



The Ohio Report on Athletics

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claim are developed, not implanted, in the athletes carry over into other situations. The thought is expressed, however, that the evil influence of bad practices will have a deleterious effect

upon the lives of those affected. Until this question is settled we shall do well to insist that good manners as well as morals should be taught on the playing fields of the American college.

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The Ohio Report on Athletics

BY C. W. SAVAGE

Recommendations by the Ohio College Association Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics

IN 1926 the Ohio College Association adopted the report of its committee on athletics embodying two fundamental principles: (1) that methods of selecting and training representative teams ought to be modified to conform with sound pedagogical procedure; (2) that the values inherent in competitive sports should be made available for a greater number of students. To these ends the Committee suggested that two years of competition on intramural teams leading up to two years of competition on the varsity team would be a step in compliance with the two principles recommended. At that time two years of varsity competition had the support of no less prominent coaches than Alonzo Stagg of the University of Chicago, and Dr. J. W. Wilce of Ohio State University. However, no group of Ohio colleges was willing to make trial of this plan.

In 1927 the Committee on Athletics again reported, recommended no further changes, but suggested details of athletic procedure which it

was felt would lessen criticism forming against intercollegiate football and perhaps gradually bring about a situation more worthy of educational institutions. Dr. R. M. Hughes, at that time president of Miami University, was scribe for this committee and put much time and thought into framing the report to make it reasonably progressive. There were no apparent results following its adoption.

For the year 1928 the Committee on Athletics of the Association failed to function, but in 1929 the athletic standards of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, by which institutions of the district were being measured and debarred and even dropped from that Association, were reported to the Ohio College Association and unanimously adopted. Again no apparent changes in athletic procedure resulted.

Early in the year 1929-30, Bulletin Number 23 of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Learning, dealing with intercollegiate athletics, was made public. The revela-

tions made, while shocking to many people, brought little that was new to members of the Athletic Committee of the Ohio College Association. It may be conceded that slight errors of interpretation and some minor inaccuracies are to be found in the Carnegie Report, but it must also be admitted that only one inference can be drawn from the report as a whole, namely, that the conditions under which potential athletes are being recruited and subsidized are a disgrace to educational institutions and controvert the very purpose for which young men are supposed to go to college.

Football and other virile sports are not to blame for this deplorable state of affairs, neither are the prospective athletes. In fact a large portion of the individuals and of the groups who practice these unworthy methods are actuated by altruistic motives and believe that they are assisting worthy and deserving boys to a fine education and consequent greater usefulness and happiness and at the same time are rendering Alma Mater a real service.

WHAT, then, is the cause of the evils we deplore? Why is it necessary to frame intricate and detailed statements of eligibility, pile up rule upon rule for procedure, place restriction after restriction upon the athletes once in college? These things and many more are all a part of the system of conducting intercollegiate sport which we have allowed to grow up, and it is this system which is to blame. It is this system which has set such store on victory that victory must be achieved by fair means or foul, and which does not hesitate to break down the moral in-

tegrity of the high-school boy and make him a party to subterfuge, deceit, and outright dishonesty. How we who are "in the know" wish that we could believe that Iowa's disgrace and disciplining was only an extreme and isolated case! Perhaps in degree it was extreme, but in kind it is certainly typical of what is only too common. This opinion is substantiated by the Carnegie Report, inadequate though it may be.

In view of these experiences and these facts, the members of the Committee on Athletics agreed that there was nothing in making further rules but futility and increased opportunity for evasions and deceit. For over thirty years the Western Conference (the Big Ten), the Ohio Conference, and other conferences have been making rules and drawing up codes. In recent years powerful athletic directors and famous coaches have pledged their influence for better conditions. In some respects there have been changes for the better, but nevertheless we have the revelations of Bulletin Number 23; we have the Iowa affair; we have Butler College dropped from the North Central. Is not the futility of rules, gentlemen's agreements, sportsmanship codes, thus incontrovertibly shown? Are we not forced to admit that the evils we deplore are inherent in the system? So at least thought the members of the Committee on Athletics—hence their report of April 5, 1930.

It should be remembered that the Committee was acting upon the policies adopted in 1926 and 1927. It must be evident that two years of participation, or better three years as the Committee suggests, will at one

stroke kill the evil of subsidizing, remove the commercial and professional aspect from the game, almost triple the number of men who make the varsity teams, greatly increase the interest and the recreative aspect of the years of preparation in intramural games, and in countless ways bring the whole system into healthy, sane, and normal relation to the other interests of the college. This report is worthy of the serious consideration of institutions interested in restoring the amateur status of intercollegiate sport. It is to be hoped that small working groups of colleges will forsake the mad race for championship honors and agree upon some plan of competition in the direction of the suggestions of this report. Colleges with the courage to try the experiment will be watched with keenest interest. The report follows:

WHEREAS, The conditions in intercollegiate sport disclosed by Bulletin Number 23 of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching are such as to bring discredit and disgrace to our institutions of higher learning; and

WHEREAS, Athletic practices brought to light at the University of Iowa and by common knowledge known to exist within our own state have resulted in unpleasant and unfortunate intercollegiate relations; and

WHEREAS, Public opinion is again forming in opposition to the present system of conducting intercollegiate football; and

WHEREAS, We believe that undergraduates throughout the country are gradually but steadily becoming critical of and dissatisfied with present methods of conducting intercollegiate football; and

WHEREAS, Presidents Hopkins of Dartmouth, Lowell of Harvard, Wilkins of Oberlin, Day of Union, and Holt of Rollins College have voiced vigorous protests

to our methods of selecting and developing our intercollegiate teams and of staging commercialized spectacles; therefore be it *Resolved*, That this Association place itself on record as believing that basic responsibility for the conduct of intercollegiate sports rests with the trustees and the administrative officers of our institutions, and that these officers and their faculties can no longer live up to their responsibilities nor discharge the trust reposed in them as leaders and guides of the youth committed to their care without giving early and serious consideration to measures which may certainly mitigate, if not entirely eliminate those evils now commonly charged against intercollegiate competition;

That because of the facts stated herein above we believe that no more opportune time than the present is likely to be found for the inauguration of a new and progressive policy in the conduct of intercollegiate sports;

That this Association recommends to its several members the formation of groups of institutions for the purpose of working out within their respective groups the details of new conditions for competitive sports embodying the objectives of intercollegiate competition adopted by this Association in 1926 and reaffirmed in the annual meeting of 1927; namely, "to make it possible for a much greater number of college men to derive the educational and character-building values of football competition" and "to modify the present system so that it will conform to sound pedagogical theory and at the same time not interfere with the game as a sport."

And Be It Further Resolved, That the method of developing representative teams be so modified that the lure of intercollegiate competition may be utilized to arouse and hold the interest of a greater number of potential athletes by making the representative teams the culmination of two, or better three years of previous training in a well-administered and well-coached intramural system; to the end that the

drudgery of intensive training may be replaced by practice recreative in character and by experience gained in actually playing games; that the love of notoriety may give way to the love of sport for sport's sake; and that all the fine characteristics now generally admitted as inherent in team games may be made available for those of the rank and file who have the

desire and will to persevere, rather than for the very few selected and pre-selected outstanding athletes as in the present system.

This report was adopted by the Association: all but the last section was accepted unanimously; this was adopted by a vote of twenty-four to ten.

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