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University, General

Publications

Sports Interviews, 1967

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These three reels of 16mm color film must be played on a projector that has an optical-magnetic head, or the sound track will not be audible.

Interview with Burton Ingwersen, retired football coach, who discussed playing football in 1917 and 1918, the absence of recruitment at that time, his personal situation with respect to playing football, his interests in baseball, various members of the 1917 and 1918 teams, the championships won by Illinois in 1918 and 1920, the 1914 team including Macomber, Pogue and Clark.

Mr. Ingwersen said that close formations were used in those days, but that Zuppke used the T-formation as early as 1917 although there was no man in motion at that time.

He discussed the relationship between athletes and students at various times. He said there was a close relationship before 1920 - a crowd, bands, parades, the Hobo Band parade at Homecoming and on the whole there was more tradition associated with intercollegiate athletics. He stated that in the 1930s, students sang about beating the opposing teams as they returned to their residences between classes.

He mentioned that there was smoking permitted only on the west side of Wright Street and that he approved of the ban on smoking on the University campus. He said that there was definitely more spirit in these earlier days, and discussed the planned September 30, 1967 Loyalty Day.

Mr. Ingwersen said that last year, four boys' parents and one boy gave money to the Grant-in-Aid Fund and that this was a unique situation. He said that most of the players were from Illinois in last year's offensive line.

Mr. Ingwersen discussed the sendoff that the 1916 team received when it went to Minnesota where it won an upset by a score of 14-10 over Minnesota.

These recollections are presented by Mr. Ingwersen with additional facts and gestures and generally relate to the place of intercollegiate athletics at the University of Illinois, and especially to the days in which he played football at the University.

The second reel is an interview with Claude "Buddy" Young, a former University of Illinois football player, made in Chicago in August 1967.

Mr. Young said that Raymond "Nusspickle" Eliot was a "great coach" and that they were all great people at Illinois. He said that 1944 is not what 1967 is with respect to segregation. There was segregated housing in town, but that it was a situation worth exploring. He said that athletics have been great equalizers and that the constitutional statement that man is equal has been supplemented by sports, which helps this realization.

Mr. Young said that he was not in a fraternity at Illinois, but lived in a private residence on Stoughton Street with Mrs. Ida Wells and her husband, who were then in their late 50s. They were all men who lived at this residence and included two architects, one graduate student working on his doctorate in sociology who is now teaching at Jackson State College in Mississippi, an African who was in engineering and Mr. Young, who was in athletics. He said they had quite a relationship there. Mr. Wells was a railroad worker and an inspiration to the students. Among the other acquaintances in Champaign, he mentioned Les Jamison, who was a waiter at the Champaign Country Club and a railroad porter and still remains a close personal friend of Mr. Young. He mentioned the problems of inequities were satisfactorily resolved.

In discussing recruiting, Mr. Young said that it was not a problem in the 1940s, that 95% of the football team came from Illinois, that Illinois produced good athletes and had a number of excellent recreation programs around the state. He said at the present time there is more competition and there was more "stateism" then and high school students in Illinois felt a loyalty to their state university. He discussed the September 30, 1967 Loyalty Day and the effect of a large crowd on the athletes' performance.

Mr. Young alluded to the bad situation or scandal in Illinois athletics which would have an adverse effect on the players. He recalled the 1946 Notre Dame in which he played, which was lost 26-6 and the game lost to Indiana 14-7. He mentioned that students wanted to fire Coach Eliot at that time, but that the team which had problems with returning servicemen, won all the remaining games including the Rose Bowl in 1947.

He mentioned the many campus activities in the period around 1945, including pep rallies, which were evidence of spirit of the student body.

Mr. Young said that sports broke down the inequities, that in 1944 not all the football players were from the Chicago area and that they had not associated with Negroes in athletic activities. He recalled the first shower that was taken by the team during which one lineman watched Mr. Young and Paul Patterson, a colleague from Aurora, Ill., for five minutes before showering.

In response to a question whether college sports should be a business, Mr. Young responded with a question, "Who puts out more energy than the athletes?" He said he meant physical and mental rigors that the athlete underwent because he liked competition and that he deserved as good a chance as any other student.

In response to a question concerning a union of professional football players, Mr. Young thought that there might be a difference between whether they were fringe players or stars, and he said, "Professional athletics, even at a college level, is a business". He discussed a proposal that the Negro athletes in professional football form an organization, and said, "I could hardly think of anything worse". He deplored the use of black power in human relations. He said that the important thing is the people who play. He mentioned Dick Butkus and said that his experience in professional

football is going to sophisticate him enough that he might become a millionaire in the process.

At the time this finding aid was prepared, Mr. Young was employed by the Commissioner's Office of the National Football League.