

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NR FORM

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Butler Fieldhouse

and/or common Hinkle Fieldhouse

097-296-11140

2. Location

street & number Butler University Campus
Cor. of 49th Street and Boulevard Place

N/A not for publication

city, town Indianapolis N/A vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Marion code 097

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Butler University

street & number 4600 Sunset Avenue

city, town Indianapolis N/A vicinity of state Indiana 46208

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Marion County Recorder's Office

street & number 721 City-County Building

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana 46204

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved	date N/A
___ fair	___ unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Hinkle Fieldhouse is located on the campus of Butler University, between 52nd and 49th Streets, Boulevard Place, and the Central Canal. It has a rectangular plan, brick walls, and a three-stage monitor roof supported by an arched steel truss system.

The building lies on the east-west axis with the gable ends facing those directions. The main facade is the south wall where the entry gates are located (photo #1). The south wall rests upon a poured concrete, beveled foundation. The brick walls are approximately three stories high from grade to the parapet. The facade is divided vertically into 22 bays by decorative buttresses. The pointed, stone buttress caps project slightly above the parapet level. The parapet has stone coping.

The south wall is pierced by eight entry gates. Gates 1, 2, and 3 occupy the three westernmost bays; Gates 4 and 5 are in the two center bays; and Gates 6, 7, and 8 are in the three easternmost bays. Each gate has three metal flush doors. Above each door is a tall, round-arch window with steel muntins and frame. The arches have limestone keystones and springstones. The gate bays are further accented with decorative brick panels rising several feet above the parapet with octagonal center tablets and accented buttresses. Every bay on the south facade has a pair of metal frame windows at the third-floor level. The bays between the gates have a pair of ground-level windows. At the second-story level is a stone string course which encircles the building.

The north facade is similar to the south facade. It has the same number of bays and buttresses. The bays are identical, but with no entry gates. Because of the sloping grade, the poured concrete basement is exposed with pairs of windows in each bay. There is a pair of windows in each bay at the ground-floor level except in the two central bays, which are blind. The easternmost bay has three metal flush doors and the second bay has been altered with the addition of an overhead garage door. The seventh and eighth bays from the west end have single added doors with concrete platforms and stairs. A brick smokestack is directly behind the two central bays. The north facade also has a course of third-floor level windows.

The east facade is a round-arch gable end. It is approximately six stories high and nine bays wide. The bays are divided by buttresses. On the ground floor the two southern and northernmost bays have large steel-framed windows. The next bay on each side has twin metal-flush doors with a single window above. The center bay has four windows, two above and two below. The bay south of the center is identical to the central bay. The bay north of the central bay has two lower windows and one upper. The third-floor level has rectangular steel-framed windows in each bay. The parapet line established on the north and south facade continues as a stone string course. The gable windows increase in height towards the central bay, which has a window three times the height of the smaller windows. The end gable bays are too short to accommodate windows. The buttress caps project above the stone coping on the parapet.

The west wall is identical to the east facade above the third-floor level. A two-story brick wing is attached to the lower floors. The wing is five bays deep and nine bays wide. The bays also have buttresses and large steel-frame windows. The windows on the north facade of the wing are blocked up with glazed tile blocks as are the three northern windows on the west side. The two end bays of the wing's southern facade have single, metal-flush doors. The wing's roof is flat. The wing houses a smaller gym and a swimming pool.

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Sports

Specific dates 1927-28

Builder/Architect

Fermor Spencer Cannon

Statement of Significance ~~(in one paragraph)~~

The Butler Fieldhouse has been well-known throughout Indiana as the largest indoor sports facility in the state, from the time of its construction in 1927-28, until the late 1960s. In its 55 year history, millions of Hoosiers have used the building for recreational, entertainment, civic, religious, and political functions, as well as sporting events. The facility was listed in 1981 as the eleventh largest Division I (NCAA) basketball arena in the nation, and it is the oldest of these.

The building was designed by Fermor Spencer Cannon, an Indianapolis architect. Cannon was an influential member of the community, being instrumental in forming the Indiana Society of Architects as well as other architectural organizations. The Butler Fieldhouse was his most notable project. Its importance was established from the beginning, primarily because of its innovative construction techniques that allowed 15,000 people to view events without interference from posts or pillars. The interior structure is made of reinforced steel girders, with an exterior brick shell.

Upon completion, the fieldhouse immediately brought statewide and national attention not only to Butler University, but to Indiana basketball. Butler's team was voted national champion in 1928 by the Veteran's Athletes for Philadelphia. In the first game at the fieldhouse, Butler defeated Notre Dame, the national champions of the previous year. From that point on, the fieldhouse became the site of major Indiana High School and National Collegiate Athletic Association basketball activities. With the exception of four years during World War II, the Indiana High School Basketball Tournament championships were held in the fieldhouse from its first year until the late 1960s. The "Hoosier Hysteria" that accompanies the state high school basketball tournament is probably unequalled outside Indiana; an understanding of this unique cultural phenomenon can readily explain why the Butler Fieldhouse is as well-known outside Indianapolis as it is locally.

