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WHY BASKETBALL?

given before

The Rosewater High School

Athletic Club

by

Nelson Sullivan

Jan. 8, 1939



## BASKETBALL

Professor Smith and athletes, it is with extreme pleasure that I appear before you this evening to discuss a subject which I hope you will approve. An incident occurred to me just a few miles out of town that struck me in an amusing light, but later I realized its true significance. In stopping for slight repairs on my car, I asked the station attendant as to my position from this town. He looked at me rather sharply and said that I must certainly be a stranger for everyone knew where Rosewater was in this district, since they have one of the best football teams in the state. I could have easily replied that I knew of their team, but was merely curious concerning the time that it might take me to cover the remaining distance.

It has always seemed rather odd to me that when two alumni of a high school or college get together they always discuss their alma mater in the realm of its athletic achievements. For example, when I go back to my home town I inevitably return to the Y.M.C.A. where the grads congregate and discuss the old athletic heroes and contests. I am sure that wherever you roam you will at some time run across an old school chum, then it is my wager that the two of you will speak of the "grand old days" and that last minute victory over "Paduch."

My presence, in reality, is due to happenings that occurred some 49 years ago. A professor at the Y.M.C.A. college in Springfield, Mass. set the stage and gave birth to a peach-basket game called basketball. He was given charge of a gym



class that others had been unable to handle. Naismith after working on a new game gave it to this class, and from that day on never had any more disturbance for those eighteen boys took to the game and relished every available minute that they were allowed to play.. That game has grown from one that offered entertainment and recreation to eighteen future Y.M.C.A. secretaries to one that attracts, as it did last year, eighty million people under its portals. The game was given international recognition in the 1936 Olympics when 21 nations competed for the championship which was awarded to the United States.. To show how the game has grown from the eastern coast of the United States to the farmost eastern point in the world, would be comparatively easy if E. C. Quigley, national authority in referring and officiating, were to tell you of the number of participants and the interest that the Japanese showed in an elimination contest that he had the job of handling.

Today you and I are remotely interested in things that occur outside of our community and yet when we read of the game of basketball being played in the Olympics and all of the major powers and secondary powers with the exception of Spain, entered into competition we must surely comprehend that the game has grown to gigantic proportions.. The reasons for this rapid growth and why it should be part of every high school curriculum is the real purpose of my speaking here tonight..

The game was originally developed to give youths an opportunity for recreation through play during the winter months.. Its wide acceptance by youths who pledge allegiance to many



different flags all over the country today shows that the game is popular. I am sure that this is one phase of emphasis that need not be stressed for one would be blind not to recognize this fact. There are rumors to the effect that the game is too strenuous for the high school athlete. Dr. James Naismith and others have made research investigations to determine the basis for such assertions and find them totally without any foundation.. Several years ago a former coach of mine told me of Forrest DeBernarde, one of the greatest basketball players of all time, whom he had coached in high school. He said that Forrest was unable to play very long in any game due to palpitation of his heart, but this did not prevent him from continuing his practicing.. The coach claimed that the youth soon built himself up physically to a place where he was able to stay in the entire game.

On the contrary, as regards the statement that the game has a tendency to be detrimental to one's health, I contend that it acts in the opposite manner. Since it is a sport that demands as much stamina and physical conditioning as possible, the youths that participate must follow certain rules of health. Often while in high school a student has no incentive for prohibiting his desire to smoke and "sow his wild oats," but when given the opportunity to play on the school's athletic teams, he will have a real desire to conform with certain training rules so that his chances may be bettered.. These training habits then started in high school and continued on into college are often the reasons why so many athletes never smoke. These habits that aid to keep one in physical fitness through his



school days are the same ones that become of benefit in later life. Besides the benefits that one accrues from following health rules there is also the desire to learn more about our body. Our curiosity is aroused when we are being worked on by the coach or trainer and we desire to know more about our physical makeup. In other words it might be said that we become body conscious.

You might easily ask "How does basketball cause one to obtain better grades?" In the first place before any team member is eligible to participate he must have average grades. Some athletes if they didn't have some incentive to study would never manage to get through high school. In order to secure these grades the individuals must budget their time to allow them to practice basketball and also to study. The story is told of Barry wood, great Harvard all-around athlete who when asked by his coach to report for a skull practice that evening replied that he was sorry, but he had planned to study that evening. It was said that he had a budget which allowed him time to participate in three major sports, and also to give him ranking at the top of the scholastic ladder.

