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COMMERCIALISM IN SPORTS*

By commercialism is meant the paying of those who take part in athletics of any kind, either in money or in rewards which have a money value. The subject is not an easy one to handle for it is far from being settled. There is not a governing body of athletics today but would be glad of information leading to a solution of the problem in such a way as to advance the interests of the athletes and the sports.

The question is one of more than local interest, for since athletics is common to all the civilized nations, and they meet on a common basis in international contests, it is important that there be some common ground on which these nations can compete. It is therefore necessary for each community so to arrange its code that at any time there will be this common basis. If any of our athletes, for example, were to represent America in the next Olympic games, they would need to be able to measure up to the standard which would be acceptable to the other nations. Not only is it of international importance, but it is also of importance for future time as well as for the present. The students of the last decade sacrificed their advantages for the benefit of the present student body. It would be poor policy, to say the least, for us to surrender that for which they sacrificed and from which we are now reaping benefits, for there are few indeed who will not concede that the present status of athletics at the University of Kansas as well

*The substance of an address by Dr. James Naismith, physical director at the University of Kansas.