

August 26, 1940

Mr. Ralph Miller
c/o Cross-Section Department
Kansas State Highway
Masonic Building
Topeka, Kansas

My dear Ralph:

I have just returned to Lawrence from my week in Topeka at the Coaching School and I have been learning some very disquieting things regarding your attitude and the things that you have been saying concerning Kansas basketball. These statements are not mrrer heresy, but are things that you have said to University of Kansas people.

For nearly a year I have noticed you seem to be fighting yourself not only in athletics but in social and other contacts. The things that I say to you are said with the full knowledge of all of our previous relationships. You will remember our conversation to Chanute when you were making up your mind regarding Kansas and Stanford. I told you that if you would come to the University and make an outstanding scholastic record and be the example on the campus that you should be, that I would recommend you as freshman coash in the University, and I had hoped that your football play would be of such high caliber that the football coach would want you as, at least, a freshman assistant, if not freshman coach. When you wanted certain favors in the way of a position for your girl friend, I did this not because she was incapable but she was a fine outstanding girl and could earn every penny that she worked for. At the same time I did it to show you that I would cooperate with you one hundred percent. Then when your brother came to college, you asked me for a job for him and I did it willingly and happily.

At no time have there been any reservations in my mind regarding my desire to help you as a man, but I did not do it on account of your athletic ability. I have never believed that anybody's athletic ability could carry him very far unless they had the other things that it takes. It is needless for me to go into a long resume of the things that I have innately and conscientiously desired to do for you. I am afraid I have reached the limit of my helpfulness to you. In fact, I am certain of it when you make the statements that you do. It is for that reason that I am writing you this letter before school opens, to appraise you of the fact that it would be impossible for you to play on the Kansas Varsity Baketball Team this year with the attitude that you now possess.

Page Two

While you may think that you might be a benefit to the Kansas basketball team with your present mental state, I wish to tell you here and now that you would be a positive detriment and I would not want you.

This may help you in your conclusions as to what you may want to do this year regarding attending the University of Kansas.

You are in no physical condition to participate in any strenuous inter-collegiate sport at the present time. Your training habits have not been such that are conducive to varsity play.

Very cordially yours,

Director of Physical Education and Recreation
Varsity Basketball Coach

FCA:lg

"Sleep in Comfort and Safety"



Sweet Hotels
INCORPORATED

JOHN S. SWEET, PRESIDENT
H. W. MCCALL, SECRETARY
PAUL FRANK, TREASURER

8-27-40

Written at

Topeka

Dear Mr. Allen,

I just received your letter this morning and got exactly what was coming to me. I believe had you said a person rather than people it would have been a much truer statement as far as I am concerned. I do not doubt that many people may have told you plenty because I know how those things go. However, I have only once in Topeka said anything that may have been bad or out of line for you, K.U. or any one concerned. The minute

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COLUMBIA, MO.

HOTEL MISSOURI
JEFFERSON CITY, MO.

TIOGA INN
CHANUTE, KANS.

THE HOTEL ATCHISON
ATCHISON, KANS.

that was over I have deeply regretted my actions and have regretted them more as the summer passed on.

As you may or may not know last years basketball was a great and bitter disappointment to me, probably more so than to anyone else.

Naturally I suppose the best way out was to find fault with everyone else but yourself, which is exactly what I did in many incidents. Since that time much water has passed under the bridge and I have realized what a complete ass I had been, and der. no one knows it better than I do. The one time was all I have said that might be taken wrong. Whatever any one else has claimed that I have said is all wrong. That was the only time. The two boys I spoke with are K.U. grads of a few years back. If they broadcast any thing I deserve all of the credit. Other than those two I have said nothing as once is enough for me.

I have made the statement several times that we may be a big disappointment to people next year because they are all expecting so much from us. I believe you will bear me out in that statement. True we will have a great ~~defense~~ ball club especially on the offense. However, you know how much Hon, Dick, and Bruce meant to our defense. If we can overcome those weak points we should

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2
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JOHN S. SWEET, PRESIDENT
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PAUL FRANK, TREASURER

undoubtedly be better. That is the one statement I have made more than once.