It frequently occurs that an athlete is not particularly interested in scholastic work but does it because he desires to be eligible for athletics. Then after graduating from high school he manages to go to college where he actually "finds himself" and desires to study, not principally because of his eligibility, but because of his desire to improve himself. Many athletes that formerly were shoved through high school and college now find their vocation in coaching which has been wide-



ly extended thru the addition of educational institutions and a more prominent place of athletics in their curriculums..

An athlete that has an enviable record in scholarship and athletics is given many opportunities for employment. A story that Dr. Allen once told his team before they were to be guests of an alumni group was in part, that they would be given an opportunity to acquaint themselves with individuals who were civic leaders whereas before they would have never been allowed entrance into their office. Through athletics an introduction is made whereby you are favorably brought into contact with individuals who might help you.. I do not mean to infer that athletics will give you a job after completing your course of study but I will say that when one's name appears in print before the public eye it is good advertising. This is often the opportunity that gives an athlete a start,, although the rest depends upon what the individual does after his chance has come.. Take for example "Boots" Adams, president of Phillips Petroleum, and Paul Endicott, vice president of Phillips, both former star athletes of the University of Kansas, who were given employment after leaving college.. They took advantage of the opportunities so many other athletes are given.. A coach is proudest over those proteges who achieve later success, rather than those who falter by the wayside, because he takes pride not only in winning championships but in influencing and helping to develop men..

The next point that I deem very important and one that the game of basketball is responsible for in a large measure is that of developing sportsmanship. Today in any field of



endeavor we must have the faculty of getting along with people.. Some executives and personnel managers contend that this ability is worth more than 50 per cent. in computing the amount of ingredients that are necessary in making one a successful individual. Unless we can develop the cooperative spirit to a point where we allow other individuals the opportunity to "shine" as well as ourselves we often fail to achieve any honor on our own. In basketball as in few other games does the spirit of teamwork appear so necessary.. There are only five men on a team and unless they work together the unit is likely to fail in its purpose; the quintet that coordinates the best is the one that will carry away the victors crown. In the game of basketball with its many moments of tenseness and excitement when one is likely to lose his temper, he can either accept and learn a valuable lesson in self control or "live to learn" another day. Sports that are high in body contact are often the very ones that bring out the greatest amount of character traits in an individual. The spirit of fair play is inborn in all persons but it is given an opportunity for development and expression in the game of basketball..

A character trait that showed very conclusively that the person was thinking more of the team than he was of his own personal glory was demonstrated by a great Kansas athlete in a recent championship basketball game.. I refer to this individual as a great basketball player because of his ability to play the game and because of his ability to develop team morale.. It was during the half period that the coach was telling what must be done in the second half in order to pull the game "out of the fire." He asked this player, Smitty, if he thought that



he would be able to get back to protect his post before the opposition could execute their plays.. Smitty, who was breathing heavily, partly because of the first half, and also because of some physical defects, said that he was unable to beat the opponents back. He wasn't admitting failure, for he was giving his best, but merely knowing his own physical prowess and its limitations, gave his ideas in relation to how it might affect the team and not himself. This is a test of character that his coach will probably ever remember, and one that any coach would be proud to relate..

I have never been thoroughly convinced that "keeping up with the Joneses" is the best policy, but I do believe that for the sake of self-preservation, the policy of "When in Rome do as the Romans do," is adviseable.. In the state of Kansas there are over 600 high school basketball teams. This number shows the largest number of teams in any one sport.. The game of basketball in the state has risen to heights that few states in the union can boast of. We have in our state both the inventor of the game and the greatest and oldest living coach,, Dr. Forrest Allen. Both of these individuals are connected with the University of Kansas and not as some authors would have you believe, the University of Nebraska..

Communities are no longer isolated members of townships but are all corporate and are part of the whole.. This small community has received recognition of its gridiron sport because of its great teams but these same towns also have basketball teams.. Are you thrown out of the association with them during the winter months because you do not have a team?