In addition, the fieldhouse has been the site of a great number of other important athletic and general-interest events. The famous Butler Indoor Relays were held here in the 1930s and 40s. It has also been the site of professional tennis tours, marathon bicycle races, and circuses. The fieldhouse evolved into an unofficial convention center for the city, attracting an impressive array of United States presidential candidates and other political, social and civic leaders. These include such prominent figures as Wendell Willkie, Tom Dewey, Billy Graham, Dwight Eisenhower, Herbert Hoover, and Gerald Ford.

Butler Fieldhouse served as a prototype for other large, modern athletic complexes, its size alone setting it apart as a unique structure. During half a century it evolved into a focal point for Indiana sports, particularly basketball. In 1965 the name was changed to Hinkle Fieldhouse, in honor of Paul D. "Tony" Hinkle, who coached at Butler University for nearly 50 years, with over 1,100 N.C.A.A. victories to his credit, 632 of them in basketball. He coached the U.S. All-Star basketball team against the U.S.S.R. team, and is a member of the James Naismith, Helms Foundation, and Indiana Basketball halls of fame. In 1962 he received the National Collegiate Basketball Coaches Association's highest award for his contributions to the sport.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3.201, approximately

Quadrangle name Indianapolis West

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	6	5	7	1	2	4	0	4	4	1	0	5	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B

Zone	Easting			Northing										

C

Zone	Easting			Northing										

D

Zone	Easting			Northing										

E

Zone	Easting			Northing										

F

Zone	Easting			Northing										

G

Zone	Easting			Northing										

H

Zone	Easting			Northing										

Verbal boundary description and justification

Please see continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Thomas McClanahan, Director of Grants, in cooperation with Vicki Sandstead and William L. Selm, of the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission

organization Butler University date 8-19-83

street & number 4600 Sunset Avenue telephone 317/283-9331

city or town Indianapolis state Indiana 46208

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *J. M. Reddin*

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date 10-28-83

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
Keeper of the National Register
Attest:
Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Butler Fieldhouse

Item number 7

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The roof of the fieldhouse is covered with asphalt shingles. It is built in three stages with glazed monitor ribbons between each stage. The first (lower) stage is steeply pitched. The second (middle) stage is slightly pitched. The third (top) stage is the two-sided gable apex.

The greater part of the interior space of the fieldhouse accommodates the basketball court and the three tiers of stands. The interior walls are clad with brown, glazed brick. The floors are poured concrete, as are the ramps and upper two tiers of stands. The actual seats are painted wooden planks fixed to the concrete steps. The framework for the stands, ramps, and roof are all exposed painted steel girders. The corrugated metal roof sheathing is also exposed to view. The stands are divided by pipe railing. The main floor stands (the first tier) are made of wood, and are not permanent.

The entryways from the south facade gates are guarded by glazed tile block ticket offices. Several painted concrete block offices and classrooms have been tucked under the main floor stands on the east end. The area under the stands on the west end is enclosed with chain-link fencing. This enclosed section is an athletic practice area.

The wooden court is NCAA regulation size (99' x 50') and is surrounded on all sides by seating. Behind and under the stands is a wide open walkway which encircles the stands. Within this area are maintenance offices, drinking fountains, and trophy cases.

The western wing of the fieldhouse is entered from inside the fieldhouse. This wing contains a swimming pool in the northern half and a practice gymnasium in the southern half. The subterranean area accommodates locker facilities and mechanical rooms.

The fieldhouse is illuminated by natural light from the monitor roof windows and the graduated windows in the gable end. Ceiling-suspended electrical lights with metal shades provide artificial illumination. The hardwood basketball court is removable. The end lines are on the north and south sides. The original court ran east and west. It was changed in 1933 to accommodate more seating and to eliminate the problem of sunlight from the west blinding the eyes of the players. The late afternoon sun streaming through the large west end windows created a blind spot for the players moving westward on the court.

Despite these minor changes, the historical integrity of this structure remains intact. It continues to serve as the home of the Butler University "Bulldogs," seating, by former coach Tony Hinkle's count, 15,062 for basketball games.

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Continuation sheet Butler Fieldhouse

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Major Bibliographical References:

Butler Alumna Quarterly. Vol. 17-18, 1928-30, p. 41. XVII April, 1928, No. 1, P. 41.

The Drift--Butler University Yearbook (1927-1928).

George W. Geib. Indianapolis: Hoosiers' Circle City, p. 187.

Indianapolis Architecture, Indiana Architectural Foundation (Hilltop Press, Inc. 1975), pp. 134-35.

Indianapolis News. Files on Hinkle (Butler) Fieldhouse and Fermor Spencer Cannon.

Indianapolis Star. Files on Hinkle (Butler) Fieldhouse and Fermor Spencer Cannon.