There is also another item you have evidently been misinformed about and that is my training habits. I have been training very well as a whole all along. I admit that I have been smoking some but certainly not to excess. Aside from that my training habits have been on a par with anyone's I have not been smoking during seasons or any thing like that. I have no smoking habit and can get along without it as easily as not. To me it is just something to do at times and that's that. I certainly do not enjoy it at all times, in fact more often than not it is ~~not~~ repulsive to me. Now Mr. you know my bad training habits and I don't believe you would call my problem a

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serious one.

Dr. you sent me a straight letter with facts and nothing else and I'm glad you did. This one to you is exactly the same way. It's straight, truthful and fact. I have taken yours as so and every thing else you've ever said to me. Now, I expect you to do the same when you receive this letter.

Doc, I have appreciated every thing you ever done for me or my friends. I certainly want you to know that. You have always been my greatest aid and advisor in college and I am glad you were. You have done much to help me and I won't ever forget it.

I know when you helped Jean + Nick why and what for. It helped them both as schooling would have been impossible for both otherwise. They are both deeply grateful to you for it. I don't believe you were disappointed in either. If you were I hope you will let me know.

I know my grades and etc were poor the first 3 semesters of college. However, you know they have improved and that I am way above

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Written at

the board now. I am sorry if I have failed in other respects, for the last year I tried hard to please every one I could and make friends and those who disliked me change their mind some. I really thought I was doing better.

Also, I told you before that if I had not made myself scholastically eligible and otherwise, that I would expect anything from you. We need a man's ~~bet~~ bet and I intend to keep up my end of it. Naturally you are the one who determines my worth and whether or not I made good. That's the way it was and still is as far as I am concerned.

Until this summer my athletics were to important to me. Now, it has a different light to me. I honestly believe your many lectures and etc on scholarship

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Athletics have taken a different color
to me. I believe for the best to.

I have never intentionally let anyone
down in any ball game. I have tried
what was my best at the time even
though it was very poor at times.
I could never do that doc because I
love to win so well. About my attitude
doc. It's changed so much lately. It's
really a pleasure to look to next year.
If I ever have it doc I shall have
it when I play again. My attitude
will be the best. You can thank
Jan for that. She has done so much
for me even though she thinks so little.
I am lucky I have her and I hope my
luck never fails.

doc. your the coach what you
say goes. If you want to use me
you'll get the best I've got. Otherwise
I'll be on the side rooting.

There is a lot here but it's all
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PAUL FRANK, TREASURER

Written at

Doc whether or not I go to school depends entirely on Dr. Francisco. His decision is final and law to me. Nothing else will enter into the decision I made.

You don't think I'm in shape and I can't go the route. I'm not sure about that myself. I think I can if my leg aren't shot. Actually Doc, I'm better than I figured. If you think I'm not explain to me. I've kept myself as best as I can what these inactive 5 mo. well do I don't know.

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Excuse all the blots and etc. and misspelled words. I wrote during my noon hour and I had to hurry.

I'm not offering excuses here.

I know myself I've been wrong
and I can prevent it from occurring
again.

sorry to have caused so much
comment and trouble, but someone's
crazy.

Best wishes and I
remain as usual.

Cappy

The job with J. V. Hamilton is
still open. I've told him of Fred.
Would like to hear from you.

(J. V. Hamilton
N. Y. A. Office
New England Bldg.
Topeka)

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SWEET HOTELS, INC.
Topeka, Kansas
Aug. 27, 1940

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I know my grades and etc. were poor the first 3 semesters of college. However, you know they have improved and that I am way above the board now. I am sorry if I have failed in other respects. For the last year I tried hard to please everyone I could and make friends and those who disliked me change their mind some. I really thought I was doing better.

Doc, I told you before that if I had not made myself scholastically eligible and otherwise, that I would expect anything from you. We made a man's bet and I intend to keep up my end of it. Naturally you are the one who determines my worth and whether or not I made good. That's the way it was and still is as far as I am concerned.

Until this summer my athletics were to important to me. Now, it has a different light to me. I honestly believe your many lectures and etc. on scholarship first and athletics first has gone home. Athletics have taken a different color to me. I believe for the best to.

