City Times*, 1 December 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁶ William L. McCorkle, "Panel Recommends Firm for Design of Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 30 December 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷ John T. Dauner, "Royal Arena Site Backed," *Kansas City Times*, [23] January 1973, A Strong Downtown Bid to Tie Down Sports Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 9 Sept 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷ Robert Carroll, "Complex Web of Sites, Bids for Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 22 April 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷ "Investors Back Stockyards Site," *Kansas City Star*, 28 Nov 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷ John T. Dauner, "Arena Selection Panel Favored," *Kansas City Times*, 1 December 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷ William L. McCorkle, "Panel Recommends Firm for Design of Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 30 December 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

box office?

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\$900,000 in federal aid for street improvements.⁸ The local press heralded the decision as assuring the future of both the American Royal and an NHL expansion team. "The region will have an arena of the size needed to compete for the biggest conventions and the large national entertainment and sporting events," the *Kansas City Star* boasted.⁹

Less than three months later things were moving swiftly forward. *The Star* published a site plan and architect's model on February 4 that showed the distinctive exterior space frame structure rising over the arena.¹⁰ On 4 April 1973 the newly formed American Royal Arena Corporation purchased 53 acres of land from the Kansas City Stock Yards Company for \$3,650,000 and borrowed just shy of \$1 million to purchase an additional 13.6 acres. The loan cleared the way for J.E. Dunn Construction Company to start preparing the site for construction.¹¹

Ground was broken on 14 April 1973¹² When the *Kansas City Times* published a photo on 1 August 1974 showing the distinctive bowl and truss structures in place, it was possible to envision the completed building.¹³ The \$23 million R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena was dedicated on 18 October 1974, just over eighteen months after construction began. Remarkably, the fast schedule was achieved despite a labor strike that interrupted construction for five months.

The dedication program noted that "Cooperation and civic pride within the Community have made the ... Arena become a reality." The Kansas City Scouts NHL team played their first home game in the arena just two weeks later, followed shortly by home games of Kansas City Kings basketball team. College basketball tournaments were highly anticipated, as was the 1975 American Royal.¹⁴

⁸ William L. McCorkle, "Stockyard Arena Plan Appears to Be Leading," *Kansas City Star*, 14 January 1973, A Strong Downtown Bid to Tie Down Sports Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 9 Sept 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁸ Carroll, "Complex Web of Sites..."

⁸ "Investors Back Stockyards Site," *Kansas City Star*, 28 Nov 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁸ Dauner, "Arena Selection Panel Favored..."

⁸ McCorkle, "Panel Recommends Firm..."

⁹ "City Hall Makes the Big Decision to Build Sports Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 24 January 1973, A Strong Downtown Bid to Tie Down Sports Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 9 Sept 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹ Carroll, "Complex Web of Sites..."

⁹ "Investors Back Stockyards Site," *Kansas City Star*, 28 Nov 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹ Dauner, "Arena Selection Panel Favored..."

⁹ McCorkle, "Panel Recommends Firm..."

¹⁰ "Arena Site Plan," *Kansas City Star*, 4 February 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹¹ "Arena Group Schedules Beginning of Construction," *Kansas City Star*, 4 April 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹² William L. McCorkle, "New Hockey Suites Plan," *Kansas City Star*, 30 May 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹³ Joe Willington, Jr., "Arena Framework," *Kansas City Times*, 1 August 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁴ Dedication Program, R. Crosby Kemper, Sr., Memorial Arena, 18 October 1974. Vertical File. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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The "gargantuan" and "gleaming white arena" was an instant landmark in the old stockyards.¹⁵ It had a footprint measuring 424 feet by 310 feet, and the top of the structure rose 95 feet above the surrounding parking lots. Inside the column-free space, no seat was farther than 200 feet from the arena floor. Although it appeared smaller, Kemper Arena boasted twice as many permanent seats as Municipal Auditorium, the venue it replaced.¹⁶ The official seating capacity was 17,000 for basketball and 16,000 for hockey. Events that required more floor space (track, rodeo, etc.) could still accommodate 15,000 patrons. This placed it among the top venues in the country.

An NHL game between the Kansas City Scouts and the Chicago Blackhawks on 2 November 1974 was the inaugural event at Kemper Arena, attended by 15,000 fans.¹⁷ This was just the first of a wide array of events that Kemper Arena hosted over the coming decades. In addition to hockey and basketball, indoor soccer, arena football, and roller derby teams played games there. It was the site of the 1976 Republican National Convention that nominated Gerald Ford for president and Kansan Bob Dole as his running mate. Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, the Rolling Stones, and Michael Jackson were just a few of the musicians whose concerts filled the venue to capacity. And, of course, there were annual rodeos and horse and livestock shows as part of the American Royal. By 2005, it was estimated that 30 million spectators had attended events in the building.¹⁸

Roof Collapse

On 4 June 1979 a large section of the Kemper Arena roof collapsed during a heavy spring storm leaving a jumble of twisted steel on the floor of the building (Figure 18). Early speculation centered on the effects of sustained seventy mile-per-hour winds, heavy rain, and negative air pressure.¹⁹ One weathercaster estimated that 140,000 gallons of rain fell on the roof within a thirty minute time span.²⁰ Two guards and a maintenance manager who were in the building at the time saw water pouring through the roof next to the score board that hangs over the center of the arena floor. The scoreboard fell to the floor along with a 200-foot by 215-foot section of the roof. Otherwise, the building, including the space frame trusses, was largely undamaged.²¹

Within days of the collapse, forensic expert James L. Stratta from Menlo Park, California was on-site to investigate. After examining physical evidence, reviewing data, and running tests, Stratta determined that the cause of the roof failure lay in two bolts connecting steel hangers to the trusses near the middle of the roof that may not have been thoroughly tightened during construction. This, along with the flexibility inherent in the roof design, allowed the bolts to move in a way that fatigued the metal.²² Wear on bolts at other points of the roof and air pressure changes caused by the storm the night of the collapse were also

¹⁵ Zeeck.

¹⁶ Joe McGuff, "Rich Tradition of Auditorium Gives Way to new Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 8 November 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁷ William D. Tammus, "Big-Time Hockey Scores First Goal for Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 3 November 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁸ Covitz, "A Storied History..." A8.

¹⁹ Bill Norton and Bill Turque, "Air Pressure Seen as Cav-In Cause," *Kansas City Star*, 5 June 1979, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

²⁰ "Mayor Asks for Answers", *Kansas City Times*, 6 June 1979, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

²¹ Norton and Turque.

²² "Prizewinning Arena Collapses: Kansas City Showcase in Ruins," *Time*, Vol. 133, Issue 25, 18 June 1979, 74. Wearne, 34.

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contributing factors. Additionally, the inward slope of the roof allowed water to pool near its center. The heavy rains and high winds the night of the incident exacerbated the situation, which led to the collapse.²³

Stratta collaborated with local structural engineer Bob D. Campbell to design roof repairs. Their solution involved welding, rather than bolting, the hangers to the trusses. Steel bars, measuring eight inches by two inches, were sistered (welded) to the hangers to add strength. Stratta also specified a different type of steel for the repairs than was originally used. The other recommended change was to slope the roof outward rather than inward to prevent water from pooling near the center of the building.²⁴

Other Alterations

where?
Early in 1987 the city undertook a more pedestrian \$1.4 million renovation of Kemper Arena to expand the number of restroom stalls available to women. Four new mid-level decks (described as "Club Level") were added under the eaves of the arena (Figure 13). They were accessed from concrete ramps that crossed back over the main concourse from the top of the stairs at the mid-level of the seating bowl (Photo 18). Each 2,000 square foot deck had restrooms as well as additional concession stands (Photo 19). Enclosed areas for handicapped seating were also added to the corners of the arena and six concession stands were refurbished.²⁵

In the early 1990s, city officials feared that the NCAA would pull its prestigious Big 12 basketball tournament from Kansas City because of the limited capacity at Kemper Arena. In an effort to stave off a potentially huge economic loss, the city added 2,000 seats to the arena. Three-quarters of these were built above center court; the remaining 450 seats were placed in the corners of the floor. To accommodate the seats above the bowl, HNTB Corp. designed an arching extension on the east exterior side of the arena that would include a new glass-fronted atrium and parking level entrance. The center space frame truss was reconfigured. Its legs were moved out from the building's east and west walls and the top chord was raised higher over the edge of the roof, where it connected to the remaining section of the original space frame. This accommodated the additional seating on the east side of the bowl and made room for future expansion on the west side of the arena.²⁶

Even before the improvements were completed in the spring of 1997, there were rumblings in the civic community to replace Kemper Arena. Since 1971 the Kansas City community had debated the merits of a downtown arena. The West Bottoms location was considered awkward to find, and even with a new atrium and additional seats, many considered Kemper Arena to be outdated. While it was built with twenty-five private suites (a novelty in 1974) and all of these were leased, these spaces were considered inadequate when compared with the luxury boxes appearing in new arenas around the country.²⁷ The new Sprint Arena opened in 2007, just north of the highway loop in the southeast corner of downtown Kansas City. The American Royal continues to use Kemper Arena for its Livestock and Horse Show every fall, but other activities have largely relocated to the bigger, newer facility. A current proposal would redevelop

²³ John Dvorak, "With No Bolts, New Arena Roof May Sport a Different Slant," *Kansas City Times*, 24 August 1979, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

²⁴ Dvorak, "With No Bolts..."

²⁵ Joe Lambe, "Waiting Game at Arena to End for Women," *Kansas City Star*, 21 January 1988, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

²⁶ Matt Campbell, "Panel Supports \$20 Million for Arena Renovation," *Kansas City Star*, 28 December 1995, A1:5.

²⁷ Randy Covitz, "Outclassed," *Kansas City Star*, 17 March 1996, C2:1.

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Kemper Arena as a facility for indoor sports (soccer, basketball, volleyball, track, gymnastics, etc.), including youth and adult recreational leagues.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE KEMPER ARENA STRUCTURAL DESIGN

Enclosed sports arenas became popular early in the twentieth century as the new game of basketball quickly gained popularity. At the same time refrigeration technology enabled the production of indoor ice sheets, elevating ice hockey to an indoor spectacle. There was a sharp rise in the number of these venues constructed nationwide after World War II. Existing facilities were aging, and communities without a large venue sought to add one. These new arenas followed the prototype established millennia earlier by Roman coliseums. An oval shaped athletic floor was surrounded by tiered seating. Offices, locker rooms, and other functional spaces were housed on a lower level of the arena. A typical venue from this period sat 10,000 – 20,000 spectators.²⁸

Whereas the original Roman model was open-air, construction technologies developed during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries were adapted to enclose modern arenas. Traditional arched and pitched roofs evolved into dome and drum shaped roofs and finally flat truss and space frame structures. As occurred with other building types, traditional building materials like brick and stone clad the exterior of early arenas. Later concrete, glass and metal became dominant.²⁹ While each arena design was unique, there were commonalities, particularly in volume. Most were a regular mass, be it rectangular, round or oval, with symmetrical expression of the facades.³⁰

A constant issue in arena design was the placement of structural posts that supported the roof. Inevitably there were seats with an obstructed view. Designers experimented with different truss configurations in an effort to reduce the number of offending members, thereby maximizing the clear space within the arena. Development of the space frame provided an optimal structural system for sports arenas that minimized obstructions, while allowing long clear spans. By utilizing tubular steel member, the space frame provided the enhanced strength needed for long spans while using less steel, making the space frame a cost effective construction option. It was also a complex structural system that required complicated and exacting calculations to execute effectively. Because each space frame was composed of a unique arrangement of members, the other key to success was developing an appropriate, yet simple joint connection where multiple members, often of differing sizes, met. Alexander Graham Bell experimented with space frames in the early 1900s, although the best known early adopter was Buckminster Fuller, who utilized space frames to create his signature geodesic structures in the 1950s.³¹

By the mid-1960s, computers provided the accurate, as well as speedy, calculations necessary to make the space frame a practical option. The technology made steady inroads into contemporary architecture, particularly for buildings like arenas or convention halls where long, open spans were desired.³² The space frame was popular, in part, because it was economical to build. The individual components that

²⁸ Joseph R. Warlick, Jr, "A View from the Bleachers," *Modern Steel Construction*, vol. XI, No. 3, Third Quarter 1971, 3-5.

²⁹ William Bradford Keller, "Architecture for Community and Spectacle: The Roofed Arena in North America, 1853-1968," PhD diss., University of Delaware, 2007, 279.

³⁰ Keller, 281.

³¹ "Space Frame," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_frame, accessed 30 October 2013.

³² Welton Beckett, FAIA, "UCLA's Steel Space Frame: Beauty on a Budget," *Modern Steel Construction*, Vol. VII, No. 2, Second Quarter 1967, 4-5.

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composed each unique design could be mass produced and were easy to stock, light to transport, and quick to assemble. Truss sections could even be prefabricated off-site and brought to the job ready to install. Likewise, individual components could withstand a variety of impairment, including some fire, before the structural integrity of the larger building was threatened. Space frames appealed to engineers devising practical solutions to spatial problems, but as Kemper Arena demonstrates, they were also intriguing to architects, who manipulated them in unexpected ways, using the simple geometry to produce aesthetically pleasing designs.³³ One engineer likened the space frame to a spider web, spun across the ceiling, defying gravity.³⁴

Two examples illustrate the typical adaptation of the space frame to large span arena projects in the years before Kemper Arena was built. When designing the Edwin W. Pauley Pavilion (1967) on the campus of UCLA, architect Welton Beckett recounted that his team studied traditional structural systems (conventional truss, dome, and catenary systems) before settling on the space frame as the best solution for the project. Only the space frame was able to meet the three-fold goals of providing a 300-foot by 400-foot clear span, creating visual interest, and ensuring economy of construction. The Welton Beckett team designed a giant three-dimensional grid composed of 108 four-sided steel pyramids that covered the building footprint. The framing remained completely exposed inside the arena, and one bay on the exterior was left exposed at the building perimeter where it overhangs the structural columns³⁵ (Figure 19). The Coliseum erected at the University of South Carolina the following year employed the space frame in the same way. A roof composed of space frame trusses sat atop 44 exterior columns, providing a clear span of 322 feet inside the building and cantilevers of almost 17 feet on the outside³⁶ (Figure 20). In both of these examples the space frame modules were conglomerated in a manner not unlike traditional trusses to form a mat of structure over the buildings. At the perimeter, the space frame form was incorporated into the mansard roof shape.

Differing significantly from these earlier examples, C.F. Murphy Associates applied the forms and technology of the space frame to Kemper Arena in highly unprecedented ways. The design team began by reimagining the property type. They drastically reduced the number of space frame modules, substantially enlarged the size of each, and then placed this bold, oversized structure outside the enclosed building mass. This left the interior of the arena unencumbered to serve its intended function, while creating a design distinguished by both brawn and elegance. The result is at once functional and adventurous.³⁷ Colorful seating and mechanical ducts enlivened the interior, while the exterior was uniformly white. There were practical benefits to the design approach. The exo-skeleton not only achieved the column-free bowl, but also reduced the amount of interior space needing to be sided, finished, and conditioned, providing savings in both construction and operations.³⁸ *Chicago Tribune* architecture critic Paul Gapp appreciated the assertive design for its contrast to the typical "puffy sports domes" found around the country.³⁹

³³ Max Blumenthal, "Structures Spatiales un Bilan," *Techniques & Architecture*, No. 309, May 1976, pp. 27. Z.S. Makowski, "Structures Spatiales: Bilan et Tendances," *Techniques & Architecture*, No. 309, May 1976, pp. 41.

³⁴ Blumenthal, 27.

³⁵ Welton Beckett, 4-5.

³⁶ Russell Maxey, "Giant Space Frame Tops Carolina Coliseum," *Modern Steel Construction*, Vol. VII, No.2, Second Quarter 1968, 3-5.

³⁷ Ross Miller, 287.

³⁸ John A. Dvorak, "Hernandez Wants Local Panel to Monitor Kemper Rebuilding," *Kansas City Times*, 9 June 1979, microfilm, Kansas City Public Library.

³⁹ Quoted in David L. Fleener, "Touched By Grace", *Kansas City Star*, 3 October 1975, microfilm, Kansas City Public Library.

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Kemper was certainly not the last arena to use a space frame structural system. Reunion Arena in Dallas, Texas, a 17,200-seat venue built in 1980, was typical of those that followed. The building was a regular, rectangular mass with rounded corners and solid beige textured-concrete walls. Topping the arena was a flat four-acre roof, composed of a dense space frame grid (Figure 21). The structure was somewhat visible through the tinted glass covering the "fascia."⁴⁰ The form of Reunion Arena was vaguely reminiscent of Kemper in that both buildings had an upper mass with rounded corners that overhung the lower portion of the body. At Reunion the upper mass simply encapsulated the building structure, while at Kemper the structure was highlighted as a third, highly distinctive element of the overall design.

Shortly after Kemper Arena was completed, the designers of Market Square Arena in Indianapolis and Atlanta's Omni Coliseum (both opened in 1975) adapted the space frame in more creative ways. At Omni Coliseum space frames form a grid of pyramidal nodules that rise above the building roof (Figure 22). A standard structural system formed the 45-foot tall trusses on each of the arena's four walls. Panels of weathering steel, accented to reflect the pattern of the structural systems they sheathed, clad the roof elements and wall trusses. Glazed lobbies anchored the tall corners of the building, enhancing their impression as voids in the primary structural system.⁴¹ Indianapolis' Market Square Arena was a circular, spaceship-like structure. Tall, splayed triangular space frames along the walls carried the weight of the arena roof to the foundation (Figure 23). Multi-level parking structures built to serve Market Arena abutted the building, obscuring much of the visible space frame.⁴² In some regards, these two venues are notable successors to Kemper Arena. They share the same creative use of structure to address challenges imposed by site, program, and owner demands, but in both cases steel sheathing or adjacent structures camouflage much (if not all) of the structure itself. Neither of these buildings survives. The Omni was demolished in 1997 after suffering problems related to building settling and excessive rusting of the steel cladding. Market Square Arena was razed in 2001 when the Indiana Pacers moved to a new venue.⁴³ Their loss compounds the uniqueness of Kemper Arena and its bold space frame exo-skeleton, that goes well beyond the basic programming needs of creating a column-free arena bowl. Reflecting on the design thirty years after Kemper Arena opened, architect Jahn observed that it had aged well compared to other arenas, many of which he likened to "boxes without architectural merit." By comparison, he rightly felt Kemper Arena had "a civic spirit... a distinctive and recognizable look that becomes an image for the city."⁴⁴

If Kemper Arena stands out from other sports venues, it is certainly distinct within the local built environment, although there is one other space frame building in Kansas City. The Bartle Hall convention center (design begun in 1968; opened in 1976) was the project that first brought C.F. Murphy Associates to Kansas City. Working with local architects Seligson Associates, Horner & Blessing, and Howard, Needles Tammen & Bergendoff (later HNTB Corp.), the designers used oversized space frame trusses to

⁴⁰ Reunion Arena was demolished in 2009. "Four-Acre Space Frame Rises in Dallas," *Modern Steel Construction*, 2nd Quarter, 1980, pp. 14-15. "Reunion Arena," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Reunion_Arena.jpg, accessed 19 December 2013.

⁴¹ "Atlanta's New Coliseum," *Modern Steel Construction*, 1st Quarter, 1975, 2-5.

⁴² Arthur W. McKinney, "Market Square Arena," *Modern Steel Construction*, 4th Quarter, 1975, 3-9.

⁴³ "Omni Coliseum," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omni_Coliseum, accessed 19 December 2013. "Market Square Arena," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Market_Square_Arena, accessed 19 December 2013.

⁴⁴ Randy Covitz, "A Storied History Amid Hoopla," *Kansas City Star*, 13 March 2005, Vertical File, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, A8.

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create a 200,000 square foot column-free exhibit hall⁴⁵ (Figure 24). The structure of Bartle Hall is exposed inside the building, but only referenced on the exterior by oversized triangular shapes that reflect the form of the trusses and accent the dark paneled metal cladding, similar to Omni Coliseum. The space frame structure of Bartle Hall is neither highlighted nor extrapolated as it is as at Kemper Arena, where the structure is a celebrated element that dominates the mass of the building.⁴⁶

KEMPER ARENA IN THE CONTEXT OF POST-MODERNISM

When architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe arrived in Chicago in the late 1930s to head the architecture program at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), he introduced International Style Modern architecture to a new audience. His influence on the generation of architects who practiced in the decades following World War II cannot be underestimated. Sleek glass boxes became synonymous with the new buildings of the 1950s and 1960s. The Miesian formula demanded a steel or concrete frame, curtain wall glazing, supreme attention to detail, and high-quality materials and finishes, but no extraneous ornament. This approach was a dramatic shift from the historically-rooted designs of the pre-war years, even the sleek hardness of the geometric Art Deco and Streamlined Moderne. Yet, there was a regal quality to the firm lines and hard materials of Miesian buildings.⁴⁷ Mies combined classical symmetry and proportions with an inclination toward abstract representations of volume and mass.⁴⁸ Lacking historical roots, these buildings were free from contextual associations. Under Mies' tutelage, the IIT program graduated numerous architects who left a lasting imprint on the built environment of post-war America, especially in Chicago, which became a laboratory for his sparse brand of Modern design.

By the late 1960s, the era of strict Modernism was ending. A new generation of architects was using Miesian rationalism as the starting point for problem solving, rather than the end point. In 1976, the same year that the American Institute of Architects honored the design of Kemper Arena, the AIA awards jury noted that "architecture has reached a point of divergence. The old formulas are no longer valid.... The glass box has been broken.... We are in a searching period; a questioning of the rules; purposeful breaking from convention."⁴⁹ Designers in this Post-Modern period explored new ways to combine strong structure and geometric forms.⁵⁰ A few architects began turning things upside down, designing buildings with solid walls and clear roofs or, in the case of Kemper Arena, with the structure on the outside rather than on the inside.

A 1977 article in *Architectura* described the previous decade as "a liberating time period [in architecture], where everybody and everything are being questioned."⁵¹ The development of tubular steel structures (space frames) to create vast interior spaces and dramatically tall buildings was evidence of this creativity. The authors cited the muscular exoskeleton of Kemper Arena as an example of this trend, along with the structural systems of the Sears Tower, the Chicago Civic Center and the John Hancock Tower, all in Chicago.⁵² Many individual designers associated with notable Modernist firms, like C.F. Murphy &

⁴⁵ Ehrlich, 162.

⁴⁶ "Grand Structures, C.F. Murphy Associates, Architects," *Techniques et Architecture*, No. 309, May 1976, 88-91.

⁴⁷ Ross Miller, "Chicago Architecture after Mies," *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 6, no. 2 (Winter 1979), 272.

⁴⁸ Ross Miller, 273.

⁴⁹ "Honor Awards: Six New Buildings, Four Recyclings and Mies," *American Institute of Architects Journal*, April 1976, Vol. 65, No. 4, 37.

⁵⁰ Peter C. Pran, "Diversity of Design Among Chicago Architects Today," *Architectura*, Vol. 23, December 1977, 440.

⁵¹ Pran, 436.

⁵² Pran, 436.

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Associates and Skidmore Owings and Merrill, fell into the Post-Modern camp, as did architects Bertrand Goldberg (Marina City and the recently demolished Prentiss Women's Hospital in Chicago), Walter Netsch (U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs), Harry Weese (Washington, DC Metro system, and Mercantile Bank Building in Kansas City), I.M. Pei (J.F.K. Presidential Library and John Hancock Tower, Boston), and others.

The young architect Helmut Jahn, named Director of Architecture and Design at C.F. Murphy Associates in 1973, embraced Post-Modernism. He came to Chicago in 1966 to study at IIT, but soon grew disenchanted with the rigid adherence to the Miesian formula. While he had absorbed the lessons of Modernism, the designs produced under his lead experimented with shapes and curves, tiers and open spaces, colors and reflection.⁵³ For Jahn the key to any design lay in solving the structural questions. The structural solution then drove building form and the organization of interior spaces. Context was generally irrelevant. Buildings were viewed as sculpture – free-standing and three-dimensional. Building skin was important in Jahn's lexicon; applied ornament did not exist. Rather, Jahn relied on form, shape, and color to create a sleek, high-tech look. Even on the interior, structure and mechanical systems became decoration rather than purely functional elements.⁵⁴ Kemper Arena was Jahn's first project as lead designer and it proved to be an ideal foil for this type of experimentation. The critical design question was how to achieve the 320-foot clear span the client requested. By beginning with the structure, Jahn led his team to an elegant, yet robust, and undeniably distinctive solution. The sleek exterior and functional interior were good fits for the sports arena, and the flat open site provided an ideal setting for a bold sculptural form.

While Kemper Arena is a distinctly Post-Modern structure, like much of Jahn's work, it has roots in formal Modernism. In an *AIA Journal* article, architecture critic Stanley Abercrombie identified Kemper Arena as an excellent example of Jahn's inclination to build upon and reinterpret the Modernist "dogma" of Mies.⁵⁵

S.R. Crown Hall, designed by Mies for the IIT campus in 1956, was likely one source of inspiration (Figure 25). The one-story building has an exo-skeleton formed by slender steel girders that rise up and over the mass, supporting the roof and glass curtainwalls. The structural members of Crown Hall are very delicate and tight to the structure, harmonizing with the mass and materials of the building. Reacting against the delicacy and balance of Crown Hall, the design for Kemper Arena exaggerates the tension between the structure and the building, using robust open space frame trusses to contrast with the solid geometric enclosed mass. Yet by coloring both structure and cladding white, Jahn brought considerable balance to the exaggerated design elements. Writer Nory Miller notes in her monograph on Jahn, "Mies' logic and clarity is reinterpreted [at Kemper Arena] in terms of muscular sensuality; his exacting elegance traded in for powerful expression."⁵⁶

The Athletics Building at Phillips Exeter Academy (1968, Exeter, New Hampshire) is also a descendent of Crown Hall (Figure 26). Here architects Kallman & McKinnell and structural engineers Le Messurier Associates suspended the building roof from delicate space frame trusses constructed of corrosion-resistant high-strength steel pipe. A series of fifty-foot tall L-shaped trusses rise from the ground and cross the roof, where they attach to a 62-foot tall concrete spine that runs down the center of the building.

⁵³ "Jahn's Designs Shatter the Box," *Engineering News-Record*, 8 October 1981, 26. Pran, 438.

⁵⁴ Nory Miller, "C.F. Murphy Associates," *A & U: Architecture & Urbanism*, July 1978, No. 94, 29.

⁵⁵ Stanley Abercrombie, "Changing Skins of Helmut Jahn," *AIA Journal*, Vol. 70, October 1981, 63

⁵⁶ Nory Miller, *Helmut Jahn* (New York: Rizzoli, 1986), 7.

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By placing these structural elements outside the building walls, the design team captured an interior clear span of 120 feet.⁵⁷ The large size of the building required the space frame to achieve the column-free clear spans, rather than the simple girder ribs used by Mies at Crown Hall. Where Crown Hall employed the classic Miesian formula of steel structure and glass curtainwalls to create a light form, the heavy concrete mass of the Phillips Exeter building is a Brutalist Post-Modern expression.⁵⁸ Although they share roots in Mies' Crown Hall, Kemper Arena and the Phillips Exeter Athletics Building are executed with highly different emphases. At Phillips Exeter the focus is on building mass, while the design of Kemper highlights the structure. The archival record does not indicate if Jahn was at all influenced by the Phillips Exeter Athletics Building, but it was clearly a contemporary and similar experiment with external structure to help maximize column-free interior space.

CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF KEMPER ARENA

Kemper Arena opened on 18 October 1974 just eighteen months after construction began. The innovative building left some visitors unsure what to think. A sports reporter noted that while local spectators enjoyed the interior spaces they were a bit confused by the sculptural exterior. This was not an issue for the design community, who were quick and unanimous in recognizing the significance of the design.⁵⁹

Kemper Arena was soon reaping accolades. The first design awards came in the fall of 1975 from the American Institute of Steel Construction and the Chicago chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA).⁶⁰ The AIA - Chicago jury noted how the "powerful use of structure and careful detailing generate a spectacular solution" for the always problematic long-span building.⁶¹ Six months later, in the spring of 1976, the AIA national organization bestowed one of six Honor Awards to Kemper Arena. The jury heralded the design for its "strength, clarity and integrity," praising the scale and detail of the trusses, the bold marriage of technology with function,⁶² and the unusually bold architectural statement for this functional building type.⁶³

Over the next several years, articles featuring Kemper Arena appeared in national and international industry publications, including *Building Design & Construction*, *Engineering News Record*, *Architecture & Urbanism*, and *Architectural Record*. All showcased Kemper Arena as an excellent, visually striking design that was built efficiently and economically. All mentioned the innovative and highly unusual placement of the space frame structure outside the building mass. *Architectural Record* remarked on the "structural elegance" of the design that was "thought-out both in its conception and its detail."⁶⁴ The Italian journal *Costruzioni* heralded Kemper Arena as "one of the most brilliantly conceived hall spaces recently

⁵⁷ "Triangle Trusses Frame Complex," *Modern Steel Construction*, First Quarter 1969, 7.

⁵⁸ G.M. Kallman and N.M. McKinnell, "Movement Systems as Generators of Built Form," *Architectural Record*, November 1975, 105-109.

⁵⁹ Extensive archival research conducted in the course of preparing this document revealed no notably negative comments about the building. Locally there was some negative feedback, although most dealt with the location of the building within the city, limited parking, and the need for more women's restrooms.

⁶⁰ "1975 Awards of Architectural Excellence," *Modern Steel Construction*, Vol. XV, No. 4, Fourth Quarter 1975, 14.

⁶¹ Quoted Fleener.

⁶² "Crosby Kemper Arena, Kansas City, Mo.," *AIA Journal*, April 1976, Vol. 65, No. 4, 49. The AIA also awarded Kemper a Bartlett Award for eliminating barriers to accessibility.

⁶³ "Arena Design Honored," *Kansas City Star*, 11 April 1976, microfilm, Kansas City Public Library.

⁶⁴ "R.Crosby Kemper Jr. [sic] Memorial Arena," 109.

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built in America...,"⁶⁵ while the British journal *Architectural Review* declared Kemper Arena "an honourable successor to the great engineering works of the nineteenth century."⁶⁶

C.F. MURPHY & ASSOCIATES - DESIGNERS

C.F. Murphy Associates, designers of Kemper Arena, began as Naess and Murphy, a partnership between Sigurd E. Naess and Charles Murphy. After studying at Northwestern University, Murphy had secured a position as stenographer in the offices of D.H. Burnham & Company in 1911. He later took night classes in architecture and rose to become an assistant to Principal Ernest Graham under the successor firm Graham, Anderson, Probst and White. Following Graham's death in 1937, Murphy joined colleagues Alfred Shaw and Sigurd Naess in partnership as Shaw, Naess and Murphy. The firm continued as Naess and Murphy after Shaw left and eventually as C.F. Murphy Associates following Naess' retirement.⁶⁷

Charles Murphy had grown up in the same south side Chicago neighborhood as long-time Chicago mayor Richard J. Daley, Sr. and capitalized on that relationship to secure significant civic commissions for the firm.⁶⁸ The first project Naess and Murphy completed for the City involved a filtration plant that the local community was contesting in court. Daley was pleased when the architects' solution for the project won neighborhood support. More commissions followed, although many projects were awarded jointly to multiple firms according to Chicago's infamous patronage system.⁶⁹

With a staff of designers trained directly by Mies, a reputation for designing "tough, muscular buildings," and a depth of services that included engineering and construction management divisions, C.F. Murphy Associates rivaled Skidmore Owings and Merrill (SOM). By many accounts these were the two leading design firms of the Modern era. In the 1960s, C.F. Murphy Associates was well known for its focus on structure as the primary component of building form and for engineering column-free solutions for long-span situations. Innovative designs for several notable projects secured this status.⁷⁰ Among these were the Richard J. Daley Center (Chicago, 1965) and McCormick Place (Chicago, 1967), both of which applied unique structural solutions to long-span issues.⁷¹ While the most of the firm's work was local, it supported a staff of nearly 450.⁷²

In 1967, Charles Murphy hired architect Gene Summers to lead the design of McCormick Place, a new Chicago convention center. Summers had received his master's degree from IIT in 1951 and subsequently worked in the office of Mies van der Rohe, where he was the project architect for the Seagram's Building in New York City (1958) and the National Gallery in Berlin (1968), among others.⁷³ This latter building became the model for the much larger McCormick Place convention center in Chicago.

⁶⁵ Pran, 441.

⁶⁶ "Kansas Arena," *Architectural Review*, Vol. 160, No. 953, July 1976, 2.

⁶⁷ Kenan Heise, "Charles F. Murphy, Chicago Architect," *Chicago Tribune*, 24 May 1985, http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1985-05-24/news/8502020167_1_charles-f-murphy-chicago-architecture-mr-murphy accessed 28 October 2013.

⁶⁸ Nory Miller, "C.F. Murphy Associates," 27.

⁶⁹ Nory Miller, *Helmut Jahn*, 15.

⁷⁰ Helmut Jahn, "New Directions and New Designs at C.F. Murphy Associates," *Architectural Record*, July 1979, 99.

⁷¹ Cheryl Kent, "AIA Honors the Futuristic Vision and High Energy of Murphy/Jahn," *Architectural Record*, Vol. 193, Issue 5, December 2005, 156.

⁷² Nory Miller, *Helmut Jahn*, 15.

⁷³ "Gene Summers (architect)", [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gene_Summers_\(architect\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gene_Summers_(architect)) accessed 28 October 2013.

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It was through his work on McCormick Place that Summers met Arthur Wirtz, owner of the Chicago Blackhawks. Knowing that an NHL expansion team was planned for Kansas City, Wirtz recommended Summers and C.F. Murphy Associates for the Kemper Arena project.⁷⁴ *what year?*

1967 Summers brought with him to C.F. Murphy Associates his young assistant Helmut Jahn. Unlike many of Mies' students, Summers understood how to apply Modernist principles without recreating Miesian designs detail for detail. This understanding passed to Jahn, who embraced the freedom to develop unique solutions for building programs and sites.⁷⁵

Gene Summers left C.F. Murphy Associates in 1973 amid a period of turbulence as the firm grappled with multiple external forces. A national economic recession and worldwide oil crisis were sharply curtailing new development. It was also the start of post-Daley Chicago, and C.F. Murphy Associates had long benefited from the former-mayor's patronage.⁷⁶ When Charles Murphy named Helmut Jahn to replace Summers as Director of Planning and Design it consolidated the firm's focus. Jahn led the firm into a new era as designers of speculative projects, both domestic and international.⁷⁷

During the 1970s and 1980s, with Jahn leading the design group, C.F. Murphy Associates focused on melding the Modern ethos of Mies with new technologies and materials. Building on the success of Kemper Arena, projects such as the Rust-Oleum Headquarters (Vernon Hills, Illinois, 1978) and the Xerox Center (Chicago, 1980) moved the firm beyond "doctrinaire Modernism to a meaningful contemporary architecture."⁷⁸ In a 1981 interview, Jahn articulated his design philosophy, stating "elements that break the norm – romance, fantasy, surprise – are what put architecture beyond engineering. After all, a building is a work of art."⁷⁹ The sculptural form of Kemper Arena clearly expresses that philosophy. Developers interested in building architecturally distinctive buildings soon sought out Jahn.⁸⁰ To take advantage of the designer's rising star, C.F. Murphy Associates was renamed Murphy/Jahn in 1980. Jahn purchased full ownership in 1982, enabling him to mold the talents of the firm to achieve his bold architectural visions.

When Murphy/Jahn was named the AIA Firm of the Year in 2005 their work was deemed to be "as technically audacious as ever," although it had also become more refined since the design of Kemper Arena. For some time, Jahn had been captivated by the possibilities inherent in high-rise office buildings, the traditional urban symbols of excellence and power. The days of ample steel structures was replaced by sculptural masses clad with delicate glass skins.⁸¹ *Chicago Tribune* architecture critic Blair Kamin noted that the firm had produced "some of the world's most technologically advanced, formally sophisticated and urbanistically significant buildings." Among the examples Kamin cited were the United Airlines terminal at O'Hare Airport (Chicago, 1988) and Kemper Arena.⁸²

⁷⁴ "Oral History of Carter Manny," Interview by Franz Schulze, Chicago Architects Oral History Project, Ernst R. Graham Study Center for Architectural Drawings, Department of Architecture, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1995, 323.

⁷⁵ Ross Miller, 286.

⁷⁶ Nory Miller, *Helmut Jahn*, 7.

⁷⁷ Nory Miller, *Helmut Jahn*, 7.

⁷⁸ Kent, 156.

⁷⁹ Jahn's Designs Shatter the Box," 26.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Kent, 156.

⁸² Hockey Rink Dedicated, "Telegram and Gazette [Worcester, MA], 23 January 2005, 7.

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Today, at the age of 73, Jahn continues to practice architecture, although the type of buildings and expression of structure his firm, now simply called JAHN, produces have evolved drastically in scale, materials and form from Kemper Arena. Kemper Arena was the only large-scale multi-purpose arena designed by the firm. Although the company portfolio includes several smaller sports venues on college and prep school campuses, none comes close to matching the size, scale, complexity, or bold form and spirit of Kemper Arena.

CONCLUSION

Kemper Arena represents an apex of design as new technology was applied in a highly innovative way to create a unique version of the enclosed sports arena in Kansas City's West Bottoms. Drawing on precedents by Mies van der Rohe and from their own portfolio, C.F. Murphy Associates reached outside the Modern box to create a design that provided not only an obstruction-free arena bowl but also an iconic building that was efficient and economical to construct and to operate. The exo-skeleton structure, along with the unified color and geometric shape of the arena mass, were a Post-Modern interpretation of the property type that reflects the designers' interest in and early experimentation with these elements. Subsequent alterations impacted the exterior of the building, but left the essential form and unique relationship between structure and mass intact. While Helmut Jahn continues to practice architecture, the work of his firm today is far removed from Kemper Arena. Kemper remains the only large sports venue in the company portfolio, which shifted focus in the early 1980s to high-rise office buildings, hotels and airport terminals. A winner of multiple national awards, Kemper Arena has been widely cited for its significant interpretation of the sports arena property type and for its highly creative use of space frame technology. No other building in Kansas City expresses Post-Modernism as clearly as does Kemper Arena. Its signature exo-skeleton is also distinguished on a national scale from other sports venues built in the 1960s and early 1970s. No other arenas survive that match the scale and expression of Kemper Arena.

Worthy
comment

- ~~prop~~ boundaries?
- garage?
- who designed glass front?

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the nominated resource follows a line around the base of the berm on which the arena sits.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the eligible resource and excludes the open land and non-historic buildings that do not contribute to its significance.

OWNER

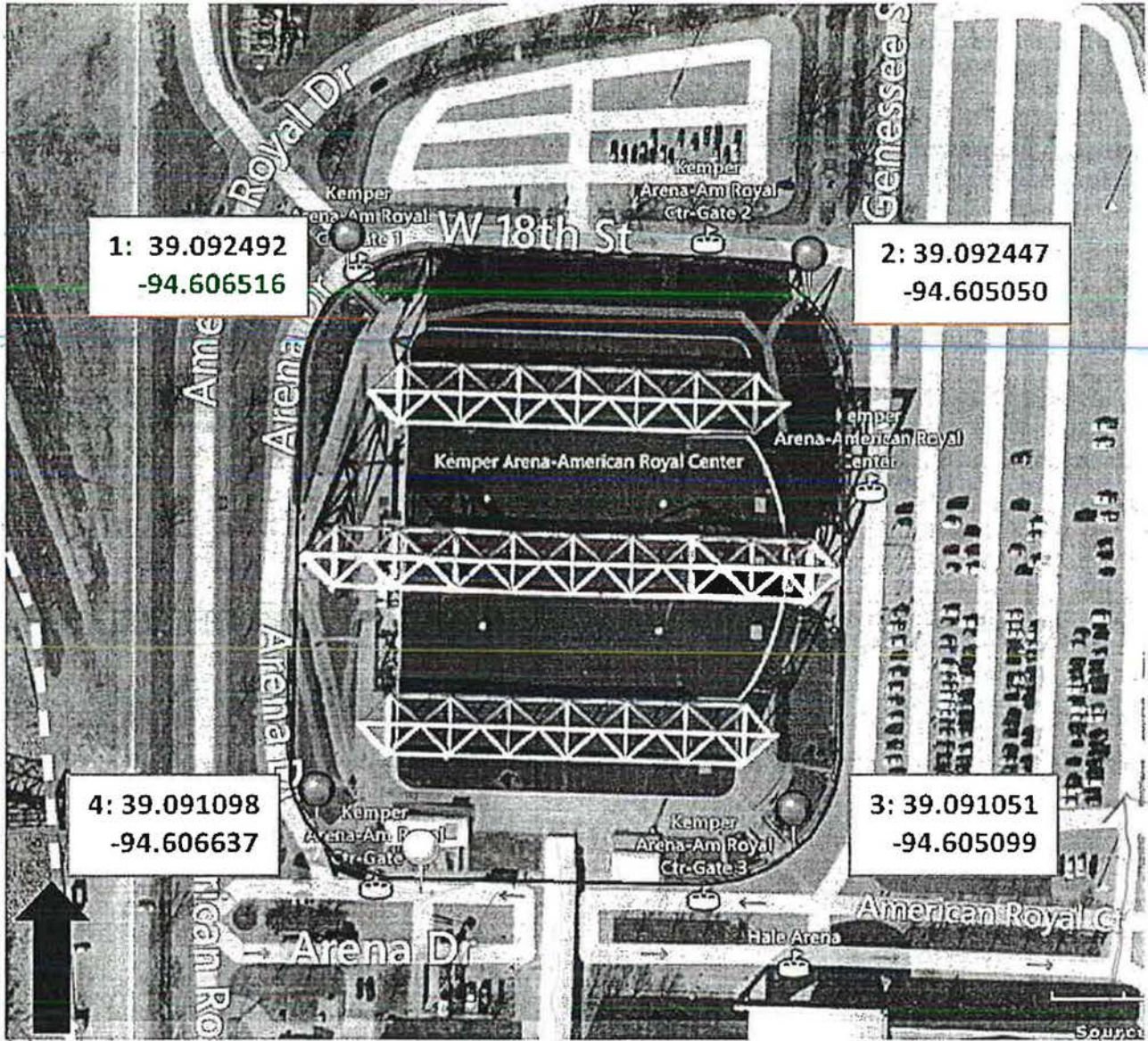
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414 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64106

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Figure 1: Site Map



1: 39.092492
-94.606516

2: 39.092447
-94.605050

4: 39.091098
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3: 39.091051
-94.605099

*where is the pad
of the arena?
where is
17th St?*

*What are:
① boundaries
② program
south*

Why is stand?

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Figure 2: Contextual Map

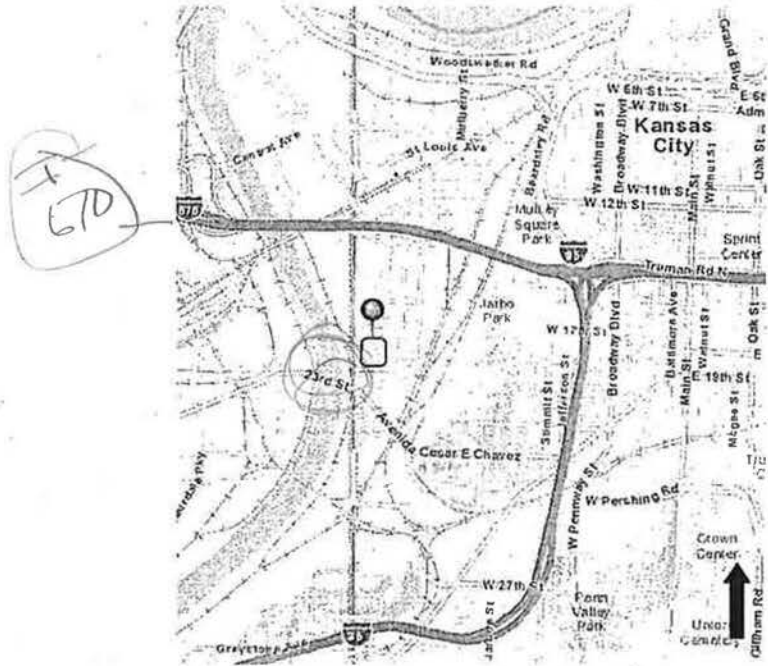
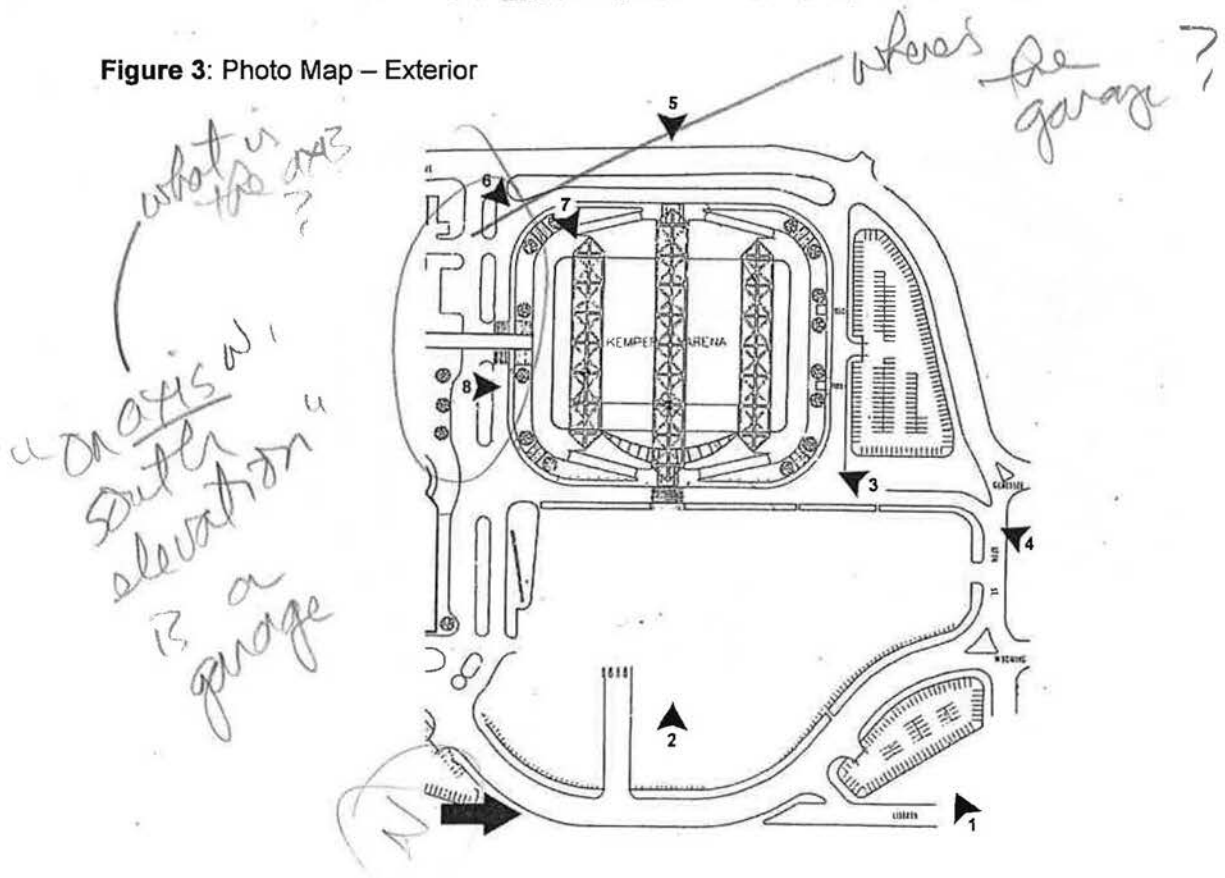


Figure 3: Photo Map – Exterior



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Figure 4: Photo Map and Current Plan – Concourse Level

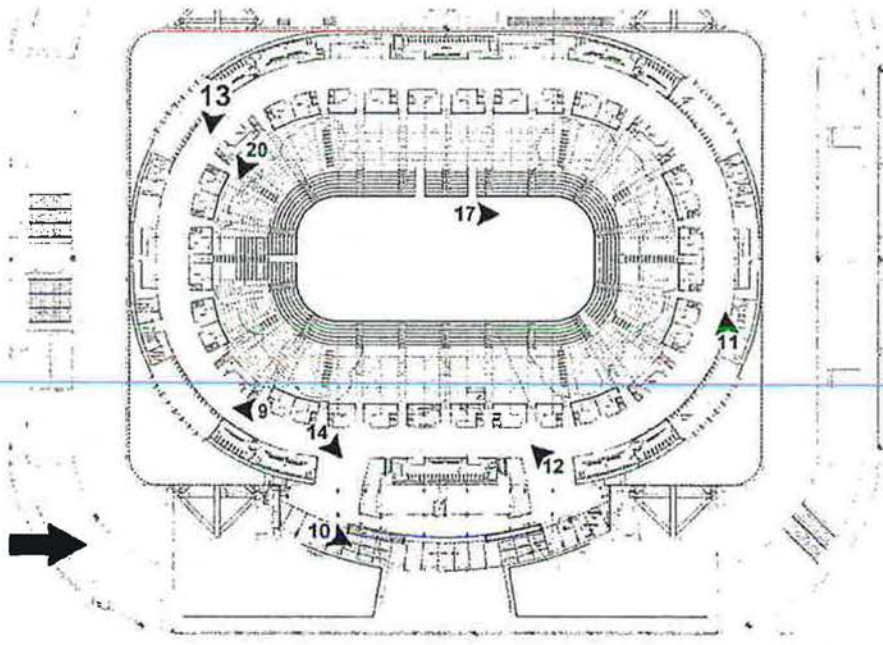
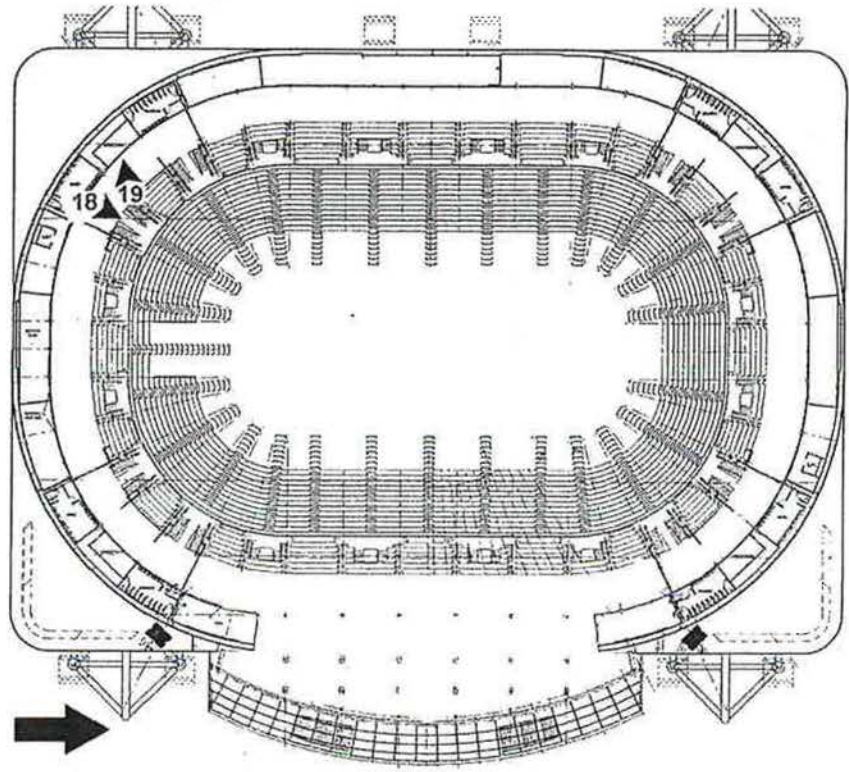


Figure 5: Photo Map and Current Plan – Club level

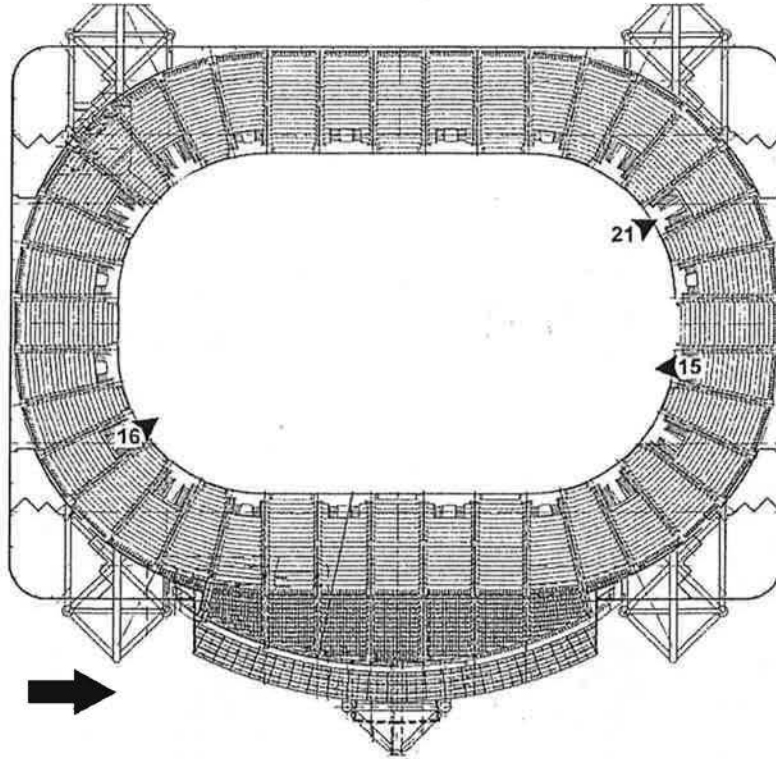


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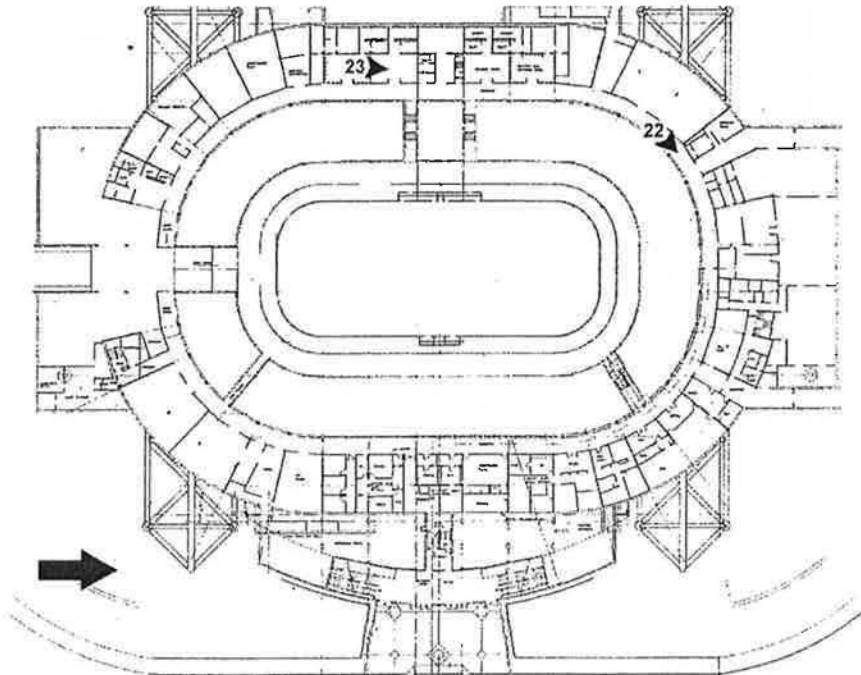
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Figure 6: Photo Map and Current Plan – Upper Seating Deck



← where is the other tower base?

