

settle things sometimes beyond control of the parents, a voluntary duty far more essential than the fielding of a winning team, though the winning team is the direct result of that voluntary, not demanded, labor.

Some coaches are far more talented than others, and in only rare cases do they take advantage of it to purposely embarrass, via crushing defeat, a less capable opponent. They have a code of ethics, too.

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THE BOY AND THE GAME

The Southern Coach and Athlete, Feb. 1941.--On a certain Southern basketball team there is a big boy playing the center position. Many thought that, due to his height, he would be of great value to his team this season. His progress in basketball has been somewhat disappointing and at a recent game a spectator was heard to remark, "I don't see why that coach fools with that boy. I'd kick him off my team and spend my time on somebody that could do me some good." The opinion he expressed was one in which a majority of the fans would have concurred. That was one viewpoint and, to them, the only logical one.

That same evening the coach of that team, without knowing of the critical remarks of the fan, said, "Basketball has certainly helped that boy. If we do not win another game this season, the game has been worthwhile for the good it has done him. Last year he couldn't play three minutes without losing his temper and committing unnecessary fouls." Here was expressed a different, and a broader viewpoint. The contrast was striking. Both were sincere and positive. It was all a matter of point of view. One was looking at it from the outside, the other from the inside. One opinion was formed from a view from the gallery--the other from a back-stage acquaintance with the characters. One wanted to know "What can the boy do for the game?" The other's concern was "What can the game do for the boy?"

We would not condemn either viewpoint. There is merit in both of these philosophies. Every boy who participates in a sport should feel obligated to uphold its best traditions. The moment he is issued a varsity uniform, he becomes a trustee of the game honor. A participant who does not carry a courageous heart and a sportsmanlike attitude into the game is guilty of stealing something from the game. The conduct of every player becomes a part of the tradition of that sport. It is his duty to build into the game the noblest and best tradition of which he is capable, so that the game will offer a greater challenge and a greater inspiration to those who follow.

On the other hand, if the game can help the individual, it should be permitted to do so. When wisely administered, a game can render a great service in building character into the individual participant. It can make a boy strong, fast, honest, fair, cooperative, loyal, and courageous! However, any time a sport has to help a boy who is below average in any of these qualities it has to give something of itself to do it. The standard of that game has been lowered to that extent. But all are not "drawing" on the game -- some are contributing. To offset the weak, there are strong characters who exert a noble influence on the game. The game takes on something of their character -- their courage, loyalty and sportsmanship. They build into the game a higher and richer tradition. It is the same old story: some contribute, others receive -- "the strong bear the infirmities of the weak." It is simply a game of give and take -- it's life!