I have never intentionally let anyone down in any ball game. I have tried what was my best at the time even though it was very poor at times. I could never do that Doc because I love to win to well. About my attitude Doc. It's changed so much lately. It's really a pleasure to look to next year. If I ever have it Doc I shall have it when I play again. My attitude will be the best. You can thank Jean for that. She has done so much for me even though she thinks so little. I am lucky I have her and I hope my luck never fails.

Doc your the coach what you say goes. If you want to use me you'll get the best I've got. Otherwise I'll be on the side rooting.

There is a lot here but it's all straight and you can take it for what you think it's worth. I slipped once with my mouth and all I can say is I'm sorry and never again.

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Best wishes and I remain as usual

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like to hear from you.

(J.V. Hamilton)
(N.Y.A. Offices)
(New England Bldg.)
(Topeka, Kansas)

Anchorage, Kentucky
September 2, 1940

Mr. Ralph Miller
Kansas Highway Dept.
Topeka, Kansas

My dear Ralph:

I received your very frank letter and I assure you that I believe you wrote me from your deeper convictions. I want you to know, however, that not one person but several persons--five or six--spoke to me concerning their disappointment in your failure to measure up to the standard they had set for you.

In Topeka, people told me of your drinking in public and of your smoking cigarettes, of your being out at all hours, of your seldom ever getting in--except in the wee hours of the morning.

I think that I told you that soon after the Indiana-Kansas game, faculty members who were not on the Athletic Board came to me and told me of conversations which they had with your father--these same resembling the statements which you have been making in Topeka.

When we had luncheon with Dr. Kirkpatrick, at the Pennant, in a friendly gesture I caught hold of your arm and was struck by the lack of tone in your brachial muscles. I realize that it is perhaps not for me to outline your social behavior during vacation time. But I do know that your behavior during the summer months is a pretty accurate barometer as to your school-time physical condition and your mental attitudes. But when a chap makes seditious remarks concerning his superiors that is doubly bad. It was these remarks which called forth the reprimand.

In addition to the loyalty to your school, your organization, and your coach, there is the added obligation which you owe to the young people who watch you for their inspiration. They are watching every move you make. This is the price that we pay either for public acclaim or for public censure--as the case may be.

It may be that I set my goal too high for you--for your attainment of the durable things of life--the making and the keeping of fast friends--the procurement of a good job--marriage--children--and all of these and more to be favorably introduced by your successful athletic career. And no boy whom I have ever met was ahead of you, in my desire to see this dream come true.

You speak of the loss of Dick Harp, Don, and Bruce, and of our possible weekend defense. I know and appreciate their talents and praise their exceptional abilities. Yet we lost the championship the year before. You saw Dick during his junior year play perhaps the sourest basketball imaginable. His fault was not physical. It was mental. Since I have the job of coaching the team, why not leave these problems of coaching entirely up to me, realizing that for 22 years at Kansas I have been faced with such similar problems.

What I most desire is your loyalty to the extent that you will realize that I know my business well enough to reshape both the offense and the defense to meet this exceptional situation. And I will do it, I assure you. "Yours is not to reason, 'Why?' Yours is but to do or die."

Your grades are not good enough for a boy who has as much intelligence as you have. You should now have better than a B average. Ralph, I do feel deeply the failure that you have made so far in college-- the failure to make the great mass of athletes and athletic followers admire you. You felt this absence of admiration enough last football season to speak to Gwinn Henry about it. The basketball season did not offer the same embarrassments in your personal relationships, but the bare facts are that you have not been a leader either on or off the campus. Emphatically, I have desired this very very much for you.

I have said things very plainly. So that you will not misunderstand me. I admire you very much for the same straightforwardness expressed in your letter. You have been honest. When you come back, I want to sit in a room with you and tell you some things which are awkward on paper. They will deal with the proper conceptions of training, conditioning, loyalties, friendships, dating, and your possible ultimate success. When I return to Lawrence, about September 8th, I hope to have this friendly and important conference.

Sincerely,

P.S. The very next day after our luncheon together in Topeka, I called on J. V. Hamilton and Miss Anne Laughlin at the N.Y.A. Headquarters re. Fred Harris. I do not lose many opportunities in endeavoring to put one of our boys over. I thank you for again calling my attention to this.