Figure 7: Photo map and Current Plan – Lower Level

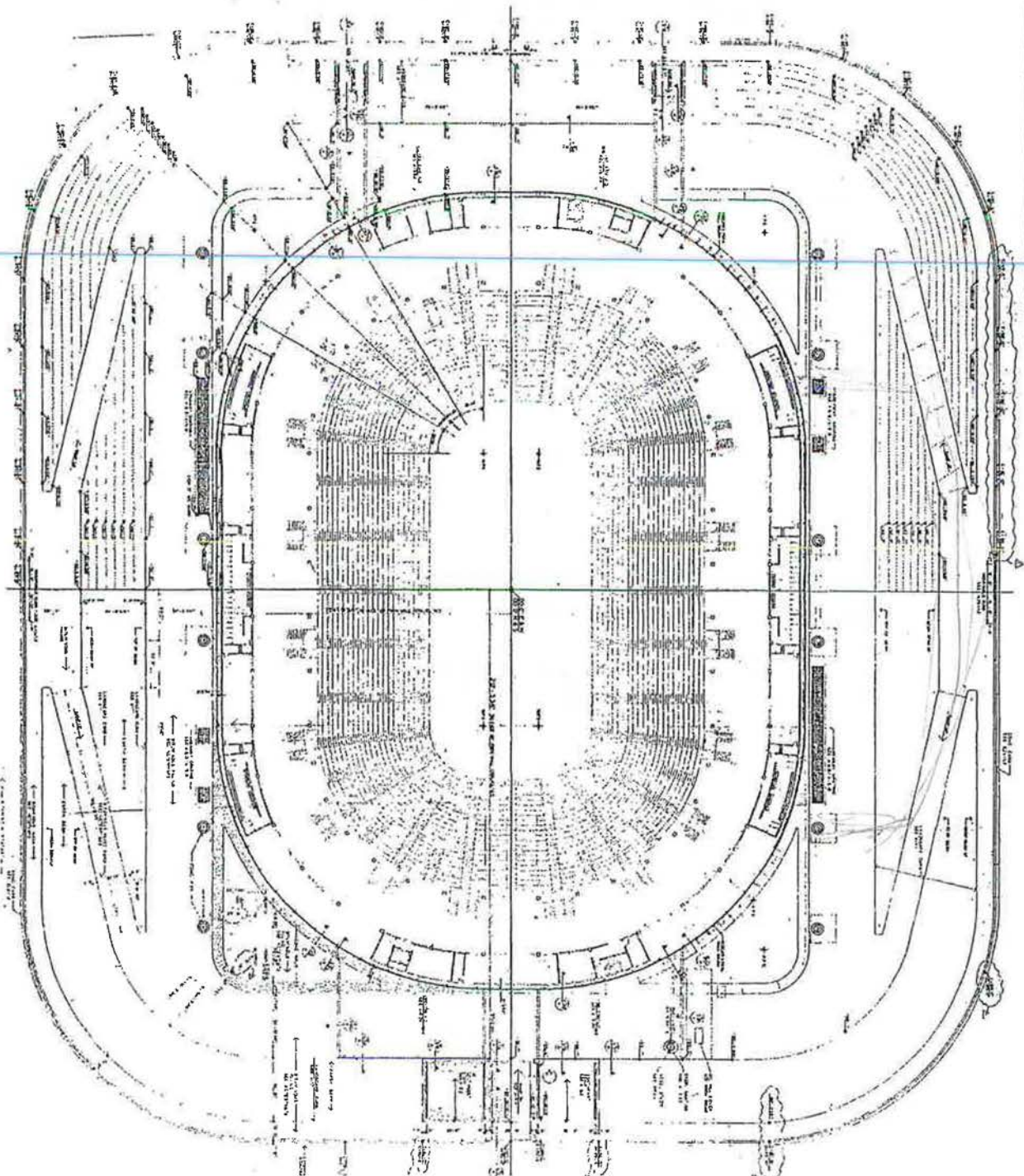


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Figure 8: Partial Site Plan for Kemper Arena, Sheet A-1.3 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

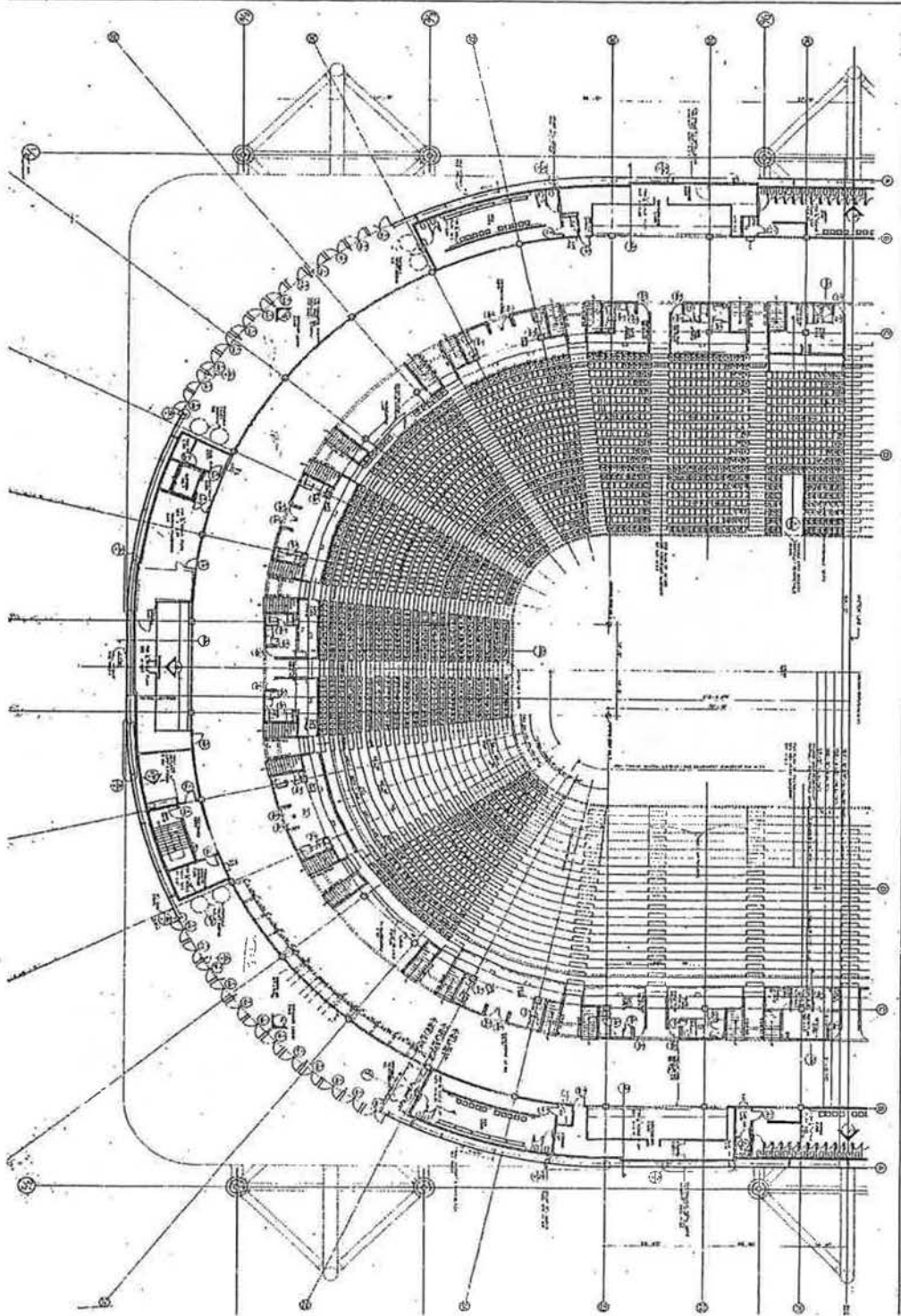


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Figure 9: Concourse Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.4, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, 23 July 1973.

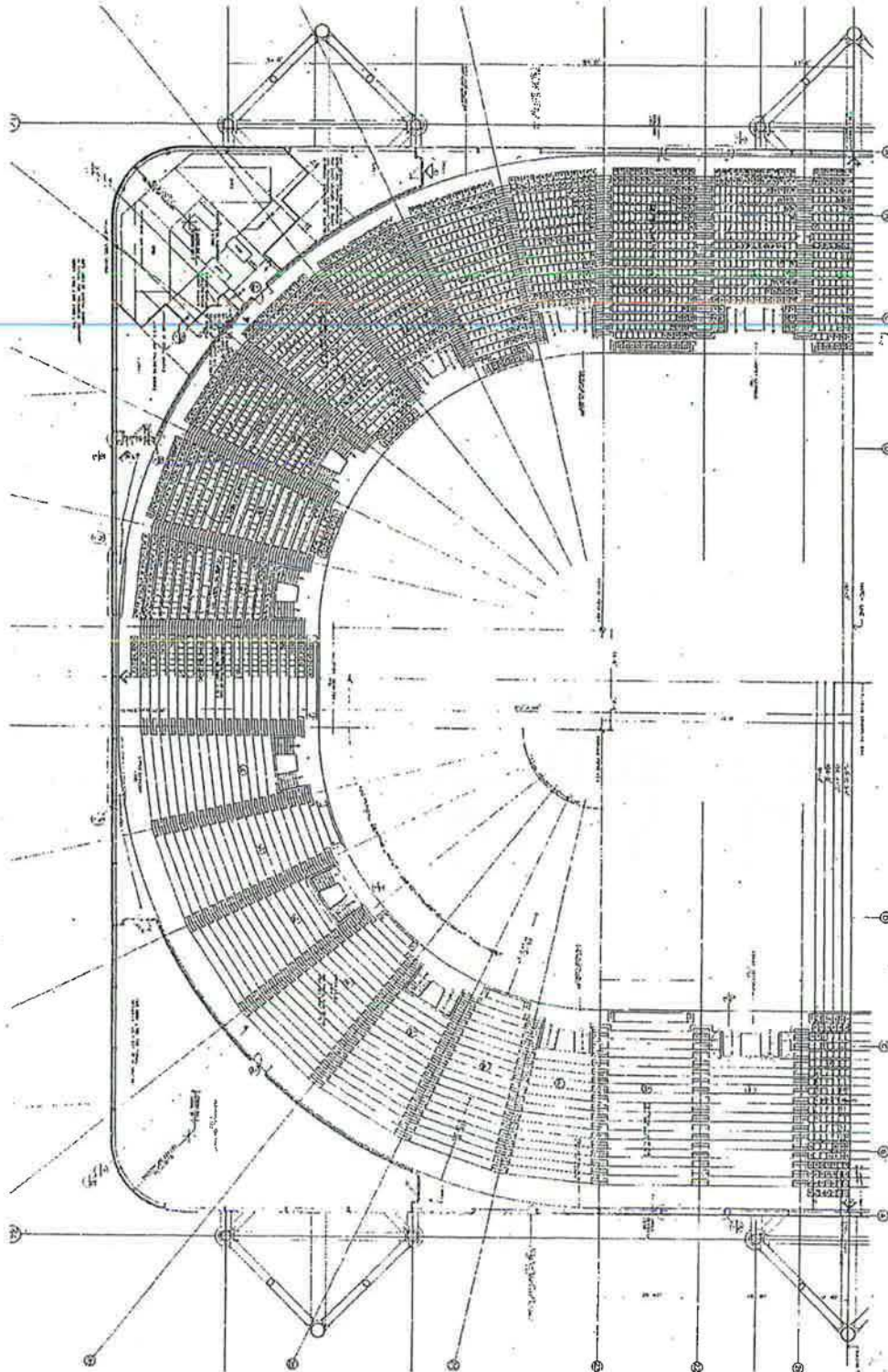


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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 10: Upper Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.6, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, [1973].

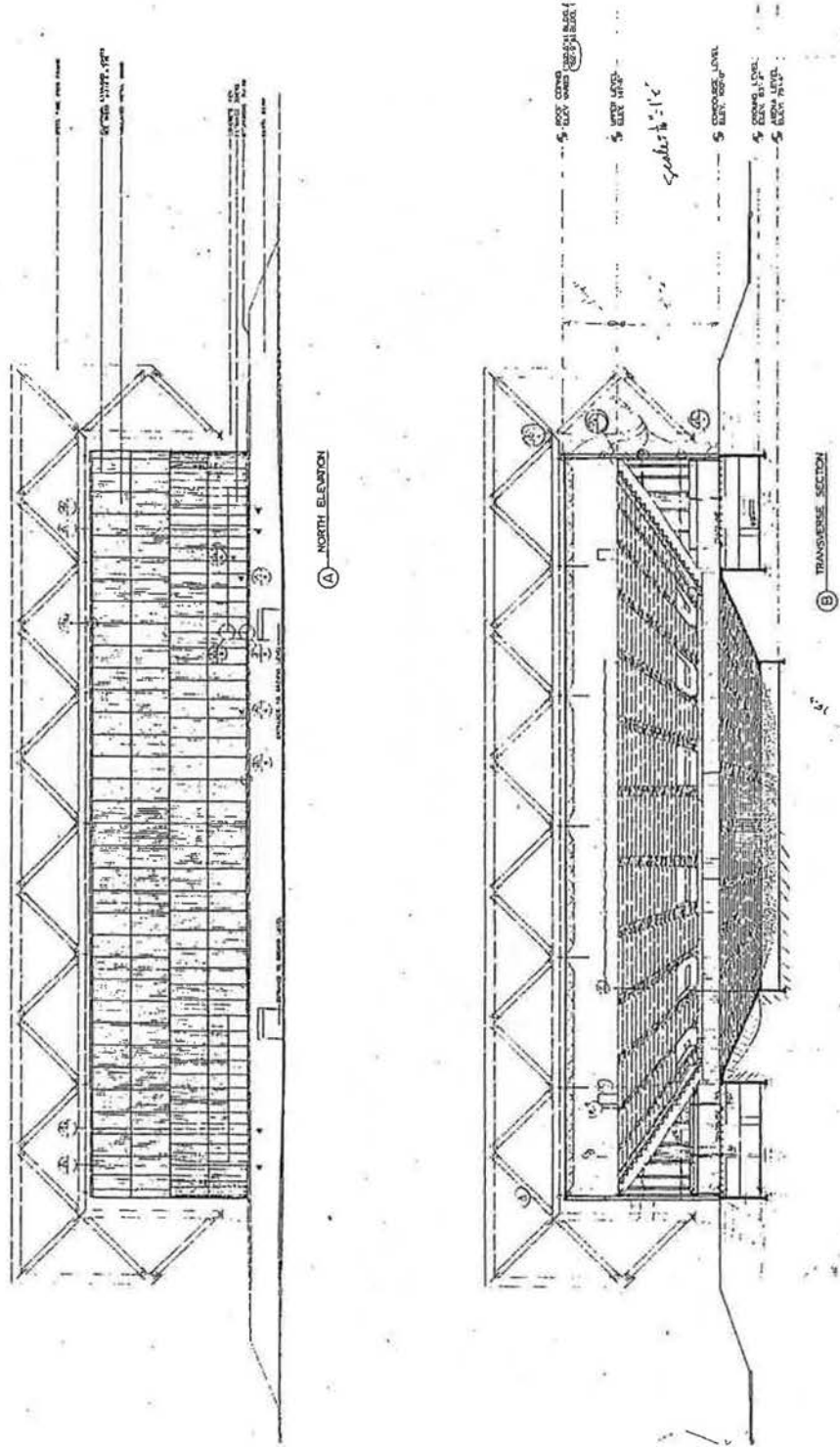


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 33

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 11: North Elevation and Transverse Section of Kemper Arena, Sheet A-3.1 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

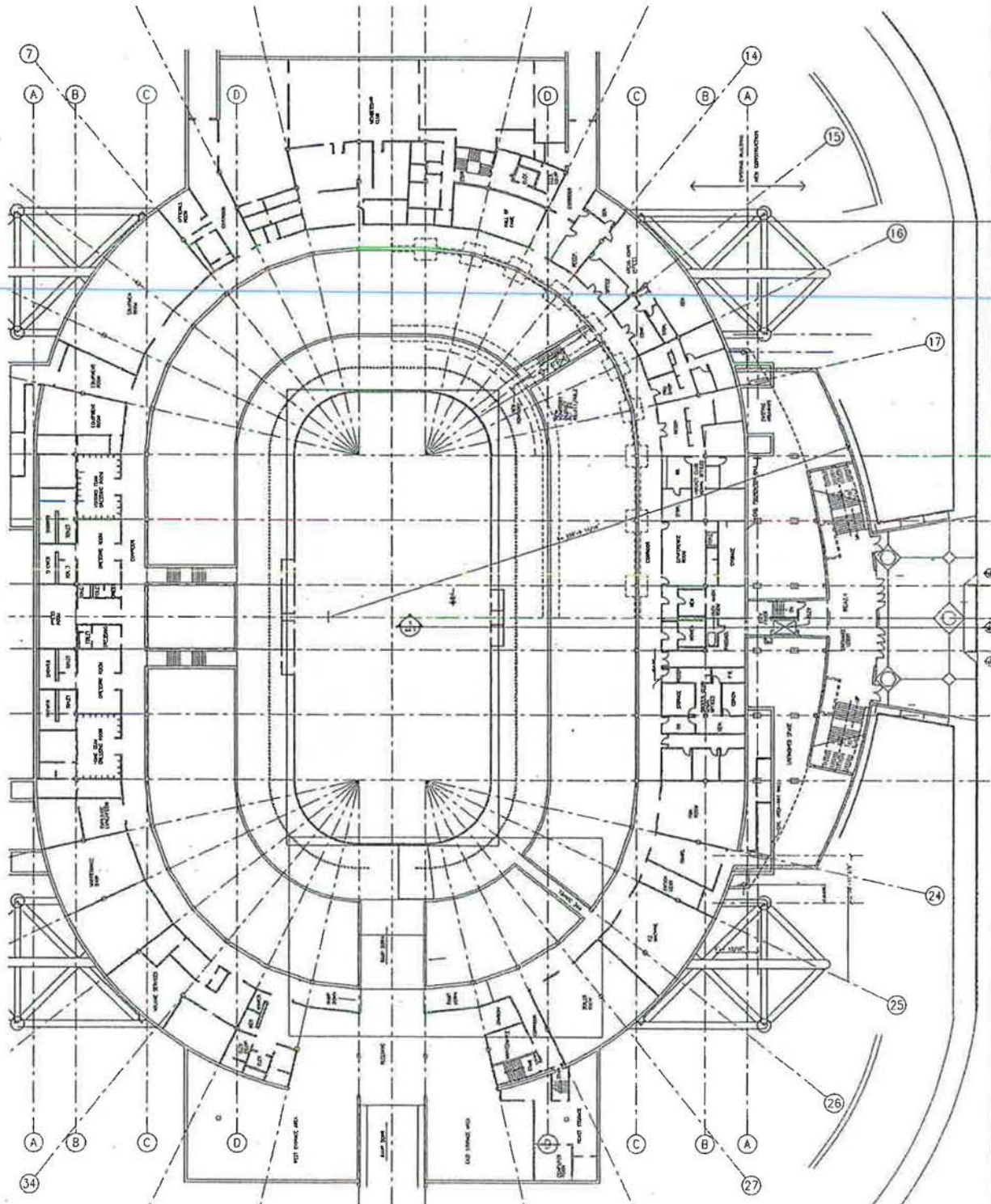


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 34

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 12: Current Plan, Lower Level. Sheet A 1.1; Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

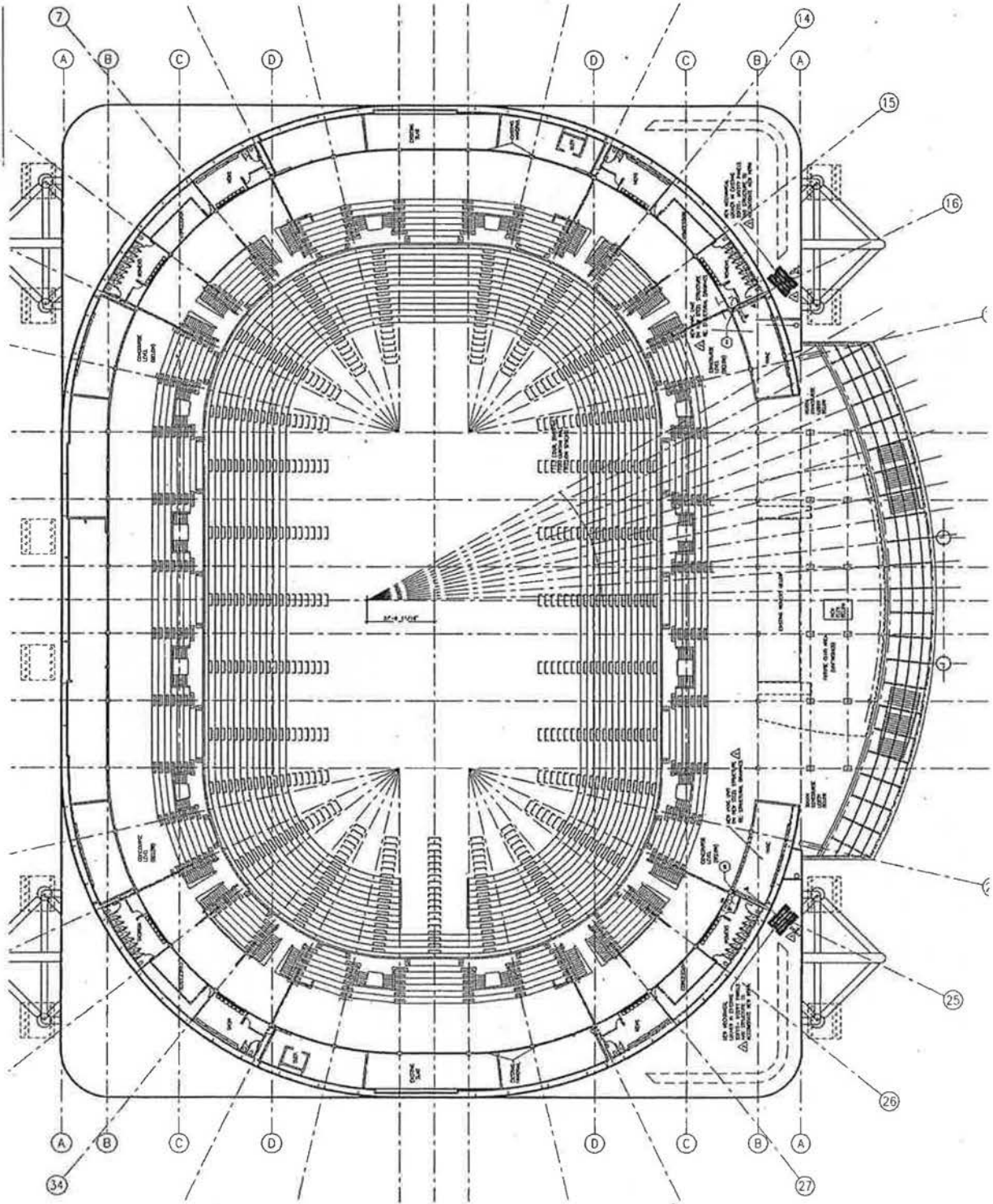


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 35

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 13: Current Plan, Club Level. Sheet A 1.3, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

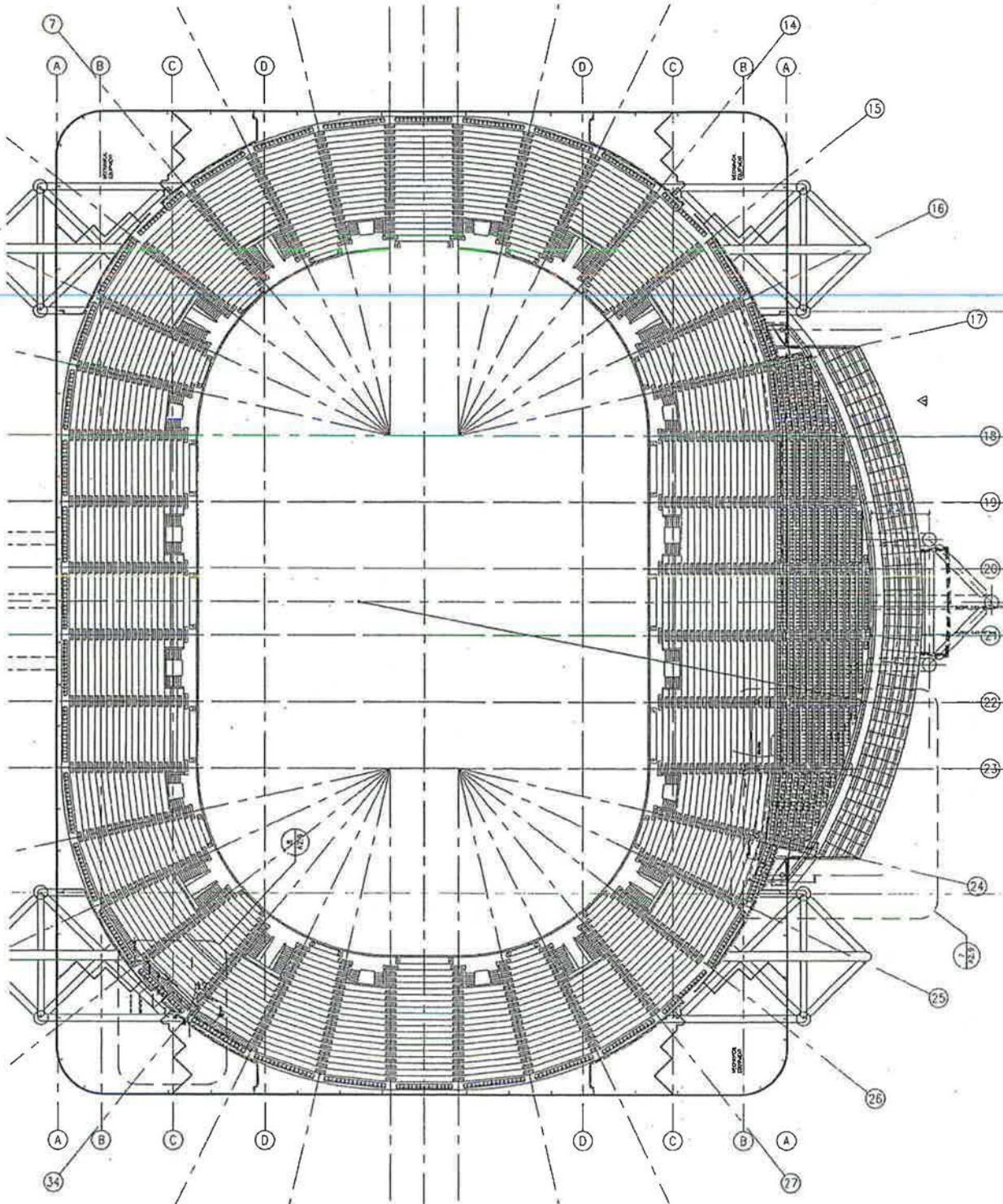


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 36

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 14: Current Plan, Upper Seating Deck. Sheet A 1.4, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

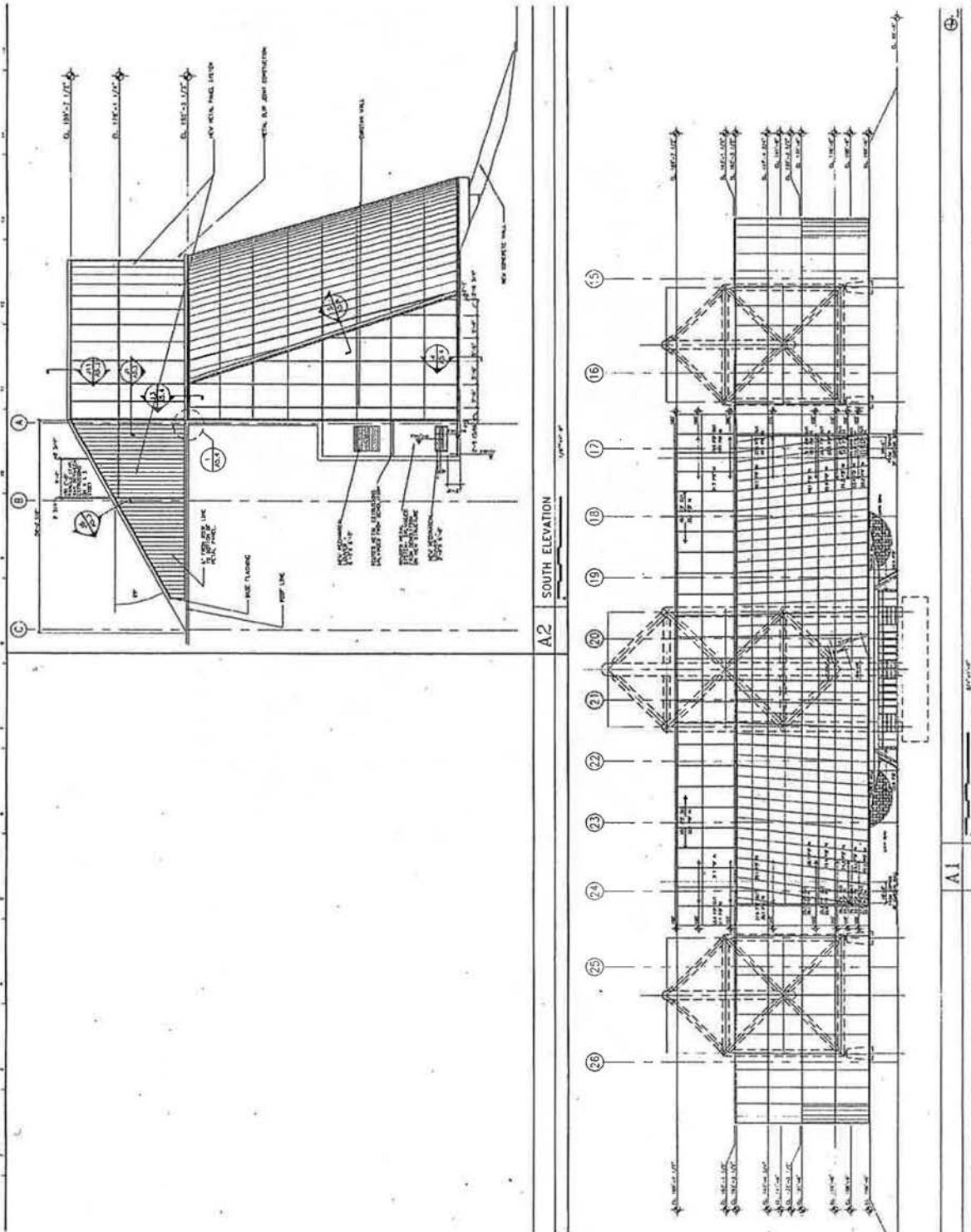


National Register of Historic Places
 Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 37

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 15: Typical Elevations, Sheet A 3.2, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

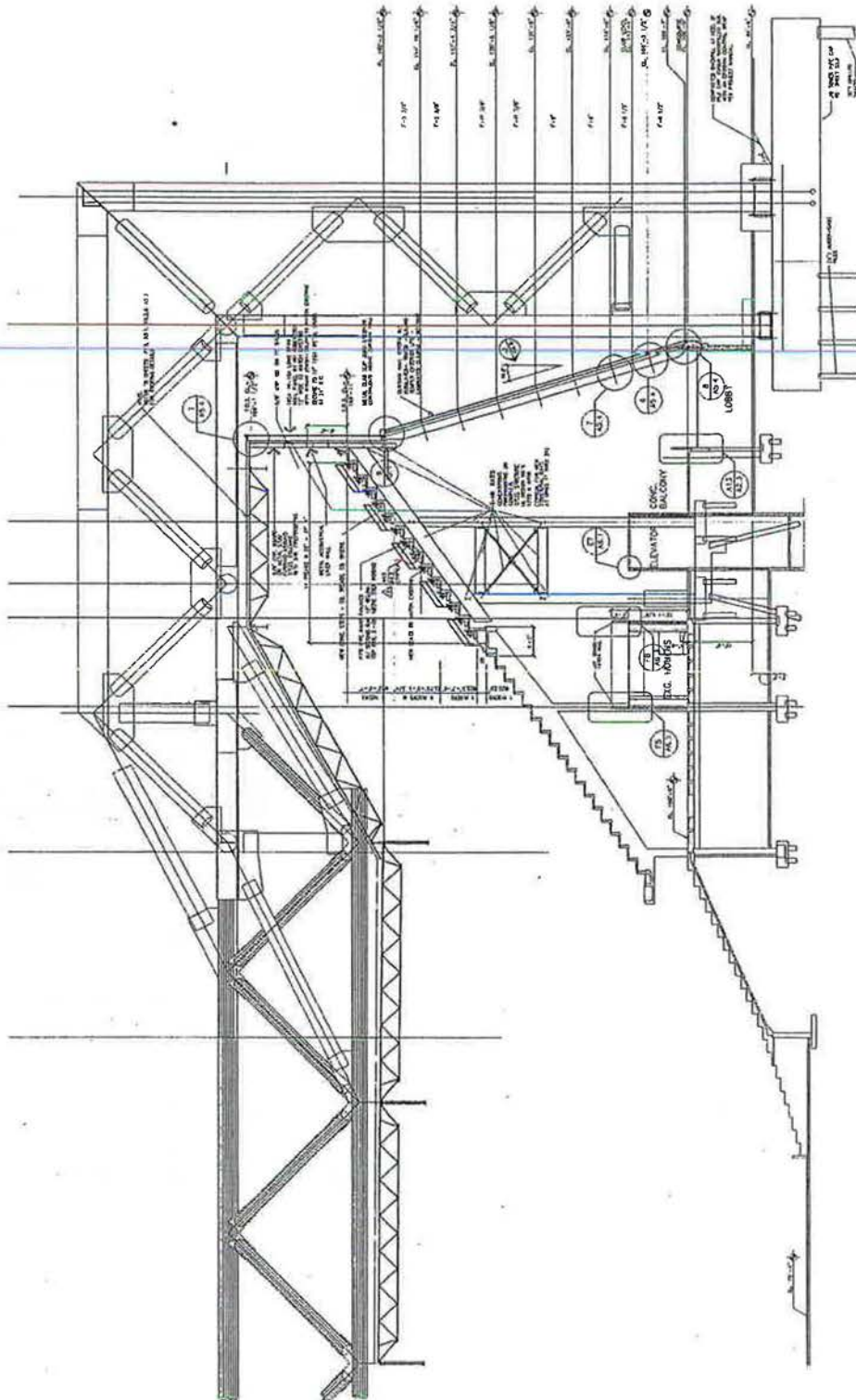


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 38

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 16: Section at Mid Point, Sheet A 4.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

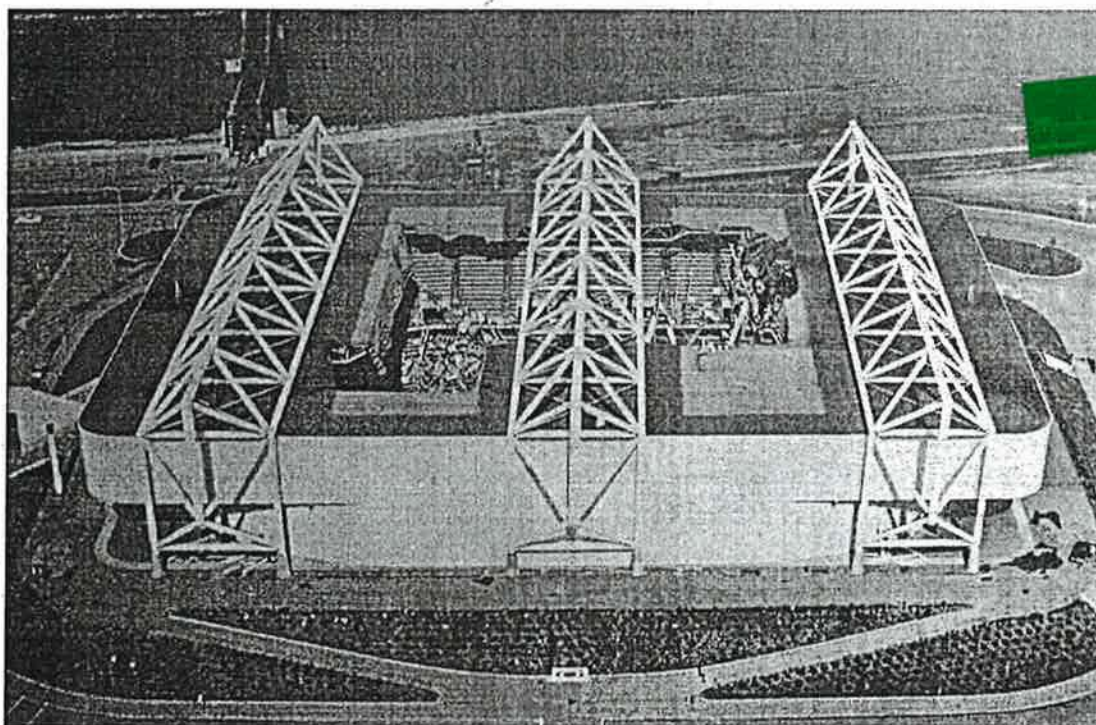
Section number Figures Page 39

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 17: Kemper Arena, Late Summer or Fall 1974, View to Northwest. (Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, online)



Figure 18: Kemper Arena Following Roof Collapse, 13 June 1979 (Source: Vertical File, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 40

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 19: Pauley Pavilion, UCLA (Source: Modern Steel)

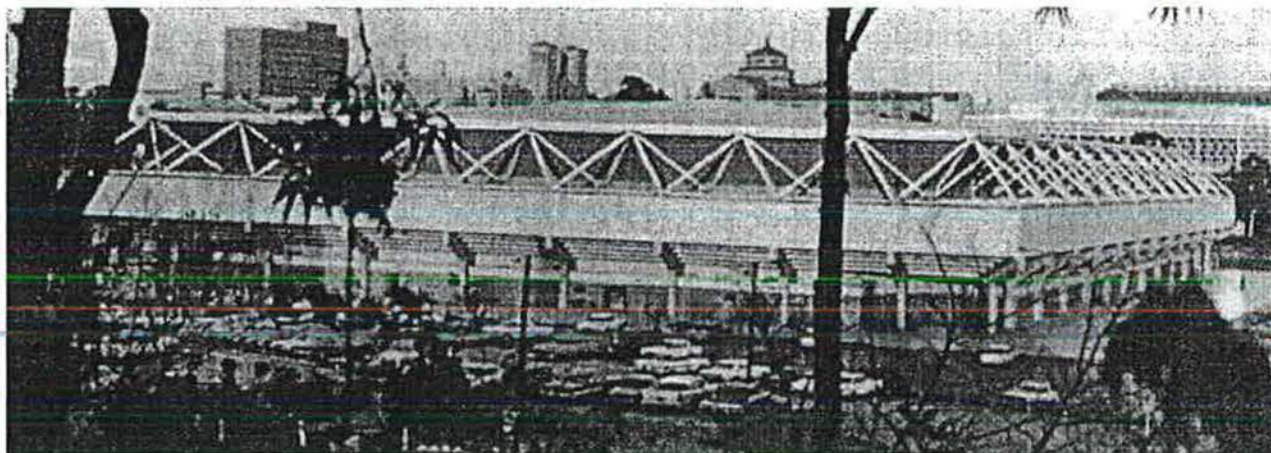


Figure 20: Carolina Coliseum, University of South Carolina (Source: Modern Steel)



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 41

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 21: Reunion Arena, Dallas, Texas
(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Reunion_Arena)



Figure 22: Omni Coliseum, Atlanta, Georgia
(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omni_Coliseum)



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 42

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 23: Market Square Arena, Indianapolis
(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Market_Square_Arena)



Figure 24: Bartle Hall Convention Center, Kansas City, c. mid-1970s (Source: Robert Askren Photograph Collection, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, online)



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

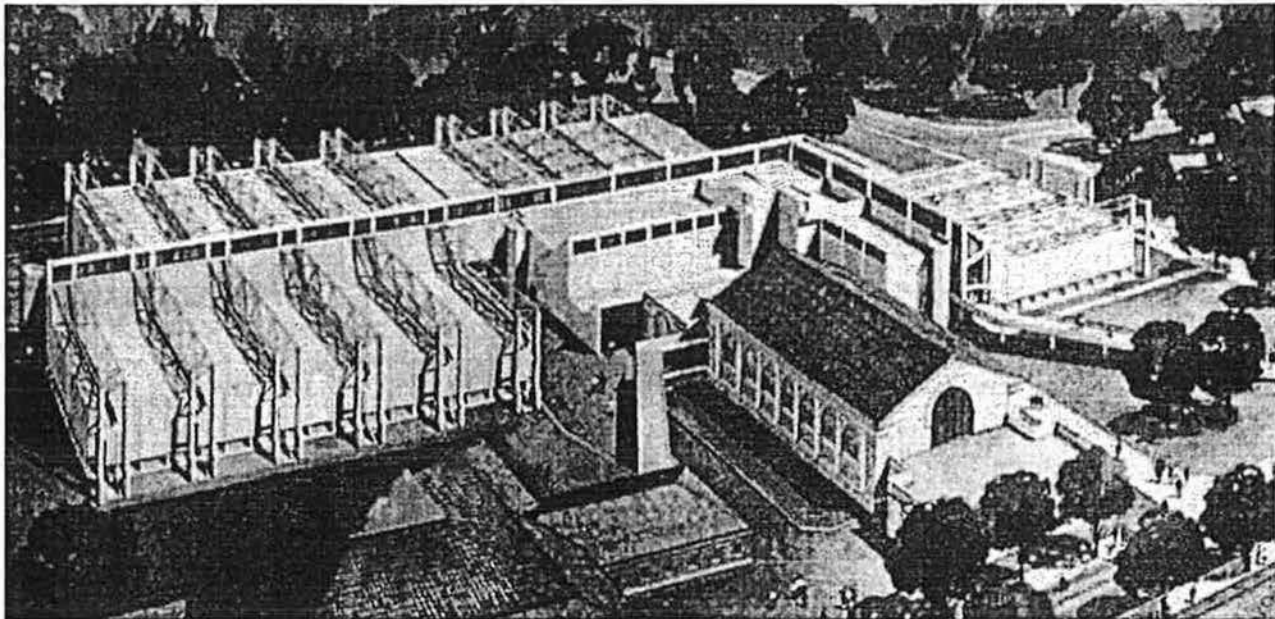
Section number Figures Page 43

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 25: S.R. Crown Hall, Illinois Institute of Technology (*Source:* Larry Hosken, online at <http://lahosken.san-francisco.ca.us/departures/chicago/07/>)



Figure 26: Rendering of Athletic Facility at Phillips Exeter Academy, 1967 (*Source:* Modern Steel)



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 44

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

SHPO Comments on the Eligibility of Kemper Arena:

On February 7, 2014 the Kemper Arena nomination was presented to the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (MOACHP). SHPO staff comments on the nomination were provided to the MOACHP (see below) prior to the meeting with the opinion the arena was not eligible. During the council meeting, the preparer and MO SHPO staff provided the council with their arguments for support and denial. Likewise, there were members of the audience who spoke for and against listing. Ultimately, the MOACHP narrowly approved (5 to 4) the nomination to send to the NPS for listing. The SHPO disagrees with the MOACHP's ruling and asks the Keeper to make a decision as to Kemper Arena's eligibility. Below is an excerpt from SHPO comments, which were provided to the MOACHP prior to the February 7th meeting.

Excerpt from Staff Comments on Kemper Arena to the MOACHP mailed 1/03/2014

The significance of Kemper Arena seems to center on the application of the external space frame or exoskeleton (there is some debate as to the correct terminology) to the building. The *NPS Bulletin How to Apply National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states the following on page 18:

For properties that represent the variation, evolution, or transition of property types, it must be demonstrated that the variation, etc., was an important phase of the architectural development of the area or community in that it had an impact as evidenced by later buildings. A property is not eligible, however, simply because it has been identified as the only such property ever fabricated; it must be demonstrated to be significant as well.

While Kemper Arena is certainly impressive, there is little to no evidence of the arena's impact on future construction. It appears it was a novelty, a well lauded novelty, but still singular in its design. As the nomination acknowledges, Helmut Jahn is a well-known architect, but is still working, thus an argument tied specifically to his work would be difficult to make. Finally, the addition of the 1996 atrium and the repositioning of the space frame/external truss impacts integrity. Given all of these issues, we do not feel there is a case for exceptional significance. Although staff considers the property ineligible, we recognize Kemper Arena as a bold example of arena architecture and hope it can be preserved.

Mark A. Miley *MARCH 4, 2014*







America's Royal

Welcome to the
American Royal

1

1

STOP



Welcome to the
American Royal

AR





Our Vault is Smokin'

4



Amherst
H

4

4

4



BOX OFFICE

NO PARKING ANY TIME

EXIT

DESIGNATED
SMOKING
EXIT



EXIT

GUEST SERVICES



EXIT

EXIT

EXIT



231-233
SECTIONS
115-116

233
232
116

DAKTRONICS
Welcome to Kemper Arena
No Smoking - Smoking Permitted at Outside Gate

115
231

88:88
Arena Information / First Aid / Security - Located at Gate 3
Concessions, Restrooms / Located on the Mid-Levels

114
1


WOMEN

88:88
Arena Information / First Aid / Security - Located at Gate 3
Concessions, Restrooms Located on the Mid-Levels

240, 239 & 201
SECTIONS
118 & 101

201

101



→ Sections 112-116 and 222-235
→ Suites S - V

Sections 112-116 and 222-235
Suites S - V

Welcome to Kemper Arena
No Smoking - Smoking Permitted at Outside Gate

WHEELCHAIR
SUITE
116





Security - Location of Gate 3
Located on the Main Level

WOMEN



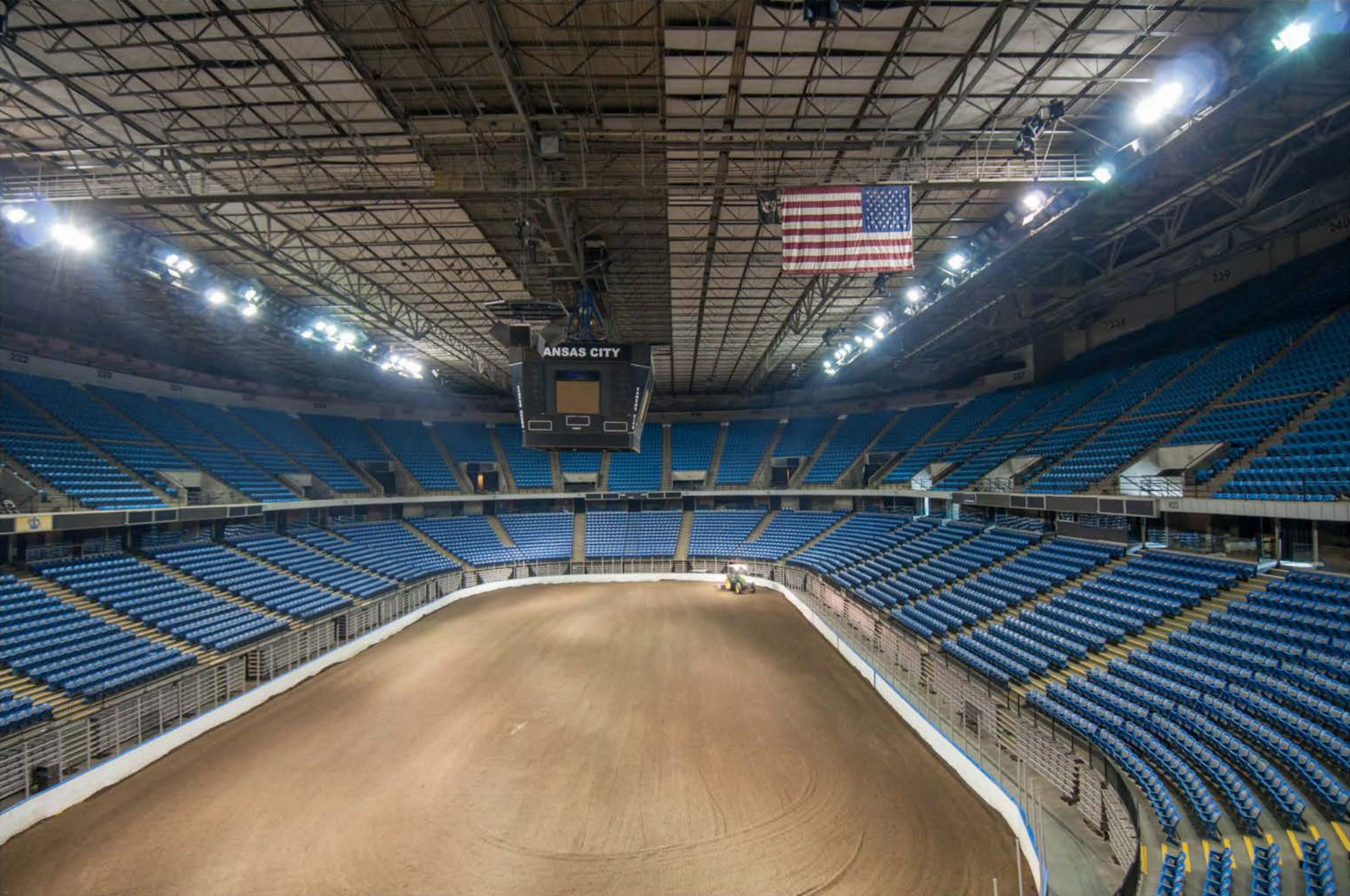
KEMPER CLASSICS

LIME
ultra
ATM

LIME
ultra
ATM



KANSAS CITY



ANSAS CITY





315

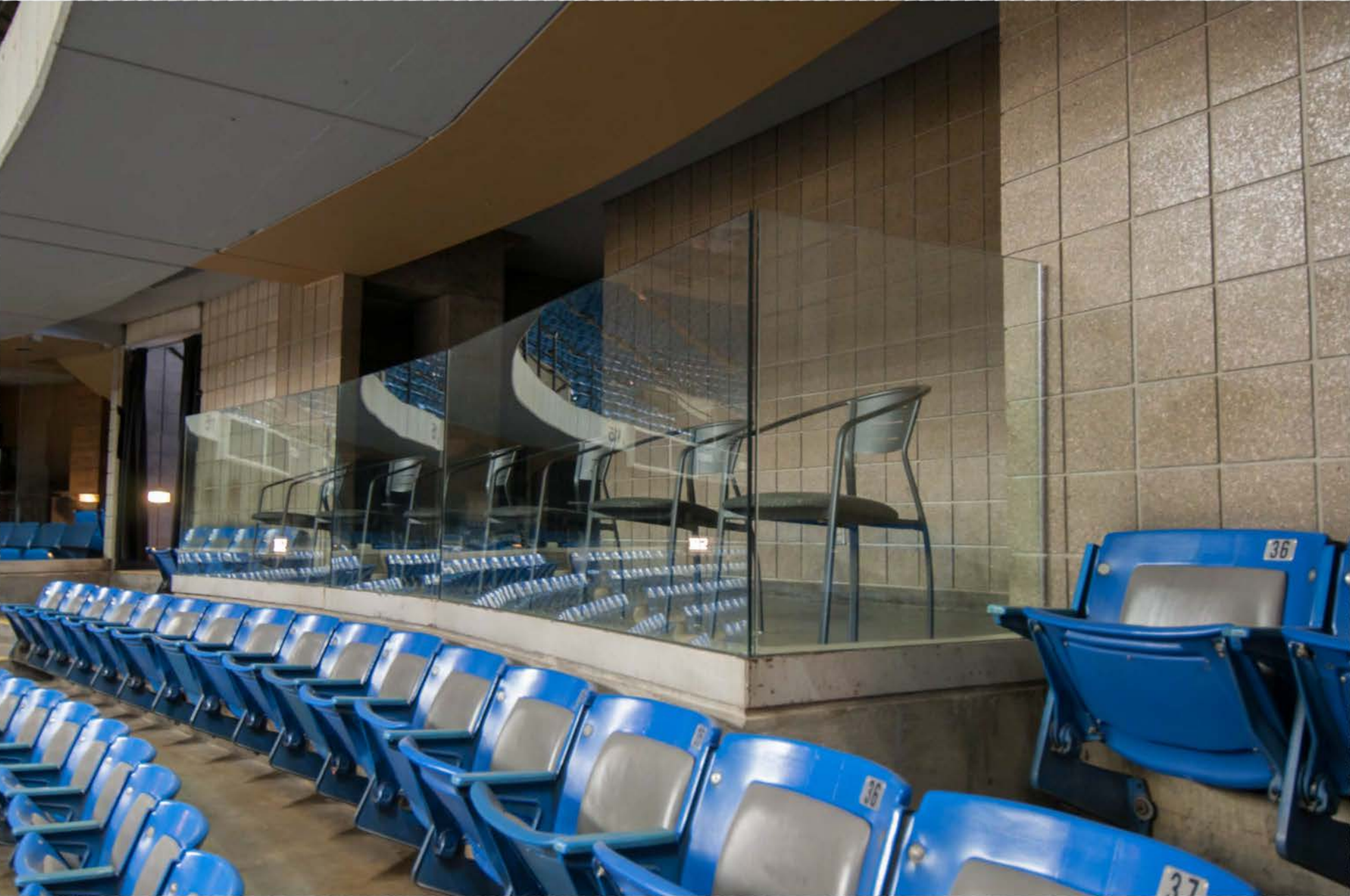


WOMEN



1





36

36

37

208

209



↑ ARENA FLOOR &
← ADMINISTRATION OFFICES
LOCKER ROOMS ▶
CONCESSIONAIRE ▶

NO SMOKING - THIS IS A NON-SMOKING FACILITY
CITY ORDINANCE NO. 59050





Office of the City Manager

29th Floor, City Hall
414 East 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

Received

(816) 513-1408
Fax: (816) 513-1363

FEB 07 2014

State Historic
Preservation Office

February 6, 2014

Historic Preservation Program
Department of Natural Resources
Attn: Mark Miles, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Owner objection
Public Property

Dear Mr. Miles:

Subject: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for the Kemper Arena

The city, as the sole property owner of the Kemper Arena located at 1800 Genessee St, Kansas City, Jackson County, MO is formally objecting to the nomination of the arena to the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 and Federal regulations 36 CFR part 60.

Any action at this time may be premature as there are significant lease and redevelopment issues that must be addressed with the current anchor tenant before historic designation can be pursued for the arena.

Your attention to our concerns is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Troy M. Schulte,
City Manager



Subscribed and sworn to before me, a notary public, on this 6 day of February, 2014.

Terrie L Smidt
Notary Public

My commission expires: January 12, 2018

EVERGLADES FA

Received

FEB 07 2014

Febr

Letters of Support

State Historic Preservation Office

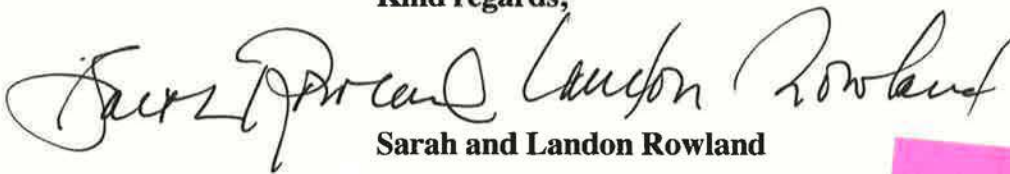
Dear Mr. Crittenden:

On Friday, February 7, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is scheduled to consider the nomination of Kansas City's Kemper Arena to the National Register of Historic Places. We urge you to support this nomination of a structure which is a brilliant example of Post-Modern elegance, a remarkable and appropriate urban design uniquely suited to its assigned role, and one which, despite a generation of benign neglect, retains its' structural integrity and its' visual appeal.

We know the building's future can be one of value, contributing to the energy and vitality of the community and serving the citizens of Kansas City as it should.

We urge your support of this nomination to guard this important property against an uncertain future.

Kind regards,



Sarah and Landon Rowland

Mr. Brent Crittenden
St. Louis, Missouri

[Redacted]



Received

FEB 07 2014

**State Historic
Preservation Office**

February 3, 2014

Dear Mr. Statler:

On Friday, February 7, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is scheduled to consider the nomination of Kansas City's Kemper Arena to the National Register of Historic Places. We urge you to support this nomination of a structure which is a brilliant example of Post-Modern elegance, a remarkable and appropriate urban design uniquely suited to it's assigned role, and one which, despite a generation of benign neglect, retains its' structural integrity and its' visual appeal.

We know the building's future can be one of value, contributing to the energy and vitality of the community and serving the citizens of Kansas City as it should.

We urge your support of this nomination to guard this important property against an uncertain future.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah and Landon Rowland".

Sarah and Landon Rowland

**Mr. Daniel A. Statler
Cape Girardeau**



Received

FEB 07 2014

**State Historic
Preservation Office**

February 3, 2014

Dear Ms. Hibbeler:

On Friday, February 7, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is scheduled to consider the nomination of Kansas City's Kemper Arena to the National Register of Historic Places. We urge you to support this nomination of a structure which is a brilliant example of Post-Modern elegance, a remarkable and appropriate urban design uniquely suited to its assigned role, and one which, despite a generation of benign neglect, retains its' structural integrity and its' visual appeal.

We know the building's future can be one of value, contributing to the energy and vitality of the community and serving the citizens of Kansas City as it should.

We urge your support of this nomination to guard this important property against an uncertain future.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah and Landon Rowland".

Sarah and Landon Rowland

**Ms. Cheryl Hibbeler
O'Fallon, Missouri**



Received

February 3, 2014 FEB 07 2014

**State Historic
Preservation Office**

Dear Ms. McDaniel:

On Friday, February 7, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is scheduled to consider the nomination of Kansas City's Kemper Arena to the National Register of Historic Places. We urge you to support this nomination of a structure which is a brilliant example of Post-Modern elegance, a remarkable and appropriate urban design uniquely suited to its assigned role, and one which, despite a generation of benign neglect, retains its' structural integrity and its' visual appeal.

We know the building's future can be one of value, contributing to the energy and vitality of the community and serving the citizens of Kansas City as it should.

We urge your support of this nomination to guard this important property against an uncertain future.

Kind regards,

Sarah and Landon Rowland

**Ms. Cindy McDaniel
Appleton City
St. Clair County**



Received

February 3, 2014
FEB 07 2014

State Historic
Preservation Office

Dear Ms. Garner:

On Friday, February 7, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is scheduled to consider the nomination of Kansas City's Kemper Arena to the National Register of Historic Places. We urge you to support this nomination of a structure which is a brilliant example of Post-Modern elegance, a remarkable and appropriate urban design uniquely suited to its assigned role, and one which, despite a generation of benign neglect, retains its' structural integrity and its' visual appeal.

We know the building's future can be one of value, contributing to the energy and vitality of the community and serving the citizens of Kansas City as it should.

We urge your support of this nomination to guard this important property against an uncertain future.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah and Landon Rowland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sarah" being more prominent.

Sarah and Landon Rowland

**Ms. Martha Garner
St. Charles, Missouri**



Received

FEB 04 2014

**State Historic
Preservation Office**

February 3, 2014

Dear Ms. Stiritz:

On Friday, February 7, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is scheduled to consider the nomination of Kansas City's Kemper Arena to the National Register of Historic Places. We urge you to support this nomination of a structure which is a brilliant example of Post-Modern elegance, a remarkable and appropriate urban design uniquely suited to its assigned role, and one which, despite a generation of benign neglect, retains its' structural integrity and its' visual appeal.

We know the building's future can be one of value, contributing to the energy and vitality of the community and serving the citizens of Kansas City as it should.

We urge your support of this nomination to guard this important property against an uncertain future.

Kind regards,

Sarah and Landon Rowland

**Ms. Mary Margaret Stiritz
Clayton, Missouri**

Received
FEB 04 2014
EVERGLADES FARM

**State Historic
Preservation Office**

February 3, 2014

Dear Mr. Shirley:

On Friday, February 7, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is scheduled to consider the nomination of Kansas City's Kemper Arena to the National Register of Historic Places. We urge you to support this nomination of a structure which is a brilliant example of Post-Modern elegance, a remarkable and appropriate urban design uniquely suited to its assigned role, and one which, despite a generation of benign neglect, retains its' structural integrity and its' visual appeal.

We know the building's future can be one of value, contributing to the energy and vitality of the community and serving the citizens of Kansas City as it should.

We urge your support of this nomination to guard this important property against an uncertain future.

Kind regards,



Sarah and Landon Rowland

Mr. Allen R. Shirley
Joplin, Missouri

HAW/CONTEMPORARY

Received

FEB 07 2014

State Historic
Preservation Office

Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

c/o Mark Miles, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Missouri State Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102

Missouri State Historic Preservation Office

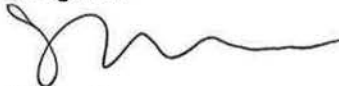
My name is Bill Haw, Jr., and I own several pieces of property in the Stockyards District of the West Bottoms, including Haw Contemporary gallery at 1600 Liberty Street. Our family also owns the Livestock Exchange Building and the Telegram building, both of which have been extensively restored, and which now function as key pieces of our developing neighborhood. I am writing to voice my strong support of the nomination of Kemper Arena to the National Register of Historic Places.

As you know, Kemper Arena ranks as one of the most important works of post-modern architecture in Kansas City, and was significant in launching the career its designer Helmut Jahn, now widely considered a post-modern master. The arena was his first major building, and its unique roof suspension system was the first of its kind at that scale. The arena's iconic trusses, visible from multiple locations in the city, are an integral and unique fixture in our urban landscape, and the arena itself is a building that remains full of possibilities.

There is currently a proposal to tear down the arena at significant cost and questionable benefit to the city. There are also proposals to repurpose it in ways that bring measurable benefit to the neighborhood, save the city money, and preserve an iconic structure that is part of our fabric. Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places will help save Kemper Arena from needless destruction, allow for further utilization in line with the times, and preserve a meaningful part of our city, and the state of Missouri.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Kind regards



Bill Haw, Jr.

LIVESTOCK EXCHANGE, LLC

1600 GENESSEE, SUITE 846
KANSAS CITY, MO 64102

(816) 221-4501 • FAX (816) 842-5078

livestockexchange@kc.rr.com

February 3, 2014

Received

FEB 07 2014

**State Historic
Preservation Office**

Missouri State Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Attn: Mark Miles
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Dear Members of the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation:

Each morning when I arrive at the 23rd Street viaduct I look down at the Kemper Arena in juxtaposition with my Livestock Exchange building. I can't imagine that there is a plan afoot to tear down the Kemper, when the two structures from different eras so beautifully complement each other while representing those different times in the cities' history.

The Kemper is truly an iconic structure deserving historic designation that would allow it to be repurposed and contribute to the rebirth of the historic K C Stockyards District in the West Bottoms.

As the owner of several historic buildings in Boonville and Kansas City, MO and Lawrence and Cottonwood Falls, KS, I know the importance of those structures to the vitality of their communities.

