

COACH STANTON AND TECH FOOTBALL

Editor's Note: The following article, reprinted from a recent issue of the California Tech, is a significant tribute to the imprint of Coach Stanton on Tech athletics. It also brings up a question in which most alumni feel a keen interest; namely, whether or not intercollegiate football should be continued at the Institute. No definite decision has yet been made on either the continuance of football or the appointment of a successor to the "Fox". Comments on this situation will be warmly welcomed by the Alumni Review. Let us hear from you.

The resignation of Coach W. L. "Fox" Stanton takes from our midst a man who has done more than any other person to maintain intercollegiate football at Caltech.

In a school which does not pick men for athletic ability he has formed championship teams. In a school where no credit is given for athletic work, where it must be carried entirely in addition to regular studies, he has developed outstanding football material.

CHAMPIONSHIP TEAMS

In 1923 his team was champion. In 1926 it tied Occidental for the championship. Again in 1930 and 1931 it forced its way to the top. And the conference was larger in that day; Redlands, San Diego, Whittier, Occidental, Pomona, La Verne, Caltech, and Santa Barbara.

Stanton wanted his men to play to win—yes, but most of all he wanted them to play football for the fun of it. He wanted to stress the special qualities of players which have most lasting effect—better called spiritual values—courage, square dealing, justice to opponents, and power within one's self.

YEARS OF GREATEST INTEREST

In the years from 1921 to 1931 he placed his best teams on the field. They won four championships. They were on a footing with such schools as UCLA, USC, and Stanford.

Behind these teams was a different student body. At that time fraternities were the coordinating force on the campus. These groups concentrated their efforts on seeing how many men they could place on scrub teams, how much support they could give every football game.

NEW ERA AFTER HOUSES

Our last conference victory came the year our student houses opened. A new era had started. The schools which Caltech rivaled were forging ahead with their athletic programs, building up their physical education departments, and attracting men interested in athletics.

Now half of the Caltech student body was concentrated on the campus. Interhouse rivalry was beginning in every sport and replacing the traditional support of the varsity teams. It was charged now and again that this or that house persuaded this or that man to remain off the varsity team so that he could strengthen his house's chance.

Some years the varsity turnout was so small that it was necessary to dissolve the scrubs to have enough men for two first-line teams. It was actually necessary for assistant coaches and graduates to scrimmage to give the regular team full practice.

The Caltech student body, to be sure, has resented the failure of their teams to win games. However, it was not until

last March, faced with the prospects of abandoning football, that one large obstacle was removed—the pressure placed on the varsity team by house competition.

The time of interhouse football was moved from fall to spring, and the six man game was substituted. The renewal of interest resulted in a large turnout for spring practice, and an exceptional group for fall training.

EASY TO CRITICIZE

It is easy to blame a coach after his men have lost games year after year. There has never been a Caltech coach who has not been criticized. In fact until Coach Stanton began his 21 years of service, not one of them had remained at this school for more than two years.

But this is certain. Coach Stanton has made intercollegiate football worthwhile for the men who have played for Caltech whether or not they have won games. He has done this against odds few coaches have had to face. For this reason, and for this reason alone, collegiate football has remained at Caltech.

PROBLEMS WILL REMAIN

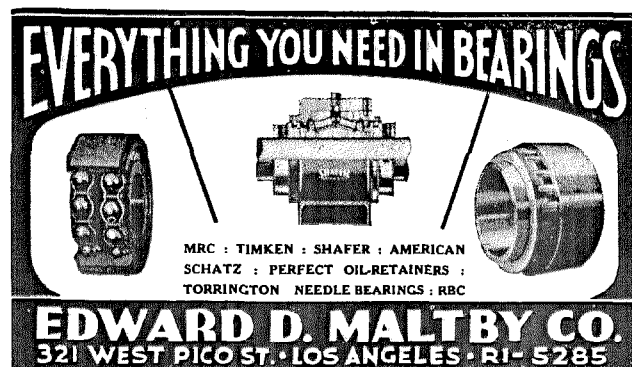
New blood may bring a new spirit. But the basic problems of finding football material and training it in the time available will remain.

A question may easily be asked of Caltech students before this year is over. It may be asked before a new coach is appointed: "Is the interest shown and the participation given intercollegiate football by Caltech students sufficient to warrant its continuance?"

If the answer is yes, then it may be necessary for students and campus groups to extend even more conscientious support, not only in the bleachers, but on the teams. And, the school must recognize that teams in the future may not be victorious ones.

NOT FOR VICTORY ALONE

If Caltech men give up the idea that they are playing football for the fun and the love of the sport, if their main reason for intercollegiate competition ceases to be a desire in the main part for competition which they cannot receive among their own groups, if the idea becomes fixed that victories, and victories alone, count in varsity participation, the intercollegiate football might as well be given back to the Gods.



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