You then ask the question as to the place that we might be able to practice? I have taken inventory and believe that the town auditorium without much additional expense could be revamped during the winter months for our practice sessions and league games. I have asked concerning the possibilities of using it during the afternoons and there seems to be no objection.. Since it is not very far from the school I suggest that if the sport is incorporated we use it..

Your school spirit must be of the very best for I have heard of it from my neighboring community.. Basketball would be the ideal sport for the students to back during the winter months, for it is one that is interesting not only to the students but also to the adults.. I daresay that within a month or two after the season is underway we could have the auditorium partially filled with spectators.. The game of basketball is growing by leaps and bounds; there is no doubt in my mind but that it is distinctly the game with the least objectionable features.. Injuries that are so frequent in many sports do not occur as often in basketball when the proper precautions are taken.. From the athletes that I have heard of from this school and from their appearance when I met them previously before speaking, I am convinced that we would give the Southwestern Conference leaders a real battle for the championship..

If you are skeptical because of the financial risk I will say that judging from the size of this town we can by means of a slight admission price, plus an activity fee, from the students, finance the game with no additional burden to the school's budget.. The equipment and suits would entail an initial cost that we



would soon be able to pay off after a season or two of play. I feel safe in prophesying, due to the popularity of the sport in Kansas, that we would actually make enough money to partially help another cause or save and have a reserve fund for future emergencies..

Gentlemen, I have stated the facts as I perceive them, and am firmly convinced that the game of basketball would be beneficial to this school and community.. I say that not only would you sustain your school spirit throughout the winter months but that you would also give the town people an opportunity to keep in contact with the educational center.. I have told you how it would give recreational play and enjoyment to the students without affecting their scholastic standing.. It is not necessary to sell this sport to you for I am firmly convinced that this fine game possesses enough attributes to sell itself..



September 27, 1938.

Miss Carolyn Stockwell,  
107 Ward Parkway,  
Kansas City, Mo.

Dear Carolyn:

I am enclosing a copy of the letter I have just  
written Dorman O'Leary.

Here's hoping it brings you good luck!

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

FCA:AH

Director of Physical Education,  
Varsity Basketball Coach.



September 27, 1938.

Mr. Dorman O'Leary,  
Vice President,  
Stern Brothers,  
1012 Baltimore Ave.,  
Kansas City, Missouri.

Dear "Dummy":

Miss Carolyn Stockwell stopped by the office today to tell me that she had an opportunity for a possible position with your firm.

I think you know me well enough to know that when I write a recommendation for anyone that I would endeavor to tell the truth and not build the individual up unduly.

Miss Stockwell acted as my secretary during my regime in the Athletic Office, and she also assisted Mr. Earl Falkenstein, our financial secretary, with his bookkeeping ledgers. I was so well pleased with Miss Stockwell's work that I want to inform you of her fine qualities.

She is an especially intelligent young woman, with fine discrimination. She has poise. Her character and personality are excellent. She has initiative and enthusiasm for her work. She was such an exceptional student that she commanded the respect of those with whom she worked as well as the leaders in the student body.

The fact that you had a wonderful father who knew English construction perfectly will make you appreciate this fact. When I wrote my new text, "Better Basketball", published by McGraw-Hill and Company of New York, I used Miss Stockwell as one of my critics on sentence construction.

I most heartily recommend her to you without reservation or evasion. She is one of the most promising and brilliant young women that I know.

Very sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education,  
Varsity Basketball Coach.

FCA:AH



September 22, 1938.

Miss Carolyn Stockwell,  
107 Ward Parkway,  
Kansas City, Missouri.

Dear Carolyn:

I am awfully sorry I did not see you when you stopped at my office this afternoon. I would really have enjoyed a visit with you.

I particularly wanted to write some letters for you to help you get the job you wanted. You remember I asked you to write whatever you wanted to have me say, and I told you I would sign the letters. I'm just afraid you were too modest to do that, but I thought you could best express the qualifications you had for a particular job. I want to help you whenever I can.

With best wishes for the present, and my very best wishes for the near future when the big event takes place, I am

Sincerely yours,

FCA:AH

Director of Physical Education,  
Varsity Basketball Coach.



September 30, 1938.

Miss Carolyn Stockwell,  
107 Ward Parkway,  
Kansas City, Mo.