Please proceed with your support of the nomination of the Kemper Arena to the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,



Bill Haw



FOSS SELIGSON & LAFFERTY
ARCHITECTS / PLANNERS

February 5, 2014

Members of the Missouri Advisory Council
c/o Mark Miles, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Missouri State Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Received

FEB 07 2014

State Historic
Preservation Office

Re: Kemper Arena
Kansas City, Missouri

Dear Advisory Council Members:

As an architectural student in the mid-1970's our class would often make trips to Chicago to study their enormous array of remarkable buildings. On one such visit we toured the architectural office of C.F. Murphy & Associates. The first thing we noticed that day was a model they had prominently displayed in their lobby...Kemper Arena in Kansas City. It was under construction at the time and it was clear that this internationally respected firm considered it one of their outstanding design achievements.

After graduating I moved to Kansas City and found that the completed building looked as impressive as the model we had admired several years before. I now have my architectural office in the Livestock Exchange Building, two blocks from Kemper Arena. I remain impressed by this structure. It has a timeless quality that few other buildings possess. I particularly like the way it contrasts yet blends with the century-old structures of the West Bottoms...both displaying honesty in their design in entirely different ways.

I believe this building is one of the finest examples of 20th Century architecture to be found. It contains elements that make it a worthy heir to the work of Mies van der Rohe. I truly hope that this historic structure will be re-purposed and remain for future generations to admire as much as I have.

Sincerely,

George Lafferty, AIA, NCARB, LEED-AP

Received

FEB 07 2014

State Historic
Preservation Office

February 3, 2014

Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
c/o Mark Miles, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Missouri State Historic Preservation Office
P.O Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Members of the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

Kemper Arena is an early product of an emerging American iconic architect, Helmut Jahn. It is important for that reason. But more to the point, it is an unusually competent, creative expression of a strong and dramatic structural concept. It is a classic example of that genre of buildings whose architectural design is a celebration of an elegant structural solution to the challenge of the clear-spanning of very large spaces. It can be peculiarly attached in time to the 1970's; a time of other similarly robust works.

The fabric of the city is shaped by a collection of worthy buildings – of *different* times, but each *expressing* their time. The Kemper, has taken its place alongside the strong, utilitarian but elegant, Livestock Exchange Building – and along with other period buildings in this former stockyards area. This wonderful mixture provides welcome contrasts in design approach, materials, form, and scale. It offers a richness and texture that is so essential to a vibrant place. That richness should be preserved and nourished. Kemper is an irreplaceable piece of that environment.

Kemper Arena is, on several counts, a genuinely worthy candidate for the National Register. I urge your favorable consideration.

Respectfully,



Tom Nelson, FAIA



Received

FEB 03 2014

State Historic
Preservation Office

Dear Members of the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation:

As a small business owner in the Stockyards District of the West Bottoms, near the historic Kemper Arena, we are in strong support of moving forward with your classification of the Kemper Arena as an historic structure being placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

We cannot imagine the area without this iconic structure, and with the support of this designation we would hope it would be preserved as a significant architectural piece, and one that can hopefully be repurposed and once again contribute to its community.

Best regards,

Amigoni Urban Winery

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kerry D. Amigoni". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "K" and "A".

Kerry D. Amigoni



900 W. 48th Place, Suite 900, Kansas City, MO, 64112 • 816.753.1000

March 25, 2014

F. Chase Simmons
(816) 360-4327
(816) 753-1536 Fax
csimmons@polsinelli.com

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

Michelle Diedrich
Missouri State Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102

**Re: Objection to Kemper Arena Nomination to National Register of
Historic Places**

Dear Michelle,

I am writing on behalf of our client, the American Royal Association (the "Royal"), to formally object to the proposed naming of the Kemper Arena to the National Register of Historic Places (the "NRHP"). We have included with this letter a copy of a study prepared on the Royal's behalf by The Louis Berger Group, Inc. examining the viability of the Kemper Arena application under the applicable legal standards. We would respectfully request that you pass this letter and enclosures on the Federal Reviewer for this project.

As you are aware, at its February 7 hearing, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation decided by a 5-4 vote to send on the nomination of Kemper Arena to the Federal Reviewer over the objection of SHPO staff, the property owner (the City of Kansas City), and the Royal, which is the primary tenant of the Arena under a long-term lease running through 2045. The City of Kansas City, as the property owner, filed a written objection to the nomination, which although not binding under Federal law, was instructive as to the City's views on this matter. The SHPO staff also made clear that given the age of the Arena, numerous exterior and engineering alterations during its existence, and lack of noteworthy impact on subsequent projects, it deemed naming the Arena to the NRHP inappropriate. Our client agreed with that analysis and also opposed the application on procedural grounds for being filed over the objection of both the property owner and our client, as the primary stakeholder in the future of the Arena.

To give further background, the City and the Royal have been working cooperatively for the past several months to determine how the Arena appropriately fits into the overall redevelopment and rehabilitation of the surrounding West Bottoms area. In that time, another



March 25, 2014

Page 2

private developer that has interest in redeveloping the area engaged Rosin Preservation to file this application with the goal of being inserted in the discussions between the Royal and the City. As the primary stakeholders in the Arena, the Royal views this as an improper and obstructionist action, and we certainly doubt that the motivation behind the application has anything to do with achieving historic preservation.

We feel that it is important to understand this background, especially in light of the fact that the Kemper Arena does not meet the historical standards necessary to name it to the NRHP. This fact has been well-explained by your staff, and we hope that the enclosed study from our consultant will further support that point.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CS" or "Chase Simmons".

Chase Simmons

cc: Federal Historic Reviewer for the State of Missouri
Kansas City Landmarks Commission
John McGurk, City of Kansas City
Troy Schulte, City of Kansas City
Bob Langenkamp, City of Kansas City
The American Royal Association

THE Louis Berger Group, INC.

1600 Baltimore Avenue
Suite 100
Kansas City, MO 64108 USA
Tel 816.398.8578 • Fax 816.561.1666



March 7, 2014

Attorney Evan Fitts
Polsinelli PC
900 W.48th Place Suite 900
Kansas City, MO 64112

Re: Review of National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Kemper Arena

Dear Attorney Fitts:

You have asked The Louis Berger Group, Inc. (Louis Berger), to provide an independent opinion on the completeness of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination for the Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Missouri, and validity of the conclusion that the building is eligible for the NRHP and meets Criterion C in the area of engineering and Criteria Consideration G for buildings that were built less than 50 years ago and are of exceptional significance. Louis Berger understands that the building is being nominated over the objection of the City of Kansas City.

The nomination was examined and analyzed by Camilla Deiber, Senior Architectural Historian, and Steven Bedford, PhD, Principal Architectural Historian for Louis Berger. Both meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Architectural Historians. The majority of the analytical work was performed by Dr. Bedford.

The nomination provides an overview of the history of the Kemper Arena but glosses over certain elements crucial to design decisions such as the importance of the architect and the building's later problems. For instance, there was no discussion of the apparent emphasis on a low budget for the project, which may have contributed both to the design chosen and its ultimate failure (Gale Encyclopedia of Biography 2010). The failure of the building's roof, an important case in the history of forensic engineering, is dismissed after a few lines.

Analysis

As noted by the National Park Service (NPS) in its *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years* (Sherfy and Luce 1998):

The passage of time is necessary in order to apply the adjective "historic" and to ensure adequate perspective. To be a useful tool for public administration, the National Register cannot include properties of only transient value or interest. The passage of time allows our perceptions to be influenced by education, the judgment of previous decades, and the dispassion of distance. In nominating properties to the National Register, we should be settled in our belief that they will possess enduring value for their historical associations, appearance, or information potential [Sherfy and Luce 1998:2].

The question then is whether the Kemper Arena has *attained those associations, retained its appearance, or is providing exceptional information relative to an established context*. The following discussion analyzes the nomination and whether it provides sufficient accurate and dispassionate information to make an informed decision as to the NRHP eligibility of the Kemper Arena.

Integrity and Appearance of the Kemper Arena

We feel that although the nomination addresses the alterations to the Kemper Arena in the description section of the building (Rosin 2014: Section 7; hereafter “the nomination”), it does not sufficiently address the impact of the 1996 alterations on the integrity of the building. NRHP regulations require that a building have integrity of design, workmanship, material, location, setting, feeling, and association. In many cases the building can lack some of these characteristics and still be listed (36 CFR 60.4); however, in this case the alterations to the building and its structure substantially eliminate the building’s integrity of design, a key factor in considering this building as eligible for the NRHP.

The 1996 alterations have greatly affected the overall perception of the building. By placing its original entrances on the corners of the building reached by ramps that slowly ascend the berm, the mass of the building was kept as a sleek skin and any notion of a single axial entrance was absent. The current main entry, which projects from the original building volume, competes with rest of the building for visual attention. In spanning the distance from outer truss to outer truss, the new entry and atrium dominate the elevation. The curving glass atrium contrasts with the original flat exterior treatment in materials, massing, and design, creating a perceived openness. It contrasts with the building’s original external treatment — a single uninterrupted cladding whose windowless nature implied that the focus of the building was internal. Now the building has what amounts to a marquee, indicating to the public that the central entrance is the primary entrance.

The three massive trusses have been dramatically altered since the 1979 collapse. First, it appears that diagonal bracing, matching that of the horizontal section of each truss, was added to the vertical sections of each column section of each frame, indicating that the initial design may have lacked stiffness in one axis. The subsequent change to the middle truss, whose horizontal section is now supported by two arms leaning over the exterior wall, may have altered structural principles at work as evidenced by the fact that the top/outer chord is now tied into a foundation. That most likely indicates a different loading arrangement from the original trusses. This action changes the engineering characteristics of the center truss by introducing new forces into the design. Furthermore, moving the center truss out of line with the older trusses alters both the perception of the visitor and the prior symmetry of the plan. The same holds true for the increase in the height of the central section and the introduction of a lowered central entry. The new design elements change our perception of the building and the building’s integrity. We do not believe that the building has retained sufficient integrity, particularly for a building that is less than 50 years old, to be considered for the NRHP.

Context

Although the nomination lists engineering as the area of significance, it does not offer convincing support that the building’s structural design was exceptionally significant. There is no argument in the nomination concerning the actual structural design of the building, which owes a significant debt to many buildings that came before it. The argument focuses on the architectural impact rather than its importance as an exceptionally significant engineering structure. In fact the examples given that use space frame trusses demonstrate that the use of long-span structures in arenas and exhibition halls was well within the capability of structural engineering firms. In 1967 Welton Becket described the Pauley Pavilion as consisting of three trusses united by a space frame — not much of a variant from Kemper Arena (Becket 1967:5). The contextual examples given are primarily limited to space frame-supported buildings while neglecting other arenas that used other structural systems. This gives one a limited sense of the historic context of arena design prior to the Kemper Arena’s construction. Therefore the nomination provides a cursory discussion of engineering context and does not establish support for the claimed importance of the building to engineering or engineering history.

The nomination attempts to differentiate the Kemper Arena from the limited number of contemporary structures illustrated. The major difference between the structural designs used for the examples and the Kemper Arena was the decision to expose the largest structural elements rather than enclose them. This is more of an architectural decision than an innovative structural one. In fact the nomination (8-13) notes “its bold space frame exo-skeleton that goes well beyond the basic programming needs of creating a column-free arena bowl.” This can be interpreted as meaning that the truss size was dictated by architectural appearance rather than structural requirements and does not signal an engineering innovation.

The nomination notes (8-14) that developing “appropriate, yet simple joint connections” was a key to the success of any space frame, yet there is no discussion as to how this apparently crucial design step was achieved at Kemper Arena. It was a failed connection between the space frame and the rest of the structure that created the progressive collapse of the interior structure of the roof. Although no responsibility for the roof collapse was assigned, this type of fault in the design was not in accord with the prevalent standards. Section 1.3.1 of *ANSI Standard Minimum Design Loads in Buildings and other Structures* (1971) required that structural systems have sufficient integrity to avoid progressive collapse. How can the engineering of this building be described as exceptionally significant if it failed to meet this standard? In fact this design failure may have led C.F. Murphy to close their in-house engineering group (personal communication, email from Joseph P. Colaco, structural engineer, March 5, 2014).

The design concept of using long-span structures to create column-free space has a long tradition of use. As the nomination notes, the concept of the design is a direct descendant of Mies van der Rohe’s column-free Crown Hall at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). As Jahn would later point out, he was using an expression of structure as decoration that dated back to the 1850s in such buildings as London’s Crystal Palace and he believed his work was a reinterpretation of the approach (Blaser 1996:17).

The architectural practice of expressing structure externally is as old as the medieval cathedral. Modern theoretical advocacy of the concept of using structure as decoration was affirmed in the nineteenth century in the works of John Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc. The expression of structure on the Kemper Arena is not a novel concept.

The nomination includes a reference to and illustration of the Love Gymnasium at Phillips Exeter Academy designed by Kallmann and McKinnell in Exeter, New Hampshire. The design of that building demonstrates that the Kemper Arena is a direct descendant of Kallmann and McKinnell’s design, the goal of which was to provide a long-span design for side-by-side ice hockey rinks with access along a central spine and spectator space of appropriate size for a preparatory school crowd. The basic design concept is so similar that the major differences between the two are scale and cladding. We disagree with the nomination’s contention that the design of the Love Gymnasium design focuses more on mass of the building than the design of the Kemper Arena. The neo-Corbusian external expression of the Kemper Arena, where the building curves to express the shape and function of the internal plan, is certainly emphasized; its blank walls and low entrances at four corners reinforce the essential mass of the arena.

Many buildings considered part of the main stream of modern architecture had or were using structure as means to draw attention the building or as expressive elements. For example the World Trade Center, which used a more novel structural device, the bundled tube, had all of its main structure on the exterior. The contemporary Centre Pompidou (Piano and Rogers, the competition occurred in 1971) exposed the structure and mechanicals throughout the building, using trusses on the façade, making the exposed structure at Kemper a design feature of the era rather than some revolutionary design concept.

In 1979, following a series of collapses of buildings that were of long-span structural design, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) convened a panel to study these collapses by reviewing available forensic engineering reports; the study included the Kemper Arena. The panel made no effort to place blame for any of the failures, but one of their findings published in 1981 was that none of the basic structural systems of any of the buildings could be characterized as surpassing existing knowledge (Long Span Building Panel 1981:4). Our interpretation of this finding confirms that the design of the Kemper Arena lacks engineering significance.

Although initially recognized for its relative importance within its immediate historic context, it is not clear that either popular or critical assessment of the importance of the Kemper Arena has stood the test of time, outside of its use as a case study in forensic engineering handbooks. Initial criticism linked the building directly to the work of Mies van der Rohe describing it as a rephrasing of the great architect's work (Abercrombie 1981:63). The AIA and American Institute of Steel Construction awards for the building reflect the attitudes and taste of the moment, not how the building's design would be assessed in the future. In addition, Kemper Arena was one of 10 buildings to receive an AIA award in 1976.

Contemporary criticism is also influenced by personal relationships and affiliations. Peter Pran's praise of Jahn's building (Pran 1977:436-441) could be attributed to their shared membership in a group of architects known as the "Chicago Seven." They may also have been at IIT in the mid-1960s, and this connection bears further research.

Works of a Living Person

The issue of nominating works of a living and practicing architect is not an accepted practice.

On rare occasions, properties associated with individuals still living have been listed in the National Register. However, the nomination of such properties is strongly discouraged in order to avoid use of the National Register listing to endorse the work or reputation of a living person. Periodically, however, sufficient scholarship and evidence of historical perspective exist to list a property associated with living persons whose active life in their field of endeavor is over [Sherfy and Luce 1998:VII].

Jahn is still practicing as JAHN. Construction of his 50 West Street in New York City is underway, and he is touring the world talking about his work. Therefore it is definitely premature to consider listing the Kemper Arena, even though it is one of his earliest works. Jahn's place in the history of architecture remains undetermined.

Architectural success is fickle. In his early years Jahn was described as "the undisputed crown prince of Chicago architecture" for his work on buildings such as One South Wacker Drive and the Chicago Board of Trade (Becker 2003). By the end of the 1980s, as architectural styles shifted, he was "an exile in his own city," (Becker 2003). His later success with flashy skyscraper designs led critic Martin Filler to describe him as having "transformed himself from *Wunderkind* into *Glitzmeister*" (Filler 1988:30).

The popularity of Jahn's work among architects, one measure of importance, is seen in a 2007 AIA poll of architects on the 150 most important American buildings (AIA 150); the Kemper Arena did not rank among them, but his later United Airlines Terminal in Chicago ranked 102. The Kemper Arena does appear in *Great Buildings Online* and is one of 500 buildings in Kidder-Smith's *Sourcebook of American Architecture* of 1996, but Wiseman's (1998) and Wright's (2008) histories of American architecture focus on Jahn's later work. Wiseman described his later work as "a bit too flamboyant" and "cheaply finished" (Wiseman 1998:316). He is discussed in Williamson's 1991 *American Architects and Mechanics of Fame*, but he is one of hundreds of other architects listed. Helmut Jahn is an important architect, but whether his work is exceptionally important remains to be seen.

The Issue of Postmodernism

The nomination discusses the building as *Postmodern*. This was not a term in use in the 1970s, when this building was under design. In linking the building to the work of Mies Van der Rohe, the nomination and early criticism link the Kemper Arena to the Modern movement. The key ideas of Postmodernism are set forth in two important books by Robert Venturi: *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966) and *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972). Postmodern architecture evolved from the Modern movement yet contradicts many of the modernist ideas. Combining new ideas with traditional forms, Postmodernist buildings can startle, surprise, and even amuse. Familiar shapes and details are used in unexpected ways. Buildings may incorporate symbols to make a statement or simply to delight the viewer. Although some sources may define any building that did not follow the Miesian canon as Postmodern, it is more generally recognized that Postmodern does not extend to free-form works by Le Corbusier or the tectonic gyrations of works by John Johanssen. In fact freeing the façade of its structure was one of Le Corbusier's "Five Points of a New Architecture," which first appeared in print in 1927 (Von Moos 1982:340). What is described in the nomination as Postmodern is really neo-Corbusian. As late as 1990, Jahn's work was described as proceeding with his form of modernism in an evolutionary process that develops out of his Mies-oriented C.F. Murphy work (Murphy 1990:102). Clearly the Kemper Arena relates more to Modernism than Postmodernism.


Charles Jencks, in his 1977 *Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, presented a group of modernists' works that included a space frame design of 1970 by the celebrated Japanese architect Kenzo Tange. He lumped this type of architectural form (the space frame) into a group of architectural forms whose symbolic nature was not understood by the general public. He further described this type of form as more in line with the avant-garde of 1960 rather than 1977 (Jencks 1977:29). The Kemper Arena would fall into this same category.

Conclusion

Based on our examination of the nomination and additional research, we do not believe that the nomination clearly or definitively establishes the exceptional significance of the Kemper Arena under the category of engineering. Although it received much critical praise on its completion, it has been altered substantially, the engineering context is not developed, the building is not an example of the advancement of the field, and it is not a postmodern building. Finally, since Helmut Jahn is still alive and practicing, we cannot judge Kemper Arena's importance within the body of his work. The building should not be considered for NRHP listing.

Sincerely,

The Louis Berger Group, Inc.



Steven Bedford, Ph.D.
Principal Architectural Historian

File: 2002841

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FW: Kemper Arena Objection Letter

1 message

Diedrich, Michelle <michelle.diedrich@dnr.mo.gov>
To: "Beall, Edson" <edson_beall@nps.gov>
Cc: "EFitts@Polsinelli.com" <EFitts@polsinelli.com>

Wed, Mar 26, 2014 at 9:44 AM

Hi Edson,

Attached is an additional objection letter for the Kemper Arena nomination in Kansas City. We sent the nomination with a request for review to the NPS on March 4th so you should have it by now.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best wishes,

Michelle

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From: Evan Fitts [mailto:EFitts@Polsinelli.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2014 12:38 PM
To: Diedrich, Michelle
Subject: RE: Kemper Arena Objection Letter

Michelle,

A revised letter is attached clarifying on that point. Sorry for the confusion. I will recirculate this to all parties

that I have sent it to and make the error clear.

Thanks, Evan

Evan F. Fitts

Attorney

efitts@polsinelli.com

816.360.4287

900 W. 48th Place, Suite 900
Kansas City, MO 64112-1895

polsinelli.com

From: Evan Fitts
Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2014 12:29 PM
To: 'Diedriech, Michelle'
Subject: RE: Kemper Arena Objection Letter

Thanks Michelle. I did not intend the letter to read as if there had been a procedural error. I always understood that you followed the law correctly. I am going to re-word that and send it right back. That will save your office having to do a memo!

I will get right back to you.

Thanks, Evan

Evan F. Fitts

Attorney

efitts@polsinelli.com

816.360.4287

900 W. 48th Place, Suite 900
Kansas City, MO 64112-1895

polsinelli.com

From: Diedriech, Michelle [mailto:michelle.diedriech@dnr.mo.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2014 12:18 PM
To: Evan Fitts
Subject: RE: Kemper Arena Objection Letter

Hi Evan,

I read your letter and am happy to send it forward once I find out what the proper procedure is (if I can just e-mail it or if I need to send it snail mail).

I have one concern, the letter appears to suggest there was a procedural error. There was not. Please refer to 36 CFR 61 regulations. As I explained during our previous conversation, only a majority of private property owners can stop a property from being listed via a formal and notarized objection letter. The City of Kansas City and the lessee, the Royal American Association, do not fall under the definition of "private property owner". Public property, such as the Kemper Arena, can be nominated by anyone to the National Register of Historic Places.

The rest of your letter seemed fine. I'm waiting to hear back from the NPS in terms of how to send your letter. In the meantime, you can update your letter, or we can send a memo with it stating SHPO followed procedure as outlined in the regs. If the letter simply meant that your client doesn't agree with the owner objection procedure, that probably should be clarified.

Thanks,

Michelle

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From: Evan Fitts [mailto:EFitts@Polsinelli.com]
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2014 4:40 PM
To: Diedrich, Michelle
Subject: Kemper Arena Objection Letter

Michelle,

Thanks for the call back. I would appreciate you forwarding the attached package on to the Federal Reviewer for the Kemper Arena project. Thanks for the assistance.

-Evan

Evan F. Fitts

Attorney

efitts@polsinelli.com

816.360.4287

900 W. 48th Place, Suite 900
Kansas City, MO 64112

polsinelli.com



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**Minutes
of the
MISSOURI ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION
February 7, 2014**

The Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation met at the Lewis and Clark State Office Building, 1101 Riverside Drive, Jefferson City, Missouri from 9:04 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. on November 8, 2013.

Kemper Arena, 1800 Genessee Street, Kansas City, Jackson County

Preparer & Agency: Elizabeth Rosin, Rosin Preservation

Staff Comments: This nomination has very few typographical errors. Since this property is less than 50 years old, the nomination must make a case for exceptional significance. We feel the preparer did the best they could with the information available. The significance seems to center on the application of the external space frame or exoskeleton (there is some debate as to the correct terminology) to the building. The *NPS Bulletin: How to Apply National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states the following on page 18:

For properties that represent the variation, evolution, or transition of property types, it must be demonstrated that the variation, etc. was an important phase of the architectural development of the area or community in that it had an impact as evidenced by later buildings. A property is not eligible, however, simply because it has been identified as the only such property ever fabricated; it must be demonstrated to be significant as well.

While Kemper Arena is certainly impressive, there is little to no evidence of the arena's impact on future construction. It appears it was a novelty, a well lauded novelty, but still singular in its design. Likewise, the addition of the 1996 atrium and the repositioning of the space frame/external truss impacts integrity. Given all of these issues, we do not feel there is a case for exceptional significance. Although staff considers the property ineligible, we recognize Kemper Arena as a bold example of arena architecture and hope it can be preserved. This was a difficult decision for staff and we welcome council input on this nomination.

Ms. Rosin introduced Mr. Fitts (who spoke in opposition of the nomination) and Mr. Heitman (who spoke in support of the nomination). She then gave a PowerPoint presentation and answered questions. Dr. Stepenoff requested a motion for the Kemper Arena. Ms. Stiritz made a motion to approve and submit to the Keeper of the National Register provided staff and Council comments are addressed in the final submission. Mr. Kuypers seconded. The motion carried (with 5 council members in favor) although not unanimously, with Mr. Crittenden, Dr. Wieggers, Ms. Hibbeler and Dr. Holland.

Kemper Arena, 1800 Genessee Street, Kansas City, Jackson County
Form prepared by: Elizabeth Rosin, Rosin Preservation LLC.

Property Information

- Previous Eligibility Assessment eligible not eligible additional info needed
- HPF Grant
- Within CLG Jurisdiction

Applicable NR Criteria: C
Criteria Considerations: G
Area of Significance: Engineering
Period of Significance: 1973-74
Level of Significance: local state national

Tally sheet including
comments sent
to the MOAHP
1-3-14

Staff Comments

This nomination has very few typographical errors. Since this property is less than 50 years old, the nomination must make a case for exceptional significance. We feel the preparer did the best they could with the information available. The significance seems to center on the application of the external space frame or exoskeleton (there is some debate as to the correct terminology) to the building. The *NPS Bulletin How to Apply National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states the following on page 18:

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Council Decision

- Approve and submit to the Keeper of the National Register provided that SHPO and Council comments, if any, are addressed.
- Table nomination until additional information on the property's significance or integrity is provided.
- Property does not meet the National Register criteria of eligibility and/or does not retain sufficient integrity to convey significance.
- Other (explain): _____

First: Stirtz
Second: Kuypers
Vote: 5 in favor - 4 opposed

Additional Comments

Brent Crittenden, Bob Wieggers, Cheryl Hibbeler, and Tony Holland voted "nay".



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Comments

Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Kemper Arena
Property Location: Kansas City, Missouri
Reference Number: 14000160
Date of Return: 4-21-14

The nomination for the Kemper Arena is being returned because the nomination needs clarification of several points to make a case for the eligibility of the property. Please resubmit the nomination with the clarification described below, so the Keeper can determine whether or not it is eligible for the National Register.

Summary

Kemper Arena is nominated under Criterion C for its significance in engineering, as an example of the innovative use of space frame technology, which “broke with convention, distinguishing Kemper Arena from all previous sports facilities” (p. 8-6). It is considered eligible at the local level, with a period of significance 1973-1974, the years it was built. It is also nominated under Criteria Consideration G, because it is less than 50 years old and is considered to have exceptional local significance.

Reasons for the Return

Criterion C, Engineering significance. The arena is nominated for its significance in engineering, specifically its space frame technology and thin exoskeleton. The nomination explains the context for this technology and provides sufficient information to establish the arena as locally significant. However, integrity is an important issue. The engineering of the structure was compromised by the roof collapse in 1979 and additions built in 1987 and 1997. According to the nomination (p. 8-10), the center space frame truss was reconfigured by the 90s era changes, and the 80s era fixes included welding the hangers to the trusses (replacing bolts), sistering steel bars to the hangers to strengthen them, and sloping the roof outward to prevent water from pooling (replacing the inward sloping roof). These are significant changes that have resulted in modification to the building’s engineering.

To defend the integrity of the arena, the nomination states, “Alteration of the central space frame and addition of a glass curtain wall to the east elevation in 1996 do not detract from the visionary reinterpretation of the property type. The organization and fabric of the functional interior are intact, and the experience of the visitor on the concourse or in the seating bowl is unchanged since the arena opened in 1974” (p. 7-5). These statements have nothing to do with the significance of the engineering.

Removal of a portion of the exoskeleton—part of the engineered concept—also compromises the engineering integrity. Whether due to structural failure or the need for more space, changes to the arena tampered with the original engineering, which is considered the most significant aspect of the arena according to the nomination. Kemper Arena’s engineering seems to fail the integrity test in terms of design, materials, and workmanship. In rare cases, changes themselves can contribute to engineering significance, if the changes clearly advanced design and technology and subsequently became standard practice. This has not been explained for the Kemper Arena, but if the early roof collapse led to pivotal modifications with a lasting impact on space frame technology, please explain. If the nomination is revised with engineering still considered significant, it must address the impact of these changes on the integrity of the engineering.

Criterion A, Entertainment/Recreation. Kemper Arena has only been nominated under Criterion C for its engineering significance. However, the nomination indicates in several places that Kemper Arena has a meaningful place in the entertainment/recreation history of Kansas City. Consider the following:

- “Kemper Arena was an immediate icon of the Kansas City built environment when it opened in 1974 and remains such today” (p. 7-5).
- “Kemper Arena is unlike any building in (the) Kansas City area built before or since and has no surviving national parallels among arena structures” (p. 8-6).
- “The ‘gargantuan’ and ‘gleaming white arena’ was an instant landmark in the old stockyards” (p. 8-9).
- “. . . This is just the first of a wide array of events that Kemper Arena hosted over the coming decades. In addition to hockey and basketball, indoor soccer, arena football, and roller derby teams played games there. It was the site of the 1976 Republican National Convention that nominated Gerald Ford for president and Kansan Bob Dole as his running mate. Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, the Rolling Stones, and Michael Jackson were just a few of the musicians whose concerts filled the venue to capacity. And, of course, there were annual rodeos and horse and livestock shows as part of the American Royal. By 2005, it was estimated that 30 million spectators had attended events in the building” (p. 8-9).

Presumably, Kemper Arena persisted as the most important sports and entertainment venue in Kansas City until the Sprint Arena opened in 2007. Today, although its usefulness may be supplanted by the Sprint Arena, does it remain the “icon” and “landmark” the nomination touts?

Consideration could be given to nominating the property under Criterion A for its contribution to Kansas City history, if development of an historic context demonstrates its significance in this regard. “In evaluating and justifying exceptional importance, it is especially critical to identify the properties in a geographical area that portray the same values or associations and determine those that best illustrate or represent the architectural, cultural, or historical values being considered” (*Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that have Achieved Significance within the Last Fifty Years*, p. 3). This would need to be done to investigate and demonstrate that Kemper Arena is exceptionally significant in Kansas City history.

Even if Criterion A is considered pertinent to the nomination of Kemper Arena, several questions remain, *primarily the issue of integrity*. Each of the points that follow needs to be addressed, regardless of the criteria applied.

Impact of the glass curtain wall/addition. The integrity of the appearance of the building (not only its engineering) may have been seriously compromised by the addition of the glass curtain wall. Throughout the nomination, much is made of the “bold space frame exoskeleton” of the building (p. 8-13), but the exoskeleton has been lost where it was replaced by the glass curtain wall. In addition to the visual impact of the glass curtain wall, the addition has more fully defined the orientation of the building. Entrances appear to have been originally at the four corners; it is not mentioned whether one of these entrances was a “main entrance” or if there was an entrance elsewhere on the building that was considered primary. It appears that all sides of the arena were equally emphasized; thus, the addition establishes a primary façade with a main entrance that never existed. This is a major change to the building. Please discuss more fully the impact of the mid-1990s curtain wall on the emblematic 1970s appearance and orientation of the building, and include an explanation of why it does not affect the integrity of the building. Information about influences on HNTB’s concept and design for the 1996 changes may be useful. It also may be helpful to describe Helmut Jahn’s reaction to and evaluation of the glass curtain wall and other modifications.

Living architect. Generally, properties designed by architects still in practice are not considered eligible for the National Register as the work of a master, although on rare occasions such properties are listed if sufficient time has “elapsed to assess both their field and their contribution in a historic perspective” (*Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years*, p. 9). Kemper Arena is not nominated as the work of a master and Section 8 should make that very clear. The part about Jahn might conclude with the thought that although Jahn may be considered a “master” in the future, there is no certainty that the Kemper Arena will ever be considered eligible based on an association with him.

Site plan. The site plan, figure 1, does not show key aspects of the nominated property and its surroundings. It does not show the wider setting of the American Royal Complex, which provides important context, nor does it label all streets mentioned in the description, including 17th and Wyoming streets, which are important reference points mentioned on page 7-1. Please include labels for all streets mentioned in the text and expand the area covered by the site plan.

Garage and Box Office. The nomination states that the garage “intersects the base of the berm.” This needs to be explained more fully, because from photo #8, the garage is shown to extend over the berm, and it may be attached to the arena below grade. The nearby box office may also be connected to the arena—again, below grade. Please explain more specifically how the berm relates to the building. Does the lower level of the arena extend into the berm, or is the berm simply banked soil at the base of the building. Are there tunnel connections to the garage and box office?

The nomination states the garage “is not included in this nomination.” In fact, if it is attached to the arena, it needs to be included in the nomination, even as a noncontributing structure. This is also true of the box office and any other adjacent buildings or structures that have not been mentioned. Please show the relationship between the garage and the arena on the site plan or other drawing, supplement the text with a description of the garage and its relationship to the arena, and submit a photograph of the garage. Please do the same for the box office, including a photo that shows the side of the box office closest to the arena.

Boundary and setting. The boundary “follows a line around the base of the berm on which the arena sits,” but the boundary cannot run through the garage and box office. The boundary on this side needs to be reconfigured, but the entire boundary needs reconsideration. Why is the boundary so tightly drawn? It has been given virtually no setting. Although the arena is surrounded by parking lots, it does not appear to be readily accessible to pedestrians, so the parking lots constitute the appropriate setting. As seen on Google Earth, there appears to be a cohesive site, outlined by trees and encompassing parking lots to the east and north, and a tree-lined road to the west. The assortment of buildings and roads to the south, including the garage, makes it impossible to suggest an appropriate southern boundary with the information provided.

Please expand the nominated area to include a setting and encompass the garage and box office, or explain why the arena does not require any setting beyond the berm to convey its significance. As stated above, the boundary cannot run through the garage and box office.

Please contact me if you have any questions about these comments. I can be reached at 202-354-2252 or by email at barbara_wyatt@nps.gov.

Barbara Wyatt, Historian
National Register of Historic Places

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Sports Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Sports Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Post-Modern

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Metal

roof: Metal

other: Glass

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Areas of Significance

ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

1973-1974

Significant Dates

1973-1974

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

C.F. Murphy Associates (Architect)

J.E. Dunn Construction Company (Builder)

HNTB Corporation (Architect – alterations)

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Chicago History Museum; Ryerson/Burnham Library of the Chicago Art Institute; Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Kemper Arena

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MISSOURI, Jackson

DATE RECEIVED: 03/07/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 03/27/14
DATE OF 16th DAY: 04/11/14 DATE OF 45th DAY: 04/23/14

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000160

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: Y
OTHER: N PDIL N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT _____ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Return:
Please see the attached
National Register Evaluation/Return Sheet
for an explanation.

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER Bonhava Wypal DISCIPLINE Historian
TELEPHONE 202-354-2252 DATE 4-23-14

DOCUMENTATION see attsched comments Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

SHPO COMMENTS FOR: Kemper Arena, Kansas City, MO: Draft I

Prepared By: Elizabeth Rosin of Rosin Preservation

Reviewed By: Michelle Diedrich

Date of Review: November 25, 2013

Next Draft Due: The nomination is not yet ready for the MOACHP meeting scheduled on 2/07/2014. If a revised draft meeting SHPO comments is submitted by **December 20, 2013** it may be placed on the February agenda but it is not guaranteed.

General

This nomination is exceptionally well-written and has a lot of useful and pertinent information. However, a clear case for eligibility and exceptional significance is lacking. Staff do not have a clear idea of why or if the building is eligible. The elements of an argument seem to be in the narrative but need to be focused. Including a subsection on each area of eligibility will likely help define the justification for listing. Currently there seems to be too many unexplored directions: architects/designers, an example of a property type (arenas), engineering, etc. What is the strongest course? Architectural significance may be a stretch, especially for Criteria consideration G, due to the modern alterations. Engineering may be the best way to go, since the narrative points to the space frame being a key element to the building. Having a subsection on the space frame would also be beneficial.

Currently the significance and accolades for this property appear to center on its novelty, cleverness, and economical use of materials. While these are certainly praiseworthy points, they do not make a strong case for significance, especially exceptional significance. What was the impact of Kemper Arena design-wise? Was it influential, did it set the stage for arenas down the road? As noted in the nomination it wasn't the first structure built via an exoskeleton/space frame. Was it the first in Missouri or Kansas City? That alone wouldn't make the case for significance entirely but it might help. Include a discussion on how the building meets criteria consideration G in the narrative and the conclusion.

The alterations, for nomination purposes, are pretty severe but we're unable to say at this point if they render the property ineligible for integrity reasons alone. Once a focused argument is in place, we'll be able to assess the impact of the modifications to the arena in relation to the area(s) of significance.

A marked copy will be mailed. Below are general comments on each section. Overall this was a great read for a very interesting property. We look forward to the next draft.

Jacket

List figures and photos in the order they are referenced in the narrative. SHPO staff can re-label photo numbers on the hard copy photos but please send updated TIF images.
This seems to be an example of Post-Modern. For style put "Other: Post-Modern"

Section Seven

This section was well-written and organized.

Section Eight

The nomination is, at times, a little quote-heavy, paraphrase and cite when possible. Some of the information could be streamlined. For instance, since Jahn is still actively working it may be a good idea to summarize this particular subsection and redirect the focus to the design itself rather than the designer. See comments above about including a discussion in the narrative that centers on Criteria Consideration G.

Supplemental

Need current floor plans and a photo map.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena

Other names/site number Kemper Arena (preferred)

Name of related Multiple Property Listing n/a

2. Location

Street & number 1800 Genessee Street

N/A

 not for publication

City or town Kansas City

N/A

 vicinity

State Missouri Code MO County Jackson Code 095 Zip code 64102

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO Date _____

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Sports Facility

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Sports Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

foundation: Concrete

walls: Metal

roof: Metal

other: Glass

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Chicago History Museum; Ryerson/Burnham Library of the Chicago Art Institute; Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library

Areas of Significance

ENGINEERING

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1973-1974

Significant Dates

1973-1974, 1976

1987, 1996

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

C.F. Murphy Associates (Architect)

J. E. Dunn (Builder)

HNTB (Architect - alterations)

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.4

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>39.092492</u>	<u>-94.606516</u>	3	<u>39.091051</u>	<u>-94.605099</u>
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
2	<u>39.092447</u>	<u>-94.605050</u>	4	<u>39.091098</u>	<u>-94.606637</u>
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)
 NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Rosin, Principal

organization Rosin Preservation, LLC date October 2013

street & number 215 W. 18th Street, Suite 150 telephone 816-472-4950

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

e-mail Elizabeth@rosinpreservation.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
 - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

PHOTO LOG

Name of Property: Kemper Arena

City or Vicinity: Kansas City

County: Jackson County State: Missouri

Photographer: Brad Finch, f-stop Photography

Date Photographed: October 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 26: East and south elevations. View to southwest from Beardsley Road.
- 2 of 26: East elevation. View to west.
- 3 of 26: North and west elevations. Soffit vent visible under upper mass. View to southeast.
- 4 of 26: North and west elevations. View to southeast.
- 5 of 26: West elevation. View to east.
- 6 of 26: West and south elevation. View to northeast.
- 7 of 26: Southwest corner at concourse level. View to east.
- 8 of 26: Arena bowl. View to south.
- 9 of 26: Arena bowl. View to north
- 10 of 26: Floor level seating riser cubbies. View to north.
- 11 of 26: Typical private suite.
- 12 of 26: Typical upper level deck with painted mechanical vents.
- 13 of 26: Corner entrance vestibule at main concourse level.
- 14 of 26: Main concourse (typical).
- 15 of 26: Typical concourse concession stand.
- 16 of 26: Intact concourse just west of 1996 atrium. View to south.
- 17 of 26: Access point between concourse and 1996 atrium. View to northeast.
- 18 of 26: 1996 atrium and entrance. View to north.
- 19 of 26: Stairs to seating decks from concourse (typical).
- 20 of 26: Mid-level ramp/bridge to Club Level concourse (typical)
- 21 of 26: Club Level concourse (typical)
- 22 of 26: View of main concourse from Club Level concourse bridge (typical).
- 23 of 26: Entrance to ground level. View to north.
- 24 of 26: Ground level concourse (typical).
- 25 of 26: Locker room (typical).
- 26 of 26: Box office. View to northwest.

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

FIGURE LOG

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

Figure 1: Site Map

Figure 2: Contextual Map

Figure 3: North Elevation and Transverse Section of Kemper Arena, Sheet A-3.1, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

Figure 4: Partial Site Plan for Kemper Arena, Sheet A-1.3 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 10 December 1973.

Figure 5: Concourse Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.4, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, [March 1974].

Figure 6: Upper Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.6, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, 8 March 1974.

Figure 7: Typical Elevations, Sheet A 3.2, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 8: Section at Mid Point, Sheet A 4.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 9: Lower Level Plan, Sheet A 1.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 10: New Club Level, Sheet A 1.3, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 11: Upper Seating Deck, Sheet A 1.4, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 12: Kemper Arena, Late Summer or Fall 1974, View to Northwest.

Figure 13: Kemper Arena Following Roof Collapse, 13 June 1979.

Figure 14: S.R. Crown Hall, Illinois Institute of Technology.

Figure 15: National Gallery, Berlin.

Figure 16: McCormick Place Convention Center, East Building, c. 1971.

Figure 17: Bartle Hall Concenterion Center, Kansas City, c. mid-1970s.

Figure 18: Rendering of Atheltic Facility at Phillips Exeter Academy, 1967.

Figure 19: Pauley Pavilion, UCLA, 1967.

Figure 20: Carolina Coliseum, University of South Carolina, 1968.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Kemper Arena
----- Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
----- County and State
N/A
----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

SUMMARY

The R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena (Kemper Arena) occupies a 6.4 acre site in Kansas City's industrial West Bottoms. The 1974 arena, designed by C.F. Murphy Associates of Chicago, is comprised of two distinct components -- the concrete substructure and the superstructure, composed of the space frame trusses and building skin. The substructure is largely hidden by an earthen berm that rises from the parking lot. The superstructure sits atop of the berm. The arena bowl, seating risers, interior concourses and lower level functional spaces are integral elements of the poured concrete substructure. The superstructure includes three oversized space frame trusses that rise from the berm to cross the mass of the building. Inside the building a secondary system of bar joists and trusses hangs from the superstructure and carries the roof deck. This approach allowed designers to achieve a 324-foot clear span inside the arena. Metal panels mounted on steel mullions clad the exterior. The enclosed mass of the superstructure has upper and lower components. The lower block is an oval lower that reflects the shape and dimension of the arena bowl and its encircling concourse. Resting on the oval is a rectangular upper block with rounded corner. All elements of the superstructure are white giving the arena a cohesive appearance. A glass atrium and parking level entrance were added to the east elevation in 1996. As part of this work, the central space frame was altered to accommodate additional seating on the east and west sides of the arena bowl. The new structure was designed to visually complement the flanking original space frame elements. The significant elements of the building design otherwise remain intact, and the bold exo-skeleton, shaped building mass, and use of color clearly express the arena's Post Modern design.

ELABORATION

SETTING

Kemper Arena sits at the center of a large, flat patch of ground in the southwest corner of Kansas City's West Bottoms industrial district. (Figure 1) The state line, separating Missouri and Kansas, runs just west of the property. To the east steep bluffs present a wooded slope toward the property and the Kansas (Kaw) River, which flows just west of the state line. The river channel makes a deep curve at a point aligned with Kemper Arena. A concrete levee lines the river bank. Open lots covered with gravel and/or grass fill most of the open ground between the levee and the state line. There are a few clusters of industrial buildings in this area south of Kemper Arena.

Kemper Arena is part of the American Royal complex, which includes several buildings and large paved parking lots, roughly bounded by 17th Street on the north, Wyoming Street on the east, and American Royal Drive on the west and south. South of Kemper Arena within the boundary of the complex are several large event halls, including Hale Arena and the Governor's Exhibition Hall. These are associated with the American Royal, a not-for-profit organization that promotes and educates about the area's agricultural heritage. The American Royal stages an annual agricultural and livestock event every fall that includes exhibitions, livestock auctions, horse shows and rodeos. The non-historic American Royal buildings are not part of this nomination. Shared drives run between the American Royal buildings and Kemper Arena with access to both Wyoming Street and American Royal Drive. The large asphalt parking lots north and east of Kemper Arena and south of Hale Arena have roughly 4,000 parking stalls.

Two modern vehicular viaducts cross the Kansas River. One carries 23rd Street over the southern tip of the Kemper Arena-American Royal complex; the other carries I-670/I-70 near 12th Street, a few blocks to

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the north. There are also several historic truss bridges in the vicinity of Kemper Arena. Active rail lines cross the river on truss structures near 25th Street and north of 12th Street; there is also a vacated vehicular truss bridge just north of 23rd Street.

The blocks north of the Kemper Arena-American Royal complex retain vestiges of the commercial/industrial district that historically flourished in the West Bottoms. Just north of 17th Street is the prominent historic Stockyard Exchange Building. Much of the open land lying west of Genessee Street was the historic stockyards. East of Wyoming Street is the very active alignment of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and a small yard of rail spurs. (Photo 1) Kansas City's original railroad station and a roundhouse once stood in this area near 14th Street.

On axis with the south elevation of the arena is a long, narrow, one-story metal-clad garage with four large vehicular bays. The garage has tubular structural elements and barrel-shaped roof clad with corrugated metal. The ends connect directly to Kemper and Hale Arena. Large overhead doors fill the vehicular bays. The garage is not part of the nominated resource.

ARENA

Kemper Arena rests on a grass covered berm that rises approximately 25 feet above the grade of the surrounding parking lots. The berm camouflages the underlying lowest level of the arena structure. A wide concrete sidewalk encircles the top of the berm. Wide ceremonial concrete stairs that access the concourse are aligned with the four corners of the arena and the original building entrances.

The box office is built into the berm on the south side of the arena. (Photo 26) The non-historic box office has an arched metal roof supported on round tubular posts. To its west, stairs rise to the sidewalk encircling the arena. A concrete loading dock intersects the berm west of the box office. (Photo 6)

Two stacked geometric masses form the body of the arena. (Photo 3) The lower oval mass reflects the shape of the arena bowl and its encircling interior concourse. The rectangular shape of the upper mass extends the main oval to accommodate mechanical equipment in the four rounded corners. Panels of seamed metal clad the walls of both forms and the soffits at the corners of the upper mass. There are slit vents and can lights in these soffits below the mechanical equipment. The entrances in the four corners of the arena have white metal slab doors that blend with the skin when shut. (Photo 7) Inside each entrance is a vestibule formed by a parallel bank of glazed doors. (Photo 13)

In 1996 the east elevation of the arena was altered with the addition of an entrance at-grade with the parking lot and a large glass "mask" that covers the central portion of the facade. (Photo 2) The mask has a gently convex shape and a sloped form that extends out slightly from the skin of the building. A metal-clad parapet rises above the glazing and the original roof line to accommodate additional seating at the top of the arena's upper deck. Below the glazing, a bank of entrance doors is set into the berm and framed with concrete. Inside this entrance, patrons rise to the main concourse via escalators and stairs. (Photo 18)

Three huge space frame trusses cross the arena from east to west at regular intervals. (Photo 5) They are the primary structural elements, supporting the roof and walls, as well as an internal system of smaller trusses and bar joists that is visible inside the arena. (Photo 8) The north and south space frames,

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spaced roughly 300 feet on-center, are identical. Each measures 27 feet tall. Tubular members of varying sizes compose the trusses. The top chords are 48 inches in diameter, the bottom chords are 36 inches in diameter, and the web members measure 30 inches in diameter. The space frames rest on tapered concrete pylons, which are the visible tops of concrete footings, integral with the substructure, that extend 60 feet into the ground.

The central space frame was modified in 1996 to accommodate additional seating inside the arena and the new parking level entrance. The vertical element was moved away from the east and west building walls to anchor into concrete footings at-grade with the base of the berm. On the east this is in front of the new parking level entrance. The space frame rises above the original parapet (and added wall section on the east), connecting to the original truss on the roof of the arena. (Figures 7 and 8) The members that compose the new space frame have a similar configuration to those of the original flanking trusses.

Inside Kemper Arena, a wide concrete concourse encircles the arena bowl at midlevel. (Photo 14) The original corner entrances provide direct access to the concourse. Concession stands and restrooms project from and recess into the walls at periodic locations. (Photo 15) Installation of the "mask" on the east elevation removed the metal wall cladding to create a bright, naturally lit, two-level atrium. Within the atrium all of the steel structural elements are exposed and coated with spray-on fire-retardant material. The volume of the historic concourse remains very legible, referenced by headers that extend across the opening between the atrium and the concourse. (Photo 17)

Kemper Arena has seating for roughly 18,000 spectators. Access to the arena bowl occurs at regular intervals along the concourse. Both the upper and lower seating levels are reached from the same entrance points. (Photo 19) Each entrance has a central run of concrete stairs heading down to the lower level seats. This access is flanked by two parallel runs of concrete stairs that rise to the upper level seats. In between these access points, other doors in the concourse wall access the private viewing suites that encircle the arena at the top of the lower bowl.

The minimal historic finishes of the concourse are substantially intact. (Photo 16) Square ground-face concrete tiles clad the concourse walls. The concourse has no ceilings, except in front of the four entrances, which have dropped hard surface ceilings with can lights. In other locations the tiered concrete risers of the upper level seats form the ceiling. Large functional light fixtures hang from the exposed structure.

The arena bowl is a column-free space, 324 feet wide. (Photos 8 and 9) Within the bowl blue plastic seats are attached to concrete risers at both the upper and lower levels. The lower level of seats can terminate in one of several ways, depending upon the event. The aisle can end in stairs that take attendees to the floor; when floor access is not desired metal railings can be installed in front of the bottom row of seats and at the base of the aisles. When needed, additional bleacher seating can be brought out from storage areas under the lower level seats. (Photo 10) The bottom of the upper deck terminates in a concourse that encircles the arena in front of this seating level. A metal pipe railing attaches to the edge of the deck at the front of the concourse. At some locations along this midlevel point there are concrete bridges that cross over the concession concourse to access secondary concession stands and additional restrooms that were added in the mid-1980s. (Photos 20 and 21)

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At the back of the lower level of seats, at-grade with the midlevel concourse, a series of private viewing boxes or suites encircles the arena. (Photo 11) The concourse at the bottom of the upper deck forms the ceiling for the suites. They typically have ground-face concrete block or painted drywall partitions, concrete, carpeted, or parquet wood floors, and dropped ceiling grids, although some suites have custom finishes such as wood paneling or wood parquet floors. A partial-height glass walls forms the front of each suite and perpendicular full-height glass panels separate the suites.

Finishes and fixtures in the arena area are highly functional. The concrete floor allows for the installation of alternate materials as required by specific events – ice for hockey; wood for basketball; and dirt for rodeos and horse shows. Exposed steel trusses form a grid at the ceiling. (Photos 8 and 9) Sound absorbing panels are placed within most of the grid squares. This is an original design detail. Large runs of exposed ductwork encircle the perimeter of the arena at the top of the upper deck. (Photo 12) Once painted a vibrant red, the color of the ductwork has faded over time. A large score board hangs from the center of the arena ceiling. Smaller scoreboards are attached to the front of the upper deck concourse at the four midpoints. Primary banks of lights hang from the ceiling aligned with the long edges of the arena floor. Smaller banks of lights hang in other locations.

Large openings centered in the short north and south ends of the lower seating bowl lead to a lower concourse that accesses administrative offices, locker rooms, and other back-of-house spaces. There is also an original restaurant/bar space on this level near the north entrance. The lower level (concourse, offices, locker rooms, etc.) has painted concrete block walls, concrete, vinyl composition tile or carpeted floors, and dropped ceiling grids with acoustical lay-in tile. Slab metal doors access locker rooms. Offices have some storefront glazing facing the concourse. (Photos 23-25)

INTEGRITY

Despite the changes described below, Kemper Arena remains a highly unique, early post-modern interpretation of the multi-purpose enclosed arena property type, distinguished by its white shell, bold exoskeleton, and column-free interior space. The majority of features that contribute to its significance and that communicate its exceptional significance as a resource less than fifty years old remain intact. It is highly visible in its original location and setting, prominently placed atop an earthen berm in the flat, former stockyards of Kansas City's West Bottoms. Signature aspects of its design, materials, and workmanship, as envisioned by architects C.F. Murphy Associates, are largely unaltered. It is a distinctive and early expression of post-modern design, and a unique example of this aesthetic applied to a sports venue. The oversized exo-skeleton and solid white arena mass are substantially intact although the central of the three space frames was altered in 1996 and a glass curtainwall was added to the east elevation to better define the building entrance (discussed more below). The organization and fabric of the functional interior are unchanged. The experience of the visitor on the concourse or in the seating bowl is unchanged since completion in 1974. The concrete floors, exposed underside of the seating tiers, and ground-face concrete block walls define the concourses, along which a series of concession stands and restrooms are arrayed. Most importantly, the arena bowl remains a column-free space that is highly adaptable to a variety of events. The grid of the secondary structural trusses is visible at the ceiling and the large scoreboard hangs over the center of the floor. The twenty-five private suites that ring the mid-level of the bowl, an innovative feature in 1974, are also intact. Fixtures and some finishes have been updated in bathrooms, locker rooms, and offices, but these are not character-defining and do not impact the integrity of the arena. Kemper Arena was an immediate icon of the Kansas City built environment

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when it opened in 1974 and remains such today. The resource communicates feelings about and associations with its period of construction and the early years of Post Modern design that re-energized Modernism with the addition of shape and color to building designs.

Kemper Arena experienced the following episodes of alteration since 1974.

1976 – Roof Repair

In May 1976 after an exceptionally heavy spring storm, a section of the arena roof collapsed. (Figure 13) Forensic investigation pointed to weakened bolts between the secondary trusses and hangers as the cause of source of the failure. Accordingly, minor adjustments were made to the entire roof structure as part of the repair. Hangers were welded rather than bolted to the trusses; and supplemental steel bars were sistered to the hangers with welds to increase rigidity and strength. The roof surface was also modified to slope outward toward the edges of the building rather than inward toward the center of the building. The repairs also specified a different type of steel. None of these repairs is evident to the casual observer and they do not impact the significance of the building's design. The space frame trusses and building walls were undamaged by the collapse and were not altered during the course of repairs.

1987 – Concourse Amenity Upgrades

In the mid-1980s the city approved bonds to create a Club Level concourse under the eaves at the perimeter of the building to provide additional women's restrooms and concession stands. These locations are accessed via concrete bridges at the base of the upper level deck in the four corners of the arena. The bridges cross the main concourse to the Club Level, which is stacked above the built-out spaces (concession stands and restrooms) on the main concourse. The volume of the concourse remains unobstructed but for the bridges themselves. (Photos 20-22) This alteration is highly unobtrusive and does not impact the qualities that render the building historically significant.

1996 – Additional Seating and East Entrance Modifications

A need for additional seating capacity spurred alterations to the arena in 1996. Roughly 1500 seats were added in a block above the upper deck on the east side of the bowl. (Figure 11) The block rises above the original roof line and was clad on the exterior with white metal panels matching those of the main building walls. (Figure 7) A two story atrium clad with a glass curtain wall was installed below the seating block with a new entrance in the base of the berm at parking level. Creation of the atrium required removing the building skin under the curtain wall. Expansion of the building mass required alterations to the central space frame. New vertical piers were anchored east and west of the berm, and rise over the height of the new seating block (the designers anticipated a similar, future addition of seating on the west side of the bowl), where it anchors to the original space frame, which remains intact across the roof of the arena. (Figure 8) The design mimics the configuration of the original webs, as seen in the flanking piers.

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SUMMARY

The Crosby Kemper Memorial Arena (Kemper Arena) at 1800 Genessee in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri is locally significant under National Register Criterion C for the areas of ENGINEERING and ARCHITECTURE. It also meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration G for buildings that are less than 50 years old. The period of significance is 1973-74, the period of construction. Kemper Arena is an early Post-Modern design that adapted construction technology in a novel way, reinterpreting the arena property type as a bold, yet graceful sculpture. As in all public projects, the efficient use of time and money were critical to the success of this project. The approach developed by designers C.F. Murphy Associates created the arena as three distinct components – the concrete substructure, the steel space frame superstructure, and the metal building skin. The massive space frame exo-skeleton was economical and efficient to build and, most importantly, achieved the 324-foot clear span in the arena bowl requested by the client. The completed arena received multiple awards, including a 1976 Honor Award from the American Institute of Architects. Multiple national and international architecture and engineering publications lauded the innovative design. While it was not the first arena to use space frame technology, nor the first large building with an exo-skeleton, the design team applied the technology in a way that completely broke with convention. Kemper Arena remains a signature building in the canon of work by C.F. Murphy Associates and is particularly notable as the first project executed under the direction of lead designer Helmut Jahn.

ELABORATION

KEMPER ARENA IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE

When architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (Mies) arrived in Chicago in the late 1930s to head the architecture program at the Illinois Institute for Technology (IIT), he introduced International Style Modern architecture to a new audience. His influence on the generation of architects who practiced in the decades following World War II cannot be underestimated. Sleek glass Miesian boxes became synonymous with the new office buildings of the 1950s and 1960s. The Miesian formula demanded a steel or concrete frame, curtain wall glazing, supreme attention to detail, and high-quality materials and finishes but no extraneous ornament. This approach was a dramatic shift from the historically-rooted designs of the pre-war years, even the sleek hardness of the geometric Art Deco and Streamlined Moderne. Yet, there was a regal quality to the firm lines and hard materials of Miesian buildings.¹ Mies imbued buildings with “polish and daring” combining classical symmetry and proportions with an inclination toward abstract representations of volume and mass. Lacking historical roots, these buildings were free from contextual associations.² Under Mies’ tutelage, the IIT program graduated numerous architects who left a lasting imprint on the built environment of post-war America, especially in Chicago which became a laboratory for his sparse brand of Modern design.

After Mies died in 1969, the era of strict Modernism came to an end. A new generation of architects was using Miesian rationalism as the starting point for problem solving rather than the end point. In 1976, the same year that the American Institute of Architects honored the design of Kemper Arena, the AIA awards jury noted that “architecture has reached a point of divergence. The old formulas are no longer valid....

¹ Ross Miller, “Chicago Architecture after Mies,” *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 6, no. 2 (Winter 1979), 272.

² Ross Miller, 273.

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The glass box has been broken.... We are in a searching period; a questioning of the rules; purposeful breaking from convention."³ Designers in this post-modern period explored new ways to combine strong structure and geometric forms.⁴ Architects turned things upside down, designing buildings with solid walls and clear roofs or, in the case of Kemper Arena, with the structure on the outside rather than on the inside.

A 1977 article in *Architectura* described the previous decade as "a liberating time period [in architecture], where everybody and everything are being questioned. The anti-intellectualism of many established architectural firms is being challenged and replaced by a new pluralism marked by openness and debate."⁵ The development of tubular steel frames (space frames) to create vast interior spaces and dramatically tall buildings was evidence of this creativity. The authors cited the muscular exoskeleton of Kemper Arena as an example of this trend, along with the structural systems of the Sears Tower, the Chicago Civic Center and the John Hancock Tower.⁶ Many individual designers associated with notable Modernist firms, like C.F. Murphy & Associates and Skidmore Owings and Merrill, fell into the post-modern camp, as did architects Bertrand Goldberg, Walter Netsch, Harry Weese, I.M. Pei and others.

The young architect Helmut Jahn, named Director of Architecture and Design at C.F. Murphy Associates in 1973, embraced post-modernism. He had come to Chicago in 1966 to study at IIT, but soon grew disenchanted with the rigid adherence to the Miesian formula. While he had absorbed the lessons of Modernism, the designs produced under his lead experimented with shapes and curves, tiers and open spaces, colors and reflection.⁷ For Jahn the key to any design lay in solving the structural questions. The structural solution then drove building form and the organization of interior spaces. Context was generally irrelevant. Buildings were viewed as sculpture – free-standing and three-dimensional. Building skin was important in Jahn's lexicon; but applied ornament did not exist. Rather Jahn relied on form, shape, and color to create the sleek, high-tech look he sought. Even on the interior, structure and mechanical systems became decoration rather than purely functional elements.⁸ Kemper Arena was Jahn's first project as lead designer and it proved an ideal foil for this type experimentation. The sleek exterior and functional interior were a good fit for the functional sports arena, and the flat open site provided an ideal setting for a bold sculptural form.

