

COACHES FURNISH MOST OF PREP BASKETBALL'S COLOR

Game for Kids, But --- 18 Pts. No Safe Lead!

By Bob Stevens

DOUBLE DRIVEL:

Though the game belongs to the kids, and the benefits thereof to them, the most fascinating characters in sports are still the coaches, a group of personalities with indescribable idiosyncrasies.

Particularly the prep brains.

Being employed primarily as gymnasium instructors, they receive no monetary satisfaction from their hours of screeching, demonstrating, pleading, and threatening, yet a more serious guy than a high school coach can't be found. Basketball, a secondary major sport to king football, is wealthy with the little wacky but extremely likable coaching characters.

They go through hades and high water every season, every game, every practice. They're comically boastful when victorious, pathetically crushed when defeated, or dangerously sensitive when crossed. There's few "middle men" in the coaching business, the guy being either a confirmed egoist, a man suffering from an inferiority complex, or a gent who couldn't be happy if he had two full squads of Hank Luisettis.

The high school coach is an entirely separate breed from the glamorous leaders of collegiate athletic destinies. They don't know the meaning of outside "pressure", yet they scream like stabbed eagles when the cards fall against them accuse everybody for anything. Victory isn't necessarily demanded of them, yet they battle for it just as passionately as the collegiate coach who must win to keep stocked with coffee and cakes.

Their bible is "next year." If beaten, they never throw in the towel, but immediately start building for that "next year," which never will come to some of them. They have their hearts torn out every season, their nerves stretched to a breaking point, their health consequently impaired, so "all-out" are their efforts at molding a winning combination.

Flattery is seldom theirs, promotion virtually impossible. Most of them are satisfied to stay with the undeveloped, uncoordinated preps, asking nothing more than the chance to brag should one of their boys set a collegiate league on fire.

THEY'VE UNSHAKEN FAITH IN OWN METHODS.

No two of them are alike. Their individual personalities dominate the style of their teams and they have unshaking faith in their own coaching methods. They'll fight at the drop of a mis-quote, argue to a point one inch this side of physical combat, then shake it off and take you out for dinner.

They're remarkable men, these high school coaches, and, though they've never been credited with it, are the backbone of democracy. They shape the careers of the future Mr. and Mrs. America, preaching all the prerequisites of solid citizenship. They give every kid an equal chance, never censor those not gifted athletically, but go hours out of their way to give each case a square shake.

But they're not gods of a different world, far from it. Some don't practice what they preach, but all preach what the kids should practice. Many deprive themselves of normal social lives so Johnny may jump out of the rut and get on the straight line again. They labor hours over the regular required time, accept each individual as a particular problem worth solving.

THEY FACE ALL KINDS OF TOUGH PROBLEMS.

Nine times out of ten they solve it, too. They trouble themselves over the academic standards of their athletes, for which they receive nothing in return except a "thanks, coach," and perhaps a better performer for the effort. They