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS
LAWRENCE

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Saturday PM.
Aug 31 - 1940 -

My Dear Ralph -

I received your very frank letter and I assure you that I honestly believe that you wrote me from your ~~inner~~ deeper convictions. However I want you to know that ^{not} a single person but several persons - five or six - different ones, spoke to me regarding their disappointment in your failure to measure up, to the standard that they had set for you. In Topeka people told me of your drinking in public and of your smoking cigarettes, of your all hours out - of your seldom ~~ever~~ getting in - except in the ~~very~~ early hours of the morning. I think that I told you personally that soon after the Indiana - Kansas game - that faculty members - not on the Athletic Board came to me and told me of conversations that they had with your father, the same resembling the statements that you made in Topeka.

When we had luncheon with Dr Kirkpatrick at the
 Pennant I somehow caught hold of your arm -
 in a friendly gesture and was struck by the lack
 of tone in your brachial muscles. All of this
 is not the slightest imagination but is founded upon fact.

I realize that I have no right to outline
 your social behavior ^{during the summer months.}
 But I do ^{know} that your behavior ^{during} vacation ^{time} is a
 pretty accurate ^{barometer} ~~gauge~~ as to your school time attitudes
 and actions. But when a Chap makes seditious
 remarks concerning his superiors then that's doubly bad.
 And it was these remarks which called forth the reprimand.

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 you owe to the young people who watch you for
 their inspiration and guidance. They watch
 every move that you make. This is the price
 people pay for public acclaim or censure
 as the case may be. ~~may be~~

Maybe I set my goal too high for you - for
 your ~~the~~ attainment of the durable things of life -
 the making and the keeping of fast friends - the pro-
 curement of a splendid job, marriage, children -
 all of this favorably introduced by your successful
 athletic career. And no boy whom I have ever

met was ahead of you - in my desire to see this dream
come true.

You spoke of Dick. He is drinking ^{entirely too}
much. Liquor is expensive and certainly it does
a poor boy more harm than it does to some high-
-hat, arrogant chap who knows not where or how
the money is earned, for such excesses.

You spoke of the loss of Dick, ^{Harp,} Dan and Bruce
concerning our possible weakened defense. I know
and appreciate their many talents and praise
their exceptional abilities. Yet we lost the
Championship the year before and you ^{perhaps}
saw Dick during his junior year play ^{perhaps} the
sourdest basket ball imaginable. The fault was
not physical - it was mental. Since I have
the job of coaching the team why not leave
that entirely up to me realizing that for
~~the 22 years~~ I have been faced with such

such similar problems ~~in almost each of these 22 years.~~
What I desire is your loyalty to the extent
that you must feel and realize that I must
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And I will do it, I assure you. "Yours is not to
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Your grades are not good enough for a boy
who has as much intelligence as you have. You
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average - practically an A average.

Ralph, I do feel deeply the failure that you
have made so far in college. The failure to
make the great mass of athletes and athletes
followers ^{admire} like you. You felt this absence
enough to speak to Grim Henry regarding
it last football season.

The basket ball season did not offer the
same embarrassments in your personal
relationships but the bare facts are that
you have not been a leader either on
or off of the campus. And I'll say
frankly and emphatically that I have
desired this for you very, very much.

I have said ~~many~~ things very plainly so that
you would not misunderstand me. Now I want to
say that I very much ~~must~~ admire you in the way that you have

expressed yourself in your letter. You have been honest. I want to sit in a room with you and tell you some things that would appear at ~~various~~ ^{in a letter} ~~in a letter~~ which has already grown too lengthy. It would deal with the proper conception of training, conditioning, loyalty, friendships, dating, and your possible ultimate success - the things that I ~~so~~ ^{do} desire for you. When I return to Lawrence about Sept. 8th I hope to have a friendly and an important conference with you. Sincerely

SCA

P.S. The very next day after our luncheon date in Topeka, I called on J.V. Hamilton and Miss Anna Laughlin at the N.Y.C. Headquarters re Fred Harris. I never lose an opportunity in my endeavor to put one of our boys over. Thank you for again calling this to my attention. SCA

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
AUSTIN

DEPARTMENT OF
INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

putting these statements down in words.
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Sincerely

James E. Green

C. B. FRANCISCO, M. D.

Orthopaedics

SUITE 623 ARGYLE BLDG.