SIGNIFICANCE OF KEMPER ARENA STRUCTURAL DESIGN

Kemper Arena was the first building designed by C.F. Murphy Associates under the direction of designer Helmut Jahn. Jahn, who would become a leader in the Post-Modern movement, reimagined the enclosed multi-purpose arena by placing the bold, over-sized structural trusses on the outside of the building. This left the primary mass of the arena unencumbered to serve its intended function, while visually enhancing the brawn of the design. The project showcased Jahn's creative instincts, yielding a design that is at once functional, adventurous, and aesthetically pleasing.⁹ Colorful seating and mechanical ducts enlivened the functional interior, while the exterior was uniformly white. Architectural Historian George Ehrlich described

³ "Honor Awards: Six New Buildings, Four Recyclings and Mies," *American Institute of Architects Journal*, April 1976, Vol. 65, No. 4, 37.

⁴ Peter C. Pran, "Diversity of Design Among Chicago Architects Today," *Architectura*, Vol. 23, December 1977, 440.

⁵ Pran, 436.

⁶ Pran, 436.

⁷ "Jahn's Designs Shatter the Box," *Engineering News-Record*, 8 October 1981, 26. *Costruzioni*, 438.

⁸ Nory Miller, "C.F. Murphy Associates," *A & U: Architecture & Urbanism*, July 1978, No. 94, 29.

⁹ Ross Miller, 287.

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the building as, "a bold shape without ornament, where cast shadows form much of the surface interest. Textures are those of the structural materials."¹⁰ Not only did the design approach achieve the column-free bowl, but by placing the structure outside the building there was less interior space to be conditioned, sided, and finished, providing savings in both construction and operations.¹¹

While Kemper Arena is a distinctly Post Modern building, like much of Jahn's work, it has roots in formal Modernism. In an *AIA Journal* article, architecture critic Stanley Abercrombie identified Kemper Arena as an excellent example of Jahn's inclination to build upon and reinterpret the Modernist "dogma" of Mies.¹² S.R. Crown Hall, designed by Mies for the IIT campus in 1956, was one clear source of inspiration. (Figure 14) The one story building has an exo-skeleton formed by slender steel girders that rise up and over the mass, supporting the roof and glass curtainwalls. The structural members of Crown Hall are very delicate and tight to the structure, harmonizing with the mass and materials of the building. Reacting against the delicacy and balance of Crown Hall, the design for Kemper Arena exaggerates the tension between the structure and the building, using robust open space frame trusses to contrast with the solid geometric enclosed mass. Yet by coloring both structure and cladding white, Jahn brought considerable balance to the exaggerated design elements. Writer Nory Miller notes in her monograph on Jahn, "Mies' logic and clarity is reinterpreted [at Kemper Arena] in terms of muscular sensuality; his exacting elegance traded in for powerful expression."¹³

The Athletics Building at Phillips Exeter Academy (1968, Exeter, New Hampshire) is also a direct descendent of Crown Hall. (Figure 18) Architects Kallman & McKinnell and structural engineers Le Messurier Associates suspended the building roof from delicate space frame trusses constructed of corrosion-resistant high-strength steel pipe. A series of fifty-foot tall L-shaped trusses rise from the ground and cross the roof, where they attach to a 62-foot tall concrete spine that runs down the center of the building. By placing these structural elements outside the building walls, the design team was able to capture an interior clear span of 120 feet and offer the owner savings in cost and operations.¹⁴ The larger building requires the space frame to achieve the column-free clear spans, rather than the simple girder ribs used by Mies. Where Crown Hall employed the classic Mies formula of steel structure and glass curtainwalls to create a light mass, the heavy concrete mass of the Phillips Exeter building is a Brutalist expression of Modernism.¹⁵ While it shares roots with Kemper Arena in Mies' Crown Hall, the two designs are executed with highly different emphases. At Phillips Exeter the focus is on building mass, while the design of Kemper highlights the structure.

By the mid-1970s C.F. Murphy Associates was well-known for column-free solutions to long-span situations. McCormick Place, the Chicago convention center, heavily influenced the design of Kemper Arena. (Figure 16) This was the project that brought Helmut Jahn and his mentor, Gene Summers, to C.F. Murphy in 1967. McCormick Place, was a devotedly Miesian building, an extrapolation of the National

¹⁰ George Ehrlich, *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990*, Revised and Enlarged Edition. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1992, 164.

¹¹ John A. Dvorak, "Hernandez Wants Local Panel to Monitor Kemper Rebuilding," *Kansas City Times*, 9 June 1979, microfilm, Kansas City Public Library.

¹² Stanley Abercrombie, "Changing Skins of Helmut Jahn," *AIA Journal*, Vol. 70, October 1981, 63

¹³ Nory Miller, *Helmut Jahn* (New York: Rizzoli, 1986), 7.

¹⁴ "Triangle Trusses Frame Complex," *Modern Steel Construction*, First Quarter 1969, 7.

¹⁵ G.M. Kallman and N.M. McKinnell, "Movement Systems as Generators of Built Form," *Architectural Record*, November 1975, 105-109.

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Gallery in Berlin designed by Mies and Gene Summers that opened in 1968. (Figure 15) The steel structure of McCormick Place, exposed on the exterior and interior, and the wide overhanging eaves contrasted with the glazed walls to give the enormous mass an unexpected lightness.¹⁶ The key design question at McCormick Place, as at Kemper, was how to create large column-free spaces in the exhibit hall. Summers and Jahn devised a solution using a space frame structure that interrupted the 300,000 square foot exhibition space with only eight intermittent columns.¹⁷ Summers and Jahn next applied the lessons from McCormick Place to the Bartle Hall convention center in Kansas City (design begun in 1968; opened 1976). Working with local architects Seligson Associates, Horner & Blessing, and Howard, Needles Tammen & Bergendoff (HNTB), the designers used oversized space frame trusses to create a 200,000 square foot column-free exhibit hall.¹⁸ (Figure 17) Again the structure is exposed inside the building. Dark metal panels clad the exterior accented with oversized triangular shapes that reflect the form of the trusses. At Kemper Arena Jahn flipped the design inside out, placing the space frame outside the building mass to create a design that is both robust and elegant. While the structure is exposed inside McCormick Place and Bartle Hall, it is neither highlighted nor extrapolated to the extent as at Kemper Arena.¹⁹

Kemper Arena as an Example of the Sports Arena Property Type

Indoor sports venues became popular early in the twentieth century as the new game of basketball quickly gained popularity. At the same time refrigeration technology enabled the production of indoor ice sheets, elevating ice hockey to an indoor spectacle.

After World War II, there was a sharp rise in the number of multi-purpose venues constructed nationwide. The existing facilities were aging, and communities without a large venue sought to add one. These new arenas followed the prototype established millennia earlier by the Roman Coliseum. An oval shaped athletic floor was surrounded by tiered seating. Offices, locker rooms, and other functional spaces were housed on a lower level of the arena. A typical venue from this period sat 10,000 – 20,000 spectators.²⁰

Whereas the original Roman model was open air, construction technologies developed during the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries were adapted to enclose modern arenas. Traditional arched and pitched roofs evolved into dome and drum shaped roofs and finally flat truss and space frame structures. As occurred with other building types, traditional building materials like brick and stone clad the exterior of early arenas. Later concrete, glass and metal became dominant.²¹ While each arena design was unique, there were commonalities, particularly in volume. Most were a regular mass, be it rectangular, round or oval, with symmetrical expression of the facades.²²

A constant issue in arena design was the placement of structural posts that supported the roof. Inevitably there were seats with an obstructed view. Designers experimented with different truss configurations in an

¹⁶ Ross Miller, 286.

¹⁷ Alice Sinkevitch, ed., *AIA Guide to Chicago*, (Orlando: Harcourt Books, 2004), 378-379

¹⁸ Ehrlich, 162.

¹⁹ "Grand Structures, C.F. Murphy Associates, Architects," *Techniques et Architecture*, No. 309, May 1976, 88-91.

²⁰ Joseph R. Warlick, Jr, "A View from the Bleachers," *Modern Steel Construction*, vol. XI, No. 3, Third Quarter 1971, 3-5.

²¹ William Bradford Keller, "Architecture for Community and Spectacle: The Roofed Arena in North America, 1853-1968," PhD diss., University of Delaware, 2007, 279.

²² Keller, 281.

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effort to reduce the number of offending members, thereby maximizing the clear space within the arena. Development of the space frame, a three dimensional truss based on a pyramidal module, offered the enhanced strength needed for the larger clear span designs. By utilizing tubular members, the space frame provided enhanced strength while using less steel, making it a cost effective option. On the other hand, it was a complex structural system that required complicated and exacting calculations to execute effectively. Because each space frame was composed of a unique arrangement of members, the other key to success was developing an appropriate yet simple joint connection where multiple members, often of differing sizes, met. Alexander Graham Bell experimented with space frames in the early 1900s, although the best known early adopter was Buckminster Fuller, who utilized space frames to create his signature geodesic structures in the 1950s.²³ Computers provided the accurate, as well as speedy, calculations necessary to make the space frame a viable option. By the mid-1960s, with the advent of the computer age, space frame technology made steady inroads into contemporary architecture, particularly for buildings like arenas or convention halls where long spans were desired.²⁴

Two arenas illustrate the typical adaptation of the space frame to large span arena projects. When designing the Edwin W. Pauley Pavilion (1967) on the campus of UCLA, architect Welton Beckett recounted that his team studied traditional structural systems (conventional truss, dome, and catenary systems) before settling on the space frame as the best solution for the project. Only the space frame was able to meet the goals of providing a 300-foot by 400-foot clear span, creating visual interest, and ensuring economy of construction. The Welton Beckett team designed a giant three-dimensional grid composed of 108 four-sided steel pyramids that covered the building footprint. The framing remained completely exposed inside the arena, and one bay on the exterior was left exposed at the building perimeter where it overhangs the structural columns.²⁵ (Figure 19) The Coliseum erected at the University of South Carolina the following year employed the space frame in the same way. A roof composed of space frame trusses sat atop 44 exterior columns, providing a clear span of 322 feet inside the building and cantilevers of almost seventeen feet on the outside.²⁶ (Figure 20) In both of these examples the space frame modules were conglomerated in a manner not unlike traditional trusses to form a shell of structure over the building. The advantage of the space frame was the additional strength, which allowed greater clear span distances.

At Kemper Arena C.F. Murphy Associates applied the forms and technology of these earlier examples in unprecedented ways. The designers drastically reduced the number of space frame modules while substantially enlarging the size of each. They placed the entire primary structure outside the enclosed arena mass as a sculptural expression. It was a design that Paul Gapp, architecture critic for the *Chicago Tribune* appreciated "...after all of the puffy sports domes which have popped up throughout the country."²⁷

Other arenas built after Kemper also utilized space frame structures. The Hartford Civic Center and Atlanta's Omni Coliseum, both opened in 1975 are notable examples, but these buildings adopted a more-

²³ "Space Frame," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_frame, accessed 30 October 2013.

²⁴ Welton Beckett, FAIA, "UCLA's Steel Space Frame: Beauty on a Budget," *Modern Steel Construction*, Vol. VII, No. 2, Second Quarter 1967, 4-5.

²⁵ Welton Beckett, 4-5.

²⁶ Russell Maxey, "Giant Space Frame Tops Carolina Coliseum," *Modern Steel Construction*, Vol. VII, No.2, Second Quarter 1968, 3-5.

²⁷ Quoted in David L. Fleener, "Touched By Grace", *Kansas City Star*, 3 October 1975, microfilm, Kansas City Public Library.

Missouri Department of Natural Resources File Transfer Protocol (FTP) Instructions

DNR's e-mail servers cannot handle large files. To transfer larger files, use the simple FTP procedures below.

For some, your browser may not have **Folder View enabled**, to do that:

- Open your **Internet Explorer** (if not already open)
- Click on **Tools**
- **Internet Options**
- Click the **Advanced tab**
- Scroll down until you get to the **Browsing section**
- Click on the checkbox by **Enable FTP folder view** (outside of Internet Explorer)
- Choose **OK** and **close Internet Explorer**.
- **Re-open Internet Explorer** and follow the instructions given here.

For some, your Internet Explorer may not be set to "**Use Passive FTP** (for firewall and DSL modem compatibility)." To do that:

- Open your **Internet Explorer** (if not already open)
- Click on **Tools**
- **Internet Options**
- Click the **Advanced tab**
- Scroll down to **Use Passive FTP** (for firewall and DSL modem compatibility and click on the checkbox.
- Choose **OK** and **close Internet Explorer**.
- **Re-open Internet Explorer** and follow the instructions given here.

Click on the link below or copy and paste into your browser:

<ftp://dnrguest:pH02-lemon@www.dnr.mo.gov>

This should open a window of the "Incoming" and "Outgoing" folders.

If the system prompts you for a Username and Password, these are embedded in the address above, but if the system asks you for them, enter:

Username: **dnrguest**

Password: **pH02-lemon** (that's a zero)

Once logged in you can copy and paste files just like in Windows Explorer file manager. There is no limit on size. If using Internet Explorer 7.0 or 8.0, you should choose Page then Open FTP site in Windows Explorer. Then post the file in a folder inside the Incoming folder.

Sending Files to DNR

To send DNR a file, find the file on your computer, 'copy', navigate to the Incoming folder on the FTP window, (or a sub-folder if one has been set up by the recipient), and Paste the file. Or drag and drop it there.

- Browsing
 - Automatically check for Internet Explorer updates
 - Automatically recover from page layout errors with Con
 - Close unused folders in History and Favorites*
 - Disable script debugging (Internet Explorer)
 - Disable script debugging (Other)
 - Display a notification about every script error
 - Display Accelerator button on selection
 - Enable automatic crash recovery*
 - Enable FTP folder view (outside of Internet Explorer)

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Figure 18: Rendering of Athletic Facility at Phillips Exeter Academy, 1967 (Source: Modern Steel)

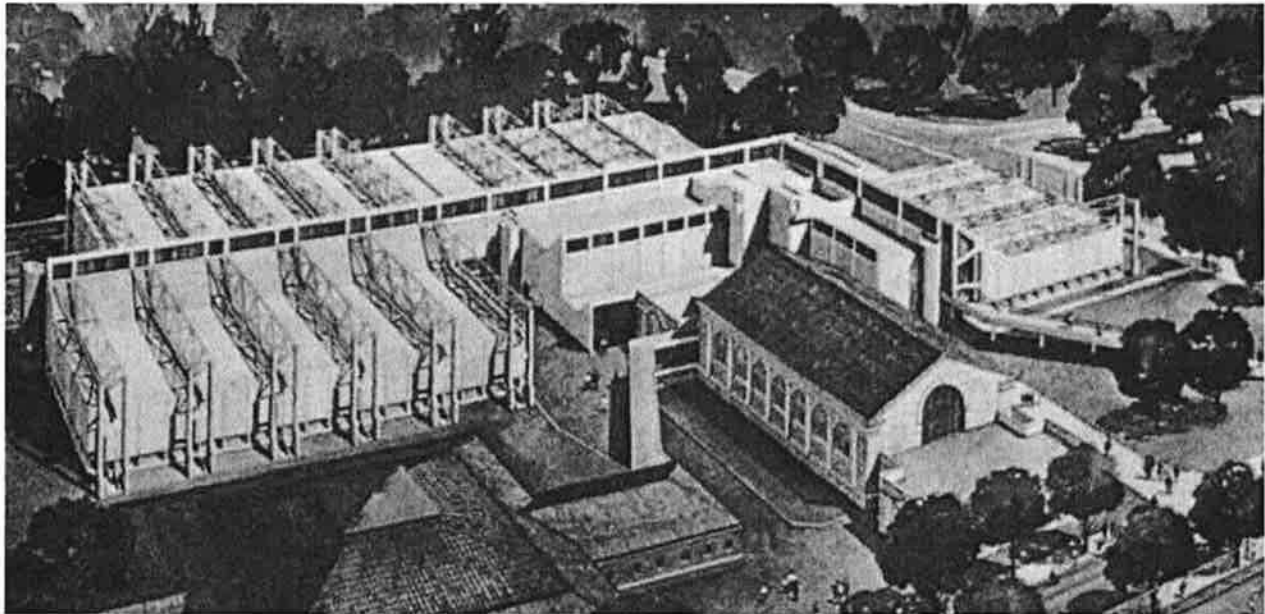


Figure 19: Pauley Pavilion, UCLA (Source: Modern Steel)



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Figure 20: Carolina Coliseum, University of South Carolina (Source: Modern Steel)



Florida case
~~didn't~~ #
Florida city transformed

- Where thought was a flop
- didn't stop white flight

Dr. Virginia Wiley
301-845-6336

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traditional application of the technology, similar to the UCLA and University of South Carolina facilities. This may have reflected local design preferences or a response to specific design questions. Regardless, Kemper Arena remains unique in its bold use of the space frame exo-skeleton.

A 1976 article in *Domus* gave architects Helmut Jahn and James Goettsch (C.F. Murphy Partner-in-Charge of the Kemper Arena project) an opportunity to reflect on the Kemper Arena design. Writing for the team, Jahn noted that the "mechanistic direction... [developed from a] logical decision making process to meet the programmatic needs of the project." Once the direction was determined, "we, of course, took pleasure in exploiting it visually." The design-build process brought pragmatism to the project, resulting in a building that is a "statement [of] how the requirements of planning, engineering and technology directly influence architectural form." They noted that the building is really two distinct structures – the concrete substructure and the steel superstructure. This allowed the architects to develop each section to meet its own design parameter, which ultimately sped up the construction process.²⁸ Overall, they concluded, "we see the building as an exploration of an architecture, which shows, what makes a building work and how to use and further develop technology and create a human environment."

CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF KEMPER ARENA

Kemper Arena opened on 18 October 1974 just eighteen months after construction began. The innovative building was hard for some to quantify. A sports reporter noted that while local spectators enjoyed the interior spaces they were a bit confused by the sculptural exterior. This was not an issue for the design community, who were quick to recognize the importance of the unique design. It was called "light, economic and elegant,"²⁹ "lively" and "hard-working,"³⁰ and "...immensely powerful and spectacular, but touched by grace."³¹

Kemper Arena was soon reaping accolades. In the fall of 1975 the American Institute of Steel Construction and the Chicago chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) bestowed design awards to the project.³² The AIA jury noted how the "powerful use of structure and careful detailing generate a spectacular solution for a long-span building; [while] the interior utilizes an interesting and appropriate industrial language."³³ Six months later the AIA national organization bestowed one of six Honor Awards for new design to Kemper Arena. The jury heralded the design for its "strength, clarity and integrity."³⁴ The jury statement continued, "It is an expression of technology necessary to serve function. Giant trusses, carefully scaled and detailed, combine with subtly articulated metal siding to make an elegant architectural statement rarely found in this building type." The design was "an exploitation of technology without the sacrifice of function."³⁵ In addition to the Honor Award, Kemper Arena received the AIA's Bartlett Award for eliminating barriers to accessibility.³⁶

²⁸ "Arena, A Kansas City," *Domus*, No. 557, April 1976, 22-23.

²⁹ Philli Wearne, *Collapse: When Buildings Fall Down*, (New York: T Books, 2000), 18.

³⁰ "R.Crosby Kemper Jr. [sic] Memorial Arena," *Architectural Record*, Vol. 159, No. 3, March 1976, 109.

³¹ Quoted in Fleener.

³² "1975 Awards of Architectural Excellence," *Modern Steel Construction*, Vol. XV, No. 4, Fourth Quarter 1975, 14.

³³ Quoted Fleener.

³⁴ "Crosby Kemper Arena, Kansas City, Mo.," *AIA Journal*, April 1976, Vol. 65, No. 4, 49.

³⁵ "Arena Design Honored," *Kansas City Star*, 11 April 1976, microfilm, Kansas City Public Library.

³⁶ "Honor Awards...", 37.

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Articles about Kemper Arena appeared in national and international industry publications, including *Building Design & Construction*, *Engineering News Record*, *Architecture & Urbanism*, and *Architectural Record*. All showcased Kemper Arena as an excellent, visually striking design that was built efficiently and economically. All mentioned the innovative and highly unusual placement of the space frame structure outside the building mass. *Architectural Record* remarked on the "structural elegance" of the design that was "thought-out both in its conception and its detail."³⁷ The Italian journal *Costruzioni* heralded Kemper Arena as "one of the most brilliantly conceived hall spaces recently built in America...."³⁸ While most of the design community embraced the forward thinking concept, the British journal *Architectural Review* was a bit more cautious. The authors credited C.F. Murphy Associates for their "extensive application of industrialised [sic] building methods," which allowed for an efficient construction process and economical plan.³⁹ But, the article concluded with a backhanded compliment, "Unfashionable as the large and the monumental may be, the Crosby Kemper Arena is an honourable [sic] successor to the great engineering works of the nineteenth century."

Reflecting on the design thirty years after the arena opened, architect Jahn observed that it had aged well compared to other arenas, many of which he likened to "boxes without architectural merit." By comparison, Kemper Arena "has... a civic spirit... a distinctive and recognizable look that becomes an image for the city."⁴⁰

C.F. MURPHY & ASSOCIATES

C.F. Murphy Associates, designers of Kemper Arena, began as Naess and Murphy, a partnership between Sigurd E. Naess and Charles Murphy. After studying at Northwestern University, Murphy had secured a position as stenographer in the offices of D.H. Burnham & Company in 1911. He later took night classes in architecture and rose to become an assistant to Principal Ernest Graham under the successor firm Graham, Anderson, Probst and White. Following Graham's death in 1937, Murphy joined colleagues Alfred Shaw and Sigurd Naess in partnership as Shaw, Naess and Murphy. The firm continued as Naess and Murphy after Shaw left and eventually as C.F. Murphy Associates following Naess' retirement.⁴¹

Charles Murphy had grown up in the same south side Chicago neighborhood as long-time Chicago mayor Richard J. Daley, Sr. and capitalized on that relationship to secure significant civic commissions for the firm.⁴² The first project Naess and Murphy completed for the City was a filtration plant being contested in court by local citizens. Daley was pleased when the architects' solution won neighborhood support, and more commissions followed, although many projects were awarded jointly to multiple firms according to Chicago's infamous patronage system.⁴³ The most significant private commission produced by Naess and Murphy was the 1955 Prudential Building, the first office tower erected in Chicago since the 1930s.

³⁷ "R.Crosby Kemper Jr. [sic] Memorial Arena," 109.

³⁸ *Costruzioni*, 441.

³⁹ "Kansas Arena," *Architectural Review*, Vol. 160, No. 953, July 1976, 2.

⁴⁰ Randy Covitz, "A Storied History Amid Hoopla," *Kansas City Star*, 13 March 2005, Vertical File, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, A8.

⁴¹ Kenan Heise, "Charles F. Murphy, Chicago Architect," *Chicago Tribune*, 24 May 1985, http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1985-05-24/news/8502020167_1_charles-f-murphy-chicago-architecture-mr-murphy accessed 28 October 2013.

⁴² Nory Miller, "C.F. Murphy Associates," 27.

⁴³ Nory Miller, *Helmut Jahn*, 15.

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While not a designer, Murphy's background in business and real estate transactions earned the office much clout. Mr. Murphy's obituary noted that Prudential selected the firm not only for its "singular tradition ... in Chicago architecture but also because of the firm's vast experience in complicated air-rights developments," including the Merchandise Mart, Union Station and the Chicago Post Office.⁴⁴

With a staff of designers trained directly by Mies, a reputation for designing "tough, muscular buildings," and a depth of services that included engineering and construction management divisions, C.F. Murphy Associates rivaled Skidmore Owings and Merrill (SOM). By many accounts these were the two leading design firms of the Modern era. In the 1960s C.F. Murphy Associates was well known for its focus on structure as the primary component of building form. Innovative designs for several notable projects secured this status.⁴⁵ Among these were the Richard J. Daley Center (1965) and McCormick Place (1967), both of which devised unique structural solutions to long-span issues.⁴⁶ While the firm mostly worked locally, it supported a staff of nearly 450.⁴⁷

In 1967 Charles Murphy hired architect Gene Summers to lead the McCormick Place project. Summers had received his master's degree from IIT in 1951 and subsequently worked in the office of Mies van der Rohe, where he was project architect for the Seagram's Building in New York City (1958) and the National Gallery in Berlin (1968), among others.⁴⁸ This latter building became the model for the much larger McCormick Place. It was through McCormick Place that Summers met Arthur Wirtz, owner of the Chicago Blackhawks. Knowing that an NHL expansion team was planned for Kansas City, Wirtz recommended Summers and C.F. Murphy Associates for the Kemper Arena project.⁴⁹

Summers brought with him to C.F. Murphy Associates his young assistant Helmut Jahn. Born in Germany in 1940, Helmut Jahn came to Chicago in 1966 to begin graduate studies in architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). By this time Mies had retired, yet the IIT architecture program continued to teach Miesian architecture as gospel. Students designed endless variations of Mies' glass box prototype. Jahn quickly grew frustrated. He left school and joined the office of Gene Summers, becoming Summers' first hire.⁵⁰ Unlike many of Mies' students, Summers understood how to apply Modernist principles without recreating Miesian designs detail for detail. This understanding passed to Jahn, who embraced the freedom to develop unique solutions to building programs and sites.⁵¹ When Summers joined C.F. Murphy Associates, Jahn went with him.

Gene Summers left C.F. Murphy Associates in 1973 amid a period of turbulence as the firm grappled with multiple external forces. A national economic recession and worldwide oil crisis were sharply curtailing new development. It was also the start of post-Daley Chicago, and C.F. Murphy Associates had long

⁴⁴ Heise.

⁴⁵ Helmut Jahn, "New Directions and New Designs at C.F. Murphy Associates," *Architectural Record*, July 1979, 99.

⁴⁶ Cheryl Kent, "AIA Honors the Futuristic Vision and High Energy of Murphy/Jahn," *Architectural Record*, Vol. 193, Issue 5, December 2005, 156.

⁴⁷ Nory Miller, *Helmut Jahn*, 15.

⁴⁸ "Gene Summers (architect)", [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gene_Summers_\(architect\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gene_Summers_(architect)) accessed 28 October 2013.

⁴⁹ "Oral History of Carter Manny," Interview by Franz Schulze, Chicago Architects Oral History Project, Ernst R. Graham Study Center for Architectural Drawings, Department of Architecture, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1995, 323.

⁵⁰ "Oral History of Carter Manny", 339.

⁵¹ Ross Miller, 286.

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benefited from the former-mayor's patronage.⁵² C.F. Murphy closed regional offices and sold the civil engineering division. Staff size dwindled as the firm struggled to stay afloat. When Charles Murphy named Helmut Jahn to replace Summers as Director of Planning and Design it consolidated the firm's focus. Jahn led the firm into a new era as designers of speculative projects, both domestic and international.⁵³

During the 1970s and 1980s, with Jahn leading the design group, C.F. Murphy Associates focused on melding the Modern ethos of Mies with new technologies and materials. Buildings such as the Rust-Oleum Headquarters (1978) and the Xerox Center (1980) moved the firm beyond "doctrinaire Modernism to a meaningful contemporary architecture."⁵⁴ The firm's design for the St. Mary's Athletic Facility in South Bend, Indiana (1977) introduced color and curved acrylic glazing to the program.⁵⁵ In a 1981 interview, Jahn expressed his design philosophy, stating "elements that break the norm – romance, fantasy, surprise – are what put architecture beyond engineering. After all, a building is a work of art."⁵⁶ The sculptural form of Kemper Arena clearly expresses that philosophy. Developers interested in building architecturally distinctive buildings soon sought out Jahn for their projects.⁵⁷ To take advantage of the designer's rising star, C.F. Murphy Associates was renamed Murphy/Jahn in 1980. Jahn purchased full ownership in 1982, enabling him to mold the talents of the firm to achieve his bold architectural visions.

By the late 1970s Jahn was captivated by the design possibilities inherent high-rise office buildings, the traditional urban symbols of excellence and power. The ideological rigidity of the glass and steel curtainwall skyscraper was loosening, and these materials were providing new opportunities through shape and/or color. Jahn relished applying details that fit the glitz of the era's pop culture.⁵⁸ His earliest high-rise buildings (Chicago Board of Trade Addition; One South Wacker, Chicago; Humana Project, Louisville, Kentucky; and Bank of the Southwest Tower, Houston, all completed in 1982) joined skyscrapers by Philip Johnson, Michael Graves and Cesar Pelli as the first of the post-modern era.⁵⁹ High rise buildings offered an inherently functional form that gave the architect a chance to play with visual and symbolic elements. As Jahn described in a 1985 newspaper article, "There is something arbitrary about making a tall building. ...the architect controls very little, perhaps the shape, the skin of the building, the lobby, the elevator cabs." While steel and glass were common threads, Jahn experimented with shape and color to make buildings distinct from both predecessors and contemporaries. These projects by Murphy/Jahn were described as both nostalgic and futuristic. Renderings often illustrated nighttime visions that recalled the glamour of the 1930s.⁶⁰ Other signature buildings designed by Murphy/Jahn during the 1980s include the State of Illinois Center (now James R. Thompson Center, 1985) and the NorthWestern Atrium Center (now CitiGroup Center, 1987), and the United Airlines Terminal at O'Hare Airport (1988) all in Chicago.⁶¹ Eventually, developers from overseas came calling. By the late-1980s,

⁵² Nory Miller, *Helmut Jahn*, 7.

⁵³ Nory Miller, *Helmut Jahn*, 7.

⁵⁴ Kent, 156.

⁵⁵ Ross Miller, 287.

⁵⁶ Jahn's Designs Shatter the Box," 26.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ "Helmut Jahn: Four Towers, 1978-1982," *Architectural Design Profile*, Vol 53, No. 7/8, 1983, 84.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ "An Architect Who Fills Tall Orders," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 4 September 1985, E1.

⁶¹ Catherine Ingraham, "On Visibility, Travel and Transformation: The Questions of the NorthWestern Atrium," *Inland Architect*, May 1988, 66.

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especially after the U.S. real estate market crashed, Murphy/Jahn began making a mark in Europe, Asia and Africa.

When Murphy/Jahn was named the AIA Firm of the Year in 2005 their work was deemed to be "as technically audacious as ever," although the expression had become more refined. The days of ample steel structures was replaced by sculptural masses clad with delicate glass skins.⁶² The firm had produced "some of the world's most technologically advanced, formally sophisticated and urbanistically significant buildings," noted *Chicago Tribune* architecture critic Blair Kamin. Among the examples Kamin cited were the United Airlines terminal at O'Hare Airport and Kemper Arena.⁶³

Today, at the age of 73, Jahn continues to practice architecture, although the type of buildings and expression of structure his firm, now simply called JAHN, produces have evolved drastically in scale, materials and form from Kemper Arena, his first major project as lead designer at C.F. Murphy. Kemper Arena was the only large-scale multi-purpose arena designed by the firm. Although the company portfolio includes several smaller sports venues on college and prep school campuses, none is nearly as large, as complex, or as bold in form and spirit as Kemper Arena, which drew inspiration from the major convention halls C.F. Murphy Associates designed in the 1960s and 1970s. Within a few years after Kemper opened, Jahn was guiding C.F. Murphy Associates toward big projects for tall office buildings, airports and hotels where designers could experiment with qualities of color, transparency and reflectivity. Within this portfolio Kemper Arena remains the nascent expression of the Post Modern spirit.

DEVELOPMENT OF KEMPER ARENA

By the late 1960s Kansas City was feeling the impact of new commercial construction outside the Interstate 35/70/670 highway loop that encircled downtown. The Crown Center development near Union Station, as well as growing nodes of retail and office space in the burgeoning north and south suburbs left civic leaders looking for ways to draw people back downtown. It was agreed that the city needed a modern exhibition hall and large hotel to attract larger conventions, which could help recoup some of the income lost when retail activity moved out of the city center. Bartle Hall, opened in 1976, became this venue. Designed by the Chicago firm C.F. Murphy & Associates, the convention hall boasted a clear span space over 300 feet wide. The design adapted structural trusses to form each span. The building was an expansive and monolithic mass that exposed its concrete and steel structure on the inside.⁶⁴

Kansas City built not one, but two open-air sports venues, known collectively as the Truman Sports Complex, in 1972-1973 for the Royals baseball team and the Chiefs football team. Located near the interchange of I-70 and I-435 in eastern Jackson County, the stadia sat close to each other surrounded by an enormous expanse of shared parking. The concrete structures were designed by local architects Kivett & Myers with the aim of putting as many patrons as possible as close to the playing fields as possible. The sweeping form of each stadium directly reflected the organization of its sport. Functionality was also important, and great attention was paid to ingress and egress systems. While a downtown location had been considered for the stadiums, it was discarded in favor of the central Jackson County site, which was

⁶² Kent, 156.

⁶³ Hockey Rink Dedicated, "Telegram and Gazette [Worcester, MA], 23 January 2005, 7.

⁶⁴ Ehrlich, 162-163.

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near to the cities of Independence and Raytown; was accessible to residents from Johnson County, Kansas and from north of the Missouri River; and offered sufficient land to accommodate parking.⁶⁵

While the Truman Sports Complex addressed local needs for large outdoor sports venues and Bartle Hall would upgrade convention space, there remained an unfulfilled need for a multi-purpose enclosed arena to replace the aging PWA-era facilities of Municipal Auditorium (1937). Talk of building a new arena began in earnest in 1971, around the time construction of Bartle Hall got underway. There was particular interest in developing a venue with capacity for 16,000 to 18,000 patrons that could attract a National Hockey League (NHL) franchise to the area. Voters had approved bond financing for the convention center, but beyond a limited pool of money remaining from a 1954 sports arena bond, no public funding was available. Revenue bonds were proposed as the funding mechanism, which would allow individuals and corporations to contribute toward the project's estimated \$10 million price tag.⁶⁶ Multiple sites were discussed for this venue – within the Truman Sports Complex, next to the new convention hall downtown, deep in suburban Johnson County, and on a piece of former stockyards in the West Bottoms.⁶⁷

At the end of November 1971 a group of investors had been assembled who supported building an arena in the West Bottoms on the condition that Kansas City obtain an NHL franchise team. This proposal required no public money, other than improvements to access roads. Stanford P. Glazer, head of the investment group, described the plan as "a good business investment..." that will "anchor beautification and development of the entire Central Industrial District." It would house sporting events, with a focus on hockey, and also support the activities of the American Royal, a Kansas City institution that held an annual Livestock and Horse Show in the West Bottoms. The 18,500-seat arena and parking for 5,000 cars would occupy a 50-acre parcel of land, to be purchased from the stockyards company. Glazer anticipated that construction could start within ninety days of approval and would take twenty months to complete.⁶⁸ It would be another year before plans gelled.

In the late Fall of 1972 the Kansas City city council was leaning heavily toward the stockyards site for the new arena. On November 30 a committee interviewed four architect-contractor teams with previous experience in arena design. In addition to C.F. Murphy Associates, the committee met with Robert Jackson Associates; Arena Associates; and Kansas City's Kivett & Myers, designers of the Truman Sports Complex. Each team presented preliminary ideas for this specific project and information about other arenas on which they worked. The schedule was tight. The NHL was meeting in January to discuss moving a franchise to Kansas City, and the committee would need preliminary plans by that date in order to sway the NHL.⁶⁹

Before the end of the year, the committee announced the selection of C.F. Murphy Associates and J.E. Dunn Construction Company, a prominent local builder, for the project. Although Chicago based, C.F.

⁶⁵ Ehrlich, 153-155.

⁶⁶ "A Strong Downtown Bid to Tie Down Sports Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 9 Sept 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁶⁷ Robert Carroll, "Complex Web of Sites, Bids for Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 22 April 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁶⁸ "Investors Back Stockyards Site," *Kansas City Star*, 28 Nov 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁶⁹ John T. Dauner, "Arena Selection Panel Favored," *Kansas City Times*, 1 December 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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Murphy was already engaged to design Bartle Hall and had local offices in Crown Center.⁷⁰ The team was given until January 22 to develop a guaranteed price for the new 16,000-seat multipurpose arena.⁷¹ This date was three days ahead of the NHL meeting.

On 23 January 1972, with just forty-eight hours before the NHL finance committee meeting, the city council approved by a vote of 10-to-3 to allocate \$5.6 million in general obligation bonds to the project. This was the final piece of a \$19.7 million financing package that also included \$7.5 million in revenue bonds; \$2 million of private funds pooled from an investor group; a \$1.2 million capital contribution from the American Royal; \$2.5 million gifted by the Kemper family; \$400,000 earned interest from other money in the package; and \$900,000 in federal aid for street improvements.⁷² The local press heralded the decision as assuring the future of both the American Royal and an NHL expansion team. "The region will have an arena of the size needed to compete for the biggest conventions and the large national entertainment and sporting events," the *Kansas City Star* boasted.⁷³

Key to making the deal happen was a gift by prominent civic leader R. Crosby Kemper, Jr. to the American Royal to cover the \$2.5 million purchase price of the project site. With this gift the Royal acquired thirty-one acres of former stockyards on which the American Royal Arena and the Royal Governors Exhibition Hall stood. The Royal also committed to raising an additional \$1 million toward construction of the arena and to refurbish the existing buildings. A non-profit corporation controlled by the city would be formed to operate the buildings in the West Bottoms as well as Municipal Auditorium and the new Bartle Hall convention center.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ William L. McCorkle, "Panel Recommends Firm for Design of Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 30 December 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷¹ John T. Dauner, "Royal Arena Site Backed," *Kansas City Times*, [23] January 1973, A Strong Downtown Bid to Tie Down Sports Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 9 Sept 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷¹ Robert Carroll, "Complex Web of Sites, Bids for Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 22 April 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷¹ "Investors Back Stockyards Site," *Kansas City Star*, 28 Nov 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷¹ John T. Dauner, "Arena Selection Panel Favored," *Kansas City Times*, 1 December 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷¹ William L. McCorkle, "Panel Recommends Firm for Design of Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 30 December 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷² William L. McCorkle, "Stockyard Arena Plan Appears to Be Leading," *Kansas City Star*, 14 January 1973, A Strong Downtown Bid to Tie Down Sports Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 9 Sept 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷² Carroll, "Complex Web of Sites..."

⁷² "Investors Back Stockyards Site," *Kansas City Star*, 28 Nov 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷² Dauner, "Arena Selection Panel Favored..."

⁷² McCorkle, "Panel Recommends Firm..."

⁷³ "City Hall Makes the Big Decision to Build Sports Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 24 January 1973, A Strong Downtown Bid to Tie Down Sports Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 9 Sept 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷³ Carroll, "Complex Web of Sites..."

⁷³ "Investors Back Stockyards Site," *Kansas City Star*, 28 Nov 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷³ Dauner, "Arena Selection Panel Favored..."

⁷³ McCorkle, "Panel Recommends Firm..."

⁷⁴ Dauner, "Royal Arena Site Backed..."

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Less than three months later things were moving swiftly forward. *The Star* published a site plan and architect's model on February 4 that showed the distinctive exterior space frame structure rising over the arena.⁷⁵ On 4 April 1973 the newly formed American Royal Arena Corporation purchased 53 acres of land from the Kansas City Stock Yards Company for \$3,650,000 and borrowed just shy of \$1 million to purchase an additional 13.6 acres. The loan cleared the way for J.E. Dunn Construction Company to start preparing the site for construction.⁷⁶

Ground was broken on 14 April 1973, but many details remained unresolved. This was a design-build project with four phases. In May of 1973 hockey officials were discussing the appropriate location for private suites with C.F. Murphy designers James Wrzesien and Helmut Jahn.⁷⁷ In August contractor J.E. Dunn was pressuring the C.F. Murphy team for final plans and specifications.⁷⁸ A photo published in the *Kansas City Times* on 1 August 1974 showed the distinctive bowl and truss structures in place.⁷⁹ It was possible to envision the completed building. The \$23 million R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena was dedicated on 18 October 1974, just over eighteen months after construction began. Remarkably, the fast schedule was achieved despite a labor strike that interrupted construction for five months.

The dedication program noted that "Cooperation and civic pride within the Community have made the ... Arena become a reality." The Kansas City Scouts NHL team played their first home game in the arena just two weeks later, followed shortly by home games of Kansas City Kings basketball team. College basketball tournaments were highly anticipated, as was the 1975 American Royal.⁸⁰ Earl Butz, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, noted in his remarks

"There may be some who will perceive this arena more as a dedication to hockey than to Herefords, but regardless of our special interest, all of us take pride in the fact that we are naming this magnificent new structure in honor of the remarkable civic leader, who for more than six decades devoted himself to the growth, stability, strength and creation of livability for Kansas City."⁸¹

The event was well attended by regional dignitaries. In addition to Butz, attendees included the governors of Missouri and Kansas, Christopher Bond and Robert Docking; the mayors of Kansas Cities Missouri and

⁷⁵ "Arena Site Plan," *Kansas City Star*, 4 February 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷⁶ "Arena Group Schedules Beginning of Construction," *Kansas City Star*, 4 April 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷⁷ William L. McCorkle, "New Hockey Suites Plan," *Kansas City Star*, 30 May 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷⁸ "Arena Deadline Demand," *Kansas City Star*, 9 August 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷⁹ Joe Willington, Jr., "Arena Framework," *Kansas City Times*, 1 August 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁸⁰ Dedication Program, R.Crosby Kemper, Sr., Memorial Arena, 18 October 1974. Vertical File. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁸¹ David Zeeck, "Kemper Arena Dedicated," *Kansas City Star*, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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Kansas, Charles Wheeler and Richard Walsh; R. Crosby Kemper, Jr., representing the eponymous family that made the arena project happen; and Willis Theis, president of the American Royal.⁸²

The "gargantuan" and "gleaming white arena" was an instant landmark in the old stockyards.⁸³ It had a footprint measuring 424 feet by 310 feet and the top of the structure rose 95 feet above the surrounding parking lots. Inside the column-free space, the farthest seat from the floor was 200 feet. Although it appeared smaller, Kemper Arena boasted twice as many permanent seats as Municipal Auditorium.⁸⁴ Seating capacity was 17,000 for basketball and 16,000 for hockey. Events that required more floor space (track, rodeo, etc.) could still accommodate 15,000 patrons. This capacity placed it among the top venues in the country.

The inaugural event at Kemper Arena was an NHL game between the Kansas City Scouts and the Chicago Blackhawks on 2 November 1974. Nearly 15,000 fans attended the opening ceremonies.⁸⁵ While somewhat baffled by the exterior of the arena, fans liked the interior, particularly the column free bowl. Joe McGuff, Sports Editor at the *Star* wrote, "The interior has a compact appearance and it projects a feeling of warmth." High praise came from Chicago Blackhawks coach Billy Ray, who said, "It's a building you feel right at home in." Less than a month after opening, the maintenance staff passed their first big test when the arena hosted hockey and basketball games less than twelve hours apart.⁸⁶

One problem was the limited parking near the arena. Patrons were encouraged to ride public transportation to events or find parking in the surrounding neighborhood, often several blocks away. The issue reached a head following a residency by the Ice Capades in April 1975. J. Vernon Banks, the event representative, wrote a scathing letter to Mayor Charles Wheeler calling out not only parking, but box offices, entrances and signage as inadequate.⁸⁷

Kemper Arena hosted a wide array of events over the coming decades. In addition to hockey and basketball, indoor soccer, arena football and roller derby teams played in the arena. It was the site of the 1976 Republican National Convention that nominated Gerald Ford for president and local son Bob Dole as his running mate. Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, the Rolling Stones, and Michael Jackson were just a few of the musicians whose concerts filled the venue to capacity. And, of course, there were annual rodeos and horse and livestock shows as part of the American Royal. By 2005, it was estimated that 30 million spectators had attended events in the building.⁸⁸

Roof Collapse

On 4 June 1979 a large section of the Kemper Arena roof collapsed during a heavy spring storm leaving a jumble of twisted steel on the floor of the building. (Figure 13) Early speculation centered on the effects of

⁸² Zeack.

⁸³ Zeack.

⁸⁴ Joe McGuff, "Rich Tradition of Auditorium Gives Way to new Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 8 November 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁸⁵ William D. Tammeus, "Big-Time Hockey Scores First Goal for Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 3 November 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁸⁶ Repps B. Hudson, "Frenzied 'Floor' Show," *Kansas City Times*, 11 November 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁸⁷ Robert L. Carroll, "Kemper 'Inadequate' ", *Kansas City Times*, 12 April 1975, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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sustained seventy mile-per-hour winds, heavy rain, and negative air pressure.⁸⁹ One weathercaster estimated that 140,000 gallons of rain fell on the roof within a thirty minute time span.⁹⁰ Two guards and a maintenance manager who were in the building at the time saw water pouring through the roof next to the score board that hangs over the center of the arena. The scoreboard ended the evening on the floor along with a 200-foot by 215-foot section of the roof. Otherwise, the building, including the space frame trusses, was largely undamaged. Architect Helmut Jahn, who was in Kansas City at the time to receive an AIA award for another project, noted that the design was intended to withstand certain wind, rain and snow loads.⁹¹ AIA president Ehrman B. Mitchell, Jr. noted that "structural integrity is entrusted to the engineer, who is registered in that discipline and has that competence."⁹²

Ironically, in January 1978 local officials had checked the supports at Kemper Arena following the collapse of the roof at the Hartford Civic Center in Connecticut after an accumulation of snow and ice. The inspection reassured the city architect that a similar situation was unlikely to occur in Kansas City.⁹³

Within days, the city hired forensic expert James L. Stratta from Menlo Park, California to investigate the collapse. He examined the debris and gathered forensic data on the site. After reviewing this information along with architectural plans and subjecting a model to water and weight tests,⁹⁴ Stratta determined that the cause of the roof failure lay in two bolts connecting steel hangers to the trusses near the middle of the roof. There was some indication that the bolts had not been thoroughly tightened during construction. This along with the flexibility inherent in the roof design, allowed the bolts to move in a way that fatigued the metal.⁹⁵ Wear on bolts at other points of the roof and air pressure changes caused the by the storm the night of the collapse were also contributing factors. Additionally, the roof sloped inward, allowing water to pool near its center. The heavy rains and high winds the night of the collapse exacerbated the situation, which led to the collapse.⁹⁶

Stratta collaborated with local structural engineer Bob D. Campbell to design the repair to the arena roof. Their solution involved welding, rather than bolting, the hangars to the trusses. Steel bars, measuring eight inches by two inches, were sistered (welded) to the hangers to add strength. Stratta also specified a different type of steel for the repairs than was originally used. The other recommended change was to slope the roof outward rather than inward to prevent water from pooling near the center of the building.⁹⁷

⁸⁸ Covitz, "A Storied History..." A8.

⁸⁹ Bill Norton and Bill Turque, "Air Pressure Seen as Cav-In Cause," *Kansas City Star*, 5 June 1979, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹⁰ "Mayor Asks for Answers", *Kansas City Times*, 6 June 1979, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹¹ Norton and Turque.

⁹² Philip L. Burgart, "Architect Buying Postcards of 'Before', viewing 'After'", *Kansas City Times*, 6 June 1979, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹³ Roger Moore, "Arena, Center Roofs 'Safe'", *Kansas City Star*, 22 January 1978, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹⁴ "Prizewinning Arena Collapses: Kansas City Showcase in Ruins," *Time*, Vol. 133, Issue 25, 18 June 1979, 74.

⁹⁵ Wearne, 34.

⁹⁶ John Dvorak, "With No Bolts, New Arena Roof May Sport a Different Slant," *Kansas City Times*, 24 August 1979, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹⁷ Dvorak, "With No Bolts..."

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While Stratta was able to determine the cause of the collapse, assignment of fault was left to the courts. Beginning in March 1980 various parties related to the arena filed multiple cross suits, alleging failures of design, construction and inspection and defective materials. The city filed suit against the architects, engineers, contractors and fabricators to address the loss of income and the cost of repairs. Souvenir and concession vendors, the Ringling Brothers circus and two ice shows sued the city for lost revenue due to cancellation of events. Ultimately, the cases were settled out of court. The city received \$2.6 million to reimburse its insurance carrier for the arena repairs and \$1 million to repay arena vendors who lost income as a result of the collapse. Making payments in the settlement were C.F. Murphy & Associates, the arena architect; Kansas City Structural Steel Company, supplier, erector and installer of the steel trusses; J.E. Dunn Construction Company, the general contractor; Bethlehem Steel, manufacturer of the steel bolts; and the last board of directors of the structural engineering firm that consulted with the contractors.⁹⁸

Renovations

Early in 1987 the city undertook a \$1.4 million renovation of Kemper Arena. The primary focus was on expanding the number of restroom stalls available to women, a source of much complaint since the facility opened in 1974. Four new mid-level decks (described as "Club Level") were added under the eaves of the arena. These were accessed from concrete ramps that crossed back over the main concourse from the top of the stairs at the mid-level of the seating bowl. Each 2,000-square-foot deck had restrooms as well as additional concession stands. Other improvements included the addition of enclosed areas for handicapped seating in the corners of arena and renovation of six concession stands.⁹⁹

Eight years later a more ambitious renovation was proposed for Kemper Arena in an effort to retain NCAA basketball tournaments. City council approved a plan in December 1995 that would provide \$14 million in bonds for the project. The main goal of the project was the addition of 2,000 seats. Three-quarters of these would go above center court. The last 450 would be in the corners of the floor. The design by HNTB Architects proposed an arching extension on the east side of the arena to accommodate the additional seats above the bowl. As part of this extension a new glass-fronted atrium and parking level entrance were added. The center space frame truss was reconfigured. Its legs were moved out from the building's east and west walls and the top chord was raised higher over the edge of the roof, where it connected to the remaining section of the original space frame. This accommodated the additional seating on the east side of the bowl and made room for future expansion on the west side of the arena.¹⁰⁰

Even before the improvements were complete in the spring of 1997, the drumbeat was swelling to replace Kemper Arena. Since 1971 the Kansas City community had debated the merits of a downtown arena. The West Bottoms location was awkward, and Kemper Arena, even with a new atrium and additional seats, was out dated in the eyes of many. While it was built with twenty-five private suites (a novelty in 1974) and all of these were leased, these spaces were considered inadequate when compared with the luxury boxes appearing in new arenas around the country.¹⁰¹ In 2007 the new Sprint Arena opened, just

⁹⁸ Ron Ostroff, "KC Gets Settlement in Arena Roof Suits," *Kansas City Times*, 7 October 1983, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹⁹ Joe Lambe, "Waiting Game at Arena to End for Women," *Kansas City Star*, 21 January 1987, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁰⁰ Matt Campbell, "Panel Supports \$20 Million for Arena Renovation," *Kansas City Star*, 28 December 1995, A1:5.

¹⁰¹ Randy Covitz, "Outclassed," *Kansas City Star*, 17 March 1996, C2:1.

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north of the highway loop in the southeast corner of downtown Kansas City. The American Royal continues to use Kemper Arena for its Livestock and Horse Show every fall, but other activities have largely relocated to the bigger, newer facility. A current proposal would redevelop Kemper Arena as a facility for indoor sports (soccer, basketball, volleyball, track, gymnastics, etc.), including youth and adult recreational leagues.

CONCLUSION

From the legacy of ancient Roman precedents, Kemper Arena represents an apex of design as new technology was applied in a highly innovative way to create a highly unique version of the enclosed sports arena in Kansas City's West Bottoms. Drawing on precedents by Mies and from their own portfolio, C.F. Murphy Associates, under the direction of lead designer Helmut Jahn, reached outside of the Modern box to create an iconic design that provided not only an obstruction-free arena bowl but also a building that was efficient and economical to construct and to operate. The use of an exo-skeleton along with color and shape provided a Post Modern interpretation of the property type that reflects Jahn's interest and early experimentation with these design elements. Subsequent alterations impacted the exterior of the building, but left the essential form and unique relationship between structure and mass clearly legible. While Helmut Jahn continues to practice architecture, the work of his firm today is far removed from Kemper Arena. Kemper remains the only large sports venue in the company portfolio, which shifted focus in the early 1980s to high-rise office buildings, hotels and airport terminals. A winner of multiple national awards, Kemper Arena is regularly cited by architecture critics as one of the most significant buildings designed by Jahn.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the nominated resource follows a line around the base of the berm on which the arena sits.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the eligible resource and excludes the open land and non-historic buildings that do not contribute to its significance.