Dear Carolyn:

I am enclosing a copy of the letter I received yesterday from Dorman O'Leary. I just wanted to keep you in touch with the situation.

Josephine Hellings, as you doubtless know, was a Phi Phi here a few years ago, and later took secretarial work. Her father is a banker, and that might weigh in her favor.

Here's wishing you the best of luck.

Cordially yours,

Director of Physical Education,  
Varsity Basketball Coach.

FCA:AH  
Enc.



September 30, 1938.

Mr. Dorman H. O'Leary,  
Vice President, Stern Brothers,  
Kansas City, Missouri.

Dear "Dummy":

Thank you very much for your kind letter of the  
28th instant.

Yes, indeed, I know Miss Josephine Hellinger very  
well. She is a beautiful girl, and I understand she took  
secretarial work. She would be a dandy. I met her father,  
who is a banker, when Jane and Josephine were sorority sisters,  
and the Hellings are wonderful people.

I want you to know how good you made me feel to  
write the letter that you did.

With all good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education,  
Varsity Basketball Coach.

FCA:AH



STERN BROTHERS & COMPANY

DORMAN H. O'LEARY  
VICE PRESIDENT

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

September 28, 1938.

Dear Phog:

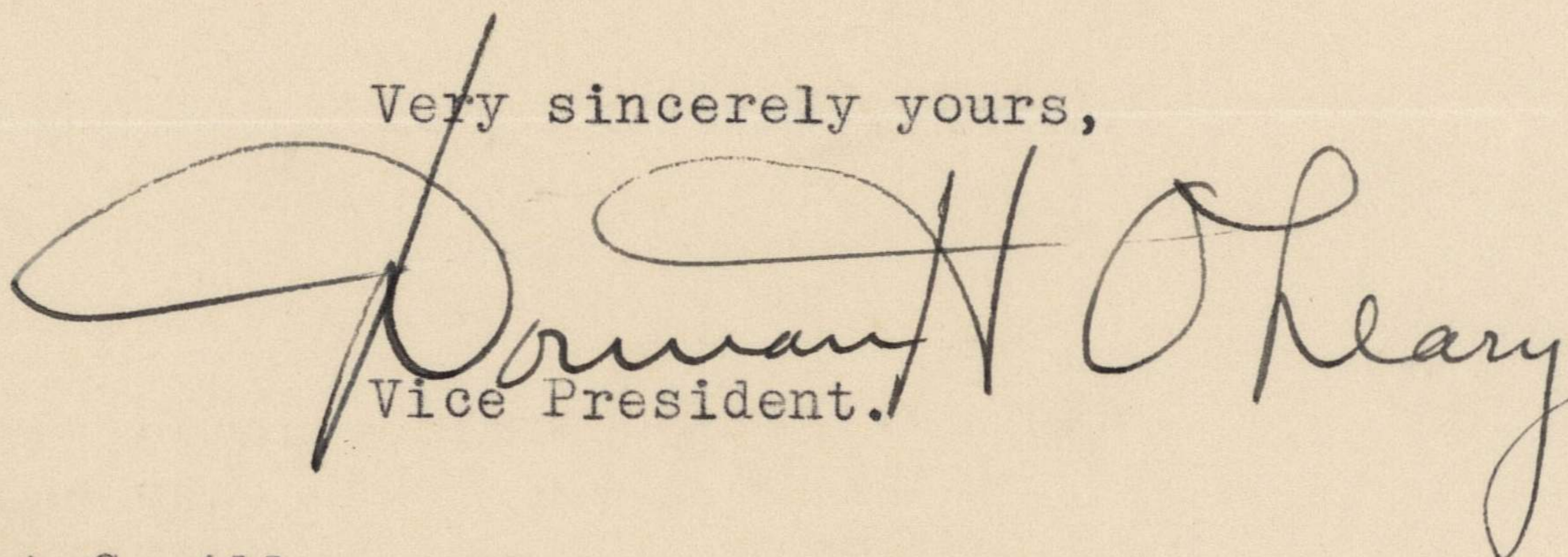
Thank you very much for your letter about Miss Stockwell. It made an excellent impression on all of us and while we have not decided definitely whom we will employ, this will be settled within the next day or so.

You might be interested to know that the other girl we are considering is Miss Josephine Hellings, whom you probably knew when she was a student at the University two or three years ago.