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

September 5th, 1940

Dr. Allen P.

Mr. Gwynn Henry, Director of Athletics
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

In re: Ralph Miller.

Dear Mr. Henry:

I wanted to tell you that I saw Ralph Miller at the clinic at Lawrence, Kansas on August 30th, 1940, and on the whole I am fairly well pleased with his knee.

He has some relaxation of the joint but not more than one expects after removal of the internal and external semilunar cartilage. He is apparently symptom free, in that he makes no complaint of this right knee.

He said that he had been doing considerable walking, and that he had played a little soft ball but had some one run the bases for him and had done no work of any sort that put any stress on the joint.

As I wrote you on June 21st, 1940, I found at the time of the last operation, May 16th, 1940, that the articular cartilage of the external condyle had worn away somewhat, and I realized then that it would require time for this cartilage to be regenerated.

I am of the opinion now that it would be best for Mr. Miller not to attempt to engage in any competitive athletics this coming year. I fear that if he started out the likelihood of this knee giving him trouble again would be so great that he probably would have to give up athletics. On the other hand if he will stay out for a year and not attempt to get this knee into training condition I believe that the cartilage will repair and the joint heal to the point that he will have no farther trouble with the knee, and that he could then go back into competitive athletics in a big way.

I am a little afraid that he will try to get back into shape, even though he doesn't get into athletics this year, and I fear if he makes such an attempt he is likely to damage his knee, and that if he is going to stay out of athletics then he should stay out completely and take no chances with this knee, because I do feel that he could injure it rather easily and that if he does injure it again there would be no way that I know of to repair it. My recommendations are then: that he keep out of athletics wholly and completely for this next year; that he refrain from all sorts of athletic sports; that if he is not willing to refrain completely then I think he just as well go into competition.

CBF:HF

C. C. Ralph Miller

Yours most truly,

C. B. Francisco, M.D.

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September 25, 1940

Coach Louis Menze
Iowa State College
Ames, Iowa

Dear Louie:

My amiable friend, Jack Gardner, has sent me an onion skin copy of a letter that he has written to the other coaches listing his five points of objection to the new board.

So far as I am concerned, I do not think any of his arguments are worthwhile, and as I have already voted for the steel board I would like to know what the agreement was between the coaches. Was it necessary for the vote to be unanimous, or is it the feeling that we all had better go along with the old large board, or wait until such a time that Mr. Gardner can have good enough shooters to hit the smaller board?

Please let me have your reply at an early date.

Sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education and Recreation
Varsity Basketball Coach

FCA:lg
cc: Jack Gardner

P.S. It took just fifty years to change the backboard to the new stream-line board, and it will be a good many years before there will be another change, so say the rule makers.

F.C.A.

October 4, 1940

Mr. Louis Menze
Basketball Coach
Iowa State College
Ames, Iowa

Dear Louie:

The enclosed carbon copy of Mr. Placzek's letter and mine are self-explanatory. I will appreciate it if you will send him the information he desires regarding the Big-Six Conference, and also the non-conference schedules, if you have them available.

By the way, Louie, what about the steel backboard? I am still shooting at the big wide rectangular 6 x 4 and have never shot at either the wooden or the steel board of the new dimensions.

However, I am for progress, but I am also for efficiency. If we are going to use the big ones or the small ones, I think we should agree to one or the other and settle the matter.

I would very much like to drive up this weekend and see the Iowa State-Kansas game, but I will not be able to do so under the conditions.

With all good wishes to Mattie, George and Keith, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education and Recreation
Varsity Basketball Coach

FCA:lg
Enc.

October 17, 1940

Mr. Louis Menze
Basketball Coach
Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

Dear Louis:

This is merely to inform you that we purchased
the Medart pressed-steel backboards.

We do not have them up as yet but it will be
a great comfort in having near uniformity.

