

Another McLemore Peeve

one of my favorite columns
By Henry McLemore

ONE of my many New Year's resolutions was to never again write another word about Admiral Gene Tunney.

You know who the Admiral is, of course. Strictly a career man. After years of experience on the storm-tossed waters of the prize ring, and the high seas of National Distilleries, Inc., he has reached a point where he is in charge of the Atlantic, Pacific and Central Park Lake land-based fleets. I gave him up on New Year's Day along with Fletcherizing my food, bobbing for apples on Hallowe'en, opium and serving as lookout for mashers in Grand Central Station.

But I find it impossible to stick to my pledge. It is impossible to ignore Admiral Tunney. He won't let you. He is the talk- ingest naval officer in history. He makes John Paul Jones a sphinx, Admiral Dewey a mummy and Commodore Perry a mute. Just stop and think how few words such officers as Admiral Nimitz or Admiral Halsey have said since the war began, as compared to the vocal output of Admiral Tunney.

THE Admiral now is speaking, writing and gesticulating against competitive sports for men in the armed forces. He feels that such things as boxing, wrestling, football, baseball, basketball and, as far as I know, handball, croquet, roque, curling, fencing, rope climbing, archery and tennis, are silly. It is his contention that mass exercise is much better and that this Nation would have a tougher, meaner Army if something on the order of a wand

drill were adopted for the hardening of the troops.

Lined up with Admiral Tunney, and applauding his every move, are the physical culture instructors of the country. Lined up against him, and hooting his every effort to have competitive sports removed from the soldiers' calendar, are the coaches of the country. On one side are men (the coaches) who feel that sports where rough, hard body contact is involved, offer the best training for fighting men, and on the other side are men (the physical culturists, or "muscle jerks" as Dr. Mal Stevens chose to term them) who feel that a sort of mass squat tag is the ideal training for combat against the enemy.

SPEAKING for myself, I am against the Admiral (you couldn't have possibly guessed that by now, could you?) and the physical culturists. I am against them because I know what wand drills and that sort of al fresco torture did to me. I was a wand driller in the third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades in grammar school. Wand drilling was part of the curriculum in the grammar schools of Georgia at the time, and the daily routine with the slivers of wood left us so worn out and bored and generally disgusted that many of us could not eat our peanut butter sandwiches, which our mothers had carefully packed for us, when recess time came around.

"One-two-three-four." I can hear Miss Wheeler calling the numbers now, and feel the dust of the schoolyard, as scores of us swung the confounded wands about in an effort to develop muscles and graces.

If Admiral Tunney succeeds in having