OWNER

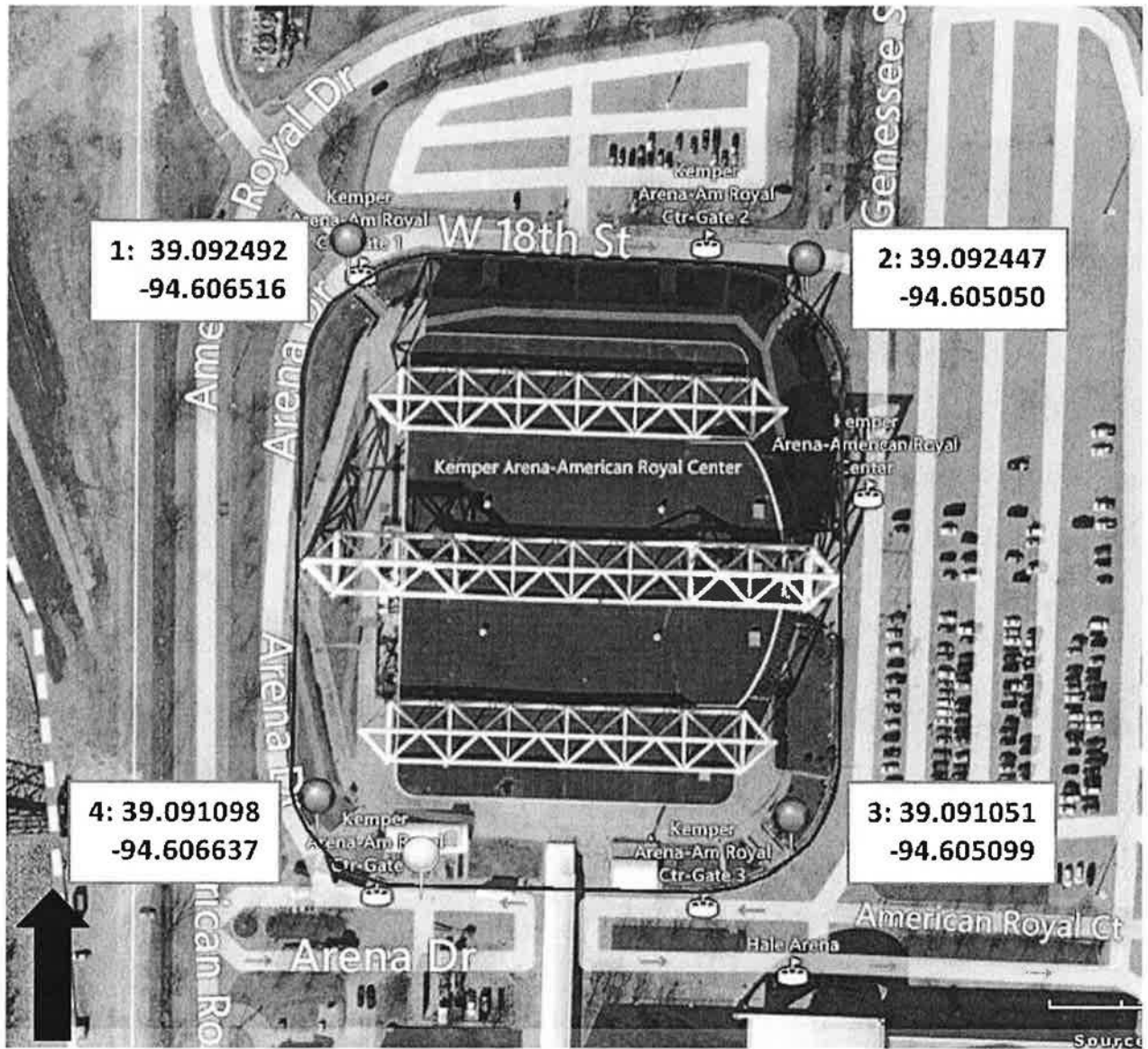
City of Kansas City
414 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64106

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Figure 1: Site Map

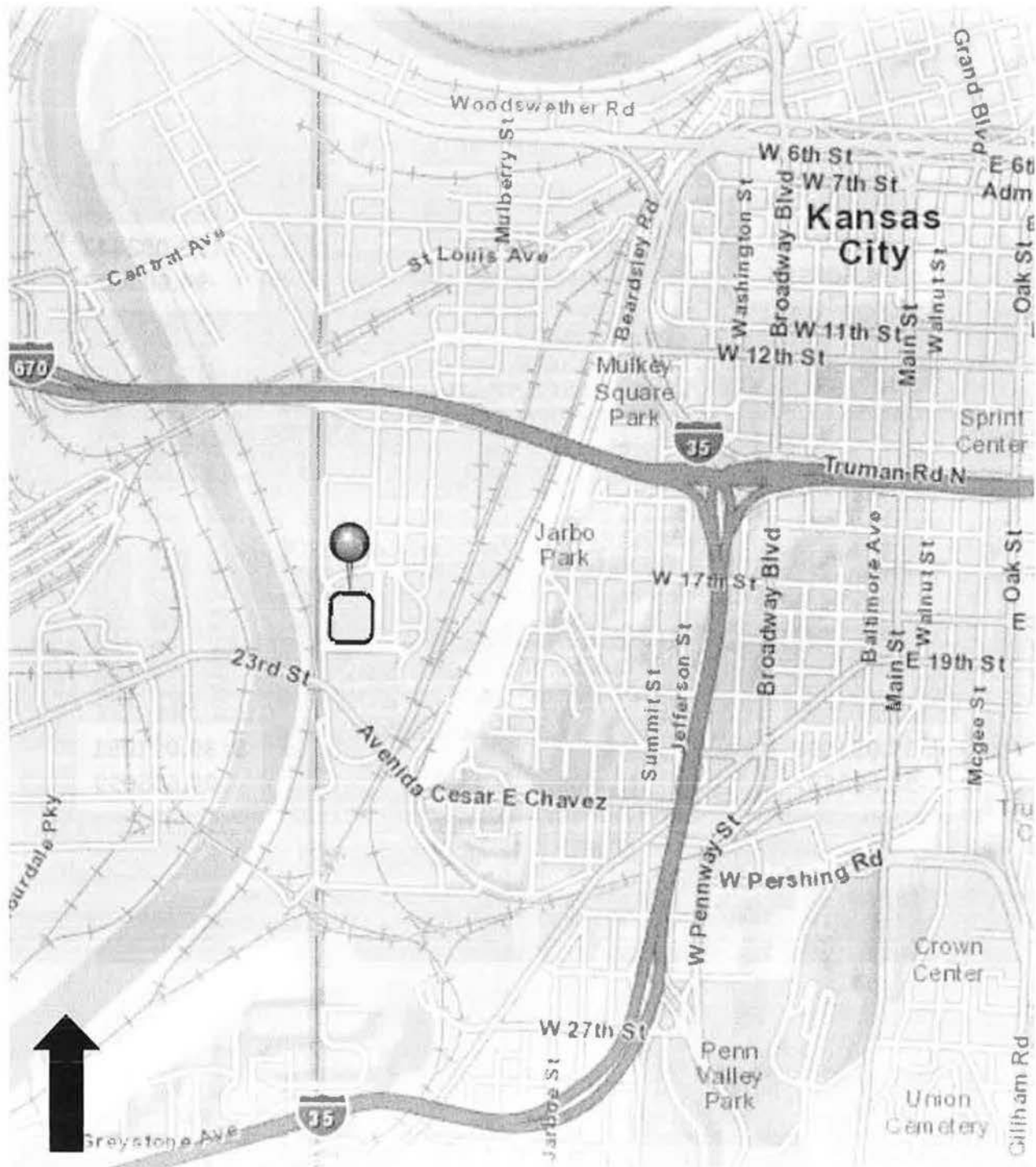


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Figure 2: Contextual Map

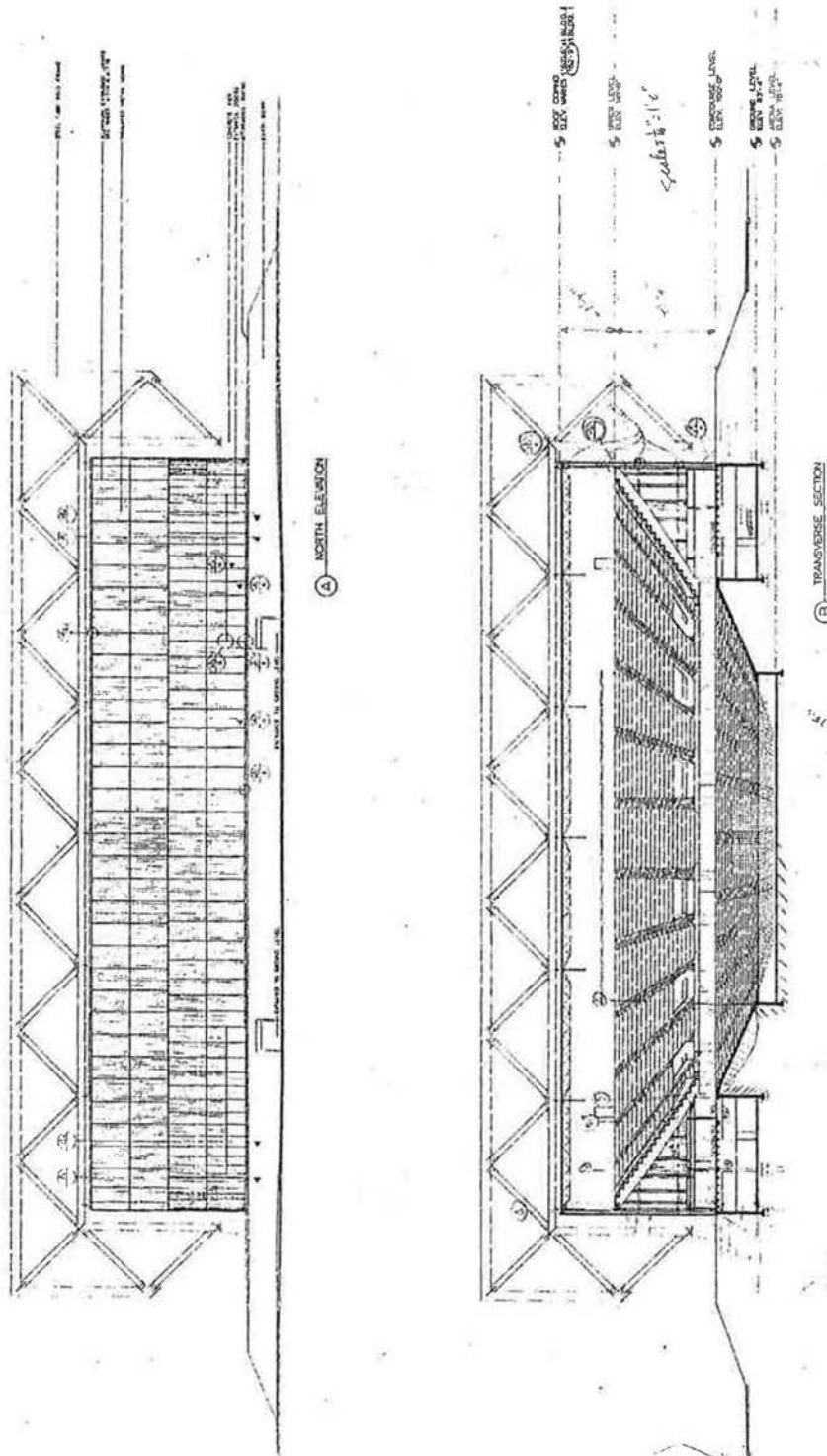


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Figure 3: North Elevation and Transverse Section of Kemper Arena, Sheet A-3.1 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

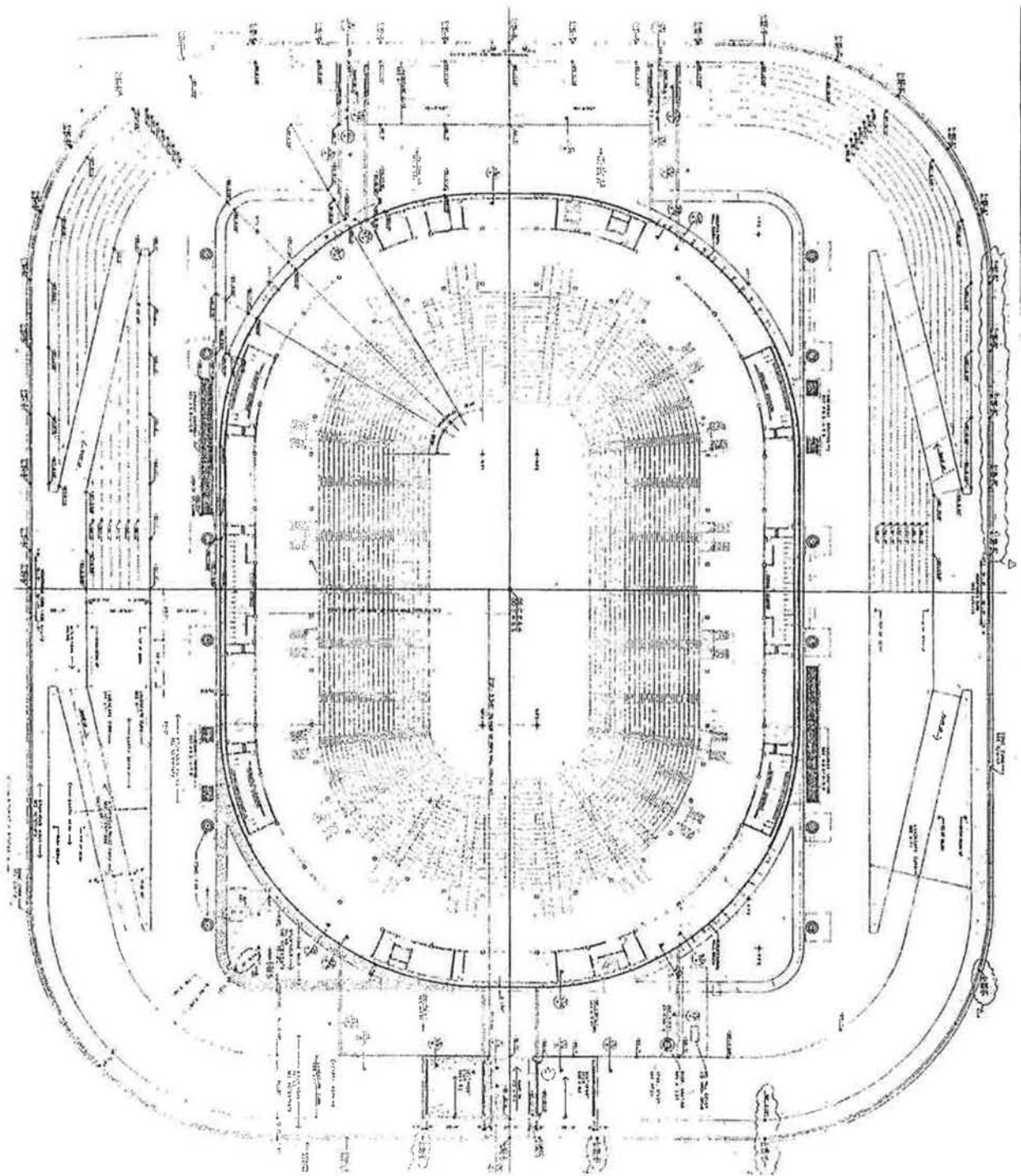


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Figure 4: Partial Site Plan for Kemper Arena, Sheet A-1.3 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

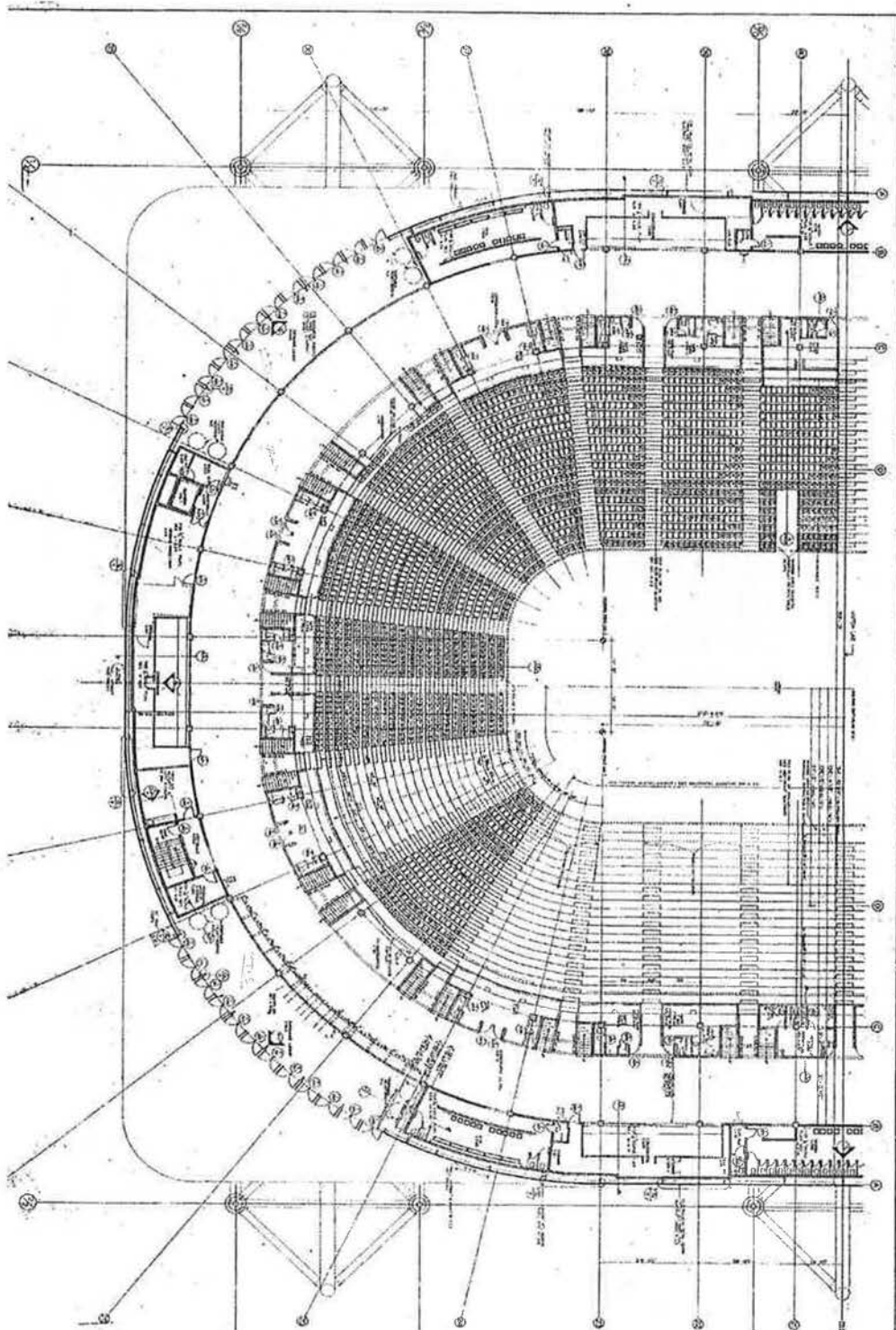


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Figure 5: Concourse Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.4, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, 23 July 1973.

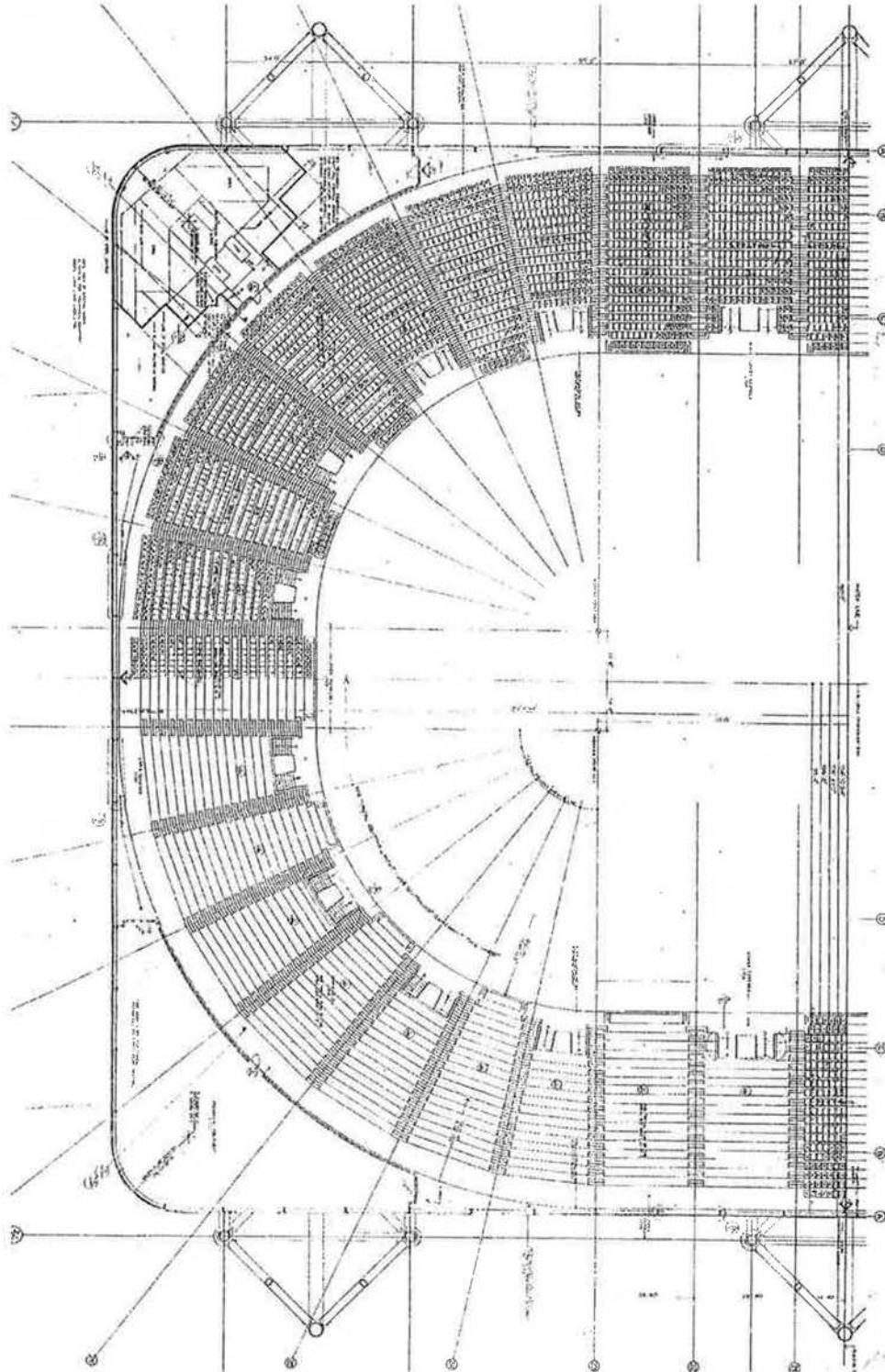


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County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 6: Upper Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.6, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, [1973].

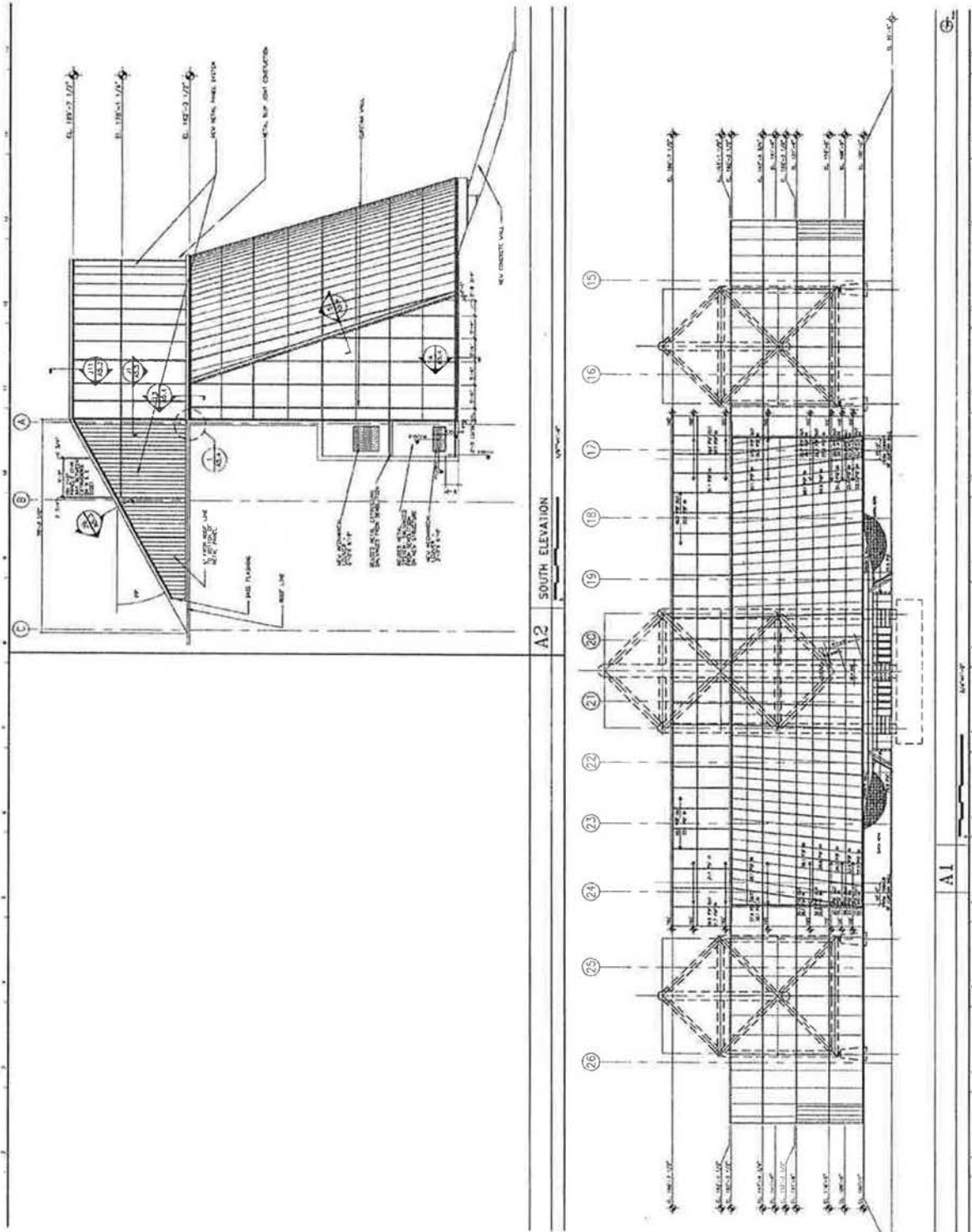


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 35

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 7: Typical Elevations, Sheet A 3.2, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

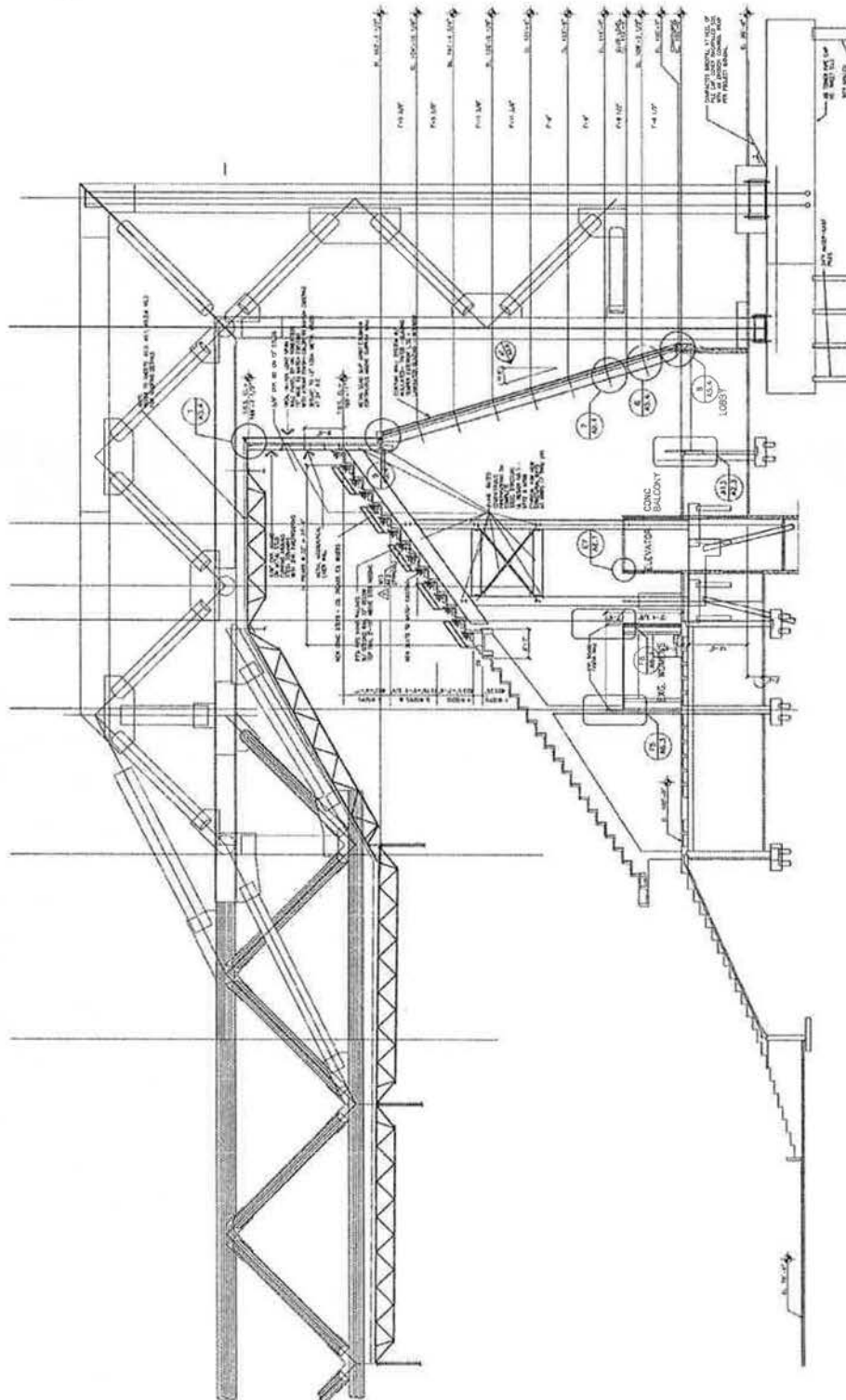


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 36

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 8: Section at Mid Point, Sheet A 4.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

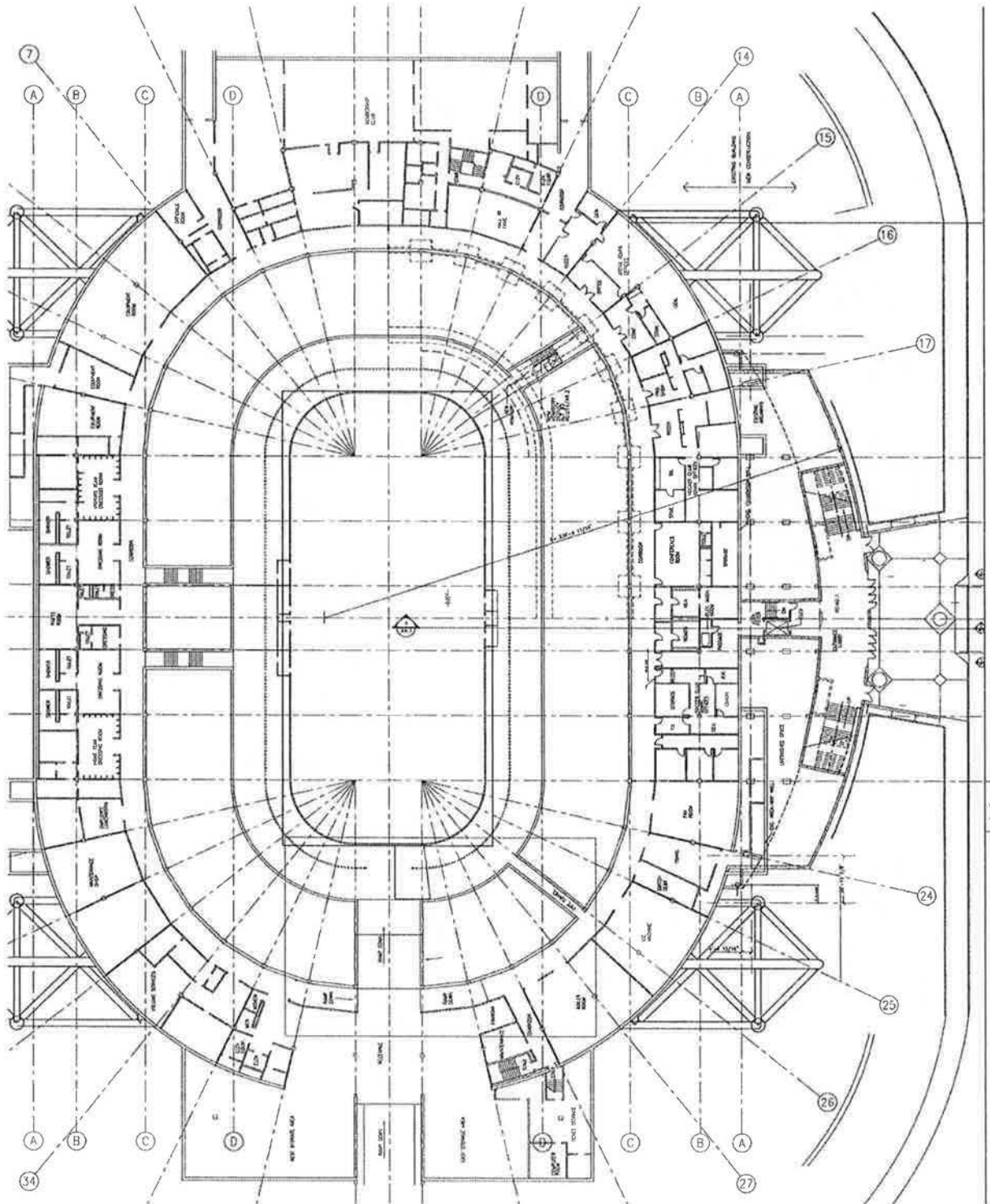


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 37

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 9: Lower Level Plan, Sheet A 1.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

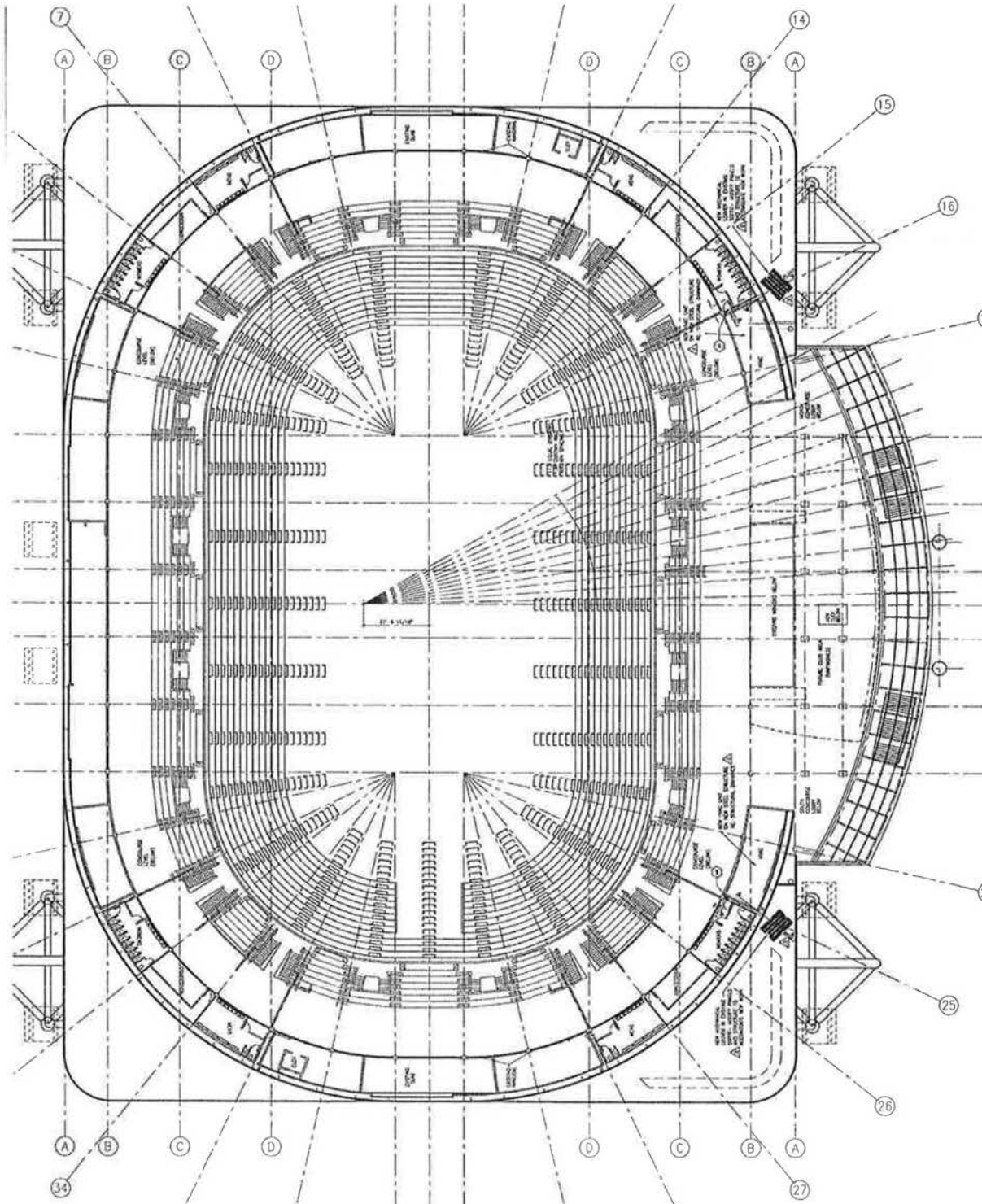


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 38

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 10: New Club Level, Sheet A 1.3, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

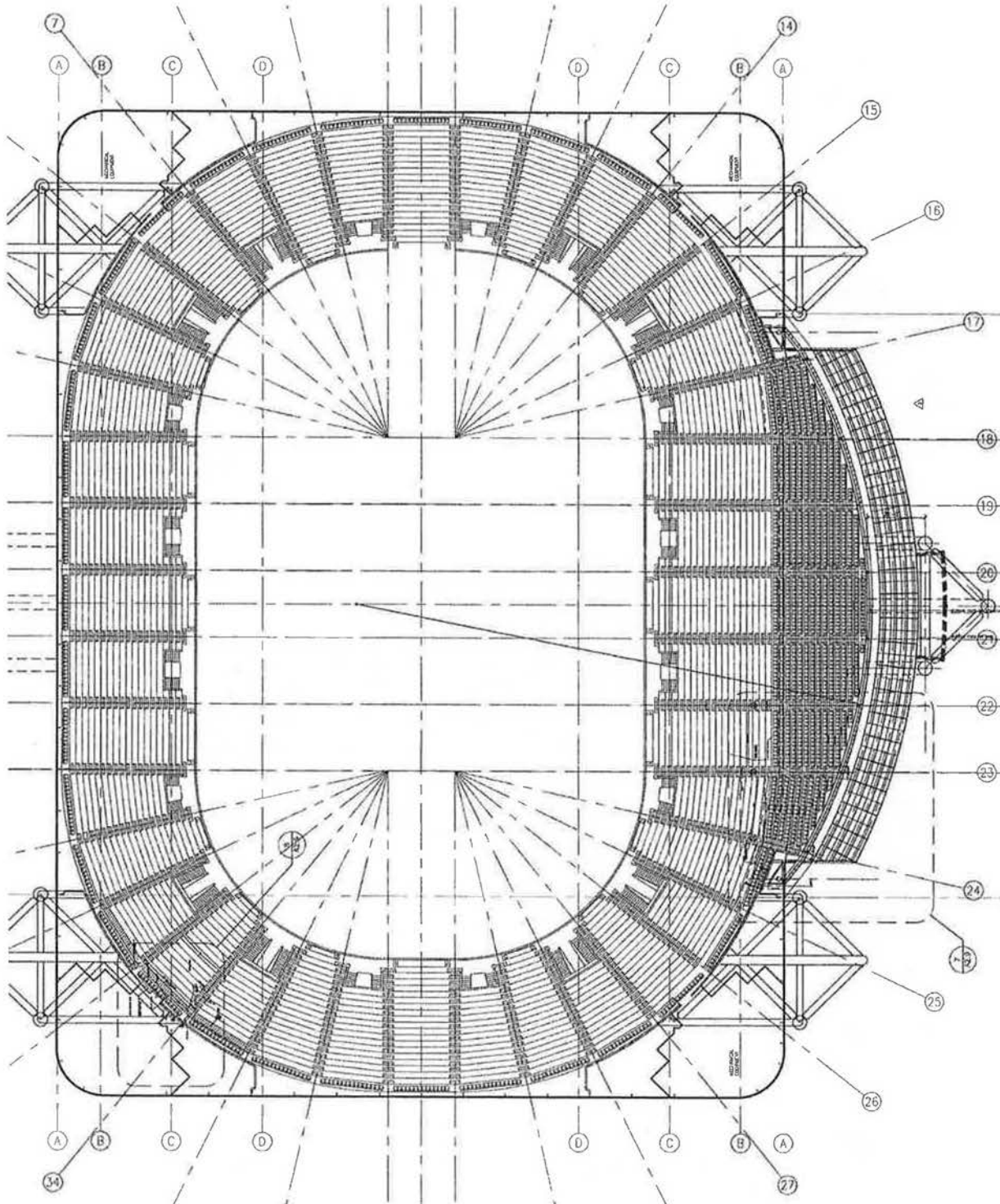


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 39

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 11: Upper Seating Deck, Sheet A 1.4, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.



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Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 40

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 12: Kemper Arena, Late Summer or Fall 1974, View to Northwest. (Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, online)

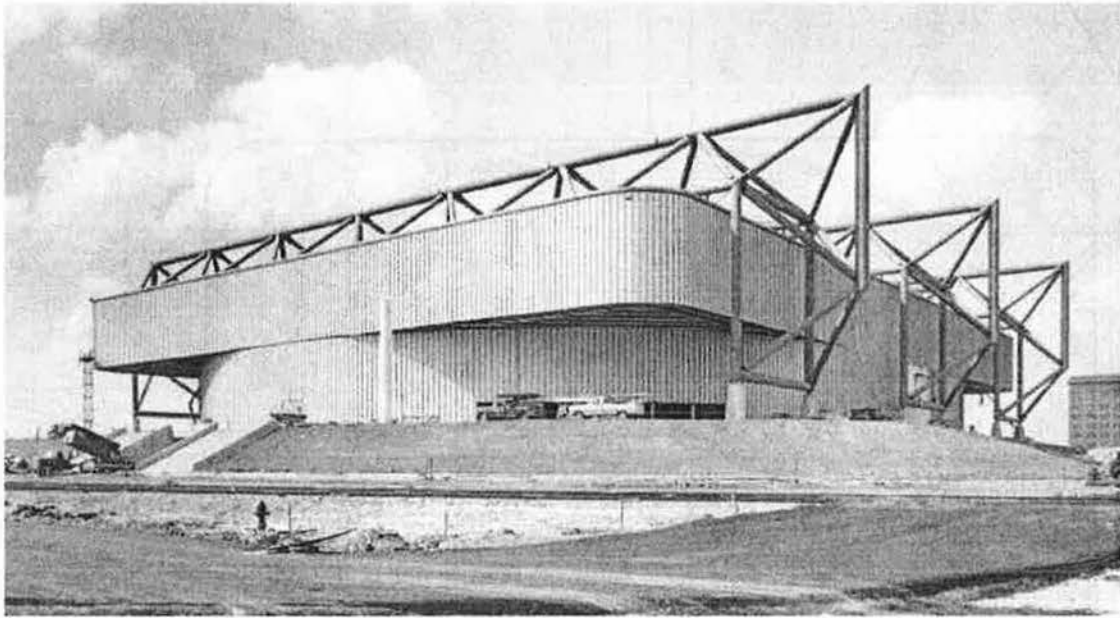
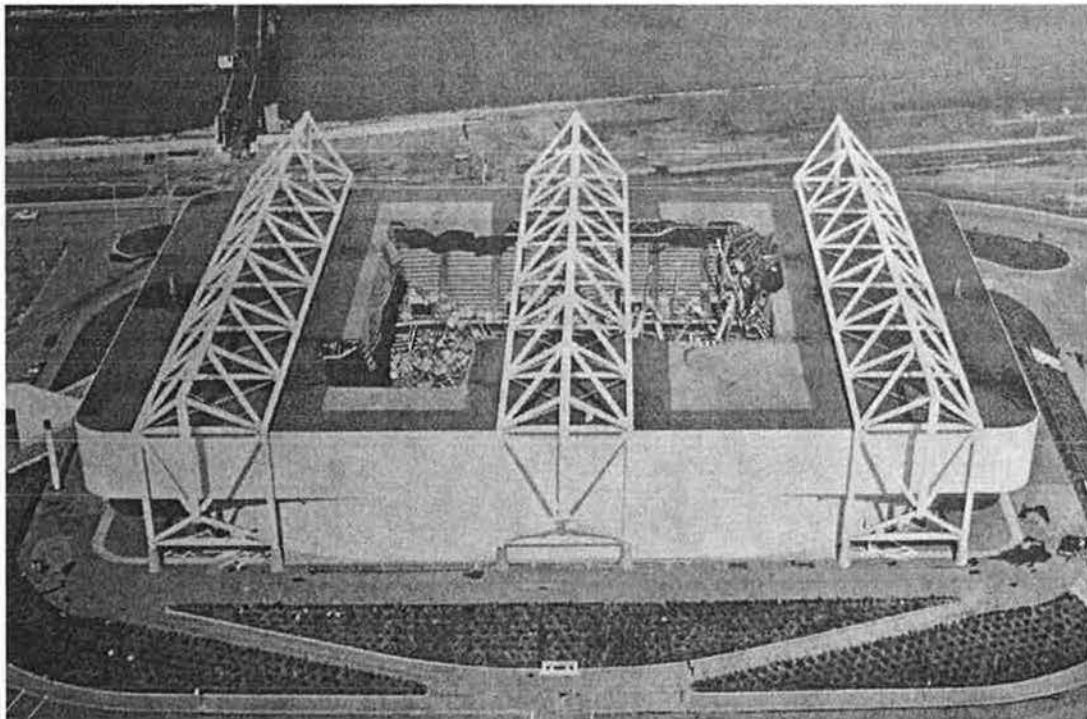


Figure 13: Kemper Arena Following Roof Collapse, 13 June 1979 (Source: Vertical File, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

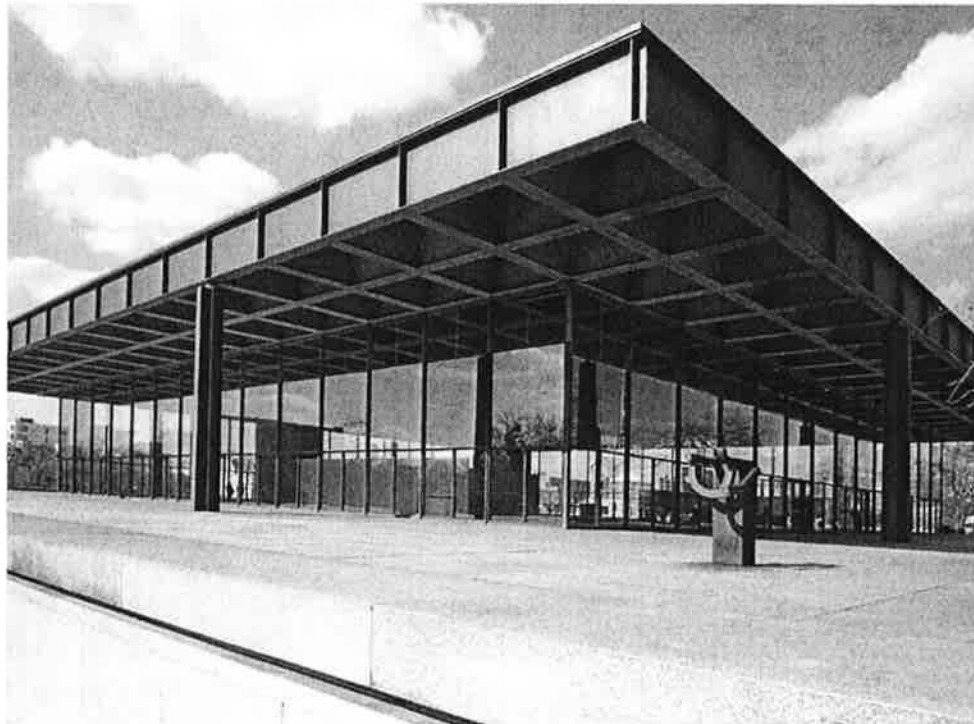
Section number Figures Page 41

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 14: S.R. Crown Hall, Illinois Institute of Technology (*Source:* Larry Hosken, online at <http://lahosken.san-francisco.ca.us/departures/chicago/07/>)



Figure 15: National Gallery, Berlin (*Source:* Manfred Bruckels, online at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Neue_Nationalgalerie_Berlin.jpg)



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Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 42

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 16: McCormick Place Convention Center (East Building), c. 1971 (Source: C. William Brubaker Collection, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, on-line)

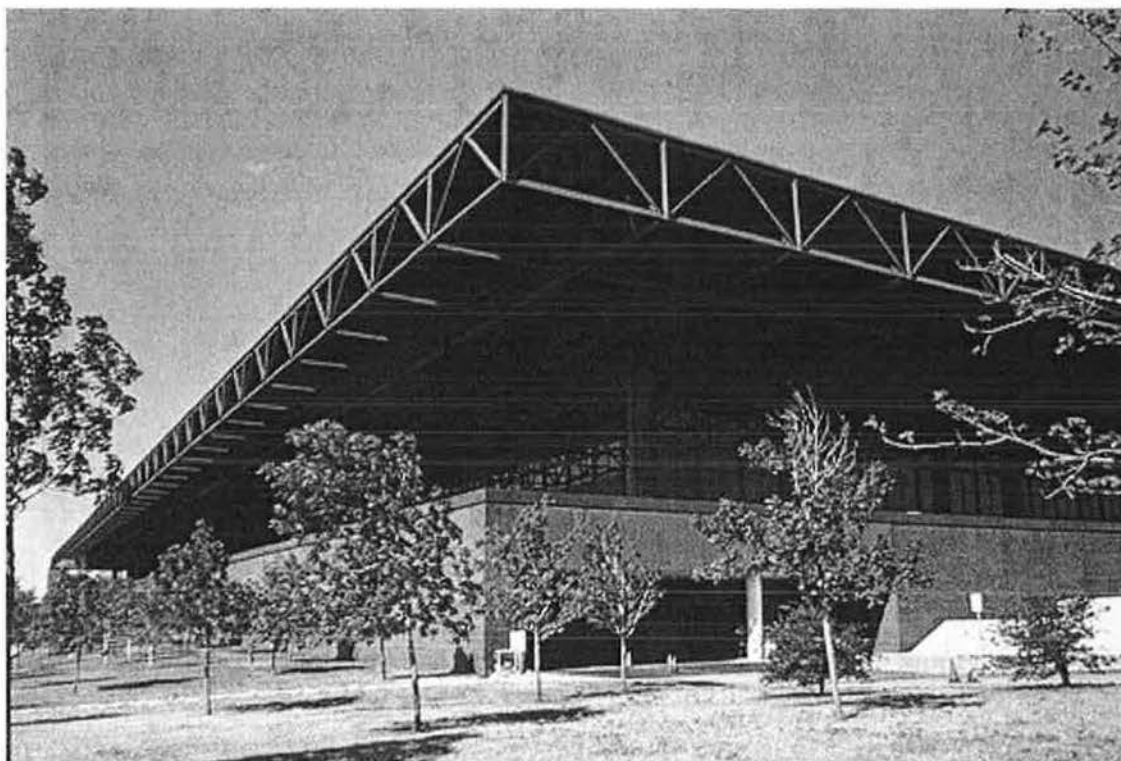


Figure 17: Bartle Hall Convention Center, Kansas City, c. mid-1970s (Source: Robert Askren Photograph Collection, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, online)



MAR - 7 2014

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena

Other names/site number Kemper Arena (preferred)

Name of related Multiple Property Listing n/a

2. Location

Street & number 1800 Genessee Street

N/A	not for publication
-----	---------------------

City or town Kansas City

N/A	vicinity
-----	----------

State Missouri Code MO County Jackson Code 095 Zip code 64102

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D


Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET) MARCH 4, 2014
Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____



900 W. 48th Place, Suite 900, Kansas City, MO, 64112 • 816.753.1000

March 25, 2014

F. Chase Simmons
(816) 360-4327
(816) 753-1536 Fax
csimmons@polsinelli.com

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

Michelle Diedrich
Missouri State Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102

**Re: Objection to Kemper Arena Nomination to National Register of
Historic Places**

Dear Michelle,

I am writing on behalf of our client, the American Royal Association (the "Royal"), to formally object to the proposed naming of the Kemper Arena to the National Register of Historic Places (the "NRHP"). We have included with this letter a copy of a study prepared on the Royal's behalf by The Louis Berger Group, Inc. examining the viability of the Kemper Arena application under the applicable legal standards. We would respectfully request that you pass this letter and enclosures on the Federal Reviewer for this project.

As you are aware, at its February 7 hearing, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation decided by a 5-4 vote to send on the nomination of Kemper Arena to the Federal Reviewer over the objection of SHPO staff, the property owner (the City of Kansas City), and the Royal, which is the primary tenant of the Arena under a long-term lease running through 2045. The City of Kansas City, as the property owner, filed a written objection to the nomination, which although not binding under Federal law, was instructive as to the City's views on this matter. The SHPO staff also made clear that given the age of the Arena, numerous exterior and engineering alterations during its existence, and lack of noteworthy impact on subsequent projects, it deemed naming the Arena to the NRHP inappropriate. Our client agreed with that analysis and also opposed the application on procedural grounds for being filed over the objection of both the property owner and our client, as the primary stakeholder in the future of the Arena.

To give further background, the City and the Royal have been working cooperatively for the past several months to determine how the Arena appropriately fits into the overall redevelopment and rehabilitation of the surrounding West Bottoms area. In that time, another



March 25, 2014

Page 2

private developer that has interest in redeveloping the area engaged Rosin Preservation to file this application with the goal of being inserted in the discussions between the Royal and the City. As the primary stakeholders in the Arena, the Royal views this as an improper and obstructionist action, and we certainly doubt that the motivation behind the application has anything to do with achieving historic preservation.

We feel that it is important to understand this background, especially in light of the fact that the Kemper Arena does not meet the historical standards necessary to name it to the NRHP. This fact has been well-explained by your staff, and we hope that the enclosed study from our consultant will further support that point.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CS" or "Chase Simmons".

Chase Simmons

cc: Federal Historic Reviewer for the State of Missouri
Kansas City Landmarks Commission
John McGurk, City of Kansas City
Troy Schulte, City of Kansas City
Bob Langenkamp, City of Kansas City
The American Royal Association

THE Louis Berger Group, INC.

1600 Baltimore Avenue
Suite 100
Kansas City, MO 64108 USA
Tel 816.398.8578 • Fax 816.561.1666



March 7, 2014

Attorney Evan Fitts
Polsinelli PC
900 W.48th Place Suite 900
Kansas City, MO 64112

Re: Review of National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Kemper Arena

Dear Attorney Fitts:

You have asked The Louis Berger Group, Inc. (Louis Berger), to provide an independent opinion on the completeness of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination for the Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Missouri, and validity of the conclusion that the building is eligible for the NRHP and meets Criterion C in the area of engineering and Criteria Consideration G for buildings that were built less than 50 years ago and are of exceptional significance. Louis Berger understands that the building is being nominated over the objection of the City of Kansas City.

The nomination was examined and analyzed by Camilla Deiber, Senior Architectural Historian, and Steven Bedford, PhD, Principal Architectural Historian for Louis Berger. Both meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Architectural Historians. The majority of the analytical work was performed by Dr. Bedford.

The nomination provides an overview of the history of the Kemper Arena but glosses over certain elements crucial to design decisions such as the importance of the architect and the building's later problems. For instance, there was no discussion of the apparent emphasis on a low budget for the project, which may have contributed both to the design chosen and its ultimate failure (Gale Encyclopedia of Biography 2010). The failure of the building's roof, an important case in the history of forensic engineering, is dismissed after a few lines.

Analysis

As noted by the National Park Service (NPS) in its *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years* (Sherfy and Luce 1998):

✓ The passage of time is necessary in order to apply the adjective "historic" and to ensure adequate perspective. To be a useful tool for public administration, the National Register cannot include properties of only transient value or interest. The passage of time allows our perceptions to be influenced by education, the judgment of previous decades, and the dispassion of distance. In nominating properties to the National Register, we should be settled in our belief that they will possess enduring value for their historical associations, appearance, or information potential [Sherfy and Luce 1998:2].

The question then is whether the Kemper Arena has *attained those associations, retained its appearance, or is providing exceptional information relative to an established context.* The following discussion analyzes the nomination and whether it provides sufficient accurate and dispassionate information to make an informed decision as to the NRHP eligibility of the Kemper Arena.

Integrity and Appearance of the Kemper Arena

We feel that although the nomination addresses the alterations to the Kemper Arena in the description section of the building (Rosin 2014: Section 7; hereafter "the nomination"), it does not sufficiently address the impact of the 1996 alterations on the integrity of the building. NRHP regulations require that a building have integrity of design, workmanship, material, location, setting, feeling, and association. In many cases the building can lack some of these characteristics and still be listed (36 CFR 60.4); however, in this case the alterations to the building and its structure substantially eliminate the building's integrity of design, a key factor in considering this building as eligible for the NRHP.

The 1996 alterations have greatly affected the overall perception of the building. By placing its original entrances on the corners of the building reached by ramps that slowly ascend the berm, the mass of the building was kept as a sleek skin and any notion of a single axial entrance was absent. The current main entry, which projects from the original building volume, competes with rest of the building for visual attention. In spanning the distance from outer truss to outer truss, the new entry and atrium dominate the elevation. The curving glass atrium contrasts with the original flat exterior treatment in materials, massing, and design, creating a perceived openness. It contrasts with the building's original external treatment — a single uninterrupted cladding whose windowless nature implied that the focus of the building was internal. Now the building has what amounts to a marquee, indicating to the public that the central entrance is the primary entrance.

add - changes to orig. eng.

The three massive trusses have been dramatically altered since the 1979 collapse. First, it appears that diagonal bracing, matching that of the horizontal section of each truss, was added to the vertical sections of each column section of each frame, indicating that the initial design may have lacked stiffness in one axis. The subsequent change to the middle truss, whose horizontal section is now supported by two arms leaning over the exterior wall, may have altered structural principles at work as evidenced by the fact that the top/outer chord is now tied into a foundation. That most likely indicates a different loading arrangement from the original trusses. This action changes the engineering characteristics of the center truss by introducing new forces into the design. Furthermore, moving the center truss out of line with the older trusses alters both the perception of the visitor and the prior symmetry of the plan. The same holds true for the increase in the height of the central section and the introduction of a lowered central entry. The new design elements change our perception of the building and the building's integrity. We do not believe that the building has retained sufficient integrity, particularly for a building that is less than 50 years old, to be considered for the NRHP.

Context

more local history

Although the nomination lists engineering as the area of significance, it does not offer convincing support that the building's structural design was exceptionally significant. There is no argument in the nomination concerning the actual structural design of the building, which owes a significant debt to many buildings that came before it. The argument focuses on the architectural impact rather than its importance as an exceptionally significant engineering structure. In fact the examples given that use space frame trusses demonstrate that the use of long-span structures in arenas and exhibition halls was well within the capability of structural engineering firms. In 1967 Welton Becket described the Pauley Pavilion as consisting of three trusses united by a space frame — not much of a variant from Kemper Arena (Becket 1967:5). The contextual examples given are primarily limited to space frame-supported buildings while neglecting other arenas that used other structural systems. This gives one a limited sense of the historic context of arena design prior to the Kemper Arena's construction. Therefore the nomination provides a cursory discussion of engineering context and does not establish support for the claimed importance of the building to engineering or engineering history.

The nomination attempts to differentiate the Kemper Arena from the limited number of contemporary structures illustrated. The major difference between the structural designs used for the examples and the Kemper Arena was the decision to expose the largest structural elements rather than enclose them. This is more of an architectural decision than an innovative structural one. In fact the nomination (8-13) notes “its bold space frame exo-skeleton that goes well beyond the basic programming needs of creating a column-free arena bowl.” This can be interpreted as meaning that the truss size was dictated by architectural appearance rather than structural requirements and does not signal an engineering innovation.

The nomination notes (8-14) that developing “appropriate, yet simple joint connections” was a key to the success of any space frame, yet there is no discussion as to how this apparently crucial design step was achieved at Kemper Arena. It was a failed connection between the space frame and the rest of the structure that created the progressive collapse of the interior structure of the roof. Although no responsibility for the roof collapse was assigned, this type of fault in the design was not in accord with the prevalent standards. Section 1.3.1 of *ANSI Standard Minimum Design Loads in Buildings and other Structures* (1971) required that structural systems have sufficient integrity to avoid progressive collapse. How can the engineering of this building be described as exceptionally significant if it failed to meet this standard? In fact this design failure may have led C.F. Murphy to close their in-house engineering group (personal communication, email from Joseph P. Colaco, structural engineer, March 5, 2014).

The design concept of using long-span structures to create column-free space has a long tradition of use. As the nomination notes, the concept of the design is a direct descendant of Mies van der Rohe’s column-free Crown Hall at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). As Jahn would later point out, he was using an expression of structure as decoration that dated back to the 1850s in such buildings as London’s Crystal Palace and he believed his work was a reinterpretation of the approach (Blaser 1996:17).

The architectural practice of expressing structure externally is as old as the medieval cathedral. Modern theoretical advocacy of the concept of using structure as decoration was affirmed in the nineteenth century in the works of John Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc. The expression of structure on the Kemper Arena is not a novel concept.

The nomination includes a reference to and illustration of the Love Gymnasium at Phillips Exeter Academy designed by Kallmann and McKinnell in Exeter, New Hampshire. The design of that building demonstrates that the Kemper Arena is a direct descendant of Kallmann and McKinnell’s design, the goal of which was to provide a long-span design for side-by-side ice hockey rinks with access along a central spine and spectator space of appropriate size for a preparatory school crowd. The basic design concept is so similar that the major differences between the two are scale and cladding. We disagree with the nomination’s contention that the design of the Love Gymnasium design focuses more on mass of the building than the design of the Kemper Arena. The neo-Corbusian external expression of the Kemper Arena, where the building curves to express the shape and function of the internal plan, is certainly emphasized; its blank walls and low entrances at four corners reinforce the essential mass of the arena.

Many buildings considered part of the main stream of modern architecture had or were using structure as means to draw attention the building or as expressive elements. For example the World Trade Center, which used a more novel structural device, the bundled tube, had all of its main structure on the exterior. The contemporary Centre Pompidou (Piano and Rogers, the competition occurred in 1971) exposed the structure and mechanicals throughout the building, using trusses on the façade, making the exposed structure at Kemper a design feature of the era rather than some revolutionary design concept.

In 1979, following a series of collapses of buildings that were of long-span structural design, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) convened a panel to study these collapses by reviewing available forensic engineering reports; the study included the Kemper Arena. The panel made no effort to place blame for any of the failures, but one of their findings published in 1981 was that none of the basic structural systems of any of the buildings could be characterized as surpassing existing knowledge (Long Span Building Panel 1981:4). Our interpretation of this finding confirms that the design of the Kemper Arena lacks engineering significance.

Although initially recognized for its relative importance within its immediate historic context, it is not clear that either popular or critical assessment of the importance of the Kemper Arena has stood the test of time, outside of its use as a case study in forensic engineering handbooks. Initial criticism linked the building directly to the work of Mies van der Rohe describing it as a rephrasing of the great architect's work (Abercrombie 1981:63). The AIA and American Institute of Steel Construction awards for the building reflect the attitudes and taste of the moment, not how the building's design would be assessed in the future. In addition, Kemper Arena was one of 10 buildings to receive an AIA award in 1976.

Contemporary criticism is also influenced by personal relationships and affiliations. Peter Pran's praise of Jahn's building (Pran 1977:436-441) could be attributed to their shared membership in a group of architects known as the "Chicago Seven." They may also have been at IIT in the mid-1960s, and this connection bears further research.

Works of a Living Person

The issue of nominating works of a living and practicing architect is not an accepted practice.

On rare occasions, properties associated with individuals still living have been listed in the National Register. However, the nomination of such properties is strongly discouraged in order to avoid use of the National Register listing to endorse the work or reputation of a living person. Periodically, however, sufficient scholarship and evidence of historical perspective exist to list a property associated with living persons whose active life in their field of endeavor is over [Sherfy and Luce 1998:VII].

Jahn is still practicing as JAHN. Construction of his 50 West Street in New York City is underway, and he is touring the world talking about his work. Therefore it is definitely premature to consider listing the Kemper Arena, even though it is one of his earliest works. Jahn's place in the history of architecture remains undetermined.

Architectural success is fickle. In his early years Jahn was described as "the undisputed crown prince of Chicago architecture" for his work on buildings such as One South Wacker Drive and the Chicago Board of Trade (Becker 2003). By the end of the 1980s, as architectural styles shifted, he was "an exile in his own city," (Becker 2003). His later success with flashy skyscraper designs led critic Martin Filler to describe him as having "transformed himself from *Wunderkind* into *Glitzmeister*" (Filler 1988:30).

The popularity of Jahn's work among architects, one measure of importance, is seen in a 2007 AIA poll of architects on the 150 most important American buildings (AIA 150); the Kemper Arena did not rank among them, but his later United Airlines Terminal in Chicago ranked 102. The Kemper Arena does appear in *Great Buildings Online* and is one of 500 buildings in Kidder-Smith's *Sourcebook of American Architecture* of 1996, but Wiseman's (1998) and Wright's (2008) histories of American architecture focus on Jahn's later work. Wiseman described his later work as "a bit too flamboyant" and "cheaply finished" (Wiseman 1998:316). He is discussed in Williamson's 1991 *American Architects and Mechanics of Fame*, but he is one of hundreds of other architects listed. Helmut Jahn is an important architect, but whether his work is exceptionally important remains to be seen.