With all good wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education and Recreation
Varsity Basketball Coach

FCA:lg

October 3, 1940

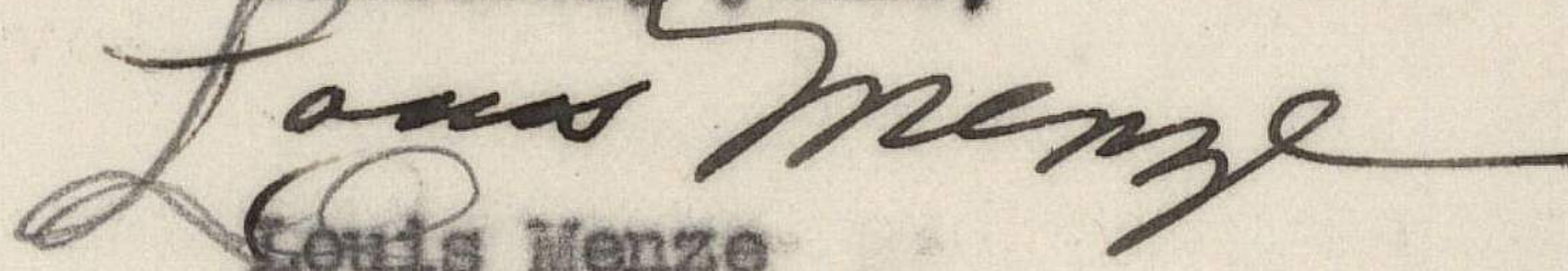
Dr. Forest C. Allen
Mr. George Edwards
Mr. W. H. Browne
Mr. Bruce Drake
Mr. Jack Gardner

Gentlemen:

The following is the result of our poll on the stream-lined back boards. Four of the votes are in favor of the steel stream-lined back board and one vote is against the change of board.

Last Spring when we had our meeting on this subject, we went on record that the majority vote would prevail.

Sincerely yours,



Louis Menze
Basketball Coach

LM:EC

P. S. I did not cast my vote because my stream-lined boards were in the process of being made. They are just now finished. We naturally will buy steel boards, since that is the vote of the majority of coaches.

L. M.

August 23, 1940

To Members,
National Basketball Committee:

You are probably receiving a number of questions relative to the new back-board, particularly the form in which these are available and the sources. With the thought that you might desire some ammunition with which to answer these questions, I am enclosing some descriptive material. You will note that well made boards are being stamped from steel at a very reasonable cost. I am sure that the committee hoped that it would be possible to bring about economical installation. As opposed to the old steel boards which customarily cost one hundred dollars or more, the new type is being produced at a cost of from thirty five to forty dollars. As far as this office is concerned, advance correspondence indicates that a great majority of the gymnasiums which have been finished during the past several months or which are now in the process of construction will be equipped with the new type board.

Baskets have been designed by the various companies to fit the new board. One of these which seems to take most advantage of the possibilities for unobstructed vision is that designed by the Schutt Manufacturing Company, Litchfield, Illinois. This has practically no obstruction below the level of the ring but is adequately braced by bringing the bracing rods through the flange which attaches the basket to the board. These rods extend a short distance up the front of the board but not a sufficient distance to permit the ball to touch them. This gives added rigidity and permits fastening of the basket to the front, rather than to the back of the board and thus considerably reduces the leverage which might cause crystallization and loosening of attaching bolts.

I am including an article which was made up for the state high school bulletins. You might find something in this article which will be of use to you.

Hoping that this is not introducing a blue work note in the middle of an August siesta, I am

Yours truly,

N. U. Porter
secretary

H
V
P
J
Enc.

NEW BASKETBALL BACKBOARD

Since the legalization of the smaller streamlined basketball backboard by the National Committee, there have been significant developments. Correspondence during the summer indicates that most of the gymnasiums which have been completed during the past few months and many of the older gymnasiums will use the new type backboard.

Equipment manufacturers have made a contribution to the game by bending their efforts toward construction of such boards of durable and rigid material at reasonable cost. One of the factors which influenced the National Committee was the matter of economy in construction. The first steel backboards of the traditional rectangular design presented many problems and it was not uncommon for such boards to cost one hundred dollars or more per pair. Several excellent steel boards are now being stamped by mammoth stamping machines and the boards are available at a cost of considerably less than half of the stated amount. Several reliable manufacturers are producing the steel boards at a cost of forty dollars or less per pair. Such boards are announced in the National Federation Basketball Rules Book by firms such as the Medart Manufacturing Company, St. Louis, Missouri, and the J. E. Porter Corporation, Ottawa, Illinois.

