

The very roars of the crowd give answer to the question of whether or not a team of women athletes can deliver a brand of play which will satisfy fans who are used only to the very best. For many years, in many parts of the world, the Grads have adequately settled this question in the minds of sports lovers. Their fiendishness of attack, their ever-burning speed, their skill, and their utter sportsmanship have won for them a lasting spot in the hearts of countless fans.

In this series the Grads have perhaps the greatest handicap in all the years of their successful career. On the very eve of the series one of their star players has been seriously injured—Miss Mabel Munton, run down by a car. It has been a great shock. Miss Munton is a splendid guard.

Tulsa outweighs the Edmonton champs by an average of fifteen pounds, and outreaches them by an average of two inches. The Grads are fighting with their backs to the wall. The Tulsans want this game, too—for they know that if they take it they stand a strong chance of annexing the next two and the series.

But the champions have that indomitable spirit which has brought them to the niche of fame. They likewise have on the side lines perhaps the greatest coach and trainer in the history of competitive sports—J. Percy Page.

When interviewed recently, Mr. Page spoke most modestly of his part in the Grads' successes.

"You see, it's like this," he said. "Odds seem to offer us a stimulant which brings out the best that is in us. When the Grads are up against the heaviest form of odds, they seem to have a reserve of fighting spirit and skill that is all the product of close coöperation, and friendly understanding throughout all the years of school and sports training."

In the first two games of this series the Grads just edged out wins. The third is the most critical game, for the weight and reach of the Tulsans is beginning to tell. Coach Page nods to a slender girl on the side lines—Noel MacDonald, the "rookie" member of the team, who is alternating with Miss Fry at center. Facing them is Miss Williams, the pivot of the Tulsans, an amazingly fast runner and deadly shot.

AT the halfway mark the game is tied, with Tulsa turning on every atom of pressure. Miss MacDonald takes the floor and immediately opens a sizzling Grads attack. Noel whips the ball to Margaret MacBurney, who ducks the Tulsa guards and pivots, lacing a whirring pass to Doris Neale. Doris dribbles the ball a few paces, outfoxes a rushing Tulsan, tosses a pass over her head, which is caught by Noel, the brilliant rookie. Then follows a spectacle which brings the crowd to its feet. From nearly center floor this sparkling young member of the champs' team poises for the shot. It seems impossible that the ball can find that narrow basket from so far out when shot from such an angle. It drops—a magnificent field basket—to put the Grads two points ahead.

But Miss Williams of Tulsa strikes hard in a counter-attack that seems no less brilliant than the Grads have staged. Again the score board teeters on an even balance. Again the Grads blaze through with a couple of baskets. There is no let-up to the speed of these girls.

Now Tulsa leads by four points! Radio announcers have lost their voices. The tongues of the crowd begin to lick lips parched with sheer excitement and expectancy.

The clock is swiftly tolling off precious minutes. Gladys Fry, smiling regular center of the Grads, is forcing the play. Tulsa strikes back. The battle is ding-dong, highlighted by most amazing plays.

Coach Page glances quietly at the clock. He nods to Miss MacDonald, the rookie. The psychological second has come. The Tulsa star and her flashy associates have been pressing and have been pressed to the limit of physical endurance when Coach Page whips in the rookie of his team. Once more there is a sudden spurt of red. The Grads are away. Frantically the Tulsans attempt to break up the attack. But there is no breaking it.

IN that terrible, dazzling combination attack the champs burn up the floor. The score is tied.

Miss Williams and Miss Walker, an aggregate of 295 pounds of physical fitness, lead a fierce attack. A referee is swept from the floor. But at the Grads' basket Doris Neale and Helen Stone

come into the play with their unmatched checking. The ball whips to a Grads forward—MacBurney, who streaks for the Tulsa goal, only to pivot and whir a pass across to Noel MacDonald.

A breathless crowd sways, and then from thousands of throats bursts that avalanche of sound which marks the third straight win for the champs. What a win! What a series! Final score: Grads 48; Tulsa 41. In a blaze of glory the Grads have won for the twelfth consecutive time the international championship.

Thus was notched up for the Grads their 393d official game in defense of their many trophies and titles—and their 382d win. What a record for sports statisticians to chalk up in their books!

The Grads basketball team was first organized twenty years ago by Mr. Page, who is principal of the school at which the players have received their business training. But they begin their basketball training only after they are graduated from this school, the Edmonton Commercial High School. Meanwhile they commence to play when they first enter school, under Mr. Page's direction. There are, in all, four teams connected with the school. The fourth or senior team is known as the Gradettes, a brilliant aggregation of champions in their own right. From this team, coached by W. "Bill" Tait, operating under the general supervision of Mr. Page, the Grads find plenty of excellent material for their front string.

In 1915 they annexed their first title, the Alberta Provincial Championship, which they have retained, with the exception of one year—1920—for twenty years.

In 1922 the champs wrested the Dominion championship from the London, Ontario, Shamrocks. Since that time—thirteen consecutive years—they have successfully defended this title against all comers.

In 1923 the Grads met the famous Cleveland Favorite-Knits, claimants of the world's championship. They defeated Cleveland two games in a two-game series. On this occasion the Edmonton sharpshooters received, for the first time in its history, the Underwood trophy, and so cinched the international championship. Since then the Grads have played for, and won, this trophy against the cream of all basketball teams from the south of the international line.

Here are one or two pertinent questions put recently, with Mr. Page's answers.

QUESTION: Just how important is the application of



Two more Grad luminaries: Elsie Bennie, guard and former captain, and (right) Mildred McCormack, official scorer.



HAROLD F. CRUICKSHANK knows sports; he's a veteran football and baseball player and track athlete. Also a World War veteran; was wounded but served right through. Had pioneered from boyhood in Alberta. Is the author of much published fiction.