

Bout settled between Legion and Fair Board

by STAN MURRAY
Sports Editor

ST. GEORGE — A long-running battle between the Washington County Fair Board and Hurricane Post 100 of the American Legion over use of the Legion's Boxing Arena has been settled — for this year anyway.

The two parties had been battling price and responsibility since early spring, but finally a simple lease agreement between them was signed.

"This is about as simple a lease agreement as you can find," County Attorney Paul Graf said today in outlining the efforts involved in getting the agreement finally signed late Tuesday.

"It's just a simple rental agreement. The county has agreed to pay the American Legion \$1,200 for use of the facility two nights and pay the electric bill. The Legion will provide the arena and parking."

Because of the agreement this year's boxing matches held in conjunction with the Washington County Fair will be in the American Legion Boxing Arena Friday and Saturday beginning at 8 p.m.

But according to Graf the road to the agreement was not easy.

"The county grants concessions to organizations, for a fee, who want to participate in the fair. But the organizations provide all the manpower and advertising. But since the county owns the boxing equipment and furnishes the manpower to run the fights we wanted to just lease the facility."

Last year, Graf said, was the first year the county and the American Legion has had a signed agreement regarding the use of the arena, at the request of Cleo Atkin, the fair board chairman. Before that the agreement was just a verbal one.

This year the same agreement was offered the Legion with the exception of considerations. The county

offered the Legion \$1,250 or a percentage of the money taken from the ticket sales.

Graf said this offer was made on April 23 but by June 28 no answer had been received. So another letter with the offer was sent to Post Commander Orvil Wright with a deadline of July 2 on it in hopes of getting the problem settled.

Between July 2 and July 26 negotiation between Wright and Atkin continued and it was thought a written agreement had been agreed upon but never signed.

Then, Graf said, last week Wright appeared with an agreement of his own but some of the clauses in the agreement were not acceptable to the county.

Those clauses were:

- The county would give the American Legion one half of the boxing equipment the county owns.

- The contract would be renegotiated in 1983 but the county would do all the advertising and ticket printing but the Legion would keep all the money.

At this time the negotiations were broken off and Atkin proceeded to direct a person to set up a ring on the high school track, close to the bleachers in order to hold the matches. This set up would actual offer more seating for the boxing fans.

"Tuesday, Wright showed up with a second agreement with major changes from the first that we settled for," Graf said.

"Cleo (Atkin) didn't want to go with the Legion. She felt they were ripping the county off. She felt the amount being paid out is unreasonable."

Since 1974 the county has paid the Legion anywhere from \$2,000 to \$3,190.37 a year for two night's use of the arena.

According to Graf in 1979 or 1980 an appraisal was done, at his request. The recommendation from the appraisal, Atkin said, was that rent should be \$150 for the two nights, \$75 a night.