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January 28, 1946

Mr. C. C. Gardner
Assistant General Passenger Agent
Rock Island
608 Equitable Life Assurance Building
Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Mr. Gardner:

I have just talked to Mr. Louis Cote, the ticket agent for Santa Fe here in Lawrence. I registered my disapproval, yes, even my disgust, at the handling of our University of Kansas basketball team by the Rock Island people out of Kansas City.

We ordered our tickets through Mr. Cote and he worked with the Kansas City Rock Island personnel. Over two weeks ago we asked for a pullman out of Minneapolis via Des Moines to Kansas. Mr. Cote called two days before and again a day before our trip, ordering pullman reservations. He was told there were none to be had.

We also asked Mr. Cote to have the Rock Island representative contact us in Des Moines so that if there was any possibility of obtaining pullman reservations at that late date, we wanted to avail ourselves of the opportunity, because we had some boys who were not well when the trip started.

We never saw any representative on either leg of our trip, with the exception of Mr. O. J. King, the clerk in your ticket office at the Des Moines depot. He was the one bright light of sunshine emanating from a gloomy Rock Island picture.

But back to the original thesis. Mr. Cote was told that there were no tickets available for the Kansas team, yet two officials out of Kansas City on Thursday made reservations for two pullman beds, leaving Des Moines on your Minneapolis train Friday night, or rather Saturday morning, at 1:30 A.M. These men saw me in Ames, Iowa, and told me that they were driving back after the game and that they had canceled their reservations and I perhaps could get those. This was the mission that took me to Mr. King's ticket window, where he did everything possible to aid us. The train was late and did not leave Des Moines until four o'clock in the morning, which added to our discomfort. One of our boys, Wendell Clark, was badly injured, having sprained a knee and an ankle very severely. He was unable to walk and had to be carried. We had three men quite ill, Charley Black, George Gear, and Otto Schnellbacher. With these men fatigued after a hard game and traveling through sub-zero weather and enduring this long wait with the prospects of not getting a bed, it did not put us in any too good a mood to find that when we got on the train there were sections unsold and not even made up. We had to purchase them on the train. Perhaps there are some explanations to this story, and we would like to hear them.

The pullman conductor was as pleasant and courteous as Mr. King. I failed to obtain his name and I should have because he was one of the most cooperative employees whom I have met.

Very cordially yours,

FCA:MF

Director of Physical Education,
Varsity Basketball Coach.