Beaver Barks

by Jack Friedman '57

There's a sports tradition at MIT that nobody knows about. Four years ago, heavyweight crew coach Jim McMillin decided that an interclass row during the fall would do a lot to increase interest and participation in rowing. He wanted to see Director of Athletics Ivan Geiger, and they talked it over. It didn't take long for Geiger, a pretty shrewd judge of such ideas, to decide that Long Jim had hit upon a good one.

Geiger and McMillin decided that all classes needed a suitable trophy for the winner. They looked around to see if they could find one already in the possession of the athletic association. Hidden deep in a safe deposit vault, they found the Harris Trophy.

Upon closer scrutiny, they discovered that the Harris Trophy had been donated twenty-five years earlier for exactly the same purpose McMillin had advocated! In 1924, crew was but an infant sport at the Institute, scarcely ten years old. Richards, who donated the trophy was the son of the then oldest alumni of the Institute. He decided that the donation of the trophy would be a fine way to honor his father and to give the fledgling sport a good start.

They were revived in 1950 and since then have been held regularly from 1924 until the beginning of the second World War. The races were then discontinued and, until Geiger and McMillin discovered the trophy, pretty much forgotten.

The Tech men chuckled, and the Harvard shell rowed away, each man with one hand holding an oar and the other wrapped around a can of beer. But be sure you pick a smart Arrow Bi-way spread, right ($5.00). Pick a spread...