

Mar. 7, 1941

Mike Ahearn, who was then faculty representative at Kansas State, Dean Byer at Iowa State and Dr. Manley at Missouri all put double pressure on me to insist that I not keep that football contract. They wanted to punish Nebraska for withdrawing and they had signed a contract the same as Kansas had but were abrogating them. I stuck by my guns and we played the football game in 1920, but I gained the eternal ill-will of Dean Byer by not going along with them.

However, I was a fair-haired boy so far as Cy Sherman was concerned and for three or four years Cy Sherman thought I was a grand fellow. But when I consistently began to whip them in basketball, Cy, like a lot of other Nebraskans I know, just could not take it and he began to yip at my heels. I have never cared much for him and care less for him now. Enough of that background.

Cy swung over and said to me, "Phog, I want to talk to you", just as I was going down to the dressing room with my boys. I stopped and Cy said, "Phog, I had hoped you would be getting more mellow as the years rolled on, but instead you are getting more vindictive."

I said, "Cy, I just tore a front page from your own book for my own example. You are the most bitter, sour and dour old man toward your opponents whom I have ever met. Instead of your getting soft you have grown old and bitter." Cy said, "But you are giving the Conference a black eye." I said, "Well, then keep your muckers at home and teach them to act like gentlemen and they will not get a black eye."

I was just as vindictive as he was and the meeting ended in a dog-fall. I started on and had gotten about twenty feet when Hallie Bowers, a salesman for Lowe & Campbell, a Nebraska graduate and a good friend of mine, said, "Phog, you are going to need a bodyguard tonight. You had better look out." I said to him, "Hallie, I came up here without a bodyguard, I will stay here and I will leave here without a bodyguard and everything will be quite satisfactory so far as I am concerned." I then swung on to my dressing room.

During the half the football men, who make a little money on the side, sold apples and during the game Norman Sanneman, one of our substitutes, was struck by a half-eaten apple, and when it hit him it shattered and ricocheted out on the court. The spectators were throwing at me but their marksmanship was bad.

You doubtless will remember several years ago when Pat Mason was officiating they hit me with an apple core; we were playing at Lincoln at the time. The crowd is as bad as it could be and no one restrains them. You doubtless have learned regarding the episode of a spectator who followed me from my bench on the way to John Selleck's office where I was to phone Mrs. Allen.

I am sending you a copy of a letter which Mr. Stanley G. Waltz, General Manager of the University of Michigan Union, wrote Chancellor Malott regarding the Kansas team. I am also sending you a copy of the letter that he wrote me. Surely such letters as these could not come from a man who is apt to make a mistake as to the action of gentlemen and muckers.

Sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education and Recreation
Varsity Basketball Coach