I personally think Miss Stockwell's experience qualifies her more completely for the place we have open, and I was very glad to get your letter confirming my own ideas.

With kindest regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

  
Vice President.

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

DHO:AE



October 10, 1938

Dear Dr. Allen,

Greetings, from the lady with a job! First, let me thank you for your most valuable assistance. Your good word tipped the scales and I found myself on the "heavy" side, for once! It was very kind of you to keep me informed of the situation. Fortunately, with thanks to you, I wasn't the disappointed young lady.

I surely appreciate the splendid letter of recommendation you composed, Dr. Allen. I fear it will be difficult for me to live up to all those fine things you said, but I shall earnestly try not to let you down in any respect. That letter is a real challenge to me (the typical "Dr. Allen" quality of bringing out the best that is in one, as evidenced by his basketball teams, and many other things.)

I am very pleased with the position and am truly enjoying this new field of work. Sometime in the near future, I shall be in to thank you personally for



the kind assistance given a very  
happy young lady.

Thanking you for your good  
wishes and hoping everything is  
in tip-top shape with you, I am

Sincerely yours,

(Miss) Carolyn



October 8, 1938.

Miss Caroline Stockwell,  
107 Ward Parkway,  
Kansas City, Missouri.

Dear Caroline:

Your sister Doris was in the office to see me the other days and she told me of the good news about your job.

This is just a little note of congratulation. We are very happy for you, and wish you the best of success.

Very cordially yours,

Director of Physical Education,  
Varsity Basketball Coach.



October 27, 1938.

Mr. Stanley Schmahn, Manager,  
Granada Theater,  
Lawrence, Kansas.

Dear Stan:

I am enclosing herewith our completed basketball schedule for the 1938-39 season.

All home games will be played in Hoch Auditorium at the University of Kansas, beginning at 7:30 p.m. The reserved seat season ticket is \$5.60 (\$5.50 plus tax), and the single admissions are 75¢ plus sales tax.

Sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education,  
Varsity Basketball Coach.



October 5, 1938.

Professor James B. Smith,  
Law School,  
University of Kansas.

Dear Professor Smith:

I am sending you the Kiplinger Washington Letter which has to do with population as it affects the school. I thought it might be interesting to you.

I am also sending a couple of other recent letters for you to scan over. I thought the Jewish problem and how the economists handle it is interesting, and also the gesture of forgiving the war debt.

About two weeks after Kiplinger's information reaches us on some of these matters the local papers put it out, but it is treated in propaganda form as it affects the papers' policy.

It was good to have a visit with you yesterday, and I enjoyed it very much, I assure you.

Sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education,  
Varsity Basketball Coach.

FCA:AH  
Enc.



October 6, 1938.

Mr. E. E. Stockebrand,  
Coach, Leonardville Rural High School,  
Leonardville, Kansas.

Dear Stockebrand:

In answer to your communication of the 4th instant regarding the difficulty with your boy's knee, I would suggest that you see some physician and have him use diathermy on that knee. I think you are well enough acquainted with the procedure of diathermy.

Two electrodes are placed on either side of the knee and the current is sent through the joint. The temperature on the inside of the knee is exactly the same as that produced by the electrodes. In other words, diathermy means "heating through", and you get the heat through the joint.

Doubtless the blood poison left the ligaments rather adhered. Since joints and ligaments get the poorest circulation of all the tissues of the body, you need diathermy to augment that circulation.

Write me and let me know if you have used diathermy. If you have not, I would suggest that you have some physician who is skilled in the use of the same. I am sure after treatment with the diathermy that your boy's knee will mend quite perceptibly.

With all good wishes, I am

Very cordially yours,

Director of Physical Education,  
Varsity Basketball Coach.

FCA:AH



E. E. Stockebrand, Coach  
Science and Woodwork

V. E. Oman, Director

C. S. Johnson, Clerk

Frank A. Rahe, Treasurer

Naomi R. Chronister  
Music, English  
Nina Edelblute  
~~Home Economics & Science~~  
Home Economics & Science

# LEONARDVILLE RURAL HIGH SCHOOL

Dora D. Chandler  
Commerce

Lloyd M. Miller, Principal.