The Issue of Postmodernism

The nomination discusses the building as *Postmodern*. This was not a term in use in the 1970s, when this building was under design. In linking the building to the work of Mies Van der Rohe, the nomination and early criticism link the Kemper Arena to the Modern movement. The key ideas of Postmodernism are set forth in two important books by Robert Venturi: *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966) and *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972). Postmodern architecture evolved from the Modern movement yet contradicts many of the modernist ideas. Combining new ideas with traditional forms, Postmodernist buildings can startle, surprise, and even amuse. Familiar shapes and details are used in unexpected ways. Buildings may incorporate symbols to make a statement or simply to delight the viewer. Although some sources may define any building that did not follow the Miesian canon as Postmodern, it is more generally recognized that Postmodern does not extend to free-form works by Le Corbusier or the tectonic gyrations of works by John Johanssen. In fact freeing the façade of its structure was one of Le Corbusier's "Five Points of a New Architecture," which first appeared in print in 1927 (Von Moos 1982:340). What is described in the nomination as Postmodern is really neo-Corbusian. As late as 1990, Jahn's work was described as proceeding with his form of modernism in an evolutionary process that develops out of his Mies-oriented C.F. Murphy work (Murphy 1990:102). Clearly the Kemper Arena relates more to Modernism than Postmodernism.

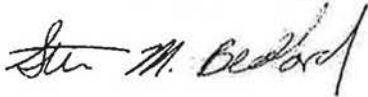
Charles Jencks, in his 1977 *Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, presented a group of modernists' works that included a space frame design of 1970 by the celebrated Japanese architect Kenzo Tange. He lumped this type of architectural form (the space frame) into a group of architectural forms whose symbolic nature was not understood by the general public. He further described this type of form as more in line with the avant-garde of 1960 rather than 1977 (Jencks 1977:29). The Kemper Arena would fall into this same category.

Conclusion

Based on our examination of the nomination and additional research, we do not believe that the nomination clearly or definitively establishes the exceptional significance of the Kemper Arena under the category of engineering. Although it received much critical praise on its completion, it has been altered substantially, the engineering context is not developed, the building is not an example of the advancement of the field, and it is not a postmodern building. Finally, since Helmut Jahn is still alive and practicing, we cannot judge Kemper Arena's importance within the body of his work. The building should not be considered for NRHP listing.

Sincerely,

The Louis Berger Group, Inc.



Steven Bedford, Ph.D.
Principal Architectural Historian

File: 2002841

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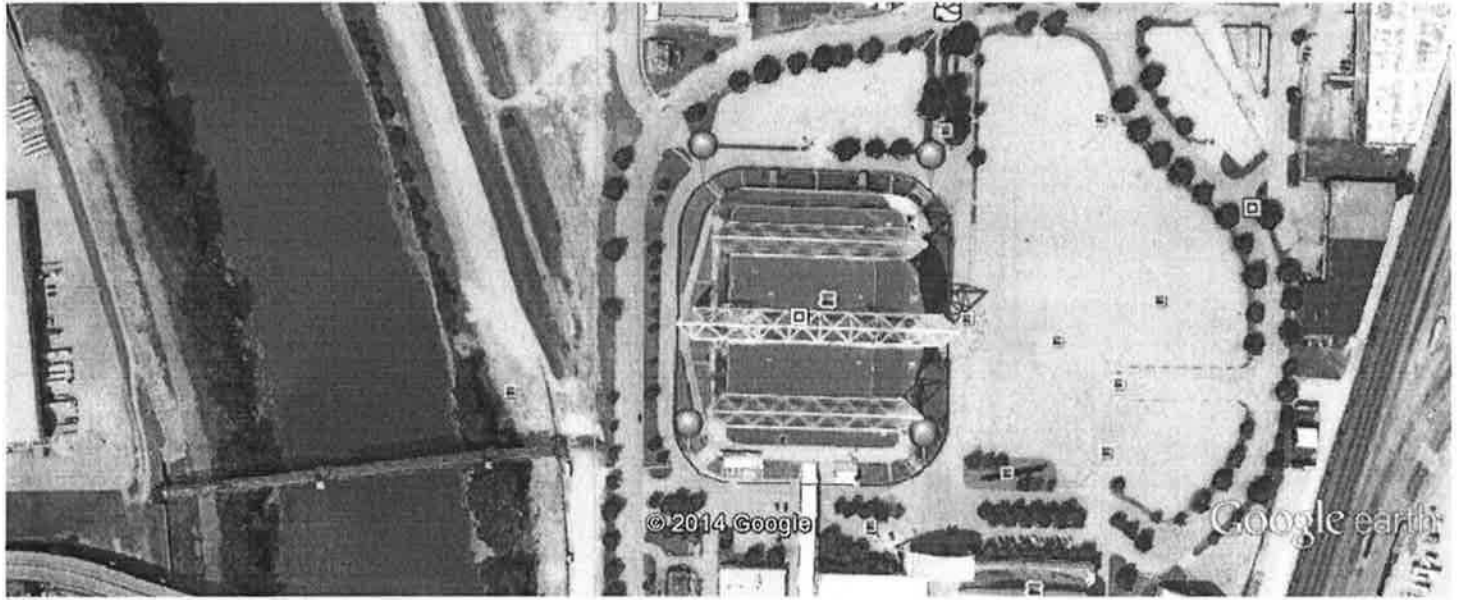
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local rig - Engineering - Space frame technology] structural
ce g - < 50 240 skeleton innovation
Post-modern
no surviving nat. parallels

Moriachi Rest
5854 Urbana Pike
(355)



Site Map



Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon, Governor • Sara Parker Pauley, Director

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

www.dnr.mo.gov

RECEIVED 2280

JUL 15 2016

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

Memorandum

Date: July 12, 2016

To: Keeper, National Register of Historic Places

From: Michelle Diedrich, National Register and Survey Coordinator, Missouri State Historic Preservation Office *MD*

Subject: Kemper Arena, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, National Register Nomination

Our state review board, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, approved the above nomination on February 7, 2014. The nomination was returned by the NPS on April 21, 2014 and is being resubmitted. All owners and appropriate elected public officials were notified and provided at least thirty (30) days to comment on the above proposed nomination in accordance with Section 36CFR60.6, interim regulations, using the exact notification format recommended by the National Register. **The enclosed disc contains the true and correct copy of the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.**

Please find enclosed the following documentation:

- 1 CD with original National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- Multiple Property Documentation Form
- Photographs
- 1 CD with electronic images
- Original USGS map(s)
- Sketch map(s)/figures(s)/exhibits not on continuation sheets
- 2 Piece(s) of correspondence (cover letter, signature page)
- Other:

Comments:

- Please insure that this nomination is reviewed. (Resubmission of Return)
- The enclosed owner objection(s) do do not constitute a majority of property owners.

DRAFT AGENDA
Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Lewis and Clark State Office Building
LaCharrette Conference Room (Ground Floor)
1101 Riverside Drive, Jefferson City, Missouri
August 19, 2016

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Sign in
9:00 a.m. Open meeting

Agenda Review

Chairman's remarks

Council Comments

Review and Approve May Minutes

Consideration of nominations (approximately 9:15 a.m.)

Note: The public will be allowed a brief comment period after the presentation of each nomination to the Council. The MOACHP Chair will announce time limits for presentations and public comment at the beginning of the meeting.

Bailey School, 501 West Central St., Springfield, Greene County

Heercleff, 6405 South Campbell., Springfield, Greene County

Twelker, Christopher and Johanna, Farm, 4749 Highway 185, New Haven (vic),
Franklin County

Century Electric Foundry Complex, 3711-3739, 3815R, 3749R Market Street,
3700-3800 Forest Park Avenue, St. Louis [Independent City]

West Bottoms-North Historic District, bounded by West 9th Street, St. Louis
Avenue, Union Avenue from Wyoming Street to west of Mulberry Street,
Kansas City, Jackson County (*Railroad Related Historic Commercial and
Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri, MPDF*)

10:30-10:45 a.m. - Break

Creamery Package Manufacturing Company Building, 1408-1410 West 12th
Street, Kansas City, Jackson County

Lindenwood Neighborhood Historic District, Roughly bounded by Watson,
Gamble, Sibley and Elm Streets, and the alley between Houston and North
Kingshighway, St. Charles, St. Charles County

Hall School, 2509 Duncan Street, St. Joseph, Buchanan County

Stevens, Edward A., House, 3223 Gladstone Boulevard, Kansas City, Jackson
County

Coleman, Lewis Shaw, House, 227 East College Street, Aurora, Lawrence County

Working Lunch (For Council members and staff) (approximately 11:45)
Presentation by Allen Shirley

Council Roundtable

Director's Comments

Program Updates

Adjourn

Note: The Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation may go into closed session at this meeting if such action is approved by a majority vote of the Council members who constitute a quorum, pursuant to Section 610.021, RSMo 2000 (as amended), to discuss legal, confidential or privileged matters under Section 610.021(1), RSMo; personnel actions under Section 610.021(3), RSMo; personnel records or applications under Section 610.021(13), RSMo; or records which are protected from disclosure by law under Section 610.021(14), RSMo.

People requiring special services at the meeting can make arrangements by calling 1-800-361-4827 or 573-751-7860. Hearing impaired persons may contact the department through Relay Missouri at 1-800-735-2966.

Each MOACHP member is provided copies of draft National Register of Historic Places nomination forms, and other items for review and consideration 3 to 5 weeks prior to each scheduled MOACHP meeting. The final agenda and additional information, if available, is provided to members the day of the meeting. For copies of nominations and other information provided to council members, or to learn more about the MOACHP and State Historic Preservation Office, please contact the State Historic Preservation Office at 573-751-7858, mshpo@dnr.mo.gov, or by mail at P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

Diedriech, Michelle

From: Reed, Roger <roger_reed@nps.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2016 3:10 PM
To: Diedriech, Michelle
Cc: Elizabeth Rosin
Subject: Re: Kemper Arena

No, owner notification is not required, nor does it have to go back to the review board as it is just the POS that would be changed, and yes that should be an easy fix.

Having said that, Elizabeth as the client will no doubt inform the owner. It does not have to go back to the review board, but of course the SHPO as signing authority should be informed. The cover sheet does not change, so SHPO does not have to sign a new sheet if you send us the revised nomination in response to our return comments.

Roger

Roger G. Reed, Historian
National Register and National Historic Landmarks
1201 Eye Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20008
202-354-2278

On Mon, Aug 29, 2016 at 3:38 PM, Diedriech, Michelle <michelle.diedriech@dnr.mo.gov> wrote:

Hi Roger,

This is positive news. Thank you for the thoughtful comments. It appears changing the period of significance would be an easy enough fix. I take it the nomination needs to be submitted to the SHPO and then sent to you?

Also, this doesn't look like a big change thus it does not appear we would need to do owner/elected official notifications again. Am I correct in this assumption?

Thanks

Michelle

Michelle Diedriech
National Register and Survey Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone: (573) 526-1680

E-Mail: michelle.diedriech@dnr.mo.gov

Promoting, Protecting and Enjoying our Natural Resources. Learn more at dnr.mo.gov.

From: Reed, Roger [mailto:roger_reed@nps.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2016 2:31 PM
To: Diedriech, Michelle
Cc: Elizabeth Rosin
Subject: Kemper Arena

Michelle and Elizabeth,

Sorry to keep you waiting on this. We are prepared to sign the nomination provided the period of significance be changed to 1974-1996. Please see the attached brief return document for an explanation.

As I indicated, this decision was made in consultation with Paul Loether, as well as Barbara Wyatt.

Please let me know if you have any questions. The 45th day is actually tomorrow, August 30, not today as I had thought.

Roger

Roger G. Reed, Historian

National Register and National Historic Landmarks

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena
Other names/site number Kemper Arena (preferred)
Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

2. Location

Street & number 1800 Genessee Street N/A not for publication
City or town Kansas City N/A vicinity
State Missouri Code MO County Jackson Code 095 Zip code 64102

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Toni M. Prawl 07/12/16
Signature of certifying official/Title Toni M. Prawl, Ph.D., Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
<u>1</u>		structures
		objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Entertainment
Facility

LANDSCAPE: Parking Lot

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Entertainment
Facility

LANDSCAPE: Parking Lot

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Late-Modern

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Metal

roof: Metal

other: Glass

Asphalt

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Areas of Significance

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance

1974-2007

Significant Dates

1974

1996

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

C.F. Murphy Associates (Architect)

J.E. Dunn Construction Co. (Builder)

HNTB Corporation (Architect – alterations)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Kemper Arena
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 24.3

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (See Continuation Page)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 39.093433 -94.604822 3 39.092908 -94.603611
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

2 39.093360 -94.603879 4 39.092394 -94.603037
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

_____ NAD 1927 or _____ NAD 1983

1 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Rosin, Principal

organization Rosin Preservation date May 2016

street & number 1712 Holmes Street telephone 816-472-4950

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

e-mail Elizabeth@rosinpreservation.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
 - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Kemper Arena

Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri

County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: Kemper Arena

City or Vicinity: Kansas City

County: Jackson State: Missouri

Photographer: Brad Finch, f-stop Photography

Date

Photographed: October 2013 and April 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 28:** East and south elevations. View to southwest from Beardsley Road.
- 2 of 28:** East elevation. View to west.
- 3 of 28:** North and west elevations. Soffit vent visible under upper mass. View to southeast.
- 4 of 28:** North and west elevations. View to southeast.
- 5 of 28:** West elevation. View to east.
- 6 of 28:** West and south elevation; trash dock visible on right. View to northeast.
- 7 of 28:** Southwest corner at concourse level. View to east.
- 8 of 28:** Arena bowl. View to south.
- 9 of 28:** Arena bowl. View to north.
- 10 of 28:** Floor level seating riser cubbies. View to north.
- 11 of 28:** Typical private suite.
- 12 of 28:** Typical upper level deck with painted mechanical vents.
- 13 of 28:** Corner entrance vestibule at main concourse level.
- 14 of 28:** Main concourse (typical).
- 15 of 28:** Typical concourse concession stand.
- 16 of 28:** Intact concourse just west of 1996 atrium. View to south.
- 17 of 28:** Access point between concourse and 1996 atrium. View to northeast.
- 18 of 28:** 1996 atrium and entrance. View to north.
- 19 of 28:** Access point to arena bowl (typical).
- 20 of 28:** Mid-level ramp/bridge to Club Level concourse (typical).
- 21 of 28:** Club Level concourse (typical)
- 22 of 28:** View of main concourse from Club Level bridge (typical).
- 23 of 28:** Ground level entrance (typical).
- 24 of 28:** Ground level concourse (typical).
- 25 of 28:** Locker room (typical).
- 26 of 28:** Box office. View to northwest.
- 27 of 28:** Storage structure. View to east.
- 28 of 28:** Storage Structure interior. View to west.

Kemper Arena

Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri

County and State

Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

Figure 1: Site Map. *Source: ArcGIS 2013.*

Figure 2: Contextual Map. *Source: ArcGIS 2013.*

Figure 3: Photo Map – Exterior

Figure 4: Photo Map and Current Plan – Concourse Level

Figure 5: Photo Map and Current Plan – Club level

Figure 6: Photo Map and Current Plan – Upper Seating Deck

Figure 7: Photo map and Current Plan – Lower Level

Figure 8: Partial Site Plan for Kemper Arena, Sheet A-1.3 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

Figure 9: Concourse Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.4, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, 23 July 1973.

Figure 10: Upper Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.6, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, [1973].

Figure 11: North Elevation and Transverse Section of Kemper Arena, Sheet A-3.1 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

Figure 12: Current Plan, Lower Level. Sheet A 1.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 13: Current Plan, Club Level. Sheet A 1.3, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 14: Current Plan, Upper Seating Deck. Sheet A 1.4, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 15: Typical Elevations, Sheet A 3.2, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 16: Section at Mid Point, Sheet A 4.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

Figure 17: Historic Site Plan. (*Source: "R. Crosby Kemper, Jr. (sic) Memorial Arena Kansas City, Missouri," Architectural Record, March 1976, 109.*)

Figure 18: Kemper Arena, Late Summer or Fall 1974, View to Northwest. (*Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013*)

Figure 19: Kemper Arena Following Roof Collapse, 13 June 1979 (*Source: Vertical File, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013*)

Figure 20: Municipal Auditorium, Kansas City, Missouri, 1950. (*Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 1 April 2015*).

Figure 21: Municipal Stadium, Kansas City, Missouri, 1955. (*Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 1 April 2015*).

Figure 22: Truman Sports Complex, date unknown. (*Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 31 March 2015*).

Figure 23: Bartle Hall Convention Center, Kansas City, c. mid-1970s (*Source: Robert Askren Photograph Collection, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013*).

Figure 24: Complete List of Concerts Held at Kemper Arena, 1975 - 2011 (*Source: Concert Database, http://www.liquisearch.com/kemper_arena/concerts, accessed online 24 February 2016*).

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

SUMMARY

The R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena (Kemper Arena) occupies a 24.3 acre site in Kansas City's industrial West Bottoms. The 1974 arena, designed by C.F. Murphy Associates of Chicago, is comprised of two distinct components -- the concrete substructure and the superstructure. The substructure is largely hidden by an earthen berm that rises from the parking lot. The superstructure sits atop the berm. The arena bowl, seating risers, interior concourses and lower level functional spaces are integral elements of the poured concrete substructure. The superstructure includes three oversized trusses that rise from the berm to cross the mass of the building. Inside the building a secondary system of bar joists and trusses hangs from the superstructure and carries the load of the roof deck. This approach allowed designers to achieve a 324-foot clear span inside the arena. Metal panels mounted on steel mullions clad the exterior. The enclosed mass of the superstructure has upper and lower components. The lower block is an oval that reflects the shape and dimensions of the arena bowl and its encircling concourse. Resting on top of the oval is a rectangular upper block with rounded corners. All elements of the superstructure are white, giving the arena a cohesive appearance. A narrow enclosed tubular storage structure, part of the original construction, connects to the arena floor through the south end of the berm. A box office and trash dock were incorporated into the south side of the berm at an unknown date (between 1987 and 1996). A glass atrium and parking level entrance were added to the east elevation in 1996. As part of this work, the central truss was altered to accommodate additional seating on the east and west sides of the arena bowl. The modified truss was designed to visually complement the two flanking, original trusses. The significant elements of the building design otherwise remain intact. The nominated property has one secondary resource that supports its historic function: the historic parking lots north and east of the arena and the road system that navigates the property are a contributing structure.

ELABORATION

SETTING

Kemper Arena sits at the center of a large, flat patch of ground in the southwest corner of Kansas City's West Bottoms industrial district (*Figures 1-2*). The state line separating Missouri and Kansas runs immediately to the west of the property. To the east, steep bluffs present a wooded slope toward the property and the Kansas (Kaw) River, which flows just west of the state line. The river channel makes a deep curve at a point aligned with Kemper Arena. A concrete levee lines the river bank. Open lots covered with gravel and/or grass fill most of the open ground between the levee and the state line. There are a few clusters of industrial buildings in this area south of Kemper Arena.

Kemper Arena functions as part of the American Royal complex, which includes several buildings and large paved parking lots, roughly bounded by 17th Street on the north, Wyoming Street on the east, and American Royal Drive on the west and south. Within this cluster the arena and its adjacent parking lots are publicly owned, while the rest of the complex is privately owned by the American Royal, a not-for-profit organization that promotes and educates about the area's agricultural heritage. South of Kemper Arena within the boundary of the complex there are several large event halls associated with the American Royal, including Hale Arena and the Governor's Exhibition Hall. Shared drives run between the American Royal buildings and Kemper Arena with access to both Wyoming Street and American Royal Drive. The large asphalt parking lots north and east of Kemper Arena are part of the historic site plan, while the parking lots south of Hale Arena were added to accommodate patrons to the event halls. The boundary

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

for this nomination follows the drives that encircle the arena and its associated parking lots, excluding the non-historic American Royal buildings and their associated parking lots.

Two modern vehicular viaducts cross the Kansas River. One carries 23rd Street over the southern tip of the Kemper Arena-American Royal complex; the other carries I-670/I-70 near 12th Street, a few blocks to the north. There are also several historic truss bridges in the vicinity of Kemper Arena. Active rail lines cross the river on truss structures near 25th Street and north of 12th Street; there is also a vacated vehicular truss bridge just north of 23rd Street.

The blocks north of the Kemper Arena-American Royal complex retain vestiges of the commercial/industrial district that historically flourished in the West Bottoms. Just north of 17th Street is the prominent historic Stockyard Exchange Building. Much of the open land lying west of Genessee Street was the historic stockyards. East of Wyoming Street is the very active alignment of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and a small yard of rail spurs (*Photo 1*). Kansas City's original union station and a roundhouse once stood in this area near 14th Street.

ARENA (CONTRIBUTING BUILDING)

Exterior

Kemper Arena rests on a grass covered berm that rises approximately 25 feet above the grade of the surrounding parking lots (*Photos 1-6, Figure 3*). The berm covers the underlying lowest level of the arena structure. A wide concrete sidewalk encircles the top of the berm (*Photo 7*). Wide ceremonial concrete stairs that access the concourse align with the four corners of the arena and the original building entrances (*Photos 3 and 6*).

Three additions are integral to the south side of the berm, through which they connect directly to the interior of the arena. The box office has an arched metal roof supported on round tubular posts (*Photo 26*). To its west, stairs rise to the sidewalk encircling the arena. A concrete loading dock sits west of the box office (*Photo 6*). Extending south from berm is a long narrow one-story metal-clad storage structure with four large vehicular bays (*Photo 27*). The structure has tubular structural elements and a barrel-shaped roof clad with corrugated metal. Large overhead doors fill the vehicular bays in the west elevation. The floor inside is dirt (*Photo 28*). The north end of the structure connects to the floor of the arena via a tunnel through the berm, providing covered space for event staging. While the 6,600 square foot structure was not part of the original arena plan, it was added to the design and built concurrent with the arena when operators realized the need for such a space to facilitate transitions between events held inside the arena (*Figure 17*). As such it is considered a historic part of the resource. The additional space was especially critical when consecutive uses required different floor surfaces.¹ The box office and loading dock were added after 1987 and before 1996.

Two stacked geometric masses form the body of the arena (*Photos 3-5*). The lower oval mass reflects the shape of the arena bowl and its encircling interior concourse. The rectangular shape of the upper mass extends the main oval to accommodate mechanical equipment in the four rounded corners. Panels of seamed metal clad the walls of both forms and the soffits at the corners of the upper mass. There are slit vents and can lights in these soffits below the mechanical equipment. The entrances in the four corners of

¹ Mike McGraw, "Addition of Storage Area Approved for New Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 6 July 1973, Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

the arena have white metal slab doors that blend with the skin when shut (*Photo 7*). Inside each entrance is a vestibule formed by a parallel bank of glazed doors (*Photo 13*).

In 1996 the east elevation of the arena was altered with the addition of an entrance at-grade with the parking lot and a large glass “mask” that covers the central portion of the facade (*Photo 2*). The mask has a gently convex shape and a sloped form that extends slightly from the skin of the building. A metal-clad parapet rises above the glazing and the original roof line to accommodate additional seating at the top of the arena’s upper deck. Below the glazing, a bank of entrance doors is set into the berm and framed with concrete. Inside this entrance, patrons rise to the main concourse via escalators and stairs (*Photo 10*).

Three huge trusses composed of triangular modules cross the arena from east to west at regular intervals (*Photos 1, 5*). They are the primary structural elements that support the roof and walls. Tubular members ranging from 30 inches to 48 inches in diameter compose the trusses. The north and south trusses are identical. They rest on tapered concrete pylons, which are the visible tops of concrete footings, integral with the substructure, that extend 60 feet into the ground below the berm (*Photo 18*). The central truss was modified in 1996 to accommodate the expanded seating bowl inside the arena. The vertical legs were moved away from the east and west building walls to anchor into concrete footings at-grade with the base of the berm (*Photos 2, 4, 6*). Using members with a similar configuration to the original trusses, the central truss rises above the original parapet (and added wall section on the east), connecting to the original truss on the roof of the arena (*Figure 16*).

Interior

Inside Kemper Arena, a wide concrete concourse encircles the arena bowl at midlevel (*Photo 14, Figure 9*). The original corner entrances provide direct access to the concourse (*Photo 13*). Concession stands and restrooms project from and recess into the concourse walls at periodic locations (*Photos 14-15*). Installation of the “mask” on the east elevation removed the metal wall cladding to create a bright, naturally lit, two-level atrium (*Photo 10*). Within the atrium all of the steel structural elements are exposed and coated with spray-on fire-retardant material. The alterations did not significantly impact the volume of the historic concourse, which remains very legible, referenced by headers that extend across the opening between the atrium and the concourse (*Photos 16-17*).

Kemper Arena has seating for roughly 18,000 spectators. Access to the arena bowl occurs at regular intervals along the concourse. Both the upper and lower seating levels are reached from the same entrance points (*Photo 19*). Each entrance has a central run of concrete stairs heading down to the lower level seats. This access is flanked by two parallel runs of concrete stairs that rise to the upper level seats. In between these access points, other doors in the concourse wall access the private viewing suites that encircle the arena at the top of the lower bowl.

The minimal historic finishes of the concourse are substantially intact (*Photos 14-16*). Square ground-face concrete tiles clad the concourse walls. The concourse has no ceilings, except in front of the four building entrances, which have dropped hard surface ceilings with can lights. In other locations the tiered concrete risers of the upper level seats form the ceiling (*Photo 16*). Large functional light fixtures hang from the exposed structure.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Kemper Arena
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The arena bowl is a column-free space, 324 feet wide (*Photos 8-9*). Within the bowl blue plastic seats are attached to concrete risers at both the upper and lower levels. The bottom edge of the lower level seats, at or near the arena floor, can be modified as appropriate for each particular event. The aisle can end in stairs that take attendees to the floor; when floor access is not desired metal railings can be installed in front of the bottom row of seats and at the base of the aisles. When needed, additional bleacher seating can be brought out from storage areas under the lower level seats (*Photo 10*). The bottom of the upper deck terminates in a concourse that encircles the arena in front of this seating level. A metal pipe railing attaches to the edge of the deck at the front of the concourse. At some locations along this midlevel point there are concrete bridges that cross over the main concourse to access secondary concession stands and additional restrooms that were added in the mid-1980s (*Photos 20-21, Figure 13*).

At the rear of the lower level seats, at-grade with the midlevel concourse, a series of twenty-five private viewing boxes or suites encircles the arena (*Photo 11*). The concourse at the bottom of the upper deck forms the ceiling for the suites. They typically have ground-face concrete block or painted drywall partitions; concrete or carpeted floors; and dropped ceiling grids, although some suites have custom finishes such as wood paneling or wood parquet floors. A partial-height plexiglass wall forms the front of each suite and perpendicular full-height glass panels separate the suites.

Finishes and fixtures in the arena area are highly functional. The concrete floor allows for the installation of alternate materials as required by specific events – ice for hockey; wood for basketball; and dirt for rodeos and horse shows. Exposed steel trusses and bar joists form a grid at the ceiling (*Photos 8-9*). Sound absorbing panels are placed within most of the grid squares. This is an original design detail. Large runs of exposed ductwork encircle the perimeter of the arena at the top of the upper deck (*Photo 12*). Once painted a vibrant red, the color of the ductwork has faded over time. A large score board hangs from the center of the arena ceiling. Smaller scoreboards are attached to the front of the upper deck concourse at the four midpoints. None of the scoreboards is original. Primary banks of lights hang from the ceiling aligned with the long edges of the arena floor. Smaller banks of lights hang in other locations throughout the arena.

Large openings centered in the short, north and south ends of the lower seating bowl lead from the arena floor to a lower concourse that accesses administrative offices, locker rooms, and other back-of-house spaces (*Figure 12*). There is also an original restaurant/bar space on this level near the north entrance. The functional lower level spaces (concourse, offices, locker rooms, etc.) have painted concrete block walls; concrete, vinyl composition tile or carpeted floors; and dropped ceiling grids with acoustical lay-in tile. Slab metal doors access locker rooms. Offices have some storefront glazing facing the concourse (*Photos 23-25*).

ARENA ALTERATIONS

Kemper Arena experienced the following episodes of alteration since 1974.

1976 – Roof Repair

In May 1976, after an exceptionally heavy spring storm, a section of the arena roof collapsed (*Figure 19*). Forensic investigation pointed to weakened bolts between the secondary trusses and hangers as the cause of the failure. Accordingly, adjustments were made to the entire roof structure as part of the repair. The roof surface was also modified to slope outward toward the edges of the building rather than inward

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toward the center of the building. None of these repairs is evident to the casual observer and they do not impact the significance of the building's historic function as a mid-twentieth century multipurpose entertainment venue. The primary structural elements and significant exterior and interior finishes were undamaged by the collapse and were not altered during the course of repairs.

1987 – Concourse Amenity Upgrades

In the mid-1980s a Club Level concourse was added under the eaves at the perimeter of the building to provide additional women's restrooms and concession stands. These locations are accessed via concrete bridges at the base of the upper level deck in the four corners of the arena. The bridges cross the main concourse to the Club Level, which is stacked above the built-out spaces (concession stands and restrooms) on the main concourse. The volume of the main concourse remains unobstructed but for the bridges themselves (*Photos 19-21*). This alteration is highly unobtrusive and does not impact the qualities that render the building historically significant.

1987-1996 – Box Office and Trash Dock

Two elements were added to the arena in the late twentieth century. Both are built into the south side of the berm and connect to the interior of the arena at the lower level.

The box office is built into the berm immediately adjacent to the south stairs (*Photo 26*). Only the front (south) elevation and small portions of the side elevations are visible. The flat roof rises about two feet above the top of the berm. The structure is cast-in-place concrete with no ornament. Sloped concrete retaining walls flank the ticket counters recessed under the projecting roof. The five rectangular ticket window openings have a continuous concrete counter and concrete mullions. Metal roll-top security gates cover the windows. A free-standing canopy covers the box office waiting area. White tubular steel members compose the canopy frame. Steel trusses support the barrel vaulted roof, which is clad in metal panels.

The trash dock is built into the southwest corner of the berm (*Photo 6*). Cast-in-place concrete retaining walls frame a recessed area with large trash bays. Rectangular openings in the north wall access interior loading areas. A canopy with tubular steel framing and steel trusses, similar to the canopy over the box office, rises above the concrete roof of the trash dock.

1996 – Additional Seating and East Entrance Modifications

The desire for additional capacity spurred alterations to the arena in 1996 (*Figures 12-16*). Roughly 1,500 seats were added in a block above the upper deck on the east side of the bowl (*Figure 14*). Rising slightly above the original roof line, the block is clad on the exterior with white metal panels matching those of the main building walls (*Figure 15*). A two-story glass curtain wall was installed below the seating block. The original building skin was removed in this location. A new building entrance at the base of the curtain wall provides a direct connection between the historic east parking lot and the building interior.² The entrance leads to a two-story atrium where escalators access the main concourse. Expansion of the building mass to add seating required altering the central exterior truss. New vertical piers were anchored east and west of the berm and rise over the height of the new seating block (the designers anticipated a future, similar addition of seating on the west side of the bowl), where it anchors to the original space frame, which

² The original design had primary entrances in each of the arena's four corners rather than a single main entrance. The original entrances are intact and used for exiting (see Photos 7 and 9).

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remains intact across the roof of the arena. The design mimics the configuration of the original webs, as seen in the flanking piers.

PARKING LOT AND NETWORK OF ROADWAYS (1974 – CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE)

Two striped asphalt parking lots occupy open land north and east of the arena. Grassy strips dotted with mature deciduous trees and edged with concrete curbing and metal chainlink fences bound each parking lot. Four metal attendant booths set on concrete bases regulate entrance to the east parking lot. One such booth stands at the entrance to the north lot. The one-person booths are very small in scale and are excluded from the resource count. A network of two-lane asphalt roads encircles the arena and the parking lots, providing access to each element on the property. There have been no significant alterations to the parking lots or the road network. (*Figure 17*)

INTEGRITY

Kemper Arena remains a unique local example of the mid-twentieth century enclosed multi-purpose entertainment venue, distinguished from other recreation facilities in the city and in the region by its column-free interior and functional adaptability to accommodate a wide variety of events. The majority of features that contribute to its significance and that communicate its exceptional significance as a resource less than fifty years old remain intact. It is highly visible in its historic location and setting, prominently sited in the flat, former stockyards of Kansas City's West Bottoms. Key aspects of its design that define the property type (an efficient structural system that provides unobstructed views; tiers of seating surrounding an oval floor; functional spaces on a lower level) are unaltered. The addition of a secondary concourse and seating at the top of the bowl do not change the organization or function of spaces inside the building. They complement the original design and materials and, most importantly, have not changed the visitor experience on the concourse or in the seating bowl. Alteration of the central truss and the addition of a glass curtain wall to the east elevation in 1996 was an effort to extend the commercial viability of the arena during a period when many venues of a similar vintage were demolished. The nominated resource clearly communicates feelings about and associations with its period of construction and the area of significance for which it is nominated.

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SUMMARY

The R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena (Kemper Arena) at 1800 Genessee Street in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for the area of ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION. It also meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration G for buildings that are less than fifty years old. It is an exceptional local example of the enclosed multipurpose entertainment arena, a property type that evolved in the mid-twentieth century to include functional elements of a traditional auditorium, a music venue, and a sports facility. The City of Kansas City, Missouri developed Kemper Arena to provide a modern, year-round venue for athletic and performance events. At the time of its construction, the multipurpose arena was considered a requisite civic resource for a thriving city. Comparable local entertainment venues extant or planned when Kemper Arena was under construction were either much smaller (Municipal Auditorium), appropriate for only a limited range of events (various downtown theaters and the Bartle Hall convention center), or open to the elements (Kauffman and Arrowhead stadiums). Kemper Arena provided a multipurpose location for a wide array of entertainment experiences that was unique in size, facilities, and amenities to the Kansas City region. Over the next forty years, the variety and importance of events hosted by Kemper Arena created an inexorable connection to nearly every resident of the Kansas City metropolitan area as well as to many from a much broader region, the boundaries of which were defined by arenas of comparable size and draw located in Omaha, Denver, Oklahoma City, and St. Louis.

The venue played a critical role in the community's collective experience during the period of significance, which begins in 1974 with the opening of Kemper Arena. As Kemper Arena entered a period of decline in the mid-1990s, the venue hosted notably fewer A-list performers and events and struggled to retain longstanding stalwart users and regional attractions, such as the Big 12 Basketball tournament. A 1996 renovation, added seating to the upper level of the arena bowl, widened the east concourse, and added the entrance on the extended east façade in an effort to extend the economic life of Kemper Arena. These changes supported the historic function of Kemper Arena and did not alter the physical or functional qualities for which it is nominated and significant.

Ultimately, the changes were not successful in staving off economic obsolescence. Kemper Arena persisted as the city's most important enclosed sports and entertainment venue until its role was supplanted by the opening of the Sprint Center in 2007. Replacement of Kemper Arena reflected a shift in arena economics rather than functionality that led to the demolition of many venues of similar vintage across the country. The nationwide loss of mid-twentieth century multipurpose arenas enhances the rarity and significance of Kemper as an example of its property type. The period of significance ends in 2007 when the Sprint Center replaced Kemper Arena as Kansas City's primary enclosed arena venue.

ELABORATION

THE MID-CENTURY MULTIPURPOSE ARENA

The urbanization of the United States after the Civil War was accompanied by an increase in both leisure time and disposable income. New commercial ventures offered patrons ways to spend their free time and spare money. Itinerant theater groups, circuses, horse races, athletic events, political rallies and agricultural fairs were popular attractions. In the late nineteenth century these events were housed in temporary facilities (e.g. tents or fields) on the edge of town or in an existing building with a stage or floor

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for performances and ample seating, such as a town hall or theater. By the start of the twentieth century enclosed sports arenas became more common as the new game of basketball gained popularity. Advances in refrigeration technology enabled the production of indoor ice sheets, also elevating ice hockey to an indoor spectacle.

Nationwide there was a sharp rise in the number of multipurpose arenas constructed after World War II. Most of the existing facilities dated from the first quarter of the century and were aging. At the same time, communities without a venue for large civic and recreational gatherings sought to add one. America had experienced almost two decades of lean times. The federal government funded a variety of public development projects during the 1930s through the New Deal programs, but there was little private construction. Then, in the early 1940s construction materials were diverted to the war effort. By the time World War II ended and the national economy rebounded in the 1950s, there was a pent-up demand for new buildings to signal the prosperity of the post-war era.

A multipurpose arena was the perfect expression of the times. An arena signaled an affluent local population with both time and money to spend on leisure activities and escapist pursuits.³ In less populated parts of the country the variety of performers and events also drew visitors from the surrounding region. By the late 1950s, most latent community infrastructure needs had been met and bountiful economic times allowed for public spending on civic luxuries. Such assets promoted a positive public image of the city center to counter the significant increase in suburban development. Writer Frank Deford also credits the modern multipurpose arena with enhancing the visibility of professional and collegiate athletics, taking the circus and the ice show to new profit levels, and creating a viable livelihood for musical entertainers and performers.⁴ The arena offered something that would appeal to everyone, young and old, women and men. Advocates of a new Kansas City arena boasted that the venue could host over 200 events annually.⁵ From the outset there would be a season's worth of professional hockey and basketball games, visits from three circuses and a couple of ice shows, as well as basketball tournaments and, of course, the annual agricultural shows of the American Royal. The American Royal was a locally hosted event that drew attendees from throughout the Midwest and Plains states. It was held in conjunction with the national Future Farmers of America convention, drawing young people to Kansas City from around the country.⁶ The biggest hurdle to the success of any individual event was the multitude of entertainment options available and the finite amount of time at a patron's disposal.⁷

An arena was a big ticket item. While most arenas operated profitably, it took a long time to offset the initial construction costs. Unlike the theaters built by entrepreneurs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the high cost of arena construction in the post-war era was of little interest to the private sector. This left these projects in the hands of the local government or a public-private civic partnership. When the voting public hesitated to approve the large sums required to build an arena, municipalities used public relations campaigns, often emphasizing the economic synergy of the project, to bring success at the polls.⁸

³ Frank Deford, "Your Time, Not Your Dollar," *Sports Illustrated*, May 12, 1969, 74.

⁴ Keller, 237.

⁵ William McCorkle, "Thompson Asks to Build Posh Suites in New Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 7 May 1973.

⁶ Lynn Cheatum, "Kemper Arena to Provide Setting for Many Events," *Kansas City Star*, 13 October 1974.

⁷ Deford, 75.

⁸ Deford, 82.

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This was very true in Kansas City. There was general consensus in the early 1950s that the booming metropolitan area would soon outgrow Municipal Auditorium, opened in 1937. In 1954 voters approved a \$6 million bond measure to support construction of a new arena. For almost two decades after this vote more pressing local needs held sway, and the bond funds remained unspent. In part there was little external pressure to replace Municipal Auditorium. It remained one of the largest entertainment venues among the cities with which Kansas City competed for convention and arena events, communities as far flung as St. Louis, Des Moines, Omaha, Denver, and Oklahoma City. That dynamic began to shift in the early 1970s when Oklahoma City opened a new 14,000-seat arena, St. Louis refurbished and expanded its pre-war arena (soon to be renamed the Checkerdome), and Denver voters approved bonds for a new 18,000-seat arena. As the National Hockey League (NHL) looked to expand, the time became right for Kansas City to take action. Local elected officials and civic boosters began advocating heavily for a new arena in 1971, hoping to ride the coattails of an NHL expansion team to generate action.⁹

Arena construction and capacity had surged in the 1960s. By the end of the decade, nationwide there were over 355 arenas with seating capacity of 5,000 or more and 100 arenas that could seat double that number. Two-thirds of these had been built after World War II; almost 25 percent were built after 1964.¹⁰ By the early 1970s a new arena typically sat 10,000 – 20,000 spectators.¹¹ The flexible layout easily adapted to the array of entertainment offerings it hosted. Kemper Arena provided this venue for Kansas City. It offered a column-free seating bowl in a flexible venue that could accommodate between 15,000 and 18,000 patrons, nearly double the 9,500-seat capacity of Municipal Auditorium.

As was the case with almost all post-war development, parking was a critical component of a successful plan. Many new arenas were located away from the city center in new development districts cleared of older structures to accommodate the new buildings and the requisite parking.¹² A large form set in a sea of parking, the modern arena was ideally poised to host guests from far and wide. After much debate about its proposed location, Kemper Arena took advantage of such a site in Kansas City's West Bottoms. Free from the restrictions of a street grid or proximal buildings, the venue became a beacon to attendees and a regional entertainment destination.

As envisioned for Kemper Arena, a typical multipurpose venue hosted events upwards of three nights per week year-round, offering an array of entertainment options that appealed to all segments of the community. According to Deford, the arena quickly became an integral part of a community's psyche and self-perception. He wrote, "The arena, more than any other, is the building for this time.... It is a phenomenon that all by itself is changing the entertainment habits and sporting interests of millions." Carson Bain, Mayor of Greensboro, North Carolina, echoed Deford, describing arenas as "necessities for the cities of the '70s.... America needs them for the happiness of a community, and in the long run... for civic peace as well."¹³ It was this sentiment that had propelled Kansas City's civic leaders in 1971 to renew their advocacy to replace the aging Municipal Auditorium. As a *Kansas City Star* editorial noted, "the region will gain an impressive indoor amphitheater with a seating capacity large enough to accommodate

⁹ Joe McGuff, "Sporting Comment," *Kansas City Star*, 23 January 1973.

¹⁰ Deford, 72-73.

¹¹ Joseph R. Warlick, Jr, "A View from the Bleachers," *Modern Steel Construction*, vol. XI, No. 3, Third Quarter 1971, 3-5.

¹² Keller, 194-195,

¹³ Deford, 74.

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national events. Jobs are at stake as well as the welfare of the local economy.”¹⁴ Another article, written shortly before Kemper Arena opened concluded, “Kansas City’s image as a convention center and sports mecca will take on added sheen when the Kemper Arena is ready.”¹⁵

From its inception, Kemper hosted a wide variety of events. The underlying concrete floor was easily topped with ice, wood, turf, or dirt as required by the program. Major league sports teams who called Kemper home included the Scouts (National Hockey League), the Kings (National Basketball Association), and the Comets (Major Indoor Soccer League). When the Scouts left after two seasons, minor league hockey teams took up residence. Kemper hosted WWE wrestling events, Women’s Flat Track Roller Derby bouts, amateur figure skating competitions, and gymnastics championships. Muhammed Ali staged an exhibition bout at the venue shortly after regaining the World Heavyweight title from George Forman. You went to Kemper to see the circus, the ice show, the rodeo, and monster truck rallies. Bob Hope performed two benefit concerts at Kemper Arena. It was the site of the 1976 Republican National Convention. An annual highlight was the regional agricultural and livestock events hosted by the American Royal and, until 1998, the annual convention of the National FFA Organization (formerly the Future Farmers of America). But, college basketball was consistently one of the arena’s biggest draws. For years it hosted Big 8 (later Big 12) basketball playoffs, and in 1988, the 50th anniversary of the NCAA men’s basketball tournament, it hosted the Final Four, which was won by the local University of Kansas in a riveting defeat of arch rival University of Oklahoma.

Of equal importance to basketball was Kemper’s role as the regional venue hosting premiere touring musical performances. Missourians could see shows of this caliber in Kansas City or in St. Louis. These performers made few stops elsewhere in the region. Kansans might see a big outdoor concert at Veterans Field on the Wichita State University campus or at an arena in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Dallas or Denver. Iowans might get to see a performance at the State Fairgrounds in Des Moines. There was War Memorial Stadium in Little Rock, Arkansas. But, for the majority of people living in the small cities and rural towns of the eastern Plains, Kansas City and Kemper Arena were THE destination for big musical performances.

Jethro Tull headlined the first rock concert at Kemper Arena in January 1974. Over the years, Kemper hosted performances by everyone from Frank Sinatra to Michael Jackson and U2. Elvis Presley, Paul McCartney & Wings, the Rolling Stones, ZZ Top, The Who, Aerosmith, KISS, Pink Floyd, Alice Cooper, and Rod Stewart; Yes, Queen, and Rush; Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel, AC/DC, Journey, the Police, Metallica, Motely Cure, Ozzy Osbourne, Boston, and more.¹⁶ The roster of performances reads like a who’s who of late-twentieth century popular music. Figure 24 shows a list of rock concerts held at Kemper compiled by the website liquisearch.com. For a pop or rock concert, no other Kansas City venue could offer the size or facilities that Kemper did. Older venues, such as Municipal Auditorium, Memorial Hall (Kansas City, Kansas), Cowtown Ballroom, and the Folly Theater were significantly smaller and unable to accommodate the equipment that was inherent to large stadium concerts beginning in the 1970s. Arrowhead Stadium, Starlight Theater (at Swope Park), and Sandstone Amphitheater (Bonner Springs,

¹⁴ “Equitable Plan to Build an Arena and Save the Royal,” *Kansas City Star*, 21 March 1973. Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁵ Lynn Cheetum. “Kemper Arena to Provide Setting for Many Events,” *Kansas City Star*, 13 October 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁶ Concert Database, www.pf-db.com/index.php?list_venue&choice=113, 26 January 2015; Rick Hellman, KC Rock History Project, personal communication, 1 January 2015.

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Kansas) hosted a limited number of seasonal outdoor concerts and music festivals, but the vast majority of top rock shows were staged at Kemper.¹⁷

In the 1990s, there was a growing trend across the country to replace mid-century arenas. The big change was not about overall seating capacity or views (most arenas from the 1970s had ample column-free bowls), but rather it was a question of amenities. The high dollars commanded by luxury seating at major sporting events was the driving force. When Kemper opened, a professional basketball or hockey game typically drew 6,000 – 8,000 spectators. In an effort to increase revenues in the late 1980s, NBA and NHL team owners devised the idea of luxury boxes, comfortable living room-like spaces with food and beverage service that could be sold for significantly more money than a standard stadium seat. The original design for Kemper was cutting edge. It included twenty-five “suites,” perhaps more aptly described as viewing boxes (*Photo 11*). These were small private spaces partitioned from the general stands at the top of the lower bowl. The open room had movable plastic chairs, a plexiglass railing, and a very modest array of amenities. In 1996 the suites at Kemper leased for \$7,200 - \$14,500 a year, and there was a waiting list. If all were rented at top dollar, this would net \$362,500. By contrast a new arena with 200 suites outfitted with club seating, high-end finishes and luxurious amenities could generate \$24 million a year. The fee was often paid to the owners of the local NBA or NHL team, who used the money to hire star players and hopefully improve their shot at a championship. The first arena to implement the luxury suite was the Palace of Auburn Hills in Michigan. Opened in 1988 for the Detroit Pistons, each of its 180 suites generated up to \$200,000 a year for the team, significantly enhancing the ability of team owners to attract star players.¹⁸ Perhaps coincidentally, the Pistons won two national championships after moving to their new arena. By 1996 this scenario was playing out across the country. Almost every city with an NBA and/or NHL team (as well as cities, such as Kansas City, hoping to – again - attract a franchise) pursued a new arena, typically demolishing their old arena in the process.

This trend also documented a shift in the purpose of arenas. Most of the older arenas were publicly-financed and owned. They typically operated in the black, but required long-term financing to cover construction costs.¹⁹ For this reason, their development had been a civic endeavor, with the cost of construction borne by the community as a whole through the sale of bonds. As public buildings, arenas were programmed to serve the entire community, offering a broad array of events – family entertainment, music concerts, as well as sporting events. By the mid-1990s this was no longer the case. The demands of professional sports teams became the driving force behind building new arenas and, to a lesser degree, renovating older arenas. In contrast to the egalitarian atmosphere that led to the construction of arenas in earlier decades, the focus on high-priced seating and amenities limited access to the arena.²⁰ Not everyone could enjoy the luxury facilities, and rising ticket prices reduced the number of events that most patrons could afford to attend. The public purpose of the arena was lost for the sake of securing the revenue stream demanded by the professional sports teams.

Kemper was one of many multipurpose arenas built in the United States during the mid-century period, when the aim was to provide accessible entertainment to a broad array of public interests. Beginning in the mid-1990s demolitions wracked the property type. The list of lost venues is long. Notable losses

¹⁷ “Kemper Arena Concerts,” http://www.liquisearch.com/kemper_arena/concerts, 24 February 2016.

¹⁸ Randy Covitz, “Outclassed,” *Kansas City Star*, 17 March 1996, C2:1.

¹⁹ Deford, 74.

²⁰ Covitz, *Outclassed*.

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include the Jacksonville [Florida] Coliseum (1960, demolished 2003), the Pittsburgh [Pennsylvania] Civic Arena (1961, demolished 2011), the Philadelphia Spectrum (1966-67, demolished 2010), the Atlanta Omni (1972, demolished 1997), the Capital Centre in Landover, Maryland (1973, demolished 2002), and Market Square Arena in Indianapolis (1974, demolished 2001). The Denver and Oklahoma City arenas that spurred construction of Kemper Arena in the early 1970s have also been lost, as has the St. Louis Checkerdome.²¹ Each of these venues was replaced by a new arena constructed on or near the original site, attesting to the continued importance of the multipurpose arena as a functional property type to the local community. The desire to replace the existing arena hinged on commercial obsolescence, rather than functional obsolescence.

The renovation of Kemper Arena in 1996 was an attempt to forestall the economic obsolescence attributable to its lack of luxury amenities. Arena general manager Carolyn Foxworth stated succinctly in 1996, "There is nothing wrong with Kemper Arena."²² Another NBA executive described a parallel situation as economic obsolescence, not physical obsolescence.²³ Aside from the Big 12 basketball tournament, the arena had plenty of capacity for its regular tenants – minor league hockey, indoor soccer, and NCAA men's and women's basketball. It filled up for special events – American Royal rodeos, FFA conventions, concerts, circus, and ice shows. The addition of seating and the alteration of the east façade undertaken that year were an effort to forestall the inevitable. Well before the renovation bonds were retired, civic leaders began planning to replace Kemper in the hope of luring an NHL or NBA team back to Kansas City.

Kansas City could not remain immune to the "need" for an updated entertainment and sports venue. The Sprint Center opened in 2007 as the public component of a larger privately-developed entertainment district created on the south side of downtown. Since then Kemper Arena has sat largely unused, despite assurances that it would continue to house "dirt" events (rodeos, monster trucks, circus, etc.). For the time being, Kemper Arena stands as a testament to the ideals and enthusiasms of the mid-twentieth century, the apex of the leisure economy.

Other Entertainment Venues in Kansas City

Kemper Arena is a distinct entertainment facility within the local built environment. Designed to fill a functional void, it served as the primary indoor entertainment venue until the 2007 opening of the Sprint Center. Four extant resources within the geographical context of Kansas City, Missouri share similar entertainment values. Additional non-extant resources hosted athletic or cultural events prior to the construction of Kemper Arena. All of these buildings were constructed for limited uses, either athletic *or* cultural; in size and scale they paled in comparison to Kemper Arena.

One of Kansas City's earliest multipurpose venues was Convention Hall, a large brick building in the downtown convention hotel district with capacity for over 22,000 attendees. After fire destroyed the original Convention Hall in 1899, the community rallied to rebuild the facility in a span of three months to host the 1900 Democratic National Convention. By 1928 when Kansas City hosted the Republican National Convention, Convention Hall revealed itself to be woefully out of date.

²¹The Checkerdome was demolished in 1999, after the privately-financed Kiel Center opened. "Great Moments at the St. Louis Arena," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, http://www.stltoday.com/news/multimedia/great-moments-at-the-st-louis-arena/collection_8ac01073-1d72-541d-add3-b8c4349db3bc.html, 22 December 2015 (accessed 24 May 2016).

²² Ibid.

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Municipal Auditorium opened in 1937 across the street from Convention Hall, replacing the aging auditorium as Kansas City's primary large-scale downtown indoor entertainment venue (*Figure 20*). The replacement was functional and literal. Convention Hall was demolished after Municipal Auditorium opened, and a parking garage and plaza were constructed on the block it had occupied. Municipal Auditorium housed three distinct venues (a 10,000-seat arena; a 2,400-seat music hall; and a 400-seat theater) that accommodated a range of activities: college basketball games and tournaments, wrestling and boxing matches, musical concerts, dramatic performances, and other special events. Yet, by the early 1970s, the city had outgrown the facilities Municipal Auditorium offered. Municipal Auditorium is extant and continues to host theater productions, limited athletic events (volleyball, gymnastics, bowling, roller derby, etc.), graduation ceremonies, weddings and other private events.

Elsewhere around downtown Kansas City, theaters constructed from the 1880s to the 1920s hosted dramatic, musical, and dance performances. These buildings varied greatly in size, with the largest accommodating around 2,500 patrons. The Midland Theater, the third largest theater in the country when it opened in 1927, had 4,000 seats.²⁴ While many have been demolished, extant historic theaters include the Folly, the Lyric, and the Midland.

While Municipal Auditorium became the leading venue for indoor athletic events, Kansas City's primary outdoor sports venue was Municipal Stadium (originally Muehlebach Field, *Figure 21*). Located a couple miles east of downtown at 22nd Street and Brooklyn Avenue, Municipal Stadium was constructed for minor-league and Negro League baseball in 1923. When the Kansas City Athletics Major League Baseball team began playing in Kansas City in 1955, a 30,000-seat double-deck stadium replaced the older single-deck ballpark. The Kansas City Chiefs National Football League team began playing at Municipal Stadium in 1962. While Municipal Stadium occasionally hosted a musical performance (most notably the Beatles in 1964 following a herculean effort by the stadium owner to impress his teenage daughter), its primary function was baseball and football games.²⁵

By the early 1960s Kansas City's major entertainment and recreation facilities had become outdated. As was common throughout the country after World War II, local governments assumed control of planning, funding, and maintaining what architectural historian George Ehrlich describes as "the assets that produce a positive national image – the so-called major league status."²⁶ These assets included the large-scale gathering spaces and facilities that were capable of hosting regional and national events.

Municipal Stadium was not large enough to support the surging popularity of professional football, and the inner-city location was not attractive to Kansas City's growing suburban population. Within twelve years after completing the stadium expansion, the city began to discuss building a new sports venue. In 1967 Jackson County voters approved bonds to fund two new, larger stadiums for Kansas City's professional baseball and football teams.²⁷ The Truman Sports Complex was built at the eastern, suburban edge of the

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Loew's Midland Theater and Midland Building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 28, 1977.

²⁵ Jay Spangler, "Beatles Press Conference: Kansas City 9/17/1964," *The Beatles Ultimate Experience: Beatles Interview Database*, <http://www.beatlesinterviews.org/db1964.0917.beatles.html> (accessed 21 August 2014).

²⁶ George Ehrlich, *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990*, Revised and Enlarged Edition (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 230.

²⁷ Ehrlich, 153.

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city (*Figure 22*). Arrowhead Stadium for the Kansas City Chiefs opened in August 1972 with more than 78,000 seats. Kauffman Stadium opened the following spring with roughly 40,000 seats.

Like cities across the country, Kansas City experienced rapid suburban growth in the 1950s. Retail businesses followed the thousands of families making an exodus from the historic city center to new and burgeoning communities on both sides of the state line. As the central business district lost its primacy as the area's commercial retail hub, city leaders focused on making downtown a convention destination, a tactic embraced by many localities to offset the loss of retail traffic to the increasing number of suburban shopping centers.²⁸ Bartle Hall, first conceived of in the 1960s, was designed to fill the gap in available convention facilities left by the demolition of Convention Hall in 1937. Modern convention centers required acres of uninterrupted exhibition space for booths and product displays, which Municipal Auditorium was not designed to accommodate. When it opened in 1976 after eight years of planning, design, and numerous construction delays, Bartle Hall boasted a 435,000 square-foot convention floor, much of it clear of structural members (*Figure 23*).²⁹ While it continues to host conventions, meetings, shows (auto, boat, recreational vehicle, etc.), and similar events, it has never hosted performances similar to those offered at Kemper Arena.

Historic theaters continued to operate in downtown Kansas City after World War II. Movement in the industry away from live entertainment to film and the subsequent rise of the suburban multiplex cinema provided substantial competition and led to the closure of many venues. Theaters were limited in the entertainment options they could offer. Their facilities were best suited to live performances of music, dance or theater, and their size limited performances to smaller audiences. They were wholly unable to accommodate the large arena concerts that became popular in the 1970s. Renovations to upgrade technology and update finishes were not able to overcome their inherently single-use function.

With the construction of Kauffman Stadium, Arrowhead Stadium, and Bartle Hall, Kansas City's civic leaders remained focused on developing facilities to meet specific entertainment needs. Kemper Arena was the last piece of the puzzle, providing a climate-controlled indoor venue that was adaptable to a broad array of event types and allowing for nearly continuous year-round use. The proximity of the site to interstate highways and the vast expanse of adjacent parking lots provided easy access to the arena from inside the city as well as from surrounding suburban and regional communities. Kemper Arena was integral to the city's ability to meet the entertainment needs of residents and visitors. It was the newest, largest, and primary multipurpose arena in the Kansas City region for over thirty years.

DEVELOPMENT OF KEMPER ARENA

Talk of building a new arena began in earnest in 1971, around the time that construction started on Bartle Hall. There was particular interest in developing a venue that could attract a National Hockey League (NHL) franchise to the area and that would supplement the aging facilities of the American Royal, a Kansas City institution that held an annual Livestock and Horse Show in the West Bottoms. In the early 1970s new arenas opened in Oklahoma City and Denver, and a refurbished and enlarged St. Louis Arena (a.k.a. the Checkerdome) was selected to host the 1973 NCAA basketball championships.³⁰ Kansas City voters had approved bond financing for the convention center, but beyond a limited pool of money

²⁸ Ehrlich, 162.

²⁹ Ehrlich, 164.

³⁰ Randy Covitz, "Outclassed."

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remaining from a 1954 sports arena bond, no public funding was available. Revenue bonds were proposed as the funding mechanism, which would allow individuals and corporations to contribute toward the project's estimated \$10 million price tag.³¹ Civic leaders discussed multiple sites for this venue – within the Truman Sports Complex, downtown next to the new convention hall, deep in suburban Johnson County, and on a piece of former stockyards land in the West Bottoms.³²

At the end of November 1971 a group of investors emerged who supported building an arena in the West Bottoms on the condition that Kansas City obtained an NHL franchise team. The new arena would house sporting events, with a focus on hockey, and also support the programs of the American Royal. The arena and associated parking would occupy a 50-acre parcel of land that would be purchased from the stockyards company. Backers anticipated that construction could start within ninety days of approval and would take twenty months to complete.³³ It would be another year before plans gelled.

