

Then he asked me to take him down to one of the girls' fraternities (sororities). He was going out on the Santa Fe noon train, so this being just before noon I stopped at the Pi Phi house on the way down. We entered and went down to the basement to the large lounge where a dozen girls were passing the half hour before lunch time. These girls will remain anonymous, but I remember each and every one of them. First he asked, "What papers do you read?" And this well-read girl said, "The New York Times and the Chicago Tribune." That opened his eyes further. The next one he asked, "Would you marry a negro?" That remark was quite satisfactory. And so we ran the gamut of a dozen questions to the girls, and with each answer the intelligence of the girls rated A plus with Mr. Tunis.

Now he wanted to see one of the boys clubs (fraternities). You know they do not have fraternities and sororities in the eastern schools. Woodrow Wilson abolished all fraternities at Princeton when he was president of Princeton University. The Phi Psi house was our next stop because it was conveniently close to our route to the railway station. It was now 12 o'clock and the 18 boys assembled in the sun room at the Phi Psi house were hungry, but affable. The boys, reading Mr. Tunis' mind, came up to the high mental standards that he found to exist among the girls.

Never was a man so much elated, and I might add, as agreeably surprised as was Mr. Tunis. He said, "Allen, this is one of the most wonderful places in the world. I would like to come back here in a month and stay. I could find a story that would be marvelous." It is not necessary for me to tell you what a bang I got out of his coming because he quickly learned how little the easterners know of the wonders and the advancement of our country. He said, "The students here are fresh - fresh, I mean intelligently affable, responsive. They've got everything." (As if we hadn't known it before!)

I have traveled from one end of the country to the other and I find the people in this section have the best health, the best physiques, and the best gumption, generally speaking. In the first World War Kansas excelled the nation so far as rejections were concerned. Kansas had the fewest of any state in the union per capita. In the second World War only Oregon rates ahead of her. You will pardon this burst of justifiable pride.

Now, back to Mr. Tunis. Mr. Tunis is a debunker of intercollegiate sport. Several years ago he wrote for Harper's, "The Great God Football", which was a typically debunking story, and he has followed through consistently. Formerly he was tennis expert for the New York Times. He is a brilliant writer and a worthy protagonist. I have a very high regard for his intelligence and ability as a writer.

I thought I might briefly review this basketball story, "Yea! Wildcats!" for you because fittingly Mr. Tunis has chosen as the setting for his story the state of Indiana, with the climax taking place at the famous state basketball tournament in Indianapolis. Basketball season is over, we do not have varsity baseball this year, but we do have track. But the catch is I do not have any catchy track stories. To Mrs. Allen, who is an expert on book reviews and other literary achievements, goes the credit for this dissertation.

The story hinges on a characterization of Don Henderson, a basketball coach in a small town, Springfield, in central Indiana. He was asked in mid-season to take charge of the Springfield Wildcats. Out of a second-rate team he builds up a basketball five that becomes a strong contender in the State finals at Indianapolis.

It is in this struggle of an idealistic coach to remain true to his noblest convictions, regardless of all opinion to the contrary, that the purpose of the story