

Many boys do go to college wholly to play basketball, football, or baseball, and so forth. But if they are the right sort and under the right influence of the coach who should encourage the boy to graduate, then this athlete will catch step with a great majority of college students who are here for a purpose and he will swing in stride and actually get the ambition to graduate even though he did not have it when he came to school.

My point is, Fred, that the coach owes this direction to his athletes. Joe McCarthy and Larry MacPhail do not owe that attitude to their men. But it does happen that we are an educational institution and we are taking the finest boys in the land with the greatest possibilities, and instead of inspiring them on to greater leadership which will carry over in the next thirty years, a lot of coaches say, "I am not paid to do that." No, they may not be paid to do that, but they are certainly not paid to make a boy duller, and thus lessen his opportunities.

I would like to sit down and talk with you one hour. I believe I could sell you on the idea that many coaches at the present time are in the same relative position in their profession as is the shyster lawyer in his. There is nothing wrong with the law, and the law is an honorable profession. But when a man distorts the true purpose of his calling and takes his material - the finest in the land in the way of American youth - then I say that it is time to call a halt to it and see just exactly what the coach is really teaching your boy - your boy, I say. Then you will get to straight thinking pretty fast.

This is not an evangelical attitude. It is an efficiency proposition - just as a teacher of engineering makes the engineering student more efficient or proficient. It is an everyday job that every coach who is handling the youth of the country should recognize. They should challenge the best in him by using the athletic halter to lead this young broncho into the tougher things of life with the philosophy and with the training that should enable him to cope with them.

I am sending you a carbon copy of the speech that I made at Cape Girardeau at the Southeast State Teachers College last Wednesday. In each and every one of these speeches I have talked only to the high school boy and warned him against this built up thing called "big time athletics". It is no good for my boy and it is no good for yours. And I am trying to be honest with the boys, that is all.

I am not one whit afraid of the coach who cusses me out or ostracizes me for my views. I would rather have as my friend a kid that is going to college and standing at the crossroad - I would rather have him as my friend when I endeavor to show him both roads.

Sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education and Recreation,  
Varsity Basketball and Baseball Coach.

FCA:AH  
Enc.