For those schools where it is desired to have the boards made by the manual training department, plans are available for proper construction. One of these plans is furnished by Schutt Manufacturing Company, Litchfield, Illinois, and is shown in the accompanying diagram.

(NOTE TO STATES: Plates showing exactly how to construct board and one showing gymnasium view of board in use are being sent to those states which have subscribed to this complete press service.)

Goals to fit the new boards have been constructed in such a way that there is a minimum obstruction of view and of interference with activities behind the plane of the backboard. Such goals may be secured at a reasonable cost from any of the above mentioned manufacturers and from similar manufacturers.

(Insert zinc plate 3 by 5)

Reasons for Change

Since the origin of the game, backboards have been rectangular in shape, six feet wide and four feet high. The basket was attached one foot above the lower edge of the board. During the early years of the game, this shape and size were desirable. The space below the level of the basket was necessary because the old style basket braces were fastened to the board about one foot below the basket. In recent years developments in gymnasium equipment construction have made these cumbersome braces unnecessary. Consequently the chief use for most of the space on the backboard below the level of the basket has disappeared. Another reason why the space at the bottom of the board was in use was because the early ball was considerably larger than the present one. The maximum size for such balls was 32 inches in circumference and because of the difficulties in the then known methods of construction, most balls stretched to the maximum size soon after being placed in use. In recent years the size of the ball has been reduced to a minimum of twenty nine and one-half inches and a maximum of thirty inches. Improved methods of construction have resulted in a ball which can be made any given size and which will not stretch during use. Consequently all balls are now made almost exactly twenty nine and one-half inches. The balls also have a slightly faster reaction due to improved methods of construction which has eliminated all sewed seams and consequently all dead spots which were inherent in balls made by sewing panels of leather and cloth together. This change in type of ball is related to the new type backboard. A slightly different technique is used in bank shots. This change in technique has resulted in the lower part of the backboard being waste space.

The simple rectangular shape was adapted to unskilled methods of construction. It was not uncommon for country schools to construct backboards by using the bumpboard from a corn husking wagon or some similar contraption. The simplest type of carpentry is required in the making of a rectangle. It merely required a hammer, a saw and a square. In fifty years many changes have occurred. More care is given the accurate construction of playing equipment and inexpensive boards made of steel, plywood, bakelite or other synthetic materials have been developed. An improved type of basket without projecting brace rods has been perfected and engineers have designed flanges which made attachment of baskets to the backboard a simple matter. There is no difficulty in producing any shape and there seems no good reason for not eliminating the waste space which is found at the corners and margins of the old rectangular board.

Changes in the location of the backboard with reference to the end wall and the end line and the development of new skills in throwing field goals from behind the plane of the backboard have made the waste space on the large board a detriment. It also interferes considerably with the vision of spectators who may be compelled to sit in parts of the building which are not between the planes of the two backboards. The game has developed in such a way that it is a real problem to provide a sufficient number of seats from which the game may be viewed. Basketball courts have a maximum of only eighty six feet for seats on the sidelines between the planes of the two baskets. There is almost no other game that has this handicap in visibility. Anything that can be done to relieve this difficulty is worthwhile.

(Insert halftone here 3 by 4)

The Transition Period

The transition to the smaller backboard may be gradual. As far as expense is concerned, there should not be a great deal of waste in making the change. Very few schools, clubs or playgrounds have a sufficient number of backboards. In case new ones are to be installed, the old boards can be moved to a cross court to permit additional use of the playing space by greater numbers of players. Players adjust themselves quickly to the slight difference in appearance and a few minutes practice is usually sufficient to allow the players to make proper adjustments.

In order to make easy transition from the rectangular board to the smaller board, the National Committee recommends that where boards of the rectangular size are used, the space which is not to be found on the smaller type board be painted with a dark paint so that the white portion on the large board is the same size and shape as the entire smaller board. This will give the boards somewhat the same appearance and should remove any handicap which might develop through playing on courts equipped with boards of different sizes.