In the late Fall of 1972 the Kansas City city council was leaning heavily toward approving the stockyards proposal for the new arena. On November 30 a committee interviewed four architect-contractor teams with previous experience in arena design. Each team presented preliminary ideas for this specific project. The schedule was tight. The NHL was meeting in January to discuss moving a franchise to Kansas City. The committee would need preliminary plans by that date in order to sway the NHL.³⁴ Before the end of the year the committee announced the selection of Chicago-based F.F. Murphy Associates and local builder J.E. Dunn Construction Company for the project. C.F. Murphy was already engaged to design Bartle Hall and had local offices. The team was given until January 22 to develop a guaranteed price for a 16,000-seat multipurpose arena.³⁵

With just forty-eight hours until the NHL finance committee meeting, the city council voted to allocate \$5.6 million in general obligation bonds, the balance of the 1954 voter-approved bonds, to the project. This was the final piece of a \$19.7 million financing package that also included \$7.5 million in revenue bonds; \$2 million of private funds pooled from an investor group; a \$1.2 million capital contribution from the American Royal; \$2.5 million gifted by the Kemper family; \$400,000 earned interest from other money in the package; and \$900,000 in federal aid for street improvements.³⁶ The local press heralded the decision as assuring the future of both the American Royal and an NHL expansion team. "The region will have an arena of the size needed to compete for the biggest conventions and the large national entertainment and sport events," the *Kansas City Star* boasted.³⁷

Less than three months later the planning process was moving swiftly forward. *The Star* published a site plan and architect's model on February 4 that showed the exterior structure rising over the arena.³⁸ On a

³¹ A Strong Downtown Bid to Tie Down Sports Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 9 Sept 1971, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

³² Robert Carroll, "Complex Web of Sites, Bids for Arena," *Kansas City Times*, 22 April 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

³³ John T. Dauner, "Royal Arena Site Backed," *Kansas City Times*, [3] January 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

³⁴ Dauner.

³⁵ William L. McCorkle, "Panel Recommends Firm for Design of Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 30 December 1972, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

³⁶ McCorkle, "Panel Recommends..."

³⁷ "City Hall Makes the Big Decision to Build Sports Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 24 January 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

³⁸ "Arena Site Plan," *Kansas City Star*, 4 February 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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4 April 1973 the newly formed American Royal Arena Corporation purchased 53 acres of land from the Kansas City Stock Yards Company for \$3,650,000 and borrowed just shy of \$1 million to purchase an additional 13.6 acres. The loan cleared the way for J.E. Dunn Construction Company to start preparing the site for construction.³⁹

Ground was broken on 14 April 1973. When the *Kansas City Times* published a photo on 1 August 1974 showing the distinctive bowl and truss structures in place it was possible to envision the completed building.⁴⁰ The \$23 million R. Crosby Kemper, Sr. Memorial Arena was dedicated on 18 October 1974, just eighteen months after construction began (*Figure 18*). Remarkably, the fast schedule was achieved despite a labor strike that interrupted construction for five months.

The dedication program noted that "Cooperation and civic pride within the Community have made the... Arena become a reality."⁴¹ The Kansas City Scouts NHL team played their first home game at Kemper Arena just two weeks later, followed shortly by home games of the Kansas City Kings basketball team. College basketball tournaments were highly anticipated, as was the 1975 American Royal.

The "gargantuan" and "gleaming white arena" was an instant landmark in the old stockyards.⁴² It had a footprint measuring 424 feet by 310 feet, and the top of the structure rose 95 feet above the surrounding parking lots. Inside the column-free space no seat was farther than 200 feet from the arena floor. Although it appeared smaller, Kemper Arena boasted twice as many permanent seats as Municipal Auditorium, the venue it replaced.⁴³ The official seating capacity was 17,000 for basketball and 16,000 for hockey. Events that required more floor space (track, rodeo, etc.) could still accommodate 15,000 patrons. This capacity placed it among the top venues in the country.

The inaugural event at Kemper Arena was an NHL game between the Kansas City Scouts and the Chicago Blackhawks on 2 November 1974 attended by 15,000 fans.⁴⁴ It was just the first of a wide array of events that Kemper Arena hosted over the coming decades. In addition to professional hockey and basketball teams, three travelling circuses, several ice shows, and the NCAA Big Eight basketball tournament were slated to use the facility. The Big Eight Conference was particularly excited about moving their tournament from Municipal Auditorium to Kemper Arena. The increased seating capacity alone greatly improved public access to the tournament, and Assistant Commissioner Jack McClelland was pleased with how the building separated back-of-house activities from the event-attending public, resulting in a better organized, less chaotic event. Before long, Kemper was hosting close to 200 events per year. Indoor soccer, arena football and roller derby teams played games there. Kemper hosted national championships for gymnastics and figure skating. It was the site of the 1976 Republican National Convention that nominated Gerald Ford for president and Kansan Bob Dole as his running mate. Elvis

³⁹ "Arena Group Schedules Beginning of Construction," *Kansas City Star*, 4 April 1973, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴⁰ Joe Willington, Jr., "Arena Framework," *Kansas City Times*, 1 August 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴¹ Dedication Program, R. Crosby Kemper, Sr., Memorial Arena, 18 October 1974. Vertical File. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴² David Zeeck, "Kemper Arena Dedicated," *Kansas City Star*. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴³ Joe McGuff, "Rich Tradition of Auditorium Gives Way to new Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 8 November 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴⁴ William D. Tammeus, "Big-Time Hockey Scores First Goal for Arena," *Kansas City Star*, 3 November 1974, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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Presley, Frank Sinatra, the Rolling Stones, and Michael Jackson were among the plethora of musicians whose concerts filled the venue to capacity. Through 1998 the National FFA Organization (FFA) held their national convention at Kemper, bringing as many as 37,000 visitors to town and pumping upwards of \$14 million into the local economy.⁴⁵ And, there were annual rodeos and horse and livestock shows as part of the American Royal. By 2005, it was estimated that 30 million spectators had attend events in the building.⁴⁶

In the early 1990s, city officials feared that the NCAA would pull its prestigious Big 12 basketball tournament from Kansas City after the organization expressed reservations about the limited capacity of Kemper Arena. The FFA, who had been meeting in Kansas City since the 1920s, began voicing similar concerns.⁴⁷ In an effort to stave off a potentially huge economic loss, the city added 2,000 seats to the arena. Three-quarters of these were built above center court; the remaining 450 seats were placed in the corners of the floor. To house the seats above the bowl HNTB Corporation designed a curved extension on the east exterior side of the arena that also provided a new glass-front atrium and parking level entrance. The center truss of the exoskeleton was reconfigured to accommodate the change, its legs moved out from the building's east and west walls and the top chord rose higher over the edge of the roof. On the roof it connected back to the original truss. This provided for the additional seating on the east side of the bowl and made room for a similar, future expansion the west side of the arena.⁴⁸

The improvements to Kemper appeased the NCAA for another decade. The Big 12 Men's Basketball tournament was played at Kemper through 2002 and again in 2005. The additional seating, however, was not enough to keep the FFA in Kansas City. After eighty years of Kansas City conventions, the organization chose not to return after 1998. This was a blow to community psyche; the invasion of FFA blue jackets every fall was part of the local identity.

Even before the improvements were completed in the spring of 1997, there were rumblings in the civic community to replace Kemper Arena. Since 1971 Kansas Citians had debated the merits of a downtown arena. Many considered the West Bottoms to be an awkward location and that the venue itself was outdated, despite the recent improvements. While Kemper Arena was built with twenty-five private suites (a novelty in 1974) and all of these were leased, these spaces were woefully inadequate when compared to the luxury boxes appearing in new arenas around the country.⁴⁹ Luxury boxes in newer arenas brought in hundreds of thousands of dollars more than standard seating, which enabled professional sports team owners (especially basketball) to hire star players who increased the likelihood of a championship for the home team. While it remained fully functional as a multipurpose venue, Kemper Arena could never compete with the economics of newer arenas. Like many of its peers nationwide, it was deemed economically obsolete.

⁴⁵ Associated Press, "Kansas City may lose FFA convention," 22 February 1996, http://www.postbulletin.com/kansas-city-may-lose-ffa-convention/article_45696c55-8e5d-5607-bf48-ff6e18d30822.html, accessed 15 July 2015.

⁴⁶ Randy Covitz, "A Storied History Amid Hoopla," *Kansas City Star*, 13 March 2005. Vertical File, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, A8. National FFA Organization, "A Brief History of the National FFA Organization," https://www.ffa.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/about_ffahistory.pdf, (accessed 15 July 2015).

⁴⁷ John Dvorak, "With No Bolts, New Arena Roof May Sport a Different Slant," *Kansas City Times*, 24 August 1979. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁴⁸ While the structural change anticipated expansion on the west side of the arena bowl this change was never made. Matt Campbell, "Panel Supports \$20 Million for Arena Renovation," *Kansas City Star*, 28 December 1995, A1:5.

⁴⁹ Randy Covitz, "Outclassed," *Kansas City Star*, 17 March 1996, C2:1.

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The Sprint Center opened in 2007, just inside the highway loop in the southeast corner of downtown Kansas City. The following spring the NCAA Big 12 Men's Basketball Tournament returned to Kansas City to play at the new venue. Despite promises to continue using Kemper for "dirt events" (rodeos, circus, monster trucks, etc.) the older arena sits mostly dark. In 2015 the American Royal moved their annual barbeque contest from Kemper to Arrowhead Stadium, and in 2016 they announced that the event would permanently move to Wyandotte County, Kansas. It remains unclear if the organization will continue to use Kemper Arena for its fall Livestock and Horse Show.

CONCLUSION

For over three decades, Kemper Arena was the primary multipurpose enclosed arena serving Kansas City and the surrounding region. It met the broad range of entertainment needs for which it was designed and hosted myriad professional and amateur athletic events, family entertainment performances, popular music concerts, political conventions, livestock shows, and more. In the 1990s, a wave of new arenas across the country replaced those built in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Improvements to Kemper Arena in 1996 attempted to extend its viable life, although they could not completely forestall the economic obsolescence of the venue in an era when owners relied on revenues from premium seating to supplant standard income from ticket sales. Yet, the experience of attending an event at Kemper Arena is unchanged from 1974. It remains fully functional for the use it was designed to perform. The loss of contemporary venues across the country enhances the significance of Kemper Arena as an example of the mid-twentieth century multipurpose arena property type.

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ADDITIONAL LATITUDE/ LONGITUDE COORDINATES

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6	<u>39.091140</u>	<u>-94.602799</u>	13	<u>39.090765</u>	<u>-94.605947</u>
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
7	<u>39.090525</u>	<u>-94.603484</u>	14	<u>39.090762</u>	<u>-94.607107</u>
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
8	<u>39.090517</u>	<u>-94.603719</u>	15	<u>39.092497</u>	<u>-94.607103</u>
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
9	<u>39.090711</u>	<u>-94.604045</u>	16	<u>39.09284</u>	<u>-94.606837</u>
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
10	<u>39.090758</u>	<u>-94.605796</u>	17	<u>9.093122</u>	<u>-94.606482</u>
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
11	<u>39.090359</u>	<u>-94.605607</u>			
	Latitude:	Longitude:			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the nominated resource is defined by the ring road that encircles and defines Kemper Arena and its historically associated open space.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the eligible resource and the open land adjacent and historically associated with it.

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Figure 1: Site Map. Source: ArcGIS 2013.



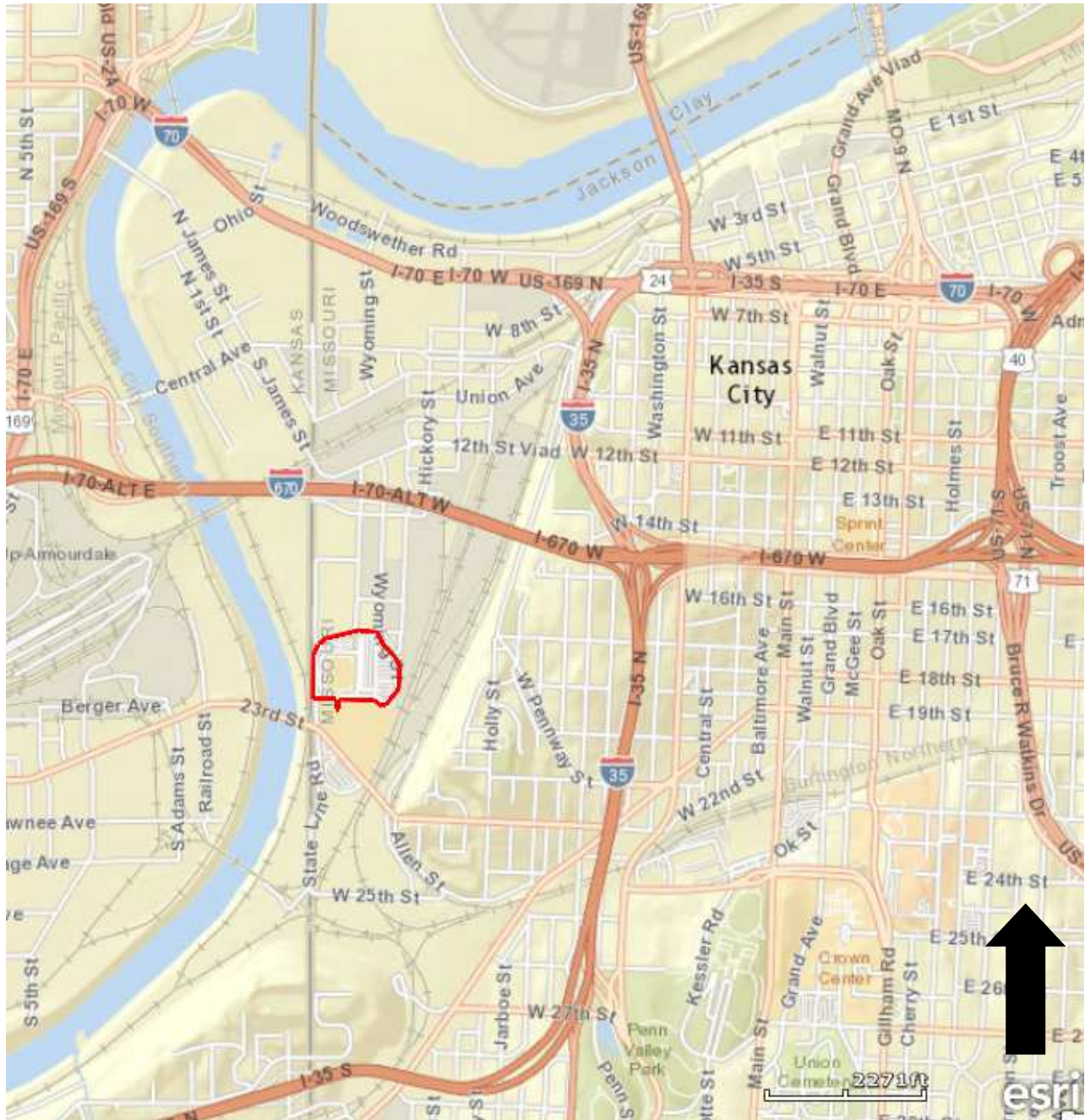
1: 39.093433 -94.604822	6: 39.091140 -94.602799	11: 39.090359 -94.605797	16: 39.09284 -94.606837
2: 39.093360 -94.603879	7: 39.090525 -94.603484	12: 39.090360 -94.605948	17: 39.093122 -94.606482
3: 39.092908 -94.603611	8: 39.090517 -94.603719	13: 39.090765 -94.605947	
4: 39.092394 -94.603037	9: 39.090711 -94.604045	14: 39.090762 -94.607107	
5: 39.092048 -94.602769	10: 39.090758 -94.605796	15: 39.092497 -94.607103	

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N/A
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Figure 2: Contextual Map. Source: ArcGIS 2013.

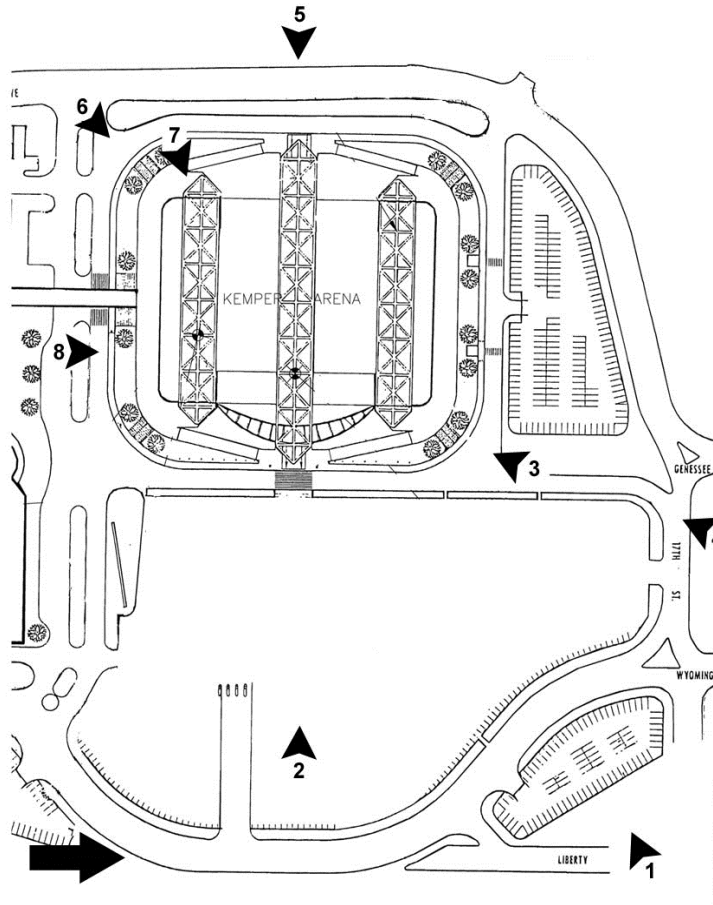


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Figure 3: Photo Map – Exterior



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N/A
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Figure 4: Photo Map and Current Plan – Concourse Level

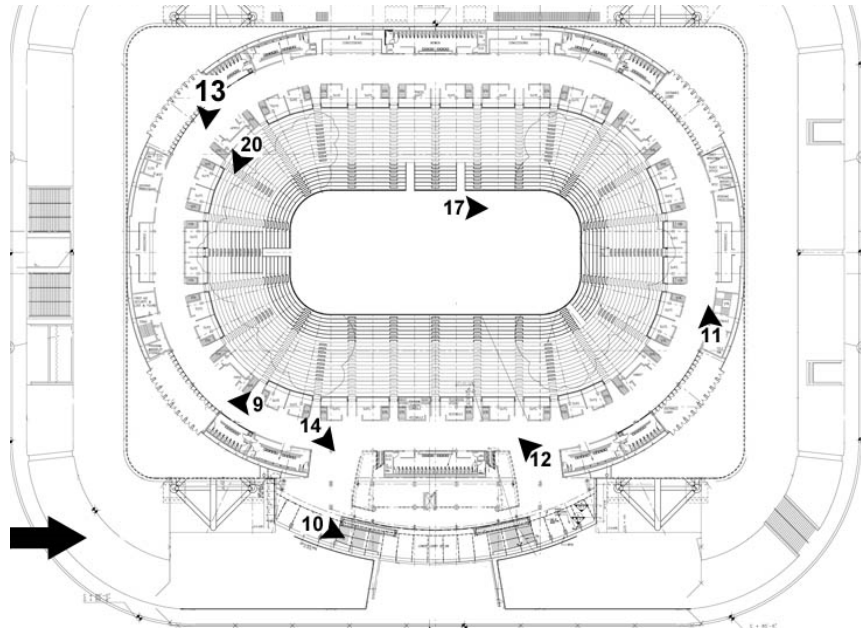
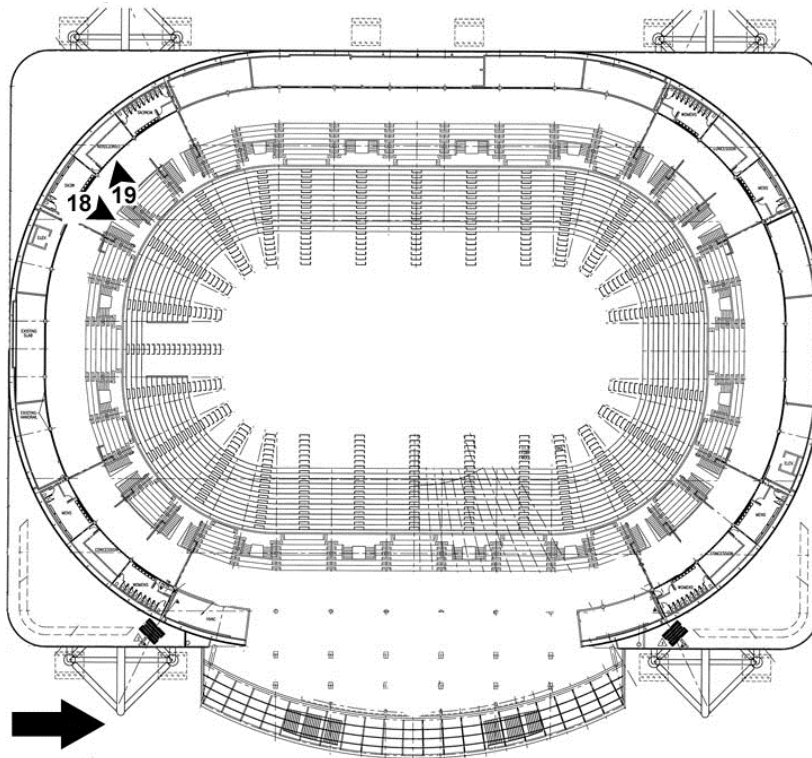


Figure 5: Photo Map and Current Plan – Club level



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Figure 6: Photo Map and Current Plan – Upper Seating Deck

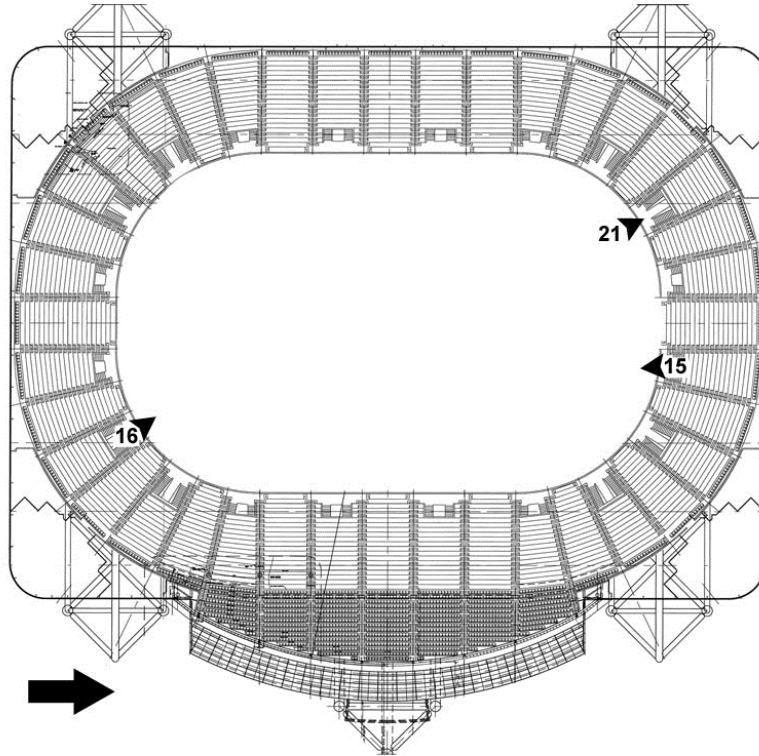
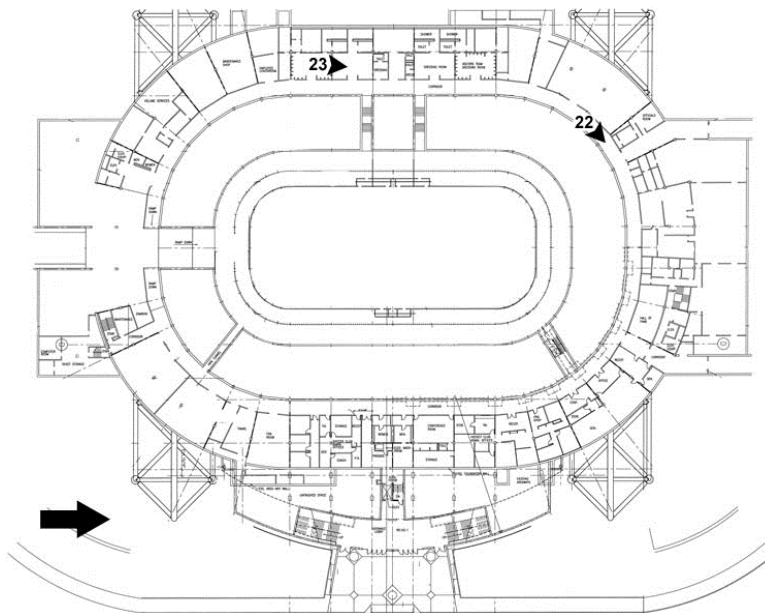


Figure 7: Photo map and Current Plan – Lower Level

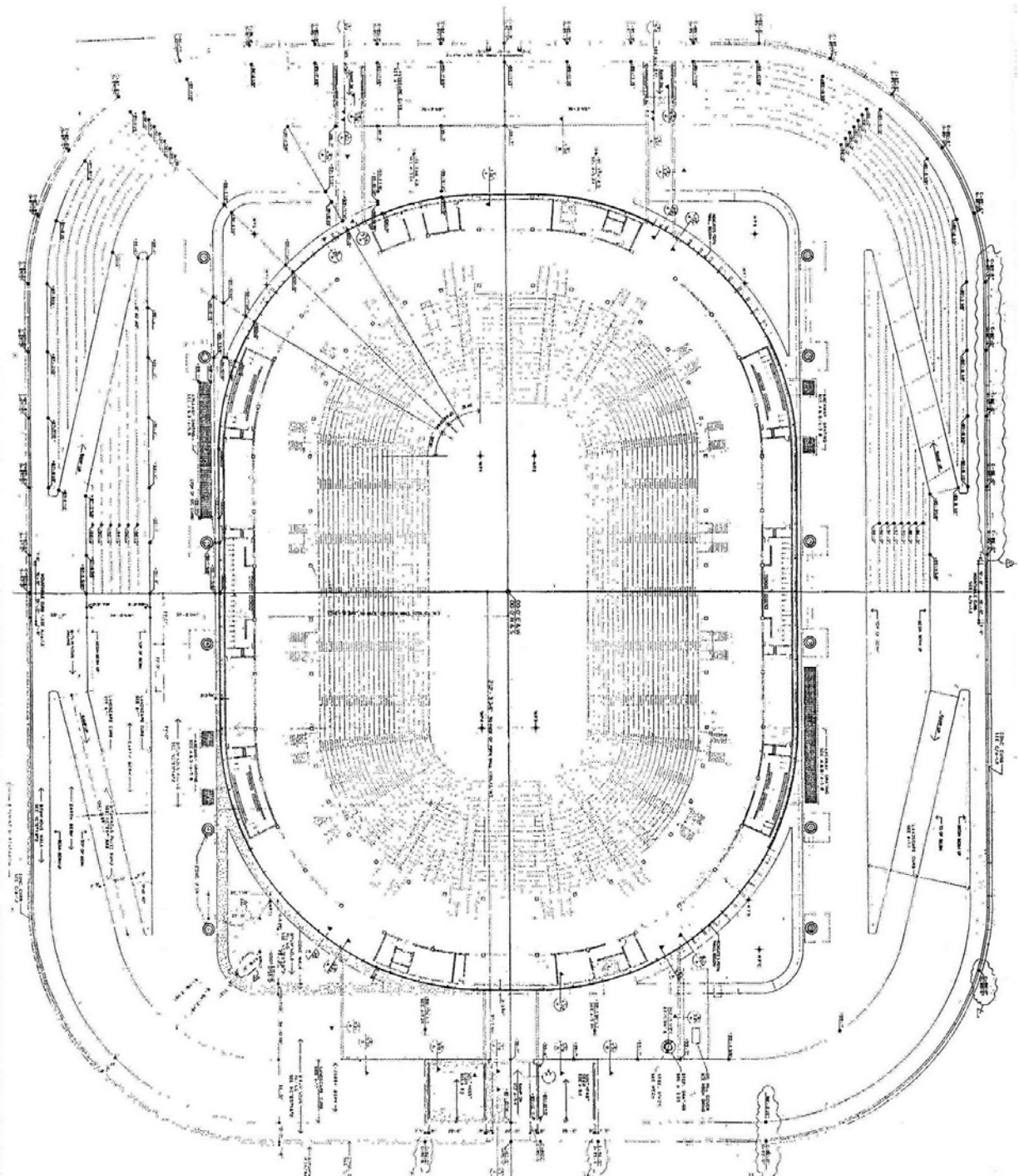


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Kemper Arena
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Figure 8: Partial Site Plan for Kemper Arena, Sheet A-1.3 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

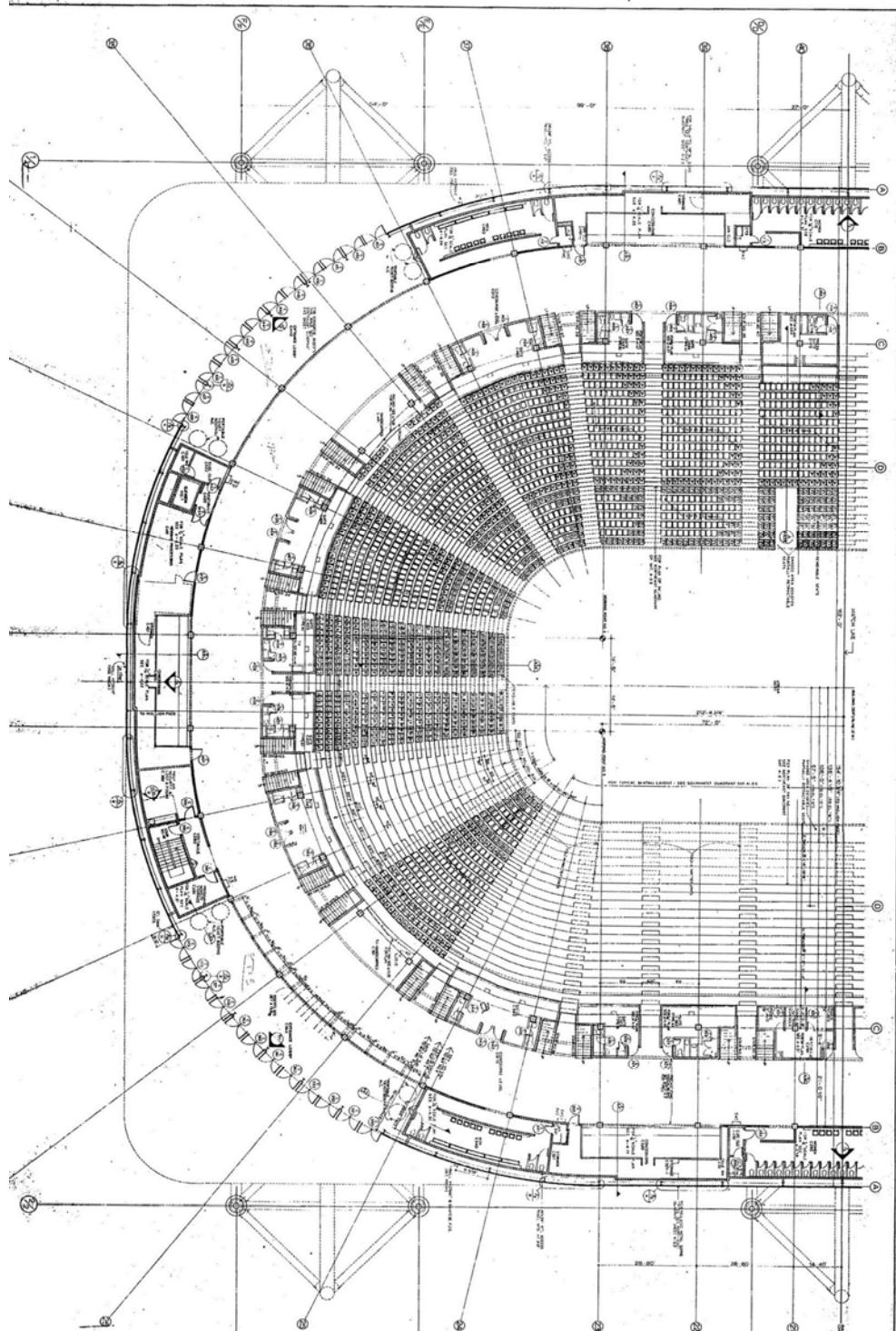


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Figure 9: Concourse Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.4, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, 23 July 1973.

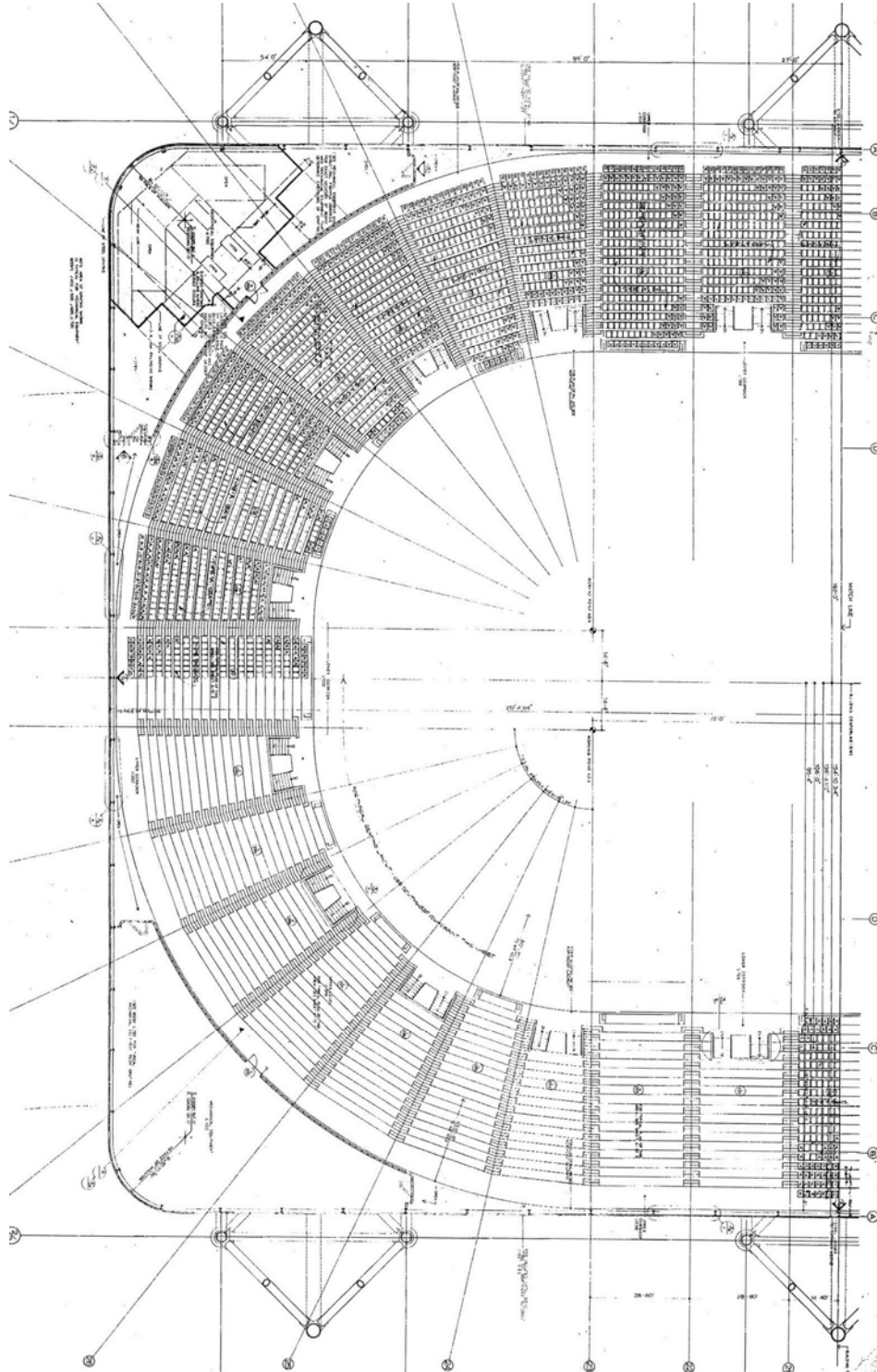


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Figure 10: Upper Level Plan, South Section, Sheet A-2.6, Architectural Plans for R. Crosby Kemper Sr. American Royal Arena, C.F. Murphy Associates, [1973].

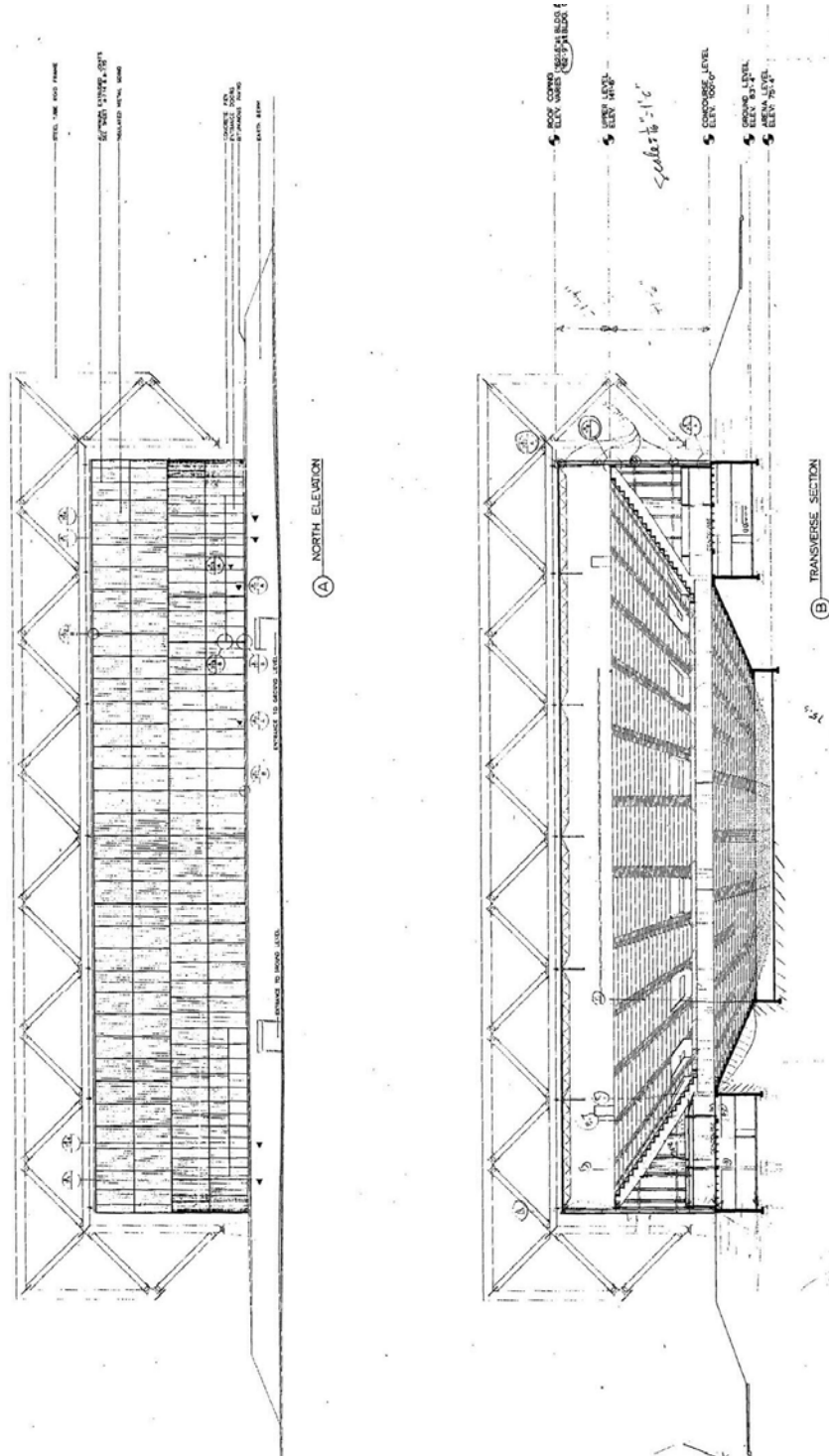


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Figure 11: North Elevation and Transverse Section of Kemper Arena, Sheet A-3.1 of Architectural Plans by C.F. Murphy Associates, 27 March 1974.

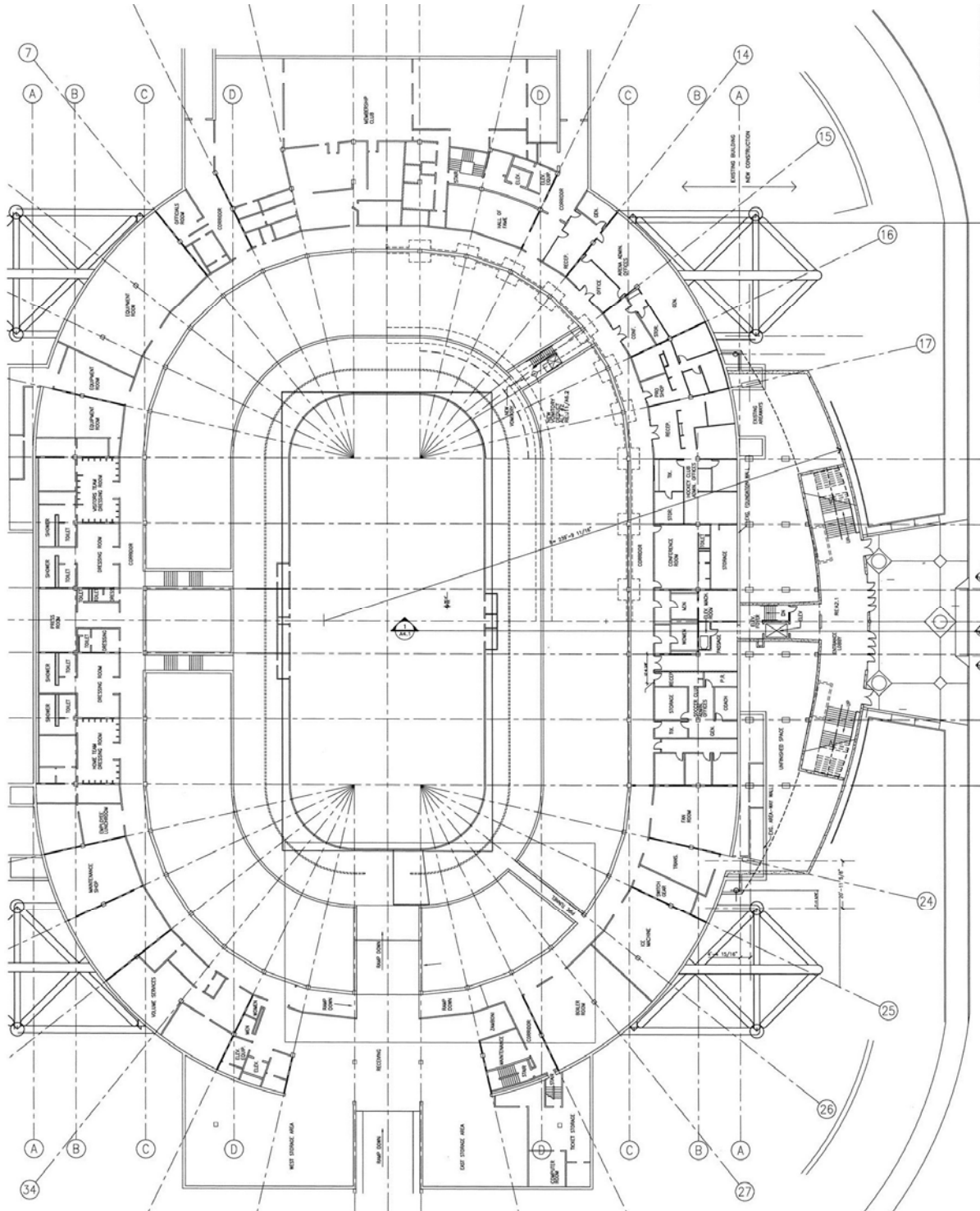


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Figure 12: Current Plan, Lower Level. Sheet A 1.1, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

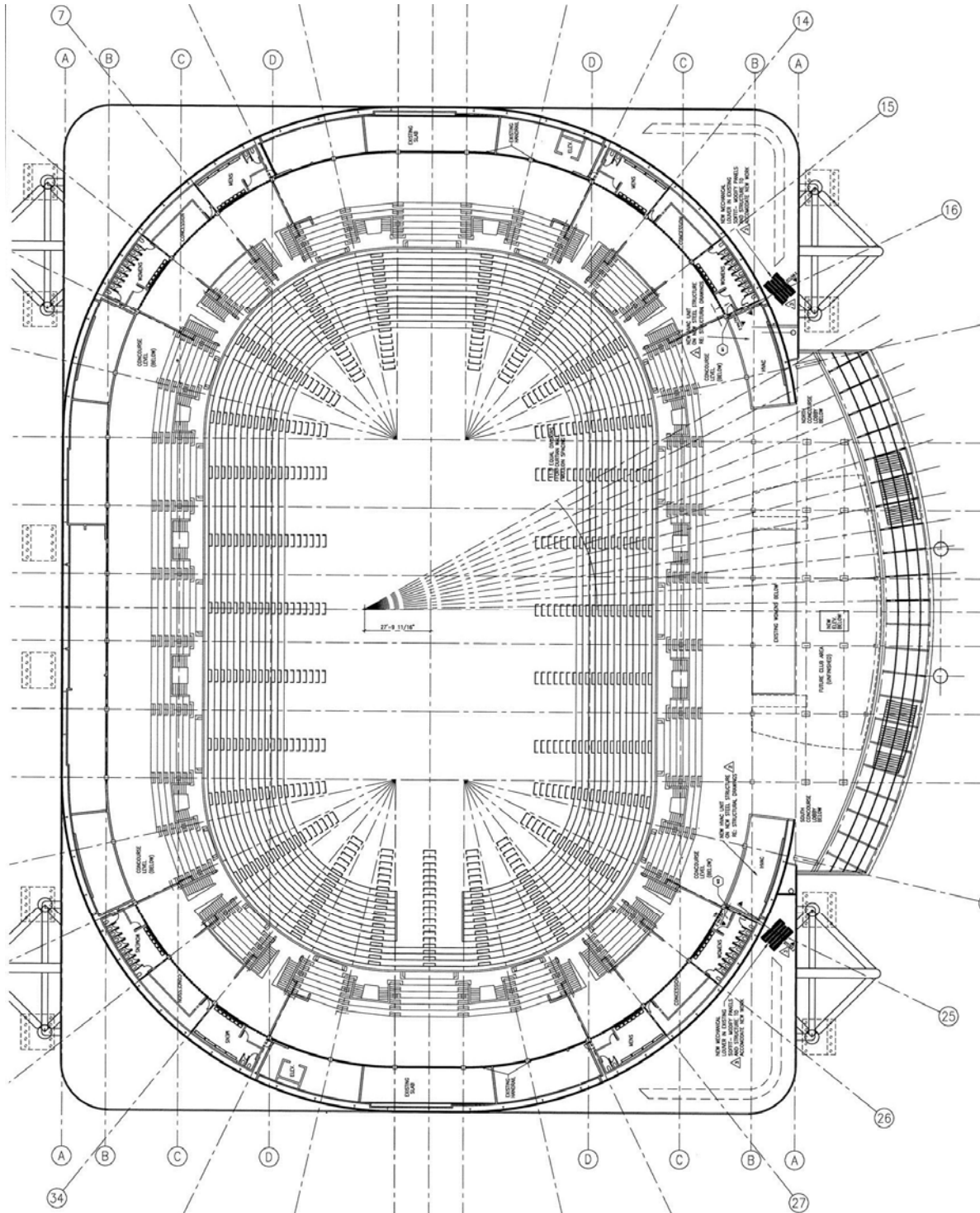


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Figure 13: Current Plan, Club Level. Sheet A 1.3, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

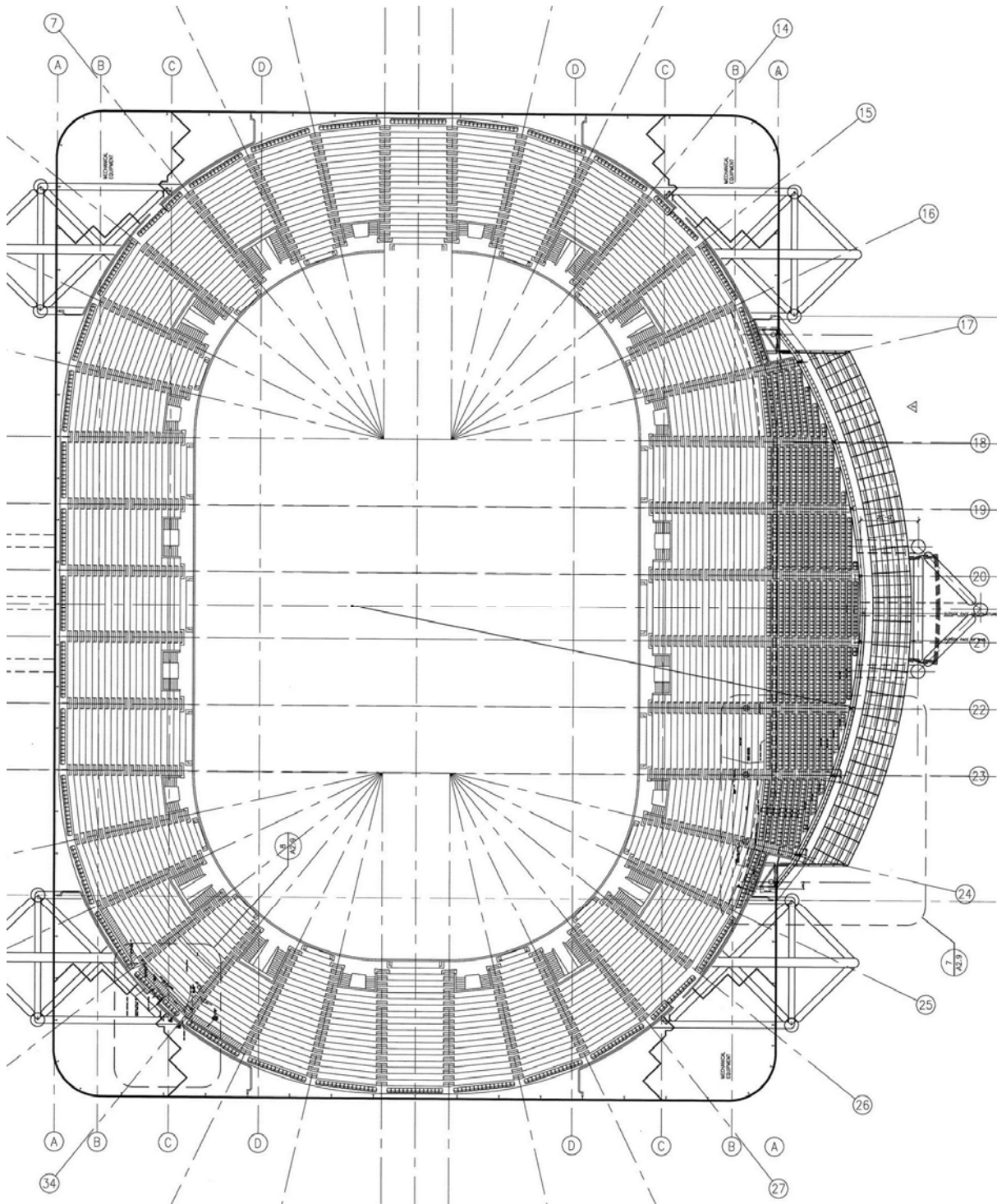


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Figure 14: Current Plan, Upper Seating Deck. Sheet A 1.4, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.

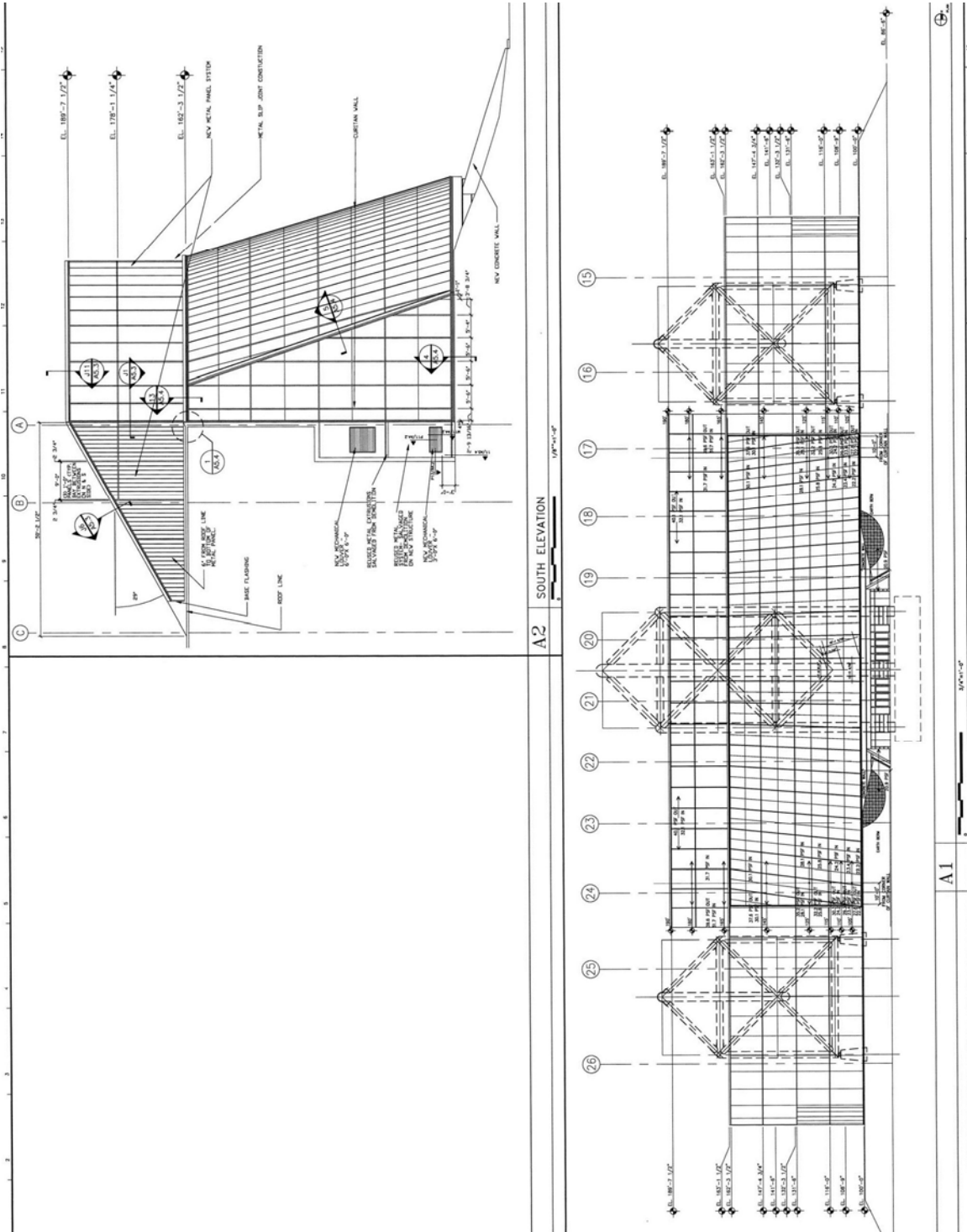


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Figure 15: Typical Elevations, Sheet A 3.2, Architectural Plans for Kemper Arena Expansion, HNTB Corporation, 22 July 1996.



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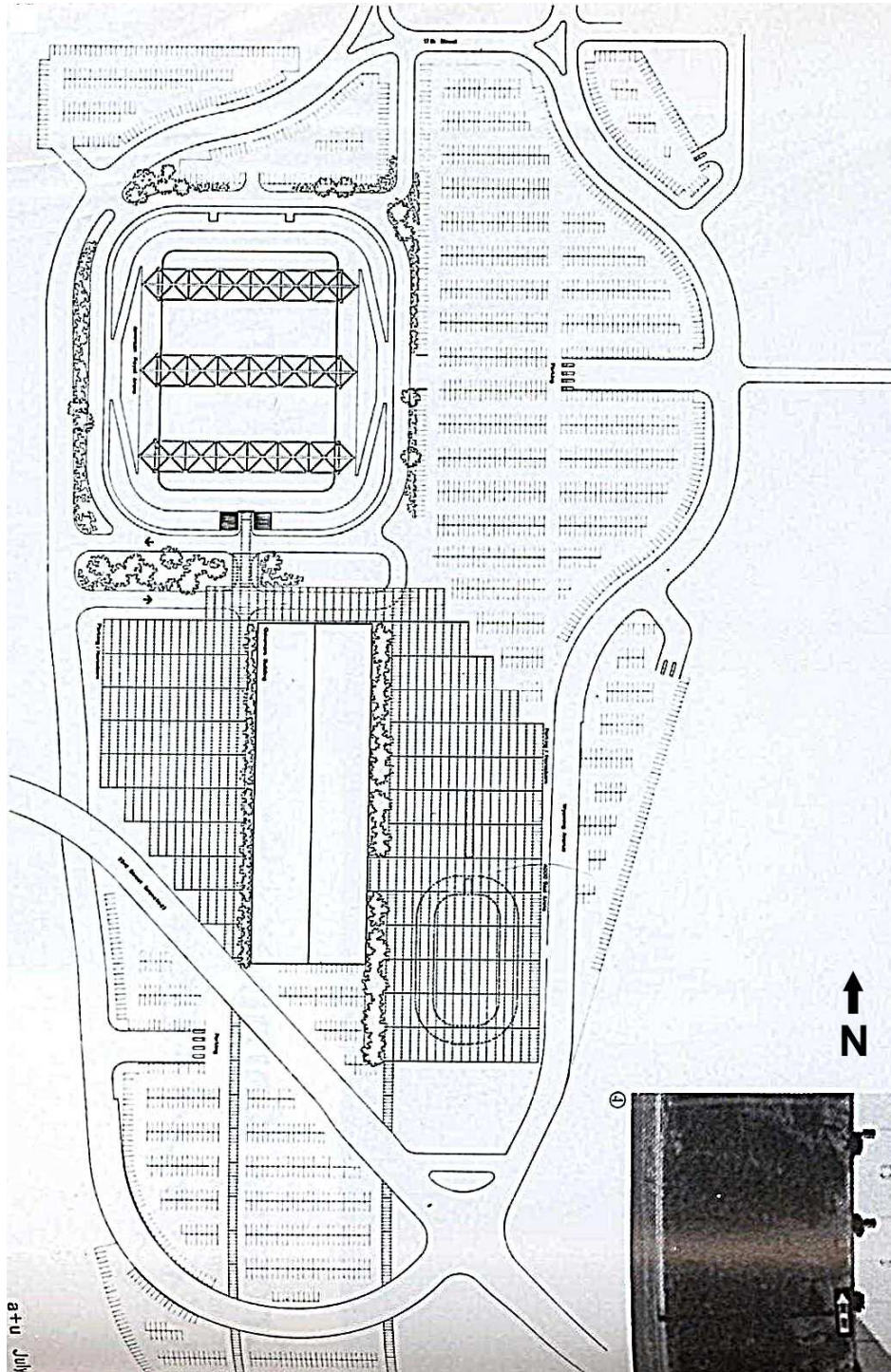
Kemper Arena

Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri

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Figure 17: Historic Site Plan. (Source: "R. Crosby Kemper, Jr. (sic) Memorial Arena Kansas City, Missouri," *Architectural Record*, March 1976, 109).



