# The Gamblers Move In on College Sport

THE POST does not often poke its editorial nose into the conduct of intercollegiate athletics because, by and large, the controversies that rage over campus sports are of something less than earthshattering importance. We are moved to comment now only because it seems to us that a good guy with a good idea has taken a kicking around from people who, in their own interests, ought to know better. The man is Dr. Forrest C. ("Phog") Allen, head basketball coach at the University of Kansas; his idea, that basketball, which has become a big business, is also becoming a dirty business.

Specifically, as you may recall, Doctor Allen charged

several weeks ago:

1. That gamblers have become a threat to college athletics;

2. That Vadal Peterson, Utah University coach, shut the door in the face of a gambler who came to his hotel room in New York last spring and asked how much it would cost to have Utah lose to Dartmouth in the finals of the National Collegiate Athletic Association basketball tournament;

3. That professional gamblers have already caused two boys to "throw" college basketball games;

4. That a "scandal that would stink to high heaven" is in the making.

What happened when this story, filed by Sam Smith, of the United Press, hit the sports pages was astonishing. Dozens of college basketball coaches and directors

of athletics hastened to give the lie to the Allen charges. In one way or another, they accused him of (a) lack of faith in American youth, and (b) seeing

things under the bed.

Simultaneously, Ned Irish, who rose from relative obscurity as a sports-writer to the acting presidency of Madison Square Garden on the strength of his flair for basketball promotion, was doing his best to make Phog look like the heel of the month. According to Irish, the Garden employs so many cops that a gambler can't get closer to the playing court than Times Square and, if he could, the players and coaches are such sterling characters that a gambler would be wasting his time. The result of all this sugar-coated double-talk was that Phog Allen's charges disappeared from the sports pages within a week, simply because sports editors tired of printing rebuttals that sounded like quotations from a high-school principal's com-

mencement address. And Phog, after shooting the works on his first announcement, did not have enough additional libel-proof information to keep his one-man crusade alive.

Perhaps there is no reason for exhuming the story now, but we think there is. Amateur athletics have lost much of their luster in the last ten years. We have learned to sneer at "tennis bums" and "golf-course insurance men"; we have learned to accept the overt professionalization of college football players. Indeed, we have come so far that the very word "amateur" now means "tyro" or "beginner" rather than a person who does something just because he likes to do it.

Somehow we feel that Phog Allen, sentimentalist and pop-off guy that he is, had something like that in mind when he cut loose with his barrage against Garden gambling. He must also have been thinking of the millions that change hands each Saturday on college football pools, where the professional gamblers are now brazen enough to get their information from the players themselves and from undergraduates working on campus newspapers. He must have been thinking of the fact that in Miami this last fall, extra police were assigned to quell gamblers working highschool football games. And he must have been thinking of the millions of kids who want to play ball, either at the Garden or at Goose Crick Corners Gym, whether the odds are 6-5, 100-1 or even money, give or take three points.

No matter what the Allen episode proved, it did suggest to a lot of people that their estimate of college athletics ought to be revised again—and downward. And it did make a lot of good cash customers wonder why professional baseball, under the late Judge Landis, has been able to deal with its problems more forthrightly, and to police itself more effectively, than have intercollegiate sports under the loose political associations which seem to divide their time evenly between cherishing the ivy and counting the house.

Another Garden basketball season is now in full swing. For the sake of a lot of kids who enjoy a trip to New York, and for the sake of American sports, we hope that Doctor Allen's prediction of another and bigger gambling "scandal" will prove false. In the meantime, it would seem only routine good sense for college associations to learn to meet their problems head on and not merely to hush up the critics.

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when the mortars find that one, make them do it again? Make them feel like worms dodging a shovel. After a few days of this and of being wet, standing in ice water, not having any warm food, a letter from home or a magazine, ask them whether it is all quiet on the western front and whether the war is over."

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Perhaps the home front does not need such a going over as this to give it a better perspective. But as a peek into how the men in the foxholes regard fatuous optimism, Mr. Groth's report is impressive.