All in all, it looks like a great season for the greatest of indoor sports. The game is keeping pace with developments in related fields of endeavor. Progressive athletic departments are making plans to bring their equipment up to date.

October 25, 1940

Mr. Louis Menze
Basketball Coach
Iowa State College
Ames, Iowa

Dear Louis:

We are just putting our Medart Steel Backboards up and, Louis, they look swell. We put one up over the weekend and the boys shot at it and did not like it. But after they played on it for 20 or 30 minutes they liked it very much.

Half of these obstacles that appear to the boys are fear-ghosts. If a fellow cannot shoot straight enough or near enough to the baskets to hit the basket, he is a bum basketball player, and the next time he shoots he will learn to be more careful in his firing.

Good luck!

Sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education and Recreation
Varsity Basketball Coach

FCA:lg

IOWA STATE COLLEGE
OF AGRICULTURE AND MECHANIC ARTS
AMES, IOWA

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION
FOR MEN

October 19, 1940

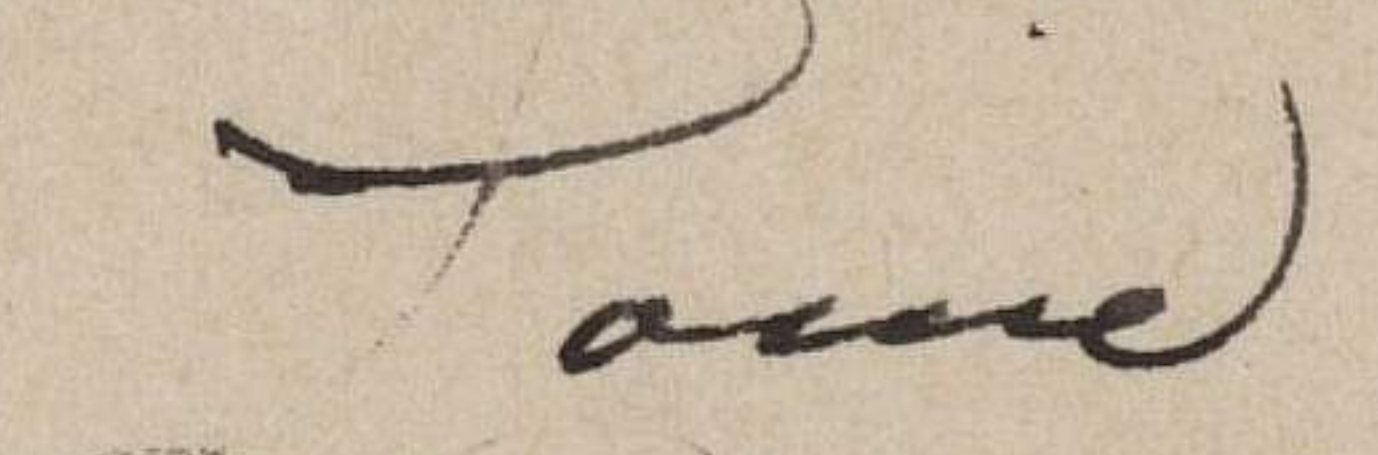
Dr. Forrest C. Allen
Basketball Coach
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

Dear Doc:

We too have ordered the Medart steel back boards, so as far as I know, we should be uniform all around the Conference. Ours haven't shown up, but I hope when they do everything will prove satisfactory.

With best wishes to you and the other Allens,
I am

Sincerely yours,



Louis Menze
Basketball Coach

LM:EC

F

October 25, 1940

Mr. Horace Mason
Sports Publicity Director
Kansas Office
University of Kansas

Dear Horace:

I have rather a distinct recollection of asking you to see if it was not possible to get the rather anemic-looking cut of myself, that appears annually in the Jayhawk Register, and substitute it for one that looked like a real live man. I thought you said that you had done this. This was last year, you know.

Saturday I saw that same sickly smile portrayed on the features of the basketball coach in the Jayhawk Register.

I would like to know what happened, if you can explain it to me.

Sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education and Recreation
Varsity Basketball Coach

FCA:lg