

--The Score Card--

Salute to Dutch Lonborg

BY FRANCIS J. POWERS.

A SALUTE to Dutch Lonborg and his five rawhide kids for landing Northwestern third in the Western Conference basketball race. That's the best a team could do, which didn't play Indiana and with the Illinois' "Whiz Kids" off in a class by themselves. Northwestern never



DUTCH LONBORG.

had more than one capable reserve, after George Felt was lost early in the season. And for the second Illinois game it didn't even have Ronnie Schumacher, that one capable reserve. So depleted was Northwestern's manpower for that game, that 24 hours before the whistle, Lonborg had to call out Ray Vincent, a tackle who had passed up basketball this winter. So over the season it was Otto Graham, Russ Wendland, Bud Hasse, Nick Vodick and Bobby Jake, who goes to the Army tomorrow, who went most of the route.

There's a special salute for Bud Hasse, the balding senior. Over three seasons, Hasse played forward, center and guard and never gave anything but his best. "He's a coach's player," said Lonborg by way of farewell to Hasse and Lynn Waldorf could offer the same praise for Bud's three years at end on Purple elevens. Cool and crafty, it was Hasse who often rallied Northwestern to a victory.

For the second season, Otto Graham was No. 2 among Big Ten scorers. His 189 points was a new 12-game record for Northwestern players, breaking Joe Reiff's 167 which was good enough to top the conference sharpshooters in 1933. Graham's total was better than the old conference record made by Chuck Carney of Illinois, but that mark already was long gone under the firing of Andy Phillip.

In some respects, Nick Vodick was the outstanding sophomore player of the Big Ten season. At the start, Vodick had little but strength and enthusiasm. As one scout remarked, along in January, "Vodick is a great player so long as he doesn't have the ball." But at the finish, Nick had developed into a smooth workman and was rapidly becoming a crack shot. Lacking height, Nick played center at a disadvantage but has the makings of a great forward or guard if permitted to compete his remaining two seasons.

There's an extra salute to little Bobby Jake, the "Whang Leather Kid," who never missed a game although he played with a broken nose, blackened eyes and a lacerated scalp and lip. The Army's getting a scrapper in that boy. There's also a salute for Ronnie Schumacher, that one capable reserve, who picked himself off the floor to make a last-second basket that defeated Iowa and made third place possible. And there were few better guards than Russ Wendland, whose "hot nights" meant several victories. They didn't have much height or any great speed but they had plenty of rawhide, those Northwestern third placers.

He's a great coach, the Dutchman. In 16 seasons at Northwestern he's finished out of the top five in the conference only three times. His teams have finished one-two-three eight times and fourth five years. Twice they were champions. Yet except for Joe Reiff, Frank Marshall and Otto Graham, Lonborg never has had any really great players. He took ordinary material and made it good by sound coaching tactics and the loyalty of his men. Seldom does a former Northwestern basketball player visit the campus but what he winds up in front of the Lonborg fireplace or at the dinner table.

It would be nice to see Lonborg with material. The sort he had in the days of Reiff, Marshall, Bus Johnson and Bert Reil or the sort you now find at Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin. The alumni don't do right by Lonborg. Too often, lately, he's had to build his team around boys who also were football players, Graham, Hasse, Vodick, Clawson, Benson and Kruger, to name a few. That situation alone gives most other conference teams an advantage of a month or so practice at the start of a season. There's no use mentioning the lack of a fieldhouse which is another handicap.

But Lonborg never complains. He just takes what he gets, practices here or there and welds first-division teams. If the alumni ever complain about Lonborg, Northwestern should fire the alumni.