ball on the Pacific Coast? Would the Oregon incident spread elsewhere? This fear seemed valid, for similar legal proceedings have just been brought by budding young lawyers against the Associated Student corporation at the University of Washington. Not since the voters canceled the Associated Student dues has Oregon's football team been in the first division. And the professors, prior to hiring Atherton, implied that the whole episode was a hint to do something about the gravy train.

Will the investigation result in that something being done? Probably all the big colleges in America will watch intently for the answer to this question, because Atherton himself maintains, "The Pacific Coast Conference is not faced with any peculiar problems of its own but is confronted with the same difficulties which beset college athletics all over the country." The one-time F. B. I. agent makes it clear that although the gravy train may be diluted, it most certainly will not be emptied out. He believes that most of the lads who play football must earn their way through college.

Making the Gravy Train Legal

How, he asks, can they do both these things and also keep up in their studies? Intercollegiate football is a rigorous game. It requires intensive practice and rigid conditioning. Trips are long and games give hard knocks. Can a boy, twenty-one or twenty-two years old, go through all this and still hold down a job and go to classes? Atherton thinks such a schedule would impose a strain on the constitution of an African elephant.

"The results of my survey," the former G-man says, "will be carefully analyzed by the faculty men and from this analysis the conference hopes to be able to establish definite and reasonable rules concerning legitimate financial aid to athletes. These rules will be enforced by an organization set up by the conference for this purpose."

Such words are reassuring, but the coaches and athletic directors are holding their breaths and waiting to see what happens. Some of them are not so sure that an incident that occurred a short time ago might not have been the culminating event in persuading the professors to hire Atherton.

Reed College is a completely academic little institution in Oregon, from which its young president, Dexter M. Keezer, likes to take pot shots at big-time football and condemn the conference schools for being "immersed in commercialized athletics." One day he was scheduled to address an alumni meeting. He had no particular message to impart, so he addressed them humorously—or at least he thought it was humorously.

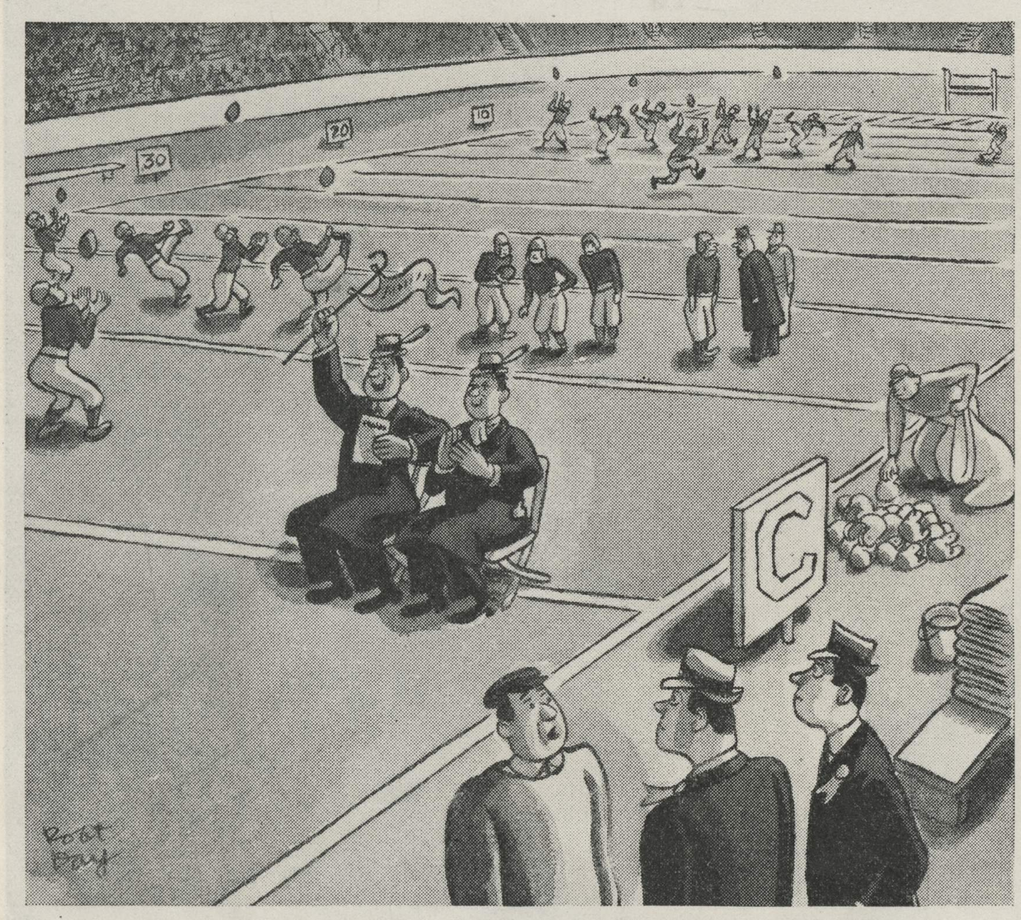
He said Reed College had stayed out of big-time football long enough. The situation would be remedied by hiring the best team in the country. Players would be paid a going wage for their services, getting from $70 to $100 a month. There also would be a special faculty solely concerned with the duty of doing the players' lessons for them. As an added inducement to the athletes, the profits from football games would be divided on a 50-50 basis, with half going to the college and half to the players. The athletes' share of the gate receipts would be impounded in a trust fund, with each player getting his cut on graduation day. The boys would be rewarded in direct proportion to their value to the team. A touchdown would net so much money, a tackle so much, a completed pass so much, and right on down the list. Keezer expressed the hope that this would result in a do-or-die spirit and a will to win never before seen on a football field.

These words were duly reported in the press.

The next day the Reed College gymnasium swarmed with brawny young men. They jammed the place to the doors. All wanted positions on the wonder team of the age. Hundreds of letters came from coaches desiring to lead this super-aggregation. In the early morning hours Keezer was dragged out of bed by an urgent long-distance telephone call.

"Say, is this Doc Keezer?" asked the voice of a football coach of some fame in the Far West. "That idea of yours is great stuff. It'll have all this other two-for-a-nickel business beat a mile. Let me coach 'at team of yours and we can lick our weight in mountain lions. Any kid who gets $100 a touchdown is gonna score. 'At's all—he's gonna score!"

Keezer hung up the phone sadly and went back to bed.



"They say they bought tickets on the fifty-yard line and they're going to sit on the fifty-yard line" ROBERT DAY

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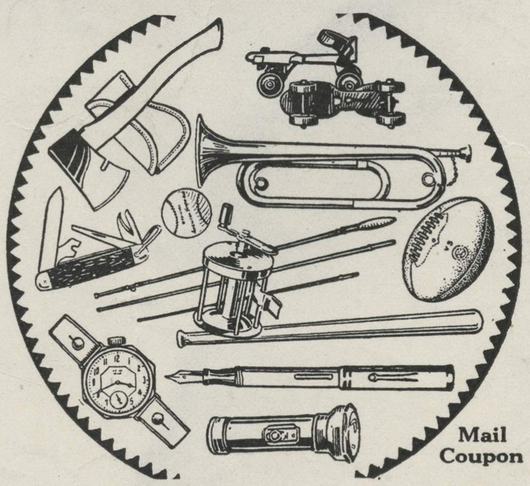

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