

matter of who would make the drive here. The fact that the First 4 organizers also included several high school teams and one 'local' college in UC Santa Barbara was a great decision."

Moeller was able to land previews in the major print outlets in the area, while the reaction from the electronic media was a little less receptive. A poison pen column in one of the peripheral papers ruffled a few feathers after the event, but for the most part the reaction from the media and fans was positive.

And the big question that remains now is what does the future hold for the First 4. Will this be a one-time deal, or will it become a fixture on lacrosse fans' calendars as a harbinger of the true start of the season?

As far as Pantheon is concerned, this is just the first step. The location is not set in stone, and there are some obstacles to overcome, such as massaging future schedules to allow the top teams to compete and travel hang-ups. The concept is not in question, however, and Atherton, Sperry and others are already prepping for next year's event.

Pantheon will be hosting the event again somewhere in Southern California, potentially the Home Depot Center again if post-event

**“That was certainly the right thing for the teams to do. It's important that this venue stimulate and promote the game, to put something back into the game and help it. Our guys really got into those clinics.”**

—Dave Urick, Georgetown head coach, on the clinics conducted by the players of the four NCAA teams while in Los Angeles

analysis by all involved is favorable. The organizers have already lined up the Division I teams and hope next year's matchups will be announced sometime before the end of the NCAA tournament in May. Intriguing high school and IA games also will be included, and perhaps a Division II or III contest, as well.

“We launched it with the expectation of it being more than one year,” said Atherton. “It took a lot of time and energy to make this successful. It is too early to commit to a site. This venue was great, but LA is a tough market for lacrosse. We'll be analyzing everything in the near future. Although I'm a firm believer in keeping an event where it is, we're going to keep an open mind.”

Some of the possible spots for a future First 4 are San Diego and San Francisco, according to Atherton, but right now the Pantheon folks and everyone who made the First 4 such a wonderful event are sitting back and enjoying the thrill of a job well done.

“We received great feedback from

referees to teams to spectators,” said Sperry. “There are always things we can do better, but we're generally pretty darned pleased. We even lucked out on the weather.”

“I think it was a terrific event. It was great to be a part of a lacrosse event, not just a game,” said Corrigan.

“I wouldn't hesitate to do it again,” added Urick. “Everything we wanted to get out of the trip we did.”

The benefit to the teams is an added bonus to what may very well be considered decades from now as a landmark event in firmly putting the sport of lacrosse in the consciousness of all the beautiful people in Los Angeles. And, more importantly, lacrosse might be added to the wide range of superlatives currently attributed with Southern California.

“I think the big picture for lacrosse in Southern California is very good,” said Moeller. “Watching the sport of lacrosse live, I'm a believer. Just get them out to see it live, and they will be hooked.” **LM**

(Left) The day's events showcased a number of top California prep teams, including Malibu and Foothill, as well as a US Lacrosse Men's Division Intercollegiate Associates (MDIA) matchup between defending champ UC Santa Barbara and Colorado State (right).

