

The Umpire

By H.G. Salsinger

ALTHOUGH the voice of Dr. Forrest C. (Phog) Allen of Kansas University, is frequently raised in warning, his is a voice crying in the wilderness. Dr. Phog keeps reminding the country of the dangers besetting college athletics and while no one denies the existence of the dangers, no one seems inclined to take the needed steps to guard against them.

Unless something is done about it, Dr. Phog is much afraid that the college athletic structure will be toppled by scandal. The two sports he is concerned about are foot ball and basket ball. Heavy gambling on these games is bound, sooner or later, to develop crooked competition, he thinks. The professional gamblers have already caused two boys to throw basket ball games in eastern collegiate tournaments, according to Dr. Phog.

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Coaches Fear

WHILE Dr. Allen is a basket ball coach, and one of the best, he has a considerable knowledge of foot ball as well. The danger to foot ball is more pronounced than the danger to basket ball for the reason that much more money is wagered on foot ball.

The gambling angle has worried many foot ball coaches. They are not concerned with the loyal alumni bets, that are prompted by sentiment, but the wagering of professionals.

Sentiment never enters into the calculations of the professional gambler. He feasts on the sentimental alumni. He cashes in on their loyalty.

The professional gambler safeguards his bets as far as he can. He is a sure-thing operator to the limit of his ability and his ability knows no moral limits. He would not hesitate a second if he had a chance to "buy" a college foot ball player who might be in position to lose a close game and win a heavy wager for the gambler.

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Root of Evil

IT HAS LONG ceased to be a secret that more than a few of our leading colleges and universities pay their foot ball players stipulated weekly or monthly sums of money. Others, while not paying them straight salaries, reward them in a more subtle way that, in the end, amounts to the same thing.

This condition is known to practically all the people who attend foot ball games. It has not shocked them. It has not driven them away from the foot ball stadia. The general attitude is one of what-of-it?

The public demands winning teams. It doesn't care a rap whether the players are salaried athletes or simon pure amateurs. The only thing the public is concerned about (and by public we mean the alumni, student body, and non-alumni among the customers) is whether the boys can play foot ball.

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The Problem

TWENTY YEARS AGO the foot ball stadia craze swept the country. Bigger and better stadia were being built everywhere. Millions were spent on foot ball ampitheatres, most of them bonded. To pay off the bonds coaches had to produce winning teams and to produce winning teams they had to have the necessary material and to get the necessary material they, or the athletic associations, or the alumni, had to provide inducements that would lure the best prospects.

It developed into a bidding contest. As many as 20 scouts for major schools would be bidding for the same player, one "who couldn't miss in big-time foot ball." The player, or his parents, or both, considering all the bids, cast his lot with the school that either offered the most money or the best advantages and, why not? It was being done all over the country, wasn't it?

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Strictly Business

COLLEGE foot ball has, for the last 20 years, been strictly a commercial proposition. Coaches, regardless of their personal inclinations and training, had to subscribe to the general procedure to survive. They either became active in proselyting or pretended to know nothing about it.

They have received no help from the public. What the public keeps demanding is winning teams. It does not concern itself with the manner or method by which they are secured. It is neither startled nor annoyed by the intermittent revelations of proselyting and commercialism. It doesn't give a rap whether the players are semi-professionals, out-and-out professionals, or simon pure students.

That is what worries the coaches.