## Mr. Whiskers Breathes Easier

THE eight states which have community-property Llaws have long been a headache to the Federal Treasury. The theory of community property is that husband and wife share equally in the income earned or enjoyed by either of them. In community-property states, husbands and wives add their incomes together, divide it by two and then file separate income-tax returns. It is easy to see that a man with a \$20,000 income comes off better by paying the tax on two incomes of \$10,000 each than he would if he had to pay the higher rate assessed against the whole \$20,000. The Treasury has repeatedly tried to get around this by compelling married couples to file joint returns, but up to now, no soap.

However, a tax case recently decided by the Supreme Court seems to remove the threat of a spate of new community-property states, all eager to ease the citizen's tax burden by permitting husband and wife to divide their incomes equally. The case arose from the attempt of the Internal Revenue officials to collect from C. C. Harmon, an Oklahoma oil man, a sum assessed against him as a result of his efforts to take advantage of the community-property law recently passed by the Oklahoma legislature. The original community-property states—California, Arizona, Louisiana, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas and Washington—inherited their laws from the colonial Spanish or French regimes under which husband and wife were joint and equal owners of all property available to either of them. Oklahoma, however, did not inherit her community-property tradition from any regime antedating her statehood, but adopted it by statute. Furthermore, she permitted Oklahoma couples to go community property or not, as they pleased. The claim of the Government was that, inasmuch as Oklahoma passed this law after the Federal-income-

tax law came into effect, it was reasonable to assume that the statute was "enacted for the purpose of enabling the citizens of that state to enjoy the tax advantages of the traditional community states."

Mr. Harmon won in the tax court and in the Circuit Court of Appeals. The Circuit Court was unable to see any legal difference between Oklahoma's made-to-order community-property law and those of the eight states which were, so to speak, born in the community-property tradition. The Supreme Court, however, felt otherwise and ruled that Oklahoma had not "adopted any legal community-property system."

Thus the Treasury is free from the fear that the thirty-nine other states may adopt Oklahoma's device for automatic tax reduction.

#### G.I. Plan for Educating Civilians

DROBABLY the notion that the war is over is less prevalent than it was six months ago, but there is still considerable ersatz optimism around which no war news seems powerful enough to shake. Perhaps one way to bring the citizenry back to reality would be to adopt (in part) the suggestion made by a soldier in Europe, as reported in a letter by John Groth to The New York Times. Mr. Groth, who has returned from Europe's battle areas, said that what particularly irritated the men at the front was to read accounts of plans for victory celebrations, directions for conduct on V-E day and news concerning the insurance of property against damage by celebrants.

One G.I. asked Mr. Groth, "Why don't they create in Central Park a string of foxholes in that wooded, hilly area north of Eighty-third Street near Central Park West and put in some representative civilians, turn on the rain that lasts all day and every day, fire mortar shells at them, and when the mortars get too close, make them get out and dig another foxhole, and

### Christmas, 1944

AT CHRISTMASTIME, when we want to be gay A and protect ourselves a little while from the callousness and cruelty of the world, we are tempted to resent the intrusion of the grim fact that for the great majority of the human race, Christmas is not merry at all. The tortured people in Hitler's jails and concentration camps; homeless thousands in the warravaged areas of France, Russia, the Balkans, China, Italy and the Netherlands; our own boys slugging it out in the freezing plains of Western Europe or the insect-infested islands of the Pacific—all these seem very far away from the crowded shops and streets of our untouched native land.

But the truth is, of course, that Christmas belongs to dispossessed, suffering and perilously situated people more truly than it belongs to the rest of us. The first Christmas was the concern of a small group of poor people living under alien, totalitarian rule. Not even the promise of a new hope escaped the local Gestapo, and the thoroughness of its murderous activities is reflected in the Gospel account: "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."

So we need not think of this Christmas as an interruption in the great tradition. On the contrary, we can be sure that those who are far away from home firesides or who have no present means of celebrating the day as they wish they could, have not given up on Christmas at all. One day in the year in which peace and good will gets even lip service must be especially precious to those whose lot it is to endure the rigors of war and witness daily the barren harvest of hate. No wonder that hard-pressed men everywhere snatch a moment of time or sacrifice some hard-bought luxury from their scant stores to celebrate the day. "The wind is chill. But let it whistle as it will, we'll keep our Christmas merry still!"