

BEAVER'S



MONTH

SURROUNDED by a chaos of half-unpacked trunks, suitcases, and travel-rumpled clothes, the Beaver peered at his room in the House disconsolately. Unpacking seemed to require an intolerable mountain of effort and he had grave doubts about the possibility of stacking into his small room all the accumulata of past years, dragged up from the trunk room in the basement.

He avoided the problem by leaning out the window to watch the passing groups of students and he began to think how strange it seemed to call last year's sophomores juniors and last year's juniors seniors. At least last year's frosh were making it obvious that they were now sophs, for when the phone rang, it was always a stentorian soph voice that bellowed, "FROSH!!"

Frosh Camp

Frosh camp, the Beaver decided, was a fine institution. The frosh had all arrived and registered last Thursday, and were feeling very confused and faced with a cold, indifferent world over the efficient registration tables. Then Friday morning they had been herded into buses in front of Dabney and carted off to Camp Radford in the San Bernardino mountains. Up there Tech began to assume a friendly, coherent personality. There they met upperclass wheels and faculty, dressed informally in camp clothes and treating the frosh to a warm, personable welcome.

Meet the People

Rapidly the new frosh began to feel at home, talked to the royalty of Tech like brothers, and gained that comfortable glow of being accepted as an equal and a friend. Royce, prexy of all Dabney house, was just another guy in a T-shirt who came up to ask you where you were from, and Lovberg, president of the whole student body (it had seemed like a pompous position worthy of a campus Napoleon on Thursday) was just another nice guy with a suggestion of a needed shave instead of an aura of celestial light.

Can This Be Tech?

In the informal talks, a picture of Tech began to crystallize in the froshs' minds and they were invariably

surprised to be told to leave their books on weekends to go out and raise hell, or to be urged into athletics and activities. Joe Lewis, an alumni wheel, had even told them that a knowledge of their capacity for alcohol was part of their education. One frosh told the Beaver he was amazed to find the renowned Institute merely a "country club for exuberant extroverts." The Beaver shook his head wisely and gently administered the truth. But the whole encouraging truth of the camp was simply this: Tech does not want the precocious snakes who slither out of their study cells to blink at the sunlight only when they go to class; it does not want the brilliant engineer who doesn't know beer from skittles outside his cherished field, or whether cherries or olives go into martinis. The frosh were surprised indeed!

Good Crop

And the crop of frosh the Institute had picked were good boys, the Beaver observed, as Mr. Killgrove ran the many musicians among them through an excellent concert, and as he watched them sign up for football and baseball and track in droves. Frosh Coach Ed Preisler had stood by the sign-up board, beaming like a miser in his gold room as more frosh signed for football than the entire varsity squad. The guys were big and eager athletes, already excitedly spinning plans to take on the varsity and trim their posteriors in scrimmages. Here was a real set of frosh, the Beaver grinned, as he moved into the crowd gathered around an impromptu poker game, or listened in to a bull session where the frosh talked about women instead of electronics.

Faculty Without Bifocals

Frosh camp is always notable for some strange reversals among the revered faculty when they take off their bifocals and grope out onto the baseball diamond to take on a bloodthirsty crew of frosh athletes. The tradition had long been that the faculty was to win, but this year (like last year) conditions had changed. The frosh, already sensing the moral need for a reservoir of revenge, had belted the ball in the second inning time after time through the slippery fingers of Fielders Foster Strong, Butch Clark and George Hall until they had made some 15 runs. Dean Strong and Clark, who had both emphasized the need for exercise and athletics in a Tech routine, were the more conspicuous now in their obvious lack of training. However, in succeeding innings a core of muscle-minded geologists and coaches kept the faculty at least within a competitive bracket and the frosh walked off with a 24-21 vengeance, which the Beaver hopes they will harbor in their memories in the tests to come.

The most spectacularly casual gesture of the day was made by Dean Thomas, who snagged a fly ball far out in the spectators' section in the most debonair manner possible, without moving a muscle. The Beaver cheered, the Dean smiled appreciatively, then hefted the ball back to the embarrassed fielder.

A New Life

The Beaver turned back to his unpacking with a wry frown, and sat down on a pile of clothing to peruse a stack of last year's love letters lying on top of an orange crate. Finally he dropped them in a wastebasket. Start life anew, he mused, and began sorting Varga girl pictures for his wall.

—Jim Hendrickson '50