A scoreboard company is installing a new $1.2 million system at the Cajundome that includes TV screens at concessions stands.

That and several other major arena improvements will debut at the Louisiana IceGators’ first 1996-97 home game, Oct. 25.

“When people walk into the arena, they’re going to experience something they would have to go to the Summit in Houston or the Reunion Arena in Dallas to experience,” Greg Davis, the Cajundome’s manager, said Monday of the upgrades.

The two Texas arenas are homes of NBA teams.

Approximately 1,000 seats have been added to the Cajundome’s 13,000-seat arena, increasing capacity for ice hockey games by 500 seats and for USL basketball games by 750 seats.

“It will give the arena, for sporting events, a bowl effect,” Davis said. The expansion’s price tag is about $600,000.

A $50,000 sound improvement will mean audio inside the arena is more of stereo quality. A $40,000 lighting improvement will increase lighting on the ice hockey rink and on the basketball court.

For the total $1.9 million in improvements, the Cajundome is paying about $500,000. The scoreboard and video system are being paid for by advertisers. USL and the Louisiana IceGators’ owners are each contributing $100,000 to the additional seating job’s cost.

On the scoreboard, suspended above the center of the arena floor, will be four 16-television panels, showing action on the floor and elsewhere in the arena. Televisions will also be set up at concession stands outside the arena, so patrons can continue to watch the games.

The Cajundome is hiring a full-time video director and part-time camera operators and other helpers to produce material for broadcast. The $50,000 a year operation will be paid for by selling commercials, Davis said. About $50,000 of profit is expected the first year, he added.