Lucile Johnson  
Social Science and Dramatics

Leonardville, Kansas

October 4, 1938

Dr. F. C. Allen  
Kansas University  
Lawrence, Kansas

Dear Dr. Allen:

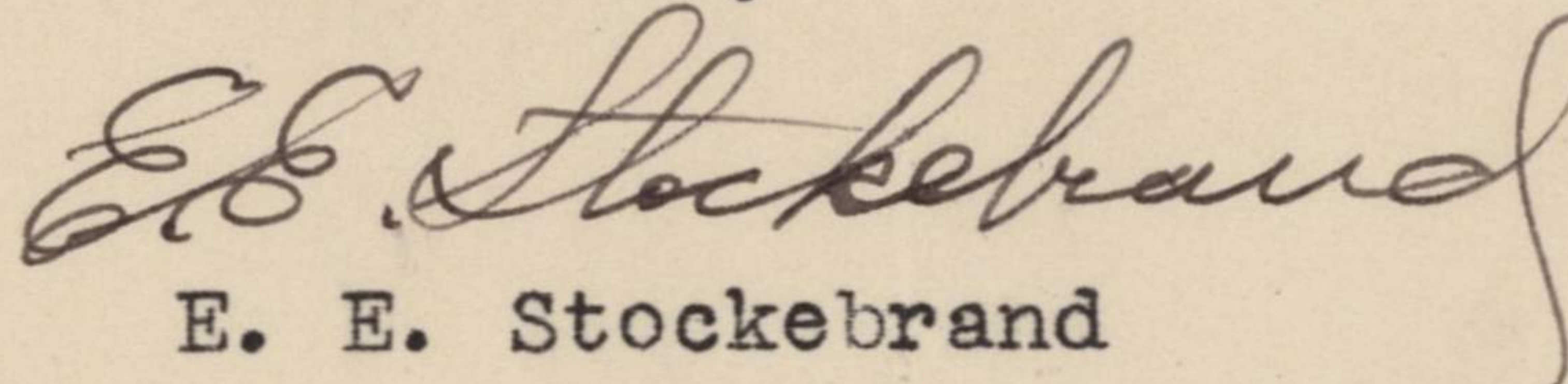
I am writing to you in regard to one of our boys who has considerable trouble with his knee.

About two years ago he ran a locus thorne into the side of the knee, about a quarter or half an inch deep, but got it all out without any difficulty. However, blood-poisoning set in and after getting over that it seems the knee was left in a weakened condition.

Last season he had to give up football and in basket-ball it troubled him on a few occasions. At the present time, and even last year, before the knee was injured it looked normal. Hard knocks on the knee cause it to swell up and pains severely.

Any information, you might give to us on the matter, will be greatly appreciated.

Yours truly

  
E. E. Stockebrand

EES:LM



October 21, 1938.

Mr. John L. Shouse,  
Asst. Superintendent of Schools,  
Library Building,  
9th and Locust Streets,  
Kansas City, Mo.

Dear Mr. Shouse:

Thank you very much for your kindness in  
sending me the information regarding Miss Joie Stapleton  
about which I telephoned you yesterday.

With all good wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education,  
Varsity Basketball Coach.



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Public Schools, Kansas City, Missouri

LIBRARY BUILDING  
NINTH AND LOCUST STREETS  
GEORGE MELCHER, SUPERINTENDENT

October 20, 1938

JOHN L. SHOUSE  
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Forrest C. Allen  
Department of Physical Education  
University of Kansas  
Lawrence, Kansas.

My dear Dr. Allen:

On returning to my office I have examined our records and find that Miss Jose Stapleton's salary for 1938-39 is \$230 per month less 12½% discount for 10½ months. I think you understand that we are operating under a discount because of the financial condition of the School District.

Very respectfully yours,

*John L. Shouse*

John L. Shouse,  
Assistant Superintendent  
In Charge of High Schools

JLS:EH



October 25, 1938.

Dean D. M. Swarthout,  
School of Fine Arts.

Dear Dean Swarthout:

Thank you very much for your thoughtfulness in setting aside two Concert Series tickets for Mrs. Allen and myself. We are especially looking forward to the concert by Gladys Swarthout this winter.

With grateful appreciation, I am

Very cordially yours,

Director of Physical Education,  
Varsity Basketball Coach.

FCA:AH