HOW TO BEAT THE BEAT GENERATION

My cousin Herkie Nytel is a sturdy lad of nineteen summers who has, we all believed, until recently, a lively intelligence and an assured future. Herkie's father, Walter O. Nytel, is, as everyone knows, president of the First National Artificial Cherry Company, world's largest maker of artificial cherries for ladies' hats. Uncle Walter had great plans for Herkie. Last year he sent Herkie to the Maryland College of Humanities, Sciences, and Artificial Cherries, and he intended, upon Herkie's graduation, to find him a nice fat wife and take him into the firm as a full partner.

Could a young man have more pleasing prospects? Of course not. But a couple of months ago, to everyone's consternation, Herkie announced that he was not going into the artificial cherry business. Nor was he going to stay in college. "I am," said Herkie, "a member of the Beat Generation. I am going to San Francisco and grow a beard."

Well sir, you can imagine the commotion in the family when Herkie went traipsing off to San Francisco. Uncle Walter would have gone after him and dragged him home, but unfortunately he was right in the middle of the artificial cherry season. Aunt Thelma couldn't go either because of her old leg trouble. (One of her legs is older than the other.)

So I went. I searched San Francisco for weeks before I found Herkie living under the counter of a Frosto Pup stand. "Herkie, how are you?" I cried, looking distraughtly upon his tangled beard, his corduroy jacket, his striking eyes.

"Beat," said Herkie.

I offered him a Marlboro and felt instantly better when he accepted it because when one smokes Marlboros, one cannot be too far removed from the world. One still has, so to speak, a hold on the finer things of life—like good tobacco, like easy-drinking filtration, like setting back and getting comfortable and enjoying a full-flavored smoke. One is, despite all appearances, basically happiness-oriented, fulfillment-directed, pleasure-prone.

"Herkie, what are you doing with yourself?" I asked.

"I am finding myself," he replied. "I am writing a novel in the sand with a pointed stick. I am composing a fugue for the wind with a pointed stick. I am sculpting in experimental materials—like English muffins."

"And what do you do for fun?" I asked.

"Come," he said, and took me to a dank little night club where men in beards and women in basic lavalamp sat on orange crates and drank espresso. On a tiny stage stood a poet reciting a free-form work of his own composition entitled Excerla: The Story of a Boy while behind him a jazz trio played 200 choruses of Tin Roof Blues.

"Herkie," said I, "come home with me to the artificial cherries."

"No," said Herkie, so sadly I went home to tell Uncle Walter the bad news. He was less distressed than I had feared. It seems Uncle Walter has another son, a quiet boy named Edvorts, about whom he had completely forgotten, and today Edvorts is in business with Uncle Walter and Herkie is beat in San Francisco, and everyone is happy.

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The Tech

Hidden Issues and an Open Meeting

MIT has always been noteworthy for the freedom of choice she has offered her students as far as athletic and extracurricular activities go. There are times, however, when rules of one sort or another become necessary to preserve some sort of order.

Recently it has been proposed that a ruling be made that all varsity athletes be barred from intramural contests for the duration of the varsity season, except with written permission of the proper coach. One of the effects of this measure would be to protect an activity which is presently suffering at the hands of another: varsity teams are plagued with injuries incurred in intramural contests, notably football. This is reasonable—but the measure, as proposed, goes much more than this.

Removing varsity players from intramural competition will have immediate long-range effects. We feel that some of them will be harmful, and have said as much in print, on two previous occasions.

Now although there seems to be no doubt in the minds of the various men involved in deciding on this ruling that it is a "good thing", not one of them has taken the time to write to this paper and express why he is in favor of it. These men should be aware that they are not operating in a vacuum, and should not wait until their opinions have been enacted into law before defending them in public.

There is a meeting of the Intramural Council next Tuesday, "to discuss and act upon" the measure cited above. How can the Council be so close to a decision when there is such widespread confusion among its members and others concerned with athletic affairs, as to just what the ruling should encompass, and what its effects are?

The Tech feels that one effect will be to endanger the continued survival of the intramural system. We'd like to speak up for intramurals and the emphasis they put on fun and rational athleticism rather than just "winning at all cost". We think the IM Council should be more sensitive to the effect the measure will have on them. Briefly, our feeling is that intramurals only retain their attractiveness when a moderate level of competition is maintained. Removal of this "necessary" competition more naturally athletically inclined will sharply lower this level.

Over a period of years, we feel this will result in a gradual loss of respect for intramurals, and consequently they will whither on the vine.

The Intramural Council has wisely made their December 6 meeting open to MIT students in general. It is to be held at 7:30 p.m., and is presently scheduled for the Conference Room in the DuPont Center. More people than the twenty or so on the council itself should have a voice before the matter is put to a vote.

We will be there to represent our feelings, and would welcome your opinion on the matter, however, we urge you to come to the meeting and make your views known. Only through the fullest possible discussion can this matter be decided in the best interests of MIT.