

A
September 22, 1943.

Mr. Hal Middlesworth,
Sports Editor,
The Daily Oklahoman,
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Dear Hal:

Your wire and your letter of the 16th have been received and I assure you that I would give serious consideration to your proposal in normal times. However, I have not said much about it, but we are curtailing our traveling this year to the minimum. I have not booked any outside games as yet and will not do so where excessive traveling is involved.

The Office of Defense Transportation is urging all of us to curtail to the maximum. Of course you read where Mr. Truman is asking none of the football teams to make reservations far in advance. As the war gets more grim, the strain on the common carriers is more severe and I am looking for the ODT to ban much basketball travel.

For two years now the government here at Haskell Institute and other places has asked the faculty members not to go home for Christmas vacation. Churchill's announcement in London of the great need to finish the war at the earliest possible date, and President Roosevelt's emphasis that we draw all forces into the war, have caused me to feel that I should cooperate in every possible way with my basketball team.

Last year when we went to Madison Square Garden we refused to take a Pullman and rode chair cars during the day and stopped at hotels at night. It was an extremely tough trip and not the most enjoyable one from a travel standpoint, but the boys learned a lot that I will never forget. They were fighting among themselves and I did not expect to win any games on the eastern trip, but when they were thrown with soldiers and sailors who had been standing for three days on a transcontinental train, then the boys began to see by contrast how insignificant and petty their differences were. Here were men offering their lives and standing the most severe inconveniences without a whimper. The morale of those boys in the armed forces caused our players to snap out of it and we came through our eastern trip undefeated - something that I had never imagined could happen. And this stimulus carried on through the season. This is the real secret of our success last year. Of course, I was able to portray to these boys the status of the soldier and the sailor, and the status of the students.