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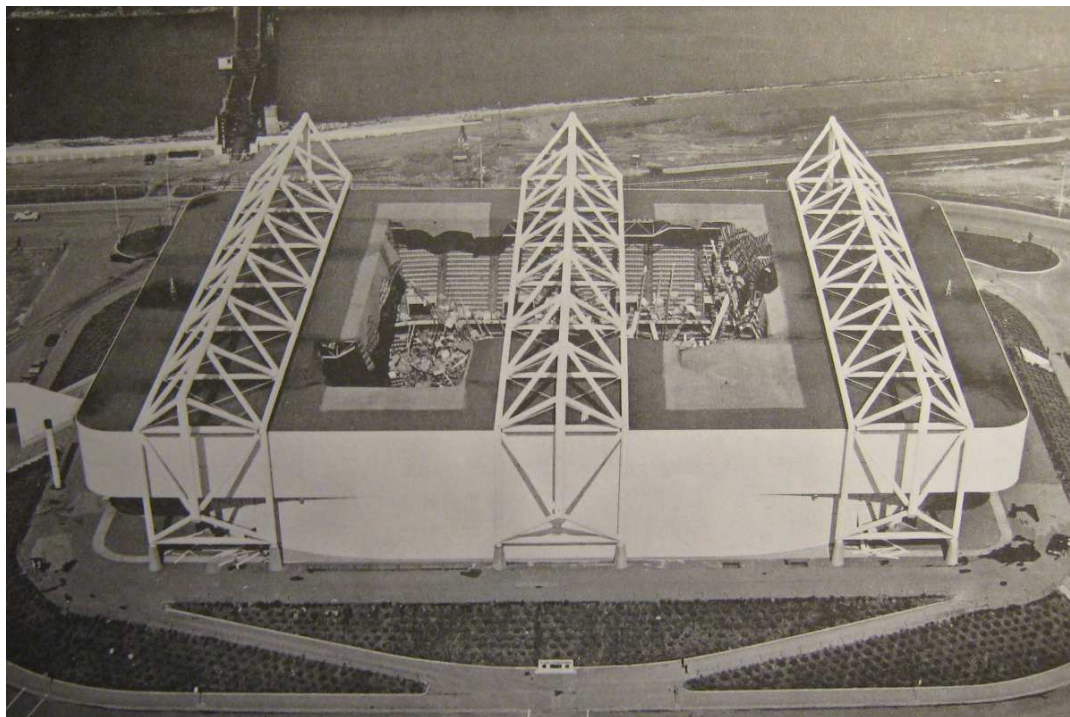
County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 18: Kemper Arena, Late Summer or Fall 1974, View to Northwest. (Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013)



Figure 19: Kemper Arena Following Roof Collapse, 13 June 1979 (Source: Vertical File, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013)



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Figure 20: Municipal Auditorium, Kansas City, Missouri, 1950. (Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 1 April 2015).



Figure 21: Municipal Stadium, Kansas City, Missouri, 1955. (Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 1 April 2015).



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Figure 22: Truman Sports Complex, date unknown. (Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 31 March 2015).



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Figure 23: Bartle Hall Convention Center, Kansas City, c. mid-1970s (Source: Robert Askren Photograph Collection, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, accessed online 30 October 2013).



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Figure 24: List of Concerts Held at Kemper Arena, 1975 - 2011 (Source: Concert Database, http://www.liquisearch.com/kemper_arena/concerts, accessed online 24 February 2016).

Kemper Arena - Concerts

Concerts

- Jethro Tull — January 28, 1975 and April 23, 1979, with UK
- John Denver — May 1, 1975, April 5, 1980, June 20, 1982 and December 13, 1989
- ZZ Top — October 31, 1975, with Rory Gallagher, August 13, 1981, with Loverboy, June 10, 1983, with Quiet Riot, February 16-17, 1986, with Jimmy Barnes, December 16, 1990, with The Jeff Healey Band and May 8, 1994, with Cry of Love
- The Who — December 1, 1975, with Toots and the Maytals and April 26, 1980, with The Pretenders
- Bachman-Turner Overdrive — February 26, 1976, with The Electric Light Orchestra
- Olivia Newton-John — March 3, 1976 and September 24, 1982, with The Tom Scott Quartet
- Elvis Presley & The TCB Band — April 21, 1976 and June 18, 1977
- Aerosmith — April 28, 1976, with Angel and Slade, June 28, 1978, with The Climax Blues Band, February 5, 1983 and February 19, 1988
- Wings — May 29, 1976
- The Eagles — November 24, 1976, June 23, 1980, with Christopher Cross and July 11, 2002
- Blue Öyster Cult — December 12, 1976, with Bob Seger and Dirty Tricks and October 31, 1981, with Foghat and Whitford/St. Holmes
- KISS — February 9, with Head East and November 27, with Detective, 1977 and July 3, 1996, with Alice in Chains
- Fleetwood Mac — April 1, with Rocky Burnette and September 16, 1977, August 24, 1980, September 30, 1987, with The Cruzados and August 13, 2003
- Pink Floyd — June 21, 1977
- Bad Company — July 15, 1977 and May 26, 1979
- Alice Cooper — July 30, 1977, with The Climax Blues Band and February 19, 1979, with The Babys
- Kansas — November 25, 1977, with Crawler, July 29, 1979, with Night, October 17, 1980 and July 29, 1982
- Rod Stewart — November 29, 1977, January 30, 1982, October 26, 1991, March 11, 2004 and April 13, 2007
- Waylon Jennings — December 4, 1977, with Jessi Colter
- Neil Diamond — December 12, 1977
- Ted Nugent — January 15 and December 17, 1978 and June 18, 1980, with Scorpions and Def Leppard
- Willie Nelson — January 19, 1978, September 27, 1980, September 19, 1983, November 16, 1986 and November 5, 2000
- Emerson, Lake & Palmer — February 28, 1978
- Parliament-Funkadelic — April 8, 1978
- REO Speedwagon — May 12-13, 1978, with Rainbow and No Dice and April 27, 1985
- Boz Scaggs — June 23, 1978, with The Little River Band
- The Electric Light Orchestra — July 2, 1978, with Trixter and October 28, 1981, with Hall & Oates
- Yes — September 27, 1978, June 6, 1979 and March 12, 1984
- Genesis — October 17, 1978, January 29, 1984 (Concert was interrupted by power outage caused by high winds outside the building) and January 21-22, 1987
- Billy Joel — October 18, 1978, April 17, 1984, February 13, 1987, April 2, 1994 and December 7, 1999

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- Bob Dylan — November 3, 1978
- Styx — November 21, 1978, with The Babys, March 16–17, 1981, May 11, 1983, June 21, 2003, with Journey and REO Speedwagon and October 22, 2005, with REO Speedwagon
- The Moody Blues — December 4, 1978, with Jimmie Spheeris and October 24, 1981
- Queen — December 8, 1978, September 12, 1980, with Dakota and August 28, 1982, with Billy Squier
- Johnny Cash — December 12, 1978
- Diana Ross — May 12, 1979
- The Village People — May 28, 1979
- Rush — February 27, 1980, with Roadmaster, April 23–24, 1981, October 15–16, 1982, with Rory Gallagher, June 16, 1984, with Gary Moore, April 29, 1986, with Blue Öyster Cult, April 7, 1988, with The Rainmakers, March 3, 1990, with Mr. Big, May 23, 1992, with Primus and April 5, 1994
- Foghat — July 29, 1980
- Van Halen — August 22, 1980, with The Katz, October 17, 1981, with G-Force, August 7, 1982, with After the Fire, June 20–21, 1984, with The Velcros, May 31, 1986, with Bachman–Turner Overdrive and July 26, 2004, with Shinedown
- Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band — October 23, 1980, May 19, 1983 and March 21, 1996
- The Cars — October 8, 1980, with The Motels
- Elton John — October 10, 1980, September 20, 1984, June 4, 1999, April 12, 2001, with Billy Joel and April 28, 2005
- Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band — February 5, 1981, November 19, 1984, April 9, 2000 and September 24, 2002
- The Beach Boys — February 19, 1981, with Randy Meisner & The Silverados
- Joe Walsh — June 6, 1981
- The Jacksons — September 8, 1981
- Journey — September 18–19, 1981, with Point Blank and July 12–13, 1983, with Bryan Adams
- Barry Manilow — September 29, 1981 and October 9, 1984
- The Rolling Stones — December 14–15, 1981, with George Thorogood & The Destroyers and The J. Geils Band and April 6, 1999, with Jonny Lang
- The Police — March 25, 1982, with Joan Jett and the Blackhearts and November 24, 1983
- Scorpions — July 10, 1982, with Iron Maiden and Girlschool
- Crosby, Stills & Nash — August 25, 1982 and January 26, 2000, with Neil Young
- Peter Gabriel — December 4, 1982
- Neil Young — July 2, 1983, with The Fabulous Pinks and October 16, 1986
- Stevie Nicks — July 14, 1983, with Joe Walsh
- Jackson Browne — August 24, 1983
- AC/DC — October 26, 1983, with Fastway, October 5, 1985, with Yngwie Malmsteen, August 3, 1986, with Queensrÿche, July 30, 1988, with White Lion, December 7, 1990, with Love/Hate, April 2, 1996, with The Poor and September 3, 2000, with Slash's Snakepit
- Dan Fogelberg — December 18, 1983
- Lionel Richie — January 19, 1984
- Ozzy Osbourne — May 4, 1984, with Mötley Crüe and April 1, 1986, with Metallica
- Ratt — August 27, 1984, February 14, 1987, with Poison and Joan Jett and the Blackhearts and February 12, 1989
- Sammy Hagar — September 26, 1984, with Krokus

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- Tina Turner — October 26, 1984, October 26, 1985, October 17, 1987, June 22, 1993 and May 17, 2000, with Lionel Richie and Janice Robinson
- Cyndi Lauper — November 30, 1984
- Iron Maiden — December 17, 1984, with Twisted Sister, June 18, 1998 and February 27, 1991
- Deep Purple — February 13, 1985, with Giuffria and May 5, 1987, with Bad Company
- Frank Sinatra — March 28, 1985
- Triumph — May 22, 1985 and October 10, 1986
- Phil Collins — June 15, 1985 and April 12, 1997
- Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers — June 26, 1985, with Lone Justice and February 26, 1990, with Lenny Kravitz
- Bryan Adams — July 28, 1985 and May 2, 1992, with The Storm
- Mötley Crüe — September 7, 1985, July 11, 1987, November 21, 1989, April 3, 1990 and March 15, 2005
- Foreigner — September 21, 1985
- Supertramp — November 5, 1985, with The Motels and Rick Springfield
- Kenny Rogers — December 6, 1985, with Dolly Parton
- Bon Jovi — February 26, 1987, with Cinderella and April 13, 1989
- The Beastie Boys — July 18, 1987 and August 7, 1998
- Boston — October 9, 1987, with Farrenheit
- David Bowie — October 14, 1987, with Peter Frampton
- U2 — October 26, 1987 and November 27, 2001, with Garbage
- Def Leppard — December 10, 1987, with Tesla and December 19, 1992
- John Mellencamp — February 16, 1988
- Michael Jackson — February 23–24, 1988
- INXS — June 14, 1988, with Public Image Ltd
- Jimmy Page — October 14, 1988
- R.E.M. — March 4, 1989, with Robyn Hitchcock and the Egyptians
- Hank Williams, Jr. — April 16, 1989
- Bobby Brown — May 21, 1989
- The Bangles — August 25, 1989
- New Kids on the Block — January 18, 1990, with The Perfect Gentlemen, Tommy Page and Rick Wes
- Janet Jackson — April 11, 1990, August 1, 1998, with Usher and July 14, 2001
- MC Hammer — October 28, 1990, with En Vogue and Vanilla Ice
- Bell Biv DeVoe — March 25, 1991, with Johnny Gill and Keith Sweat
- Metallica — November 28, 1991, with Metal Church, January 31, 1997, with Corrosion of Conformity and May 11, 2004, with Godsmack
- Dire Straits — February 16, 1992
- Eric Clapton — October 28, 1994, with Jimmie Vaughan & The Tilt-A-Whirl Band, April 2, 1998, with Distant Cousins, July 28, 2001, with Doyle Bramhall II & Smokestack and April 2, 2007, with The Robert Cray Band
- Page & Plant — May 5, 1995, with The Tragically Hip and June 6, 1998
- Garth Brooks — May 2–5, 1996
- Kiss - July 3, 1996, with Alice in Chains (last show with Layne Staley)
- The Smashing Pumpkins — September 1, 1996, with Garbage
- Jerry Lee Lewis — November 9, 1997
- Toby Keith — November 15, 1997 and October 27, 2000

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- Merle Haggard — November 16, 1997
- Prince & The New Power Generation — January 4, 1998 and May 4, 2004
- The Backstreet Boys — July 31, 1998, November 18, 1999 and August 27, 2001, with Krystal Harris
- The Family Values Tour — October 22, 1998 and October 12, 1999
- Alanis Morissette — March 15, 1999, with Garbage
- Celine Dion — March 29, 1999
- 'N Sync — April 1, 1999, with Divine and Tatyana Ali and June 22, 2000, with Sisqó and Pink
- Korn — April 23, 1999, with Rob Zombie and Videodrone, April 19, 2000 and July 21, 2002, with Puddle of Mudd and Deadsy
- Roger Waters — August 28, 1999
- Ricky Martin — November 30, 1999
- Nine Inch Nails — May 28, 2000, with A Perfect Circle and February 18, 2006, with Moving Units and Saul Williams
- Blink-182 — June 30, 2000, with Bad Religion and Fenix TX
- The Dixie Chicks — August 4, 2000, with Patty Griffin and May 10, 2003, with Joan Osborne
- Tim McGraw and Faith Hill — September 24, 2000, with The Warren Brothers and July 18, 2006, with Uncle John's Band
- Montgomery Gentry — October 28, 2000
- Brad Paisley — October 29, 2000
- Creed — November 15, 2000 and February 17, 2002
- Tool — October 21, 2001, with Tricky, October 16, 2002 and September 15, 2006, with Isis
- Cher — July 16, 2002, with Cyndi Lauper and September 22, 2003
- Gary Allan — October 26, 2002 and October 27, 2007
- Carolyn Dawn Johnson — November 1, 2002
- Keith Urban — November 2, 2002 and December 1, 2005, with Nerina Pallot and Richard Winsland
- George Strait & The Ace in the Hole — February 13, 2003, with Tammy Cochran, March 4, 2005, with Dierks Bentley and March 2, 2007, with Taylor Swift and Ronnie Milsap
- The Red Hot Chili Peppers — May 5, 2003, with Queens of the Stone Age and The Mars Volta
- Matchbox 20 — May 28, 2003
- Buddy Jewell — October 23, 2003
- Trace Adkins — October 24, 2003
- Craig Morgan — October 25, 2003 and October 23, 2010
- Emerson Drive — October 31, 2003
- Trick Pony — November 1, 2003
- Shania Twain — November 29, 2003
- Martina McBride — December 21, 2003, October 9, 2004, with Alan Jackson, January 28, 2006 and April 12, 2007, with Rodney Atkins and Little Big Town
- Sarah Brightman — February 15, 2004
- Clay Aiken and Kelly Clarkson — April 15, 2004, with The Beu Sisters
- Joe Nichols — October 29, 2004
- Darryl Worley — October 30, 2004
- Sarah McLachlan — April 30, 2005
- Hilary Duff — August 11, 2005

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- Kenny Chesney — August 21, 2005, with Gretchen Wilson and Pat Green
- The Charlie Daniels Band — October 21, 2005
- Sugarland — October 27, 2005
- Terri Clark — October 29, 2005
- The Trans-Siberian Orchestra — December 22, 2005 and December 26, 2006 (2 shows)
- Millionaire — March 23, 2006
- Nickelback — September 16, 2006, with Hoobastank and Chevelle and September 2, 2007, with Puddle of Mudd and Daughtry
- Rodney Atkins — October 20, 2006
- Shooter Jennings — October 27, 2006
- Little Big Town — October 28, 2006
- High School Musical — January 23, 2007, with Jordan Pruitt
- Christina Aguilera — February 24, 2007, with The Pussycat Dolls and Danity Kane
- Hillsong United — April 21, 2007
- T.I. and Ciara — August 12, 2007
- The Casting Crowns — February 9, 2008
- The Foo Fighters — July 19, 2008, with Supergrass and Year Long Disaster
- Thousand Foot Krutch — February 28, 2009
- Paul van Dyk — October 16, 2009
- Abandon — February 19–20, 2010, with Unhindered and February 11, 2012
- Little Texas — October 22, 2010
- Dierks Bentley — October 29, 2010
- Heidi Newfield — October 30, 2010
- Hawk Nelson — February 4–5, 2011, with Group 1 Crew and Britt Nicole
- Jimmy Needham — February 11, 2011

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Kemper Arena

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MISSOURI, Jackson

DATE RECEIVED: 7/15/16 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/30/16
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000160

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT _____ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

see comment

RECOM./CRITERIA 4.5

REVIEWER [Signature]

DISCIPLINE Historic

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 8/30/16

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Evaluation/Return Sheet**

Property Name: Kemper Arena

Reference Number:

Date of Return: August 29, 2016

Reason for Return: Substantive problems

Section 8 Statement of Significance

The nomination proposes that the property be individually listed under Criterion A and Criterion Consideration G with a period of significance (POS) beginning in 1974, the original construction date, and ending in 2007, the year a larger arena (Sprint Center) was opened making the Kemper Arena functionally (economically) obsolete.

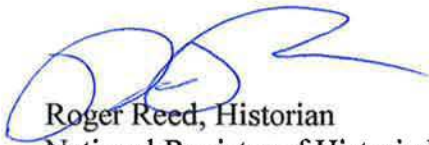
This proposed POS would include as significant substantial alterations made in 1996 to keep the arena competitive. As noted in the nomination, (and characterized as, "Band-Aids"), the 1996 renovations did not significantly contribute to the local importance of the arena that is described as "an exceptional local example of the enclosed multipurpose entertainment arena, a property type that evolved in the mid-twentieth century to include functional elements of a traditional auditorium, a music venue, and a sports facility." Indeed, the nomination goes on to state the following: "The venue played a critical role in the community's collective experience during the period of significance, which begins in 1974 with the opening of Kemper Arena. As Kemper Arena entered a period of decline in the mid-1990s, the venue hosted fewer A-list performers and events and struggled to retain longstanding stalwart users and regional attractions, such as the Big 12 Basketball tournament."

Although the Kemper Arena continued to function for the decade after the 1996 renovations, it is not clear that the changes during this period of decline were sufficient to justify exceptional significance under Criteria Consideration G, and that the POS should extend to such a comparatively recent date as 2007. In evaluating this nomination, it is problematical that the changes in 1996 were not insignificant in terms of altering the original exterior character of the Kemper Arena as a multi-purpose arena characteristic of the period of the 1960s-1970s. While the exterior has been altered, the interior spaces that directly relate to the justification for listing under ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION, appear to be substantially intact.

The importance of the intact interior is found in the nomination and provides a strong case for listing, notwithstanding the 1996 alterations. A concise statement is provided in the following statement on page 6 under INTEGRITY:

Kemper Arena remains a unique local example of the mid-twentieth century enclosed multi-purpose entertainment venue, distinguished from other recreation facilities in the city and in the region by its column-free interior and functional adaptability to accommodate a wide variety of events. The majority of features that contribute to its significance and that communicate its exceptional significance as a resource less than fifty years old remain intact. It is highly visible in its historic location and setting, prominently sited in the flat, former stockyards of Kansas City's West Bottoms. Key aspects of its design that define the property type (an efficient structural system that provides unobstructed views; tiers of seating surrounding an oval floor; functional spaces on a lower level) are unaltered. The addition of a secondary concourse and seating at the top of the bowl do not change the organization or function of spaces inside the building. They complement the original design and materials and, most importantly, have not changed the visitor experience on the concourse or in the seating bowl. Alteration of the central truss and the addition of a glass curtain wall to the east elevation in 1996 was an effort to extend the commercial viability of the arena during a period when many venues of a similar vintage were demolished. The nominated resource clearly communicates feelings about and associations with its period of construction and the area of significance for which it is nominated.

With a nomination revised to specify a POS of 1974-1996, the above statement (or words to that effect) would articulate the important character-defining features that would support listing under Criterion C and Criteria Consideration G.

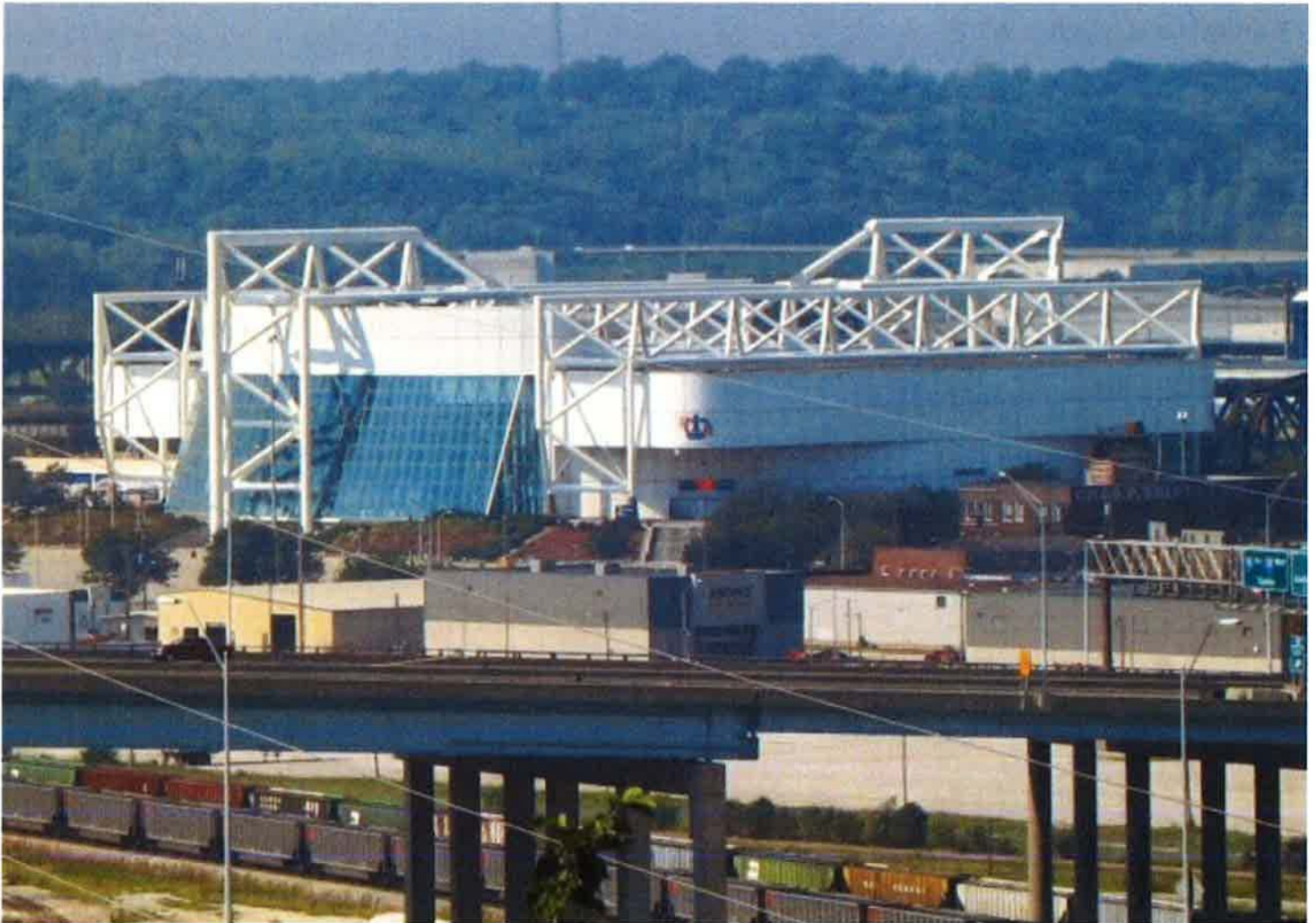


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What became of Kemper Arena's 1970s contemporaries?

DAVID MARTIN — JULY 5, 2016 11:36 A.M.

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An effort is afoot to put Kemper Arena on the [National Register of Historic Places](#). The designation would qualify the arena for historic tax credits and potentially save it from demolition.

Foutch Brothers, a Kansas City company specializing in historic restoration, has put forward a plan to use the credits to repurpose the building as an amateur-sports complex. The tax credits would pay about one-third of the \$25 million to \$30 million in project costs, according to [a report](#) in Sunday's *Kansas City Star*.

Kemper Arena opened in 1975 and is among a dwindling number of arenas from an era when the English rock band Foghat was headlining 18,000-seat venues. Here's a list of Kemper's notable contemporaries among North American arenas, and their status today:

Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1972–

Uniondale, New York

Home of the New York Islanders until the NHL team moved to Brooklyn in 2015, the publicly owned coliseum is being renovated by a private developer.

Omni Coliseum, 1972–97

Atlanta

After the Omni's demolition, a new arena was built on the site.

Capital Centre, 1973–2002

Landover, Maryland

A shopping center was built on the suburban Washington, D.C., site after the arena was torn down.

Market Square Arena, 1974–2001

Indianapolis

The site of Elvis Presley's last concert, the building was demolished after the Indiana Pacers moved into a new arena. Construction began at the old arena site on an apartment tower anchored by a Whole Foods.

Northlands Coliseum, 1974–

Edmonton, Alberta

The Edmonton Oilers played their last game at the coliseum in April; the NHL team moves into a new arena this fall. Now known as Rexall Place, the coliseum may be repurposed as an ice center.

Richfield Coliseum, 1974–99

Richfield, Ohio

Built on farmland between Cleveland and Akron, the arena lost its main tenant when the NBA's Cavaliers left for downtown Cleveland. After the demolition, the site was turned into a meadow.

Hartford Civic Center, 1975–

Hartford, Connecticut

Now known as the XL Center, the arena is home to the University of Connecticut's basketball teams and a minor-league hockey team. Justin Bieber is coming this week.

McNichols Sports Arena, 1975–2000

Denver

The arena was demolished, and the site is now used as a parking lot for the football stadium where the Denver Broncos play.

Riverfront Coliseum, 1975–

Cincinnati

Site of the disastrous 1979 Who concert at which 11 fans were killed, the coliseum is now known as U.S. Bank Arena. Last renovated in 1997, the facility is now of suitably lackluster condition to have shouldered the blame for Cincinnati's failure to land the 2016 Republican National Convention.

The Summit, 1975–

Houston

Houston's pro-sports teams used the Summit until 2003, when a new arena opened. The facility has found a second life as a worship center. Joel Osteen's Lakewood Church leased the Summit before purchasing it in 2010.

Joe Louis Arena, 1976–2017

Detroit

After the upcoming hockey season, the city will tear down Joe Louis Arena and give the land to a creditor as part of its bankruptcy plan. The Detroit Red Wings will begin play in Little Caesars Arena in 2017.

Reunion Arena, 1980–2009

Dallas

The arena was torn down, and the city-owned land has not been redeveloped.

Brendan Byrne Arena, 1981–

East Rutherford, New Jersey

Now known as the Izod Center, the arena was home to NBA and NHL franchises, which eventually departed. Located at the Meadowlands Sports Complex outside New York City, the arena faces an uncertain fate.

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Multi-purpose stadium

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Multipurpose stadiums are a type of stadium designed to be easily used by multiple types of events. While any stadium could potentially host more than one type of sport or event, this concept usually refers to a specific design philosophy that stresses multifunctionality over specificity. It is used most commonly in Canada and the United States, where the two most popular outdoor team sports – football and baseball – require radically different facilities. Football uses a rectangular field (Canadian football fields are larger than American ones), while baseball is played on a diamond and large outfield. This requires a particular design to accommodate both, usually an oval. While building stadiums in this way means that sports teams and governments can share costs, it also imposes some challenges.



RFK Stadium, a multipurpose stadium in Washington, D.C.

In North America, multipurpose stadiums were built primarily during the 1960s and 1970s as shared home stadiums for Major League Baseball and National Football League or Canadian Football League teams. Some stadiums were renovated to allow multipurpose configurations during the 1980s. This type of stadium is associated with an era of suburbanization, in which many sports teams followed their fans out of large cities into areas with cheaper, plentiful land. They were usually built near highways and had large parking lots, but were rarely connected to public transit. As multipurpose stadiums were rarely ideal for both sports usually housed in them, they had fallen out of favor by the 1990s. With the completion of the Truman Sports Complex in Kansas City in 1973, a model for purpose-built stadiums was laid down. Since Oriole Park at Camden Yards opened in 1992, most major league sports stadiums have been built specifically for one sport.

Outside North America, the term is rarely used, since soccer is the only major outdoor team sport in many countries; in some countries, soccer and rugby can easily co-exist, with Australia and South Africa being notable examples. In other countries, such as England, teams rarely share facilities. In Australia, many sports grounds are suited to both Australian rules football and cricket, as Australian rules was originally conceived for play on cricket fields. Soccer stadiums have historically served as track and field arenas, as well, and some (like the Olympiastadion in Berlin) still do, whereas a newer generation frequently has no running track to allow the fans closer to the field.

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History in the United States

As of 2016, the Oakland Coliseum is the last multipurpose stadium to serve as a full-time home to both an MLB team and an NFL team.

Several stadiums hosted multiple sports teams prior to the advent of multipurpose stadiums. In New York City, the Polo Grounds hosted football teams early on, and although the stadium was ostensibly designed for polo, its rectangular nature lent itself well to football, and was also – with somewhat less of a fit – used for baseball. The original configuration of Yankee Stadium was specifically designed to accommodate football, as well as track and field (it was Yankee Stadium that popularized the warning track, originally designed as a running track, around baseball fields), in addition to its primary use for baseball. Wrigley Field, while originally built for baseball, also hosted the Chicago Bears, just as Comiskey Park hosted the Chicago Cardinals and Tiger Stadium hosted the Detroit Lions. Later venues such as Cleveland Stadium and Baltimore Memorial Stadium were built to accommodate both baseball and football.

In the 1960s, multipurpose stadiums began replacing their baseball-only and football-only predecessors, now known as "classics" or "jewel box" parks. The advantage to a multipurpose stadium is that a singular infrastructure and piece of real estate can support both teams in terms of transportation and playing area, and money (often public money) that would have been spent to support infrastructure for two stadiums could be spent elsewhere. Also playing into the advent of the multipurpose stadium was Americans' growing use of automobiles as a form of transportation, therefore the need for professional sports stadiums to accommodate parking. As most cities lacked the space to construct the stadiums with necessary parking lots near their city centers, most multipurpose stadiums were built in suburbs, away from the city centers, but near freeways or highways.

Subsets of the multipurpose stadiums were the so-called "cookie-cutter stadiums" or "concrete donuts" which were all very similar in design. They featured a completely circular or nearly circular design, and accommodated both baseball and football by rotating sections of the box seat areas to fit the respective playing fields. These fields often used artificial turf, as it could withstand the reconfiguration process more easily or be removed for nonsporting events, plus it could be used in domes, which many of these stadiums were. The first of these stadiums was Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium. It was followed during the 1960s and 1970s by Shea Stadium, Atlanta–Fulton County Stadium, Oakland–Alameda County Coliseum, the Astrodome, Jack Murphy Stadium, Riverfront Stadium, Busch Memorial Stadium, Three Rivers Stadium, Veterans Stadium, and the Kingdome. As of 2016, seven of these 11 stadiums have been demolished. Only Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium, the Oakland Coliseum, and Jack Murphy Stadium (now known as Qualcomm Stadium) remain in use; the Astrodome, while still standing, has been disused since 2008 because of fire code violations; Shea Stadium, Atlanta–Fulton County Stadium, Riverfront Stadium, Busch Memorial Stadium, Three Rivers Stadium, Veterans Stadium, and the Kingdome were all demolished between 1997 and 2009. The Washington Nationals and San Diego Padres baseball teams have since moved out of Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium and Qualcomm Stadium, respectively, although the latter stadium is still home to the San Diego Chargers (NFL) and San Diego State Aztecs (college) football teams.

The Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome was unusual in that it was one of the few air-supported dome stadiums that was multipurpose in practice, being convertible between football and baseball. Home of the Minnesota Vikings through the 2013 season, it was also home to the Minnesota Twins until 2009 and the Minnesota Golden Gophers football team (NCAA) until 2008.^[1] The Carrier Dome was another such air-supported, multipurpose stadium, although it was built to accommodate outdoor sports such as football and indoor sports such as basketball. The Carrier Dome remains in use. The Metrodome has now been demolished to make way for its professional football-specific successor, U.S. Bank Stadium, which will host baseball games at the collegiate level.^[2] Most other inflatable domes, such as the Hoosier Dome and Pontiac Silverdome, were football-only stadiums.

During the height of the multipurpose stadium construction era of the 1960s and 1970s, four baseball-only stadiums were constructed: Candlestick Park (1960), Dodger Stadium (1962), Anaheim Stadium (1966; now Angel Stadium of Anaheim), and Royals Stadium (1973; now Kauffman Stadium). Anaheim Stadium was, however, renovated into a multipurpose stadium in 1980 to accommodate the Los Angeles Rams' move from the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, and renovated back into a baseball-only facility in 1997, three years after the Rams' departure for St. Louis. Similarly, Candlestick Park was renovated into a multipurpose stadium in 1970 to accommodate the San Francisco 49ers' move from Kezar Stadium and converted to football only after the San Francisco Giants moved to their new ballpark in 2000. Another baseball stadium, Denver's Mile High Stadium, was also renovated with additional seating, including a 4,500-ton, three-tier movable grandstand to accommodate both baseball and football configurations. Mile High Stadium was home to the AFL/NFL Denver Broncos and the MLB Colorado Rockies franchises.

The Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) built Centennial Olympic Stadium in a way that it could be converted to a new baseball stadium, and ACOG paid for the conversion.^[3] This was considered a good agreement for both the Olympic Committee and the Braves, because no use existed for a permanent 85,000-seat track and field stadium in downtown Atlanta], as the 71,000-seat Georgia Dome had been completed 4 years earlier by the state of Georgia. Furthermore, the Braves had already been exploring opportunities for a new venue to replace Atlanta–Fulton County Stadium.^[4] The southwest corner of the Olympic Stadium was built to accommodate the future baseball infield and seating. This is easily seen in aerial views and diagrams of the stadium in its Olympic configuration, where the seats are not placed next to the oval running track. The southwest part of the stadium also had four tiers of seats, luxury boxes, a facade facing the street, and a roof, whereas the northern half of the stadium used a simpler two-tiered seating configuration. During reconstruction, the athletics track was removed, and the north half of the stadium was demolished, reducing the capacity to 49,000 when it reopened as Turner Field. Because of the need to fit a track within the stadium in its earlier incarnation, the field of play, particularly foul territory, while not large by historical standards, is still larger than most new MLB stadiums.

History in Canada

In Canada, several large multisport stadiums were built during this style's heyday. However, unlike in the United States, an NFL team has never been based primarily in Canada (though the Buffalo Bills played some home games in Toronto between 2008 and 2013) and only two MLB teams have been based there, so teams from these leagues have not been the major impetus behind stadium construction (with the notable exception of Toronto). Instead, stadiums were built primarily for Canadian Football League teams and to host multiple-sport events, such as the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, and Pan-American Games.

Three of Canada's largest stadiums from this era and type feature domed or retractable roofs, namely BC Place in Vancouver, SkyDome/Rogers Centre in Toronto, and Olympic Stadium in Montreal.

BC Place is capable of hosting baseball, but has been primarily a football venue. Rogers Centre was built to accommodate baseball (MLB's Toronto Blue Jays play there), but was a football venue until the CFL's Toronto Argonauts moved to BMO Field after the 2015 CFL season. Montreal's Olympic Stadium was built primarily for a multisport event (the 1976 Summer Olympics, during which it hosted the track and field events and the soccer final) rather than for professional team sports, but it later became the home of the Montreal Alouettes football team and the Montreal Expos baseball team, and began serving as an alternate home to the Montreal Impact when that team entered Major League Soccer in 2012. Similarly, the open-air Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton was constructed for the 1978 Commonwealth Games, but has also become home of the Edmonton Eskimos of the CFL. It has also hosted many soccer events, as



Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton, like Olympic Stadium in Montreal, was built initially for a multiple-sport event, but is now used mostly for professional sports.

well as the 2003 Heritage Classic, the first major outdoor ice hockey event in Canada. Tim Hortons Field, which opened in 2014, was built both as a venue for the 2015 Pan American Games and as the new home of the Hamilton Tiger-Cats football team; its predecessor, Ivor Wynne Stadium, was originally built for the first Commonwealth Games.

Other Canadian cities never expressed interest in building a venue for Major League Baseball or the Summer Olympics, and felt no need to replace their smaller, open-air stadiums used mostly for Canadian football. For example, Calgary's open-air McMahon Stadium dates from 1960 and has been used only for Canadian football, the 1988 Winter Olympics, and an outdoor ice hockey event (the 2011 Heritage Classic). Similar situations hold in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Hamilton, and Regina. No large stadiums of any kind are in cities such as Quebec City, London, or Saskatoon, or in Atlantic Canada; in those places (with the exception of Saskatoon), smaller stadiums (less than 13,000 seats) exist that can be augmented with temporary seating to bring their capacities close to that of the smaller CFL stadiums.

Outside North America

The idea of a sharp difference between a multipurpose stadium and a single-sport stadium is less important outside of North America, since in most countries stadiums that are constructed with soccer in mind are easily able to accommodate rugby, track and field, or other sports with a similar-sized playing field. For example, any large stadium in most of Latin America, part of Asia, most of Africa, or continental Europe is likely to be used mostly for soccer. The majority of the largest stadia in the world were built for either association football or American football.

The regions where other outdoor sports can draw numbers comparable to soccer or American football are limited. They include: baseball in Japan and the Spanish Caribbean; cricket in England, Australia, the Anglophone Caribbean, and the Indian subcontinent; rugby (union or league) in Wales, England, Ireland, South Africa, New Zealand, Fiji, and parts of Australia and France; Australian rules football in Australia; bandy in Russia and Scandinavia; and Gaelic games in Ireland.

However, even in these areas, the amount of compromise needed to accommodate multiple sports varies considerably. Most outdoor team sports have a rectangular playing field, but cricket and Australian-rules fields are rounded, while baseball is played in a diamond. This makes them much harder to accommodate within a rectangular-shaped stadium. Likewise, accommodating athletics (track and field), such as for a Summer Olympics, means constructing a rounded 400-m track around the infield. This often means the sports simply find it easier to play in separate stadiums.

In the case of Ireland, grounds built for Gaelic games are physically capable of hosting soccer and the rugby codes without changing the seating configuration. Because the Gaelic games' pitch is rectangular and also longer and wider than that of soccer or either rugby code, the only changes required are the physical goals and field markings. However, opposition to those sports within large parts of the Gaelic games community, most notably manifested in GAA Rule 42, means that soccer and rugby clubs have generally had to play in separate grounds.

True multisport facilities, where teams from a variety of sports use the same stadium as their home ground, exist outside North America in a few cases, most of those smaller stadiums. A handful are notable for having 60,000 seats or more. Melbourne Cricket Ground and ANZ Stadium host cricket, Australian-rules football, and soccer, and ANZ Stadium also hosts several major rugby league events. Wembley Stadium in London, Stade de France near Paris, and Millennium Stadium in Cardiff are not the permanent homes to any club teams, but are used primarily



Melbourne Cricket Ground, Australia's largest stadium, is circular to accommodate the round playing surfaces of cricket, and Australian rules football.

for international competitions and major tournament finals, mostly for soccer and rugby. In South Africa, Soccer City and Ellis Park Stadium have hosted rugby union and soccer, while Moses Mabhida Stadium has hosted soccer and cricket. Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Kochi in India hosts cricket and soccer. Eden Park in New Zealand hosts rugby union and cricket. Westpac Stadium in Wellington, New Zealand, has hosted both rugby codes, cricket, soccer, and Australian rules.

The architects Arup cited history that a rarely used athletics track does not work with football, such as the Stadio delle Alpi and the Munich Olympic Stadium, with both Juventus and Bayern Munich moving to new stadiums less than 40 years after inheriting them.^[5] The delle Alpi's design was criticized, as it left spectators exposed to the elements, and the long distance between the stands and the pitch resulted in poor visibility. This was because the athletics track, which was seldom used, was constructed around the outside of the pitch, while views from the lower tier were also restricted due to the positioning of advertising boardings.^[6] These factors contributed to low attendances; only 237 spectators showed up for the Coppa Italia home match against Sampdoria in the 2001–02 season, while in the 2005–06 season, the average attendance was 35,880.^{[7][8]} Manchester City Council wished to avoid creating a white elephant, so to give the stadium long-term financial viability, extensive work was carried out to convert the City of Manchester Stadium from a field and track arena to a football stadium. The old Estádio da Luz was demolished so that the football-specific replacement could be built on the site as part of Portugal's bid to host Euro 2004. German stadiums such as the AWD-Arena, Commerzbank-Arena, Mercedes-Benz Arena, RheinEnergieStadion, Volksparkstadion, and Zentralstadion also underwent reconstruction/renovation by removing the running track to become football-only venues; several of these projects were done in preparation for the 2006 FIFA World Cup.

A different take on the multipurpose concept can be seen in the Saitama Super Arena in Japan and Arena 92, a stadium set to open in 2017 near La Défense in the inner suburbs of Paris. Both venues are similar to the Carrier Dome in that they are fully enclosed stadiums (though with fixed roofs instead of the Carrier Dome's air-supported roof) that can accommodate field and indoor court sports. However, they differ from the Carrier Dome in the specific way they accommodate court sports. Both the Super Arena (used mainly for basketball, volleyball, mixed martial arts, and professional wrestling events) and Arena 92 (the future home of rugby union's Racing 92) feature movable seating blocks that allow each facility to serve as an appropriately sized venue for either field or court sports.

Field layout

Most multipurpose stadiums that existed in North America overlaid one sideline of the football field along one of the baseball foul lines, with one corner of the football field being located where home plate would be. Because the length of a regulation American football field is 360 feet, longer than the roughly 330-foot average for foul lines in Major League Baseball, this requires an unusually long distance from the home plate to the fence along the foul line on which the football field is constructed, part of the football field to be constructed in foul territory (and the size of said territory to be increased accordingly), or a temporary wall. The Oakland Coliseum uses a configuration such that its football sideline runs along a line drawn from first base to third base (the former Atlanta–Fulton County Stadium also used this configuration). This was done presumably to make the same coveted seats behind home plate at a baseball game also coveted 50-yard line seats at a football game, and also so the stadium would need only one press box. Different stadiums have different angles between the left- and right-field seats.



Sun Life Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida: Its layout has the baseball diamond in the corner of the football field.

In stadiums that were primarily football stadiums converted to baseball stadiums, the stands were at nearly right angles. This allowed the football field to be squared within the bleachers, but left the baseball configuration with many undesirable views farther away from home plate or facing away from the diamond, such as at the Kingdome, the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome, and Sun Life Stadium. For stadiums such as the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, where the Los Angeles Dodgers played their home games from 1958 through 1961 while awaiting completion of Dodger Stadium, this also had the undesirable effect of having unusually short foul lines, making it easier to hit so-called "Chinese home runs". Baseball stadiums that converted to football stadiums had more of an obtuse angle between the stands. This made the football viewing farther away, and in some cases partially obscured as in Candlestick Park.



A satellite view of the Oakland Coliseum: Its layout has the baseball diamond in the middle of the football field.

In the case of Qualcomm Stadium, it was constructed with half of the field-level seating permanent (built of concrete, in the southern quadrant of the stadium), and the other half portable (modular construction using aluminum or steel framing). When the stadium was configured for baseball, the portable sections would be placed in the western quadrant of the stadium and serve as the third-base half of the infield. In the football configuration, these are placed in the northern quadrant of the stadium (covering what is used as left field in the baseball configuration) to allow for the football field to be laid out east-west. This had the advantage of improving sightlines for both sports while keeping the baseball dimensions roughly symmetrical.

Criticisms

While multipurpose stadiums were intended to easily accommodate both American football and baseball (and in some cases, soccer), the fundamentally different sizes and shapes of the playing fields made them inadequate for either sport. When used for baseball, the lower-level boxes were usually set back much further from the field than comparable seats in baseball-only parks because they swiveled into position for football and soccer. In the case of stadiums that hosted both baseball and Canadian football, the lower boxes were set even further back than their American counterparts, because Canadian football fields are 30 yards longer and considerably wider than their American counterparts. Likewise, attempts to build stadiums without support columns to obstruct spectators' views, as was the case with sport-specific "jewel box" stadiums, resulted in upper decks being placed very high above the field—as far as 600 feet away in some cases. Several teams closed off sections of the upper level and only sold them during the playoffs, as they were too far away to be of any use during the regular season. For football, the seats nearest the field were set farther back than at football-only stadiums to accommodate the larger baseball field. In some cases, the seats closest to the field, normally prime seats for baseball, were almost at field level for football. In general, spectator sightlines were not optimized for either sport, i.e., seats were angled towards the center of the field rather than towards the logical center of the game action (home plate for baseball and the 50-yard line for football).

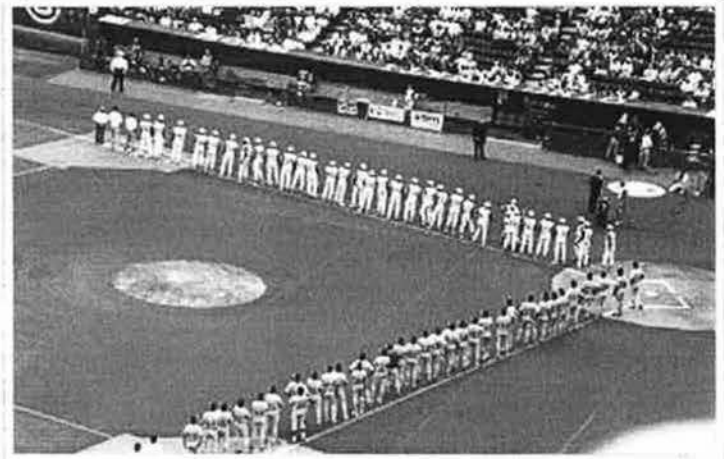
The large capacities of multipurpose stadiums were usually more than adequate for football. However, baseball crowds tend to be much smaller than football crowds, resulting in baseball games at these stadiums being swallowed up in the environment. This was especially true if a baseball team were not doing particularly well either on the field or in the box office. This was another reason some baseball teams closed sections of the upper level during the regular season.

Many multipurpose stadiums also had artificial turf playing surfaces, to ease the transition from baseball field to football field and vice versa. In many cases, the turf was nothing more than carpet on top of concrete with little padding material, which caused frequent injuries to players. During the first month of the football season, the playing field included the infield soil that is harder than the grass and is also a significant injury risk.

In the baseball configuration, most had symmetrical field dimensions. This detracted from the unique, individual identity enjoyed by the sport-specific "jewel box" stadiums with odd or asymmetrical field dimensions, and further supported the "cookie cutter stadium" nickname.

Fans also criticized the large parking lots surrounding the stadiums, as well as their concrete or painted concrete façades as uninviting.

The suburban locales of many multipurpose stadiums (as well as other sport-specific stadiums also built there) were also a focal point for criticism, as they were often no longer in the municipality the teams represent, especially if the stadium were built across a state border. One of the most famous examples is Giants Stadium, which primarily hosted football, but was also a soccer stadium at times; its primary tenants were nominally based in New York City, but Giants Stadium was neither in New York City or even New York, instead being built in the Meadowlands of East Rutherford, New Jersey.



The field markings for football are visible during this April 1995 baseball game at Riverfront Stadium. The dirt "slide pits" used for baseball, common in multipurpose stadiums, can also be seen.

Soccer was perceived as an especially bad fit for this type of stadium because, in the United States, the sport does not draw as many fans to games as American football or baseball (with the partial exception of Seattle), resulting in the stadium being filled to only a fraction of its capacity. This led to the soccer-specific stadium movement.

Scheduling was also a big issue, since the MLB postseason overlaps with the NFL regular season. If a baseball team advances in the postseason to the point where it is scheduled to play a postseason game on the same day the football team plays a home game, adjustments had to be made, such as having the game moved to Monday night or – if a division opponent were scheduled – have the game sites switched, putting the upcoming meeting on the road and playing the home game during the latter meeting. An example of the former happening was in 1997 when the Florida Marlins played game 7 of the World Series at home on Sunday, Oct. 26, which moved the Miami Dolphins game against the Chicago Bears to Monday night.^[9] An example of the latter happening was in 1989 when the San Francisco Giants hosted a postseason game on Sunday, Oct. 8, against the Chicago Cubs, the same day the San Francisco 49ers were scheduled to host their division rival New Orleans Saints. The Oct. 8 game was moved to New Orleans and the Nov. 6 game was moved to San Francisco.^[10]

In Australia, most major stadiums which can hold over 50,000, such as the Melbourne Cricket Ground and Adelaide Oval, are circular or oval-shaped venues which – while suitable for cricket and Australian rules football – pose the same sight-line problems for soccer, rugby league, and rugby union as an athletics venue would. Playing sports with rectangle-shaped pitches on larger ovals often means fans can be as much as 30 m or more from the sidelines. Both Stadium Australia in Sydney and the Docklands Stadium in Melbourne have retractable seating to be able to change from an oval to rectangle shape and bring fans closer to the action if needed. Lang Park in Brisbane is currently (as of 2014) the only purpose-built rectangle stadium in Australia (with fixed seating) with a capacity exceeding 50,000.

Replacement and retention

The first real departure from the multipurpose stadium design occurred in 1972, when the Jackson County Sports Authority in Kansas City, Missouri, opened the Truman Sports Complex, which houses Kauffman Stadium (named Royals Stadium at the time of opening) and Arrowhead Stadium. The Truman Sports Complex was the first

example of multiple stadiums being built for specific sports at the same time. The designers, Kivett and Myers, were then absorbed by Kansas City architecture firm Hellmuth, Obata, and Kassabaum to become HOK Sport + Venue + Event (now the independent firm Populous), which went on to design many professional sports venues in the United States. Though hailed as revolutionary at the time, the Truman Sports Complex model of stadium design was widely ignored for the next 20 years, though the influence of both Arrowhead and Kauffman Stadiums were easily seen in venues such as Giants Stadium.

The true end of the multipurpose era began in 1987, when Buffalo's Pilot Field, a stadium built for the Buffalo Bisons minor league baseball team and a potential MLB expansion franchise, opened. Pilot Field replaced the long-obsolete War Memorial Stadium, which had been designed mainly for football, but had been (awkwardly) fit for baseball after the city's baseball park, Offermann Stadium, was torn down in 1960. During the 1990s and 2000s, most of the multipurpose stadiums used for MLB in the United States were replaced (most of those replaced have been demolished) by "retro-style" ballparks. These parks were built in two varieties: "retro-classic" parks, which combine the interior and exterior design of the "classic" ballparks with the amenities of newer facilities; and "retro-modern" parks, which have modern amenities and "retro" interiors, but have modern exterior designs. The first "retro-classic" park in MLB was Oriole Park at Camden Yards in Baltimore, which opened in 1992 and was based mostly on the Pilot Field design. (Comiskey Park had opened a year earlier in Chicago, but it was very modernist in its design and had little in common with the later retro-classic parks. However, due to extensive renovations over the years, Comiskey Park now enjoys many of the same amenities.) The "retro-modern" park made its first appearance in 1994 with the opening of Jacobs Field in Cleveland. Many football teams that shared a stadium with a baseball team had their stadiums converted into football-only facilities shortly after the baseball tenant left (e.g., Qualcomm Stadium), while other football teams followed their baseball counterparts and had new football-only stadiums constructed.

The widespread adoption of FieldTurf and similar modern artificial turfs beginning in the early 2000s also has had a role in the decline of the multipurpose stadium. While first-generation, short-pile turfs such as AstroTurf lent themselves well to multiple sports (one could have a turf for football, roll it up and replace it with one for baseball, soccer, or lacrosse), this was not the case with FieldTurf and its competitors. Modern artificial turf requires a more permanent installation, including sand and rubber base and/or infill that is not easily removed, thus does not lend itself well to multipurpose stadiums. Because of such turfs' superiority in other features compared to the earlier turfs, it has been seen as easier to build new stadiums for each sport rather than attempt to share an inflexible turf installation among multiple sports.

The Miami Marlins, which changed their name from the original Florida Marlins in November 2011, moved to Marlins Park, a new retractable-roof stadium in Miami, in 2012. Sun Life Stadium was then renovated to eliminate its baseball functionality, making it a football-only stadium.^[11]

With the Marlins' relocation, the Oakland Athletics are the only team left in the U.S. still sharing a stadium with an NFL team (the Oakland Raiders), the Oakland Coliseum. The Athletics and Raiders are both seeking new places to play; the Athletics recently explored plans to build Cisco Field. The Raiders have no concrete plans to move, but have suggested a move back to Los Angeles, where they played from 1982 to 1994. Also, suggestions have been made for the Raiders to share the new Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara with the 49ers. The Raiders' lease on the Coliseum expired after the 2013 season, and the team is currently only in the stadium because of emergency lease extensions; the Raiders have also been aggressively exploring a move to the Alamodome in San Antonio, and should the Raiders decide to relocate to any of those venues, shared stadiums will no longer be used by both the NFL and MLB. Still later, after the NFL rejected a proposed Los Angeles-area stadium for both the Raiders and San Diego Chargers (favoring instead a rival stadium plan that led to the return of the Los Angeles Rams from St. Louis), the Raiders have entered into talks with authorities in Las Vegas.

Currently, soccer-specific stadiums are now required by North America's three main soccer leagues: Major League Soccer, the North American Soccer League, and the United Soccer League.

In Canada, smaller, more specialized stadiums have generally become more popular, but none of the major multiple-use stadiums of the 1970s and 1980s have been demolished as of 2015. The Toronto Blue Jays shared Rogers Centre with the Toronto Argonauts of the CFL before the Argonauts moved to BMO Field after the 2015 season,^[12] and shared the facility on a part-time basis with the Buffalo Bills of the NFL for several years beginning in 2008.^[13] Before their 2015–16 move, the Argonauts had publicly announced plans to leave Rogers Centre twice, only to end up staying; during that time, the originally soccer-specific BMO Field was built by Toronto FC. The Blue Jays presently do not have any plans to leave Rogers Centre; the Argonauts had proposed renovating BMO Field so they could share it with Toronto FC, and the Bills sought to end their sharing agreement with the Rogers Centre and return to playing all of its games in Buffalo and ultimately did so after the 2013 season. BC Place in Vancouver is still used by the BC Lions and was also the Olympic Stadium for the 2010 Winter Olympics; the Lions played their 2010 season at the temporary Empire Field while BC Place was being renovated to replace the original air-supported roof with a retractable roof. The Vancouver Whitecaps, which entered Major League Soccer in 2011, shared Empire Field and are sharing the renovated BC Place with the Lions. This was intended to be a temporary arrangement until the MLS team could build their own Whitecaps Stadium, but local opposition to the planned stadium has led the Whitecaps to make BC Place a long-term home. The Montreal Expos' owners often cited the inadequacy of Olympic Stadium as a reason for the team's financial troubles, which eventually led to relocation to Washington, D.C.. The Montreal Alouettes moved out of Olympic Stadium to Molson Stadium. In soccer, the original Montreal Impact built the smaller Saputo Stadium, which was expanded to accommodate the team's 2012 entry into MLS. Both the Alouettes and Impact continue to use Olympic Stadium for playoff games and other special events when extra capacity is needed. Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton received major upgrades to host the 2001 World Championships in Athletics, and continues to host the Edmonton Eskimos, but is not hosting the new soccer team, FC Edmonton, which began play in 2011.

An added benefit of single-sport stadiums that was impossible with the "concrete donut" design of the multipurpose stadiums is improved panoramic views of areas outside the stadium, such as mountains, bodies of water, or city skylines. Examples include CenturyLink Field and Safeco Field, which replaced the Kingdome in Seattle, and Heinz Field and PNC Park, which replaced Three Rivers Stadium in Pittsburgh.

Still, several modern baseball-specific stadiums are able to be (and have been) converted for football use. In addition to the aforementioned Safeco Field, which has hosted occasional college football games, San Francisco's AT&T Park (which hosted the XFL's San Francisco Demons, hosted the annual Fight Hunger Bowl from 2002 to 2013, and also hosted California Golden Bears football games in the 2011 season while that team's stadium was being renovated), Phoenix's Chase Field (which hosted the Insight Bowl from 2000–2005), and St. Petersburg's Tropicana Field (which was built as a baseball-specific stadium, but began hosting a college bowl game in 2008) have all been used to host professional and college games since they were built; Tropicana Field, being an indoor stadium, has also hosted the Tampa Bay Lightning ice hockey team for a time. (Nationals Park in Washington, D.C., was to be the original host of the EagleBank Bowl before that game was moved, first to RFK Stadium^[14] and eventually to Navy–Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis, Maryland.) Yankee Stadium hosts the Pinstripe Bowl, New York City FC soccer (among other neutral-site matches), and various other high-profile college football games.

Furthermore, some teams in the United Football League played their home schedule at a baseball-specific stadium. The California Redwoods played their home games at the aforementioned AT&T Park; though they moved to a football stadium in Sacramento (Sacramento Mountain Lions) in 2010 and 2011, they moved back to a baseball park (this time Raley Field) for 2012. Although their home field was the Citrus Bowl in Orlando, the Florida Tuskers played one 2009 home game at Tropicana Field. The team has since moved to the Hampton Roads area as the Virginia Destroyers and played its last two seasons at a stadium designed for soccer, the Virginia Beach Sportsplex. The Omaha Nighthawks played their inaugural 2010 season at a baseball park, Rosenblatt Stadium, and played in Rosenblatt's replacement, TD Ameritrade Park Omaha (a stadium built mainly for baseball's College World Series, but with a round field more reminiscent of the multipurpose stadiums), until the league's demise.^[14] The New York Sentinels originally planned to play their games at Citi Field, the home of baseball's New York Mets;

budget issues prompted the team to play all of its games in other stadiums. The Stars Football League, one of the *de facto* second-tier professional football leagues that filled the void of the UFL's departure, played all of its 2013 games at Central Broward Regional Park, a stadium designed for cricket. The Fall Experimental Football League had two of its teams play in baseball parks: the Omaha Mammoths at TD Ameritrade Park and the Brooklyn Bolts at MCU Park; for its 2015 season, the league went further and put all of its teams in baseball parks (franchises were given to minor league baseball franchises so they could use their ballparks after the end of the baseball season).

See also

- Sport venue
- Sports complex
- Modular stadium

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Categories: Multi-purpose stadiums | Stadiums

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STATE OF MISSOURI
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon, Governor • Sara Parker Pauley, Director



www.dnr.mo.gov

Memorandum

Date: August 30, 2016
To: Keeper, National Register of Historic Places (**Attn: Roger Reed**)
From: Michelle Diedrich, National Register and Survey Coordinator, Missouri State Historic Preservation Office *MD*
Subject: Kemper Arena, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, National Register Nomination

Our state review board, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, approved the above nomination on February 7, 2014. The nomination was returned by the NPS on April 21, 2014 and is being resubmitted. All owners and appropriate elected public officials were notified and provided at least thirty (30) days to comment on the above proposed nomination in accordance with Section 36CFR60.6, interim regulations, using the exact notification format recommended by the National Register. **The enclosed disc contains the true and correct copy of the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.**

Please find enclosed the following documentation:

- 1 CD with original National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- Multiple Property Documentation Form
- Photographs
- 1 CD with electronic images
- Original USGS map(s)
- Sketch map(s)/figures(s)/exhibits not on continuation sheets
- 2 Piece(s) of correspondence (cover letter, 8/29 e-mail from Roger Reed)

Comments:

 X Please insure that this nomination is reviewed. (Response of 8/29 request to change period of significance)

 The enclosed owner objection(s) do do not constitute a majority of property owners.