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Drive

## Ralliart a sporty winner

For those who can't afford Mitsubishi's tire smoking Evolution, may I direct your attention to the next step down, the Lancer Ralliart.

The Ralliart looks much like the vanilla Lancer, but with a bit more attitude and standard equipment. The biggest difference is the 2.4-liter engine. At 165 horsepower, it has more punch than most in the class. There is also a generous amount of torque, which also puts it a step ahead of the class.

This is not an Evo, but the difference in horsepower and price tell you that at the start. What it is, is a great gap car. The Ralliart gives enough thrills on a budget. Just turn the key and you feel that the car has some guts. A light tap on the gas and the engine skips the verses and goes straight for the chorus. The exhaust note is deep and the engine growls.

On the highway, this car wants to run. The stiff suspension and aggressive 16-inch 205/50 series tires allow you to play junior racer. Toss it, throw it, or just hammer straight ahead and this car pleases.

There are two flavors. The four-door sedan and a sportback. I generally like sportback (or small wagon) versions better because of the room to put stuff. My yellow test car did not disappoint in that respect, but it was saddled with a clunky four-speed automatic. It shifted smoothly, but slowly. The gearing seemed to be too tall. Passing felt a bit precarious. Some of this may be due to the car's weight - it's a little heavier than the sedan - but playing with the shift points may solve the problem. No, it's not driver adjustable, I'm speaking to Mitsubishi.

My ruby red test sedan didn't have that problem. The five-speed manual was a complete joy. Throws are short and sweet, the snick, snick kind. I was better able to put the car's power to use. Cruising at 80 mph in either car was easy, although the engine did whine a bit. But who buys a car like this for quiet.

Actually, the car is a lot quieter than some in its class and the ride is much more comfortable than you might think. Bumpy roads were a pain, but in general, both cars' ride were pretty tame.

The sedan clocked in at \$19,972, \$200 more than the sportback. That's because the sportback had no options but was still well equipped with everything you need, including ABS and air conditioning.

The sedan's \$17,997 base price was upped by a \$1,400 package that included a sunroof and a 315 watt upgrade to the stereo system.

If you don't need the space, take the sedan. The five alone is worth the price of admission. Either car will make you happy.

# College spending on spots under fire

By Julia Silverman  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EUGENE, Ore. — The new \$3.2 million football locker room at the University of Oregon - complete with plasma screen TVs, PlayStations, and a bronze plaque honoring Nike chairman and rabid fan Phil Knight - thrilled the players, the coaches and the team's boosters.

But professors were less than enthralled. For them, it was the latest sign that college spending on athletics was out of control.

Their calls for more faculty influence on sports spending have helped spark a nationwide movement already endorsed by faculty senates at schools such as Duke, Michigan, Stanford, Texas, Alabama, Nebraska, Mississippi, Arkansas, Iowa and Oklahoma State.

"From a professor's point of view, athletics is a sideshow that has taken on a life of its

own and become dangerous and counterproductive to education," said James Earl, a professor of medieval literature at the University of Oregon and co-chair of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics.

The coalition's roots go back to 2000, when Earl and other Oregon professors were infuriated by the university's plans for a multi-million-dollar expansion of its football stadium, even as academic budgets were being cut. Their movement spread and now includes faculty leaders from other universities with big, Division I sports programs.

Its members are now asking faculty senates at other Division I schools to vote on a resolution that calls for more restraint on spending on sports and a brake on "creeping collegiate commercialism." The resolution also asks that professors be given more influence over spending decisions at their univer-

sities and with the NCAA.

The faculty senate at Oregon held a vote on it on Wednesday.

It is unclear how much effect the coalition will have. At the University of Texas, for example, the faculty council approved the intent of the reforms in January, but former council chairman Michael Grunof told the student newspaper, "What we will be doing with this is still very unclear."

And the proposal is sure to encounter skepticism from higher-ups.

"I am glad that the faculty take a genuine interest in institutional issues," said Dan Williams, vice president of administration at Oregon. "But their primary area of expertise is academic affairs. I have a problem when the faculty take on responsibility for administrative matters."

Student athletes, too, said they were skeptical about a greater role for the faculty.

"I completely oppose the

idea of faculty members being included in the process of deciding where spending should be done," said Jared Siegal, a 22-year-old football player and business major at Oregon. "It is inappropriate. They don't have any sort of authority."

Others, though, said the faculty's words about sports spending run amok deserve to be heeded.

"It kind of sends a mixed message, with tuition and book prices going up, to also be building new arenas,"

said Adam Petkun, a 21-year-old political science major at Oregon.

Supporters of college athletics counter that college sports are big business, like it or not.

Moneymaking sports like men's football and basketball often underwrite other college athletic teams, from squash to soccer. And universities say fancy stadiums, arenas and locker rooms help them recruit star athletes and attract fans and donors.

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