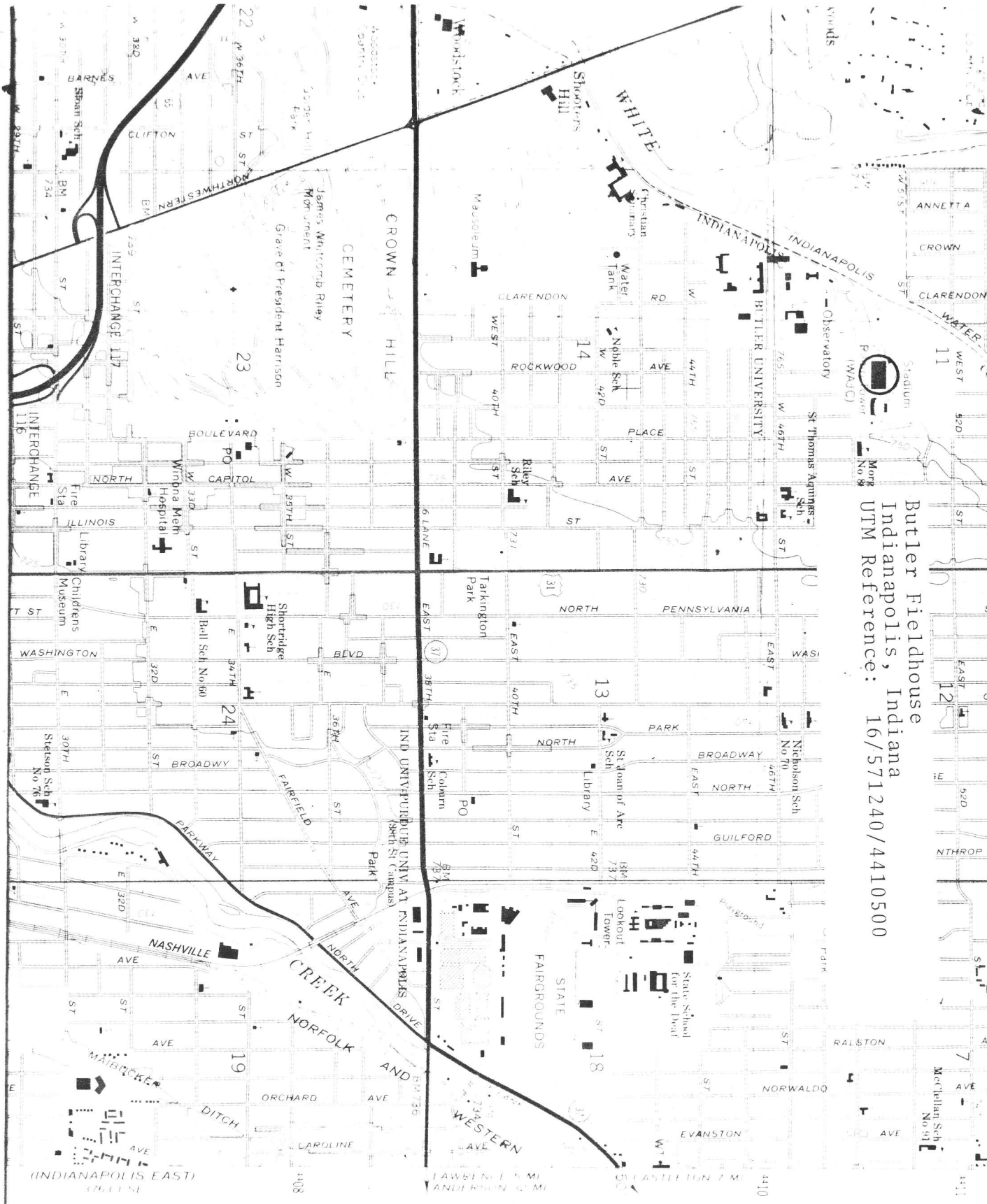
Indianapolis Times. Files on Hinkle (Butler) Fieldhouse and Fermor Spencer Cannon.

Herbert F. Schwomeyer. Hoosier Hysteria: A History of Indiana High School Basketball, Mitchell-Fleming Printing, Inc. (Greenfield, Indiana), 1970.

Butler Fieldhouse

Item No. 10

Commencing at the intersection of the West right-of-way line of Boulevard Place and the North right-of-way line of West 49th Street as now located on Drawing No. 59-51, Office of the Marion County Surveyor, said point being North 30.00 feet and West 25.00 feet from the southeast corner of Lot 24, Blues Overlook Addition, an Addition to the City of Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana the plat of which is recorded in Plat Book 16, page 174, in the Office of the Recorder of Marion County, Indiana; thence South 90 degrees 00 minutes 00 seconds West 630.58 feet along said north right-of-way; thence North 0 degrees 08 minutes 10 seconds West 198.15 feet to the point of beginning; thence South 89 degrees 51 minutes 50 seconds West 488.90 feet; thence North 0 degrees 08 minutes 10 seconds West 285.20 feet; thence North 89 degrees 51 minutes 50 seconds East 488.90 feet; thence South 0 degrees 08 minutes 10 seconds East 285.20 feet to the point of beginning and containing 3.201 acres, more or less.



Butler Fieldhouse
 Indianapolis, Indiana
 UTM Reference: 16/571240/4410500