Informality Characterizes Early Athletics At MIT

Athletics at MIT have a long history, though they were not initially included in common MIT activities of Institute activities. Prior to the appointment of Walker in 1881, the status of athletics at Tech was, to say the least, informal. Before his time, The Tech Athletic Club had come into existence, but there was still no organized competition. The students' interest was directed to a great extent to interscholastic rather than intercollegiate rivalry, with such events as the tug of war and football attracting greatest interest.

Informality, however, did not hold up for long as the need for extracurricular activities in the students' life and the growth of athletics in the Institute demanded something more. One of Walker's first moves at The Tech was to initiate baseball teams, which played wherever a vacant lot could be found. There was a combination gymnasium and drill hall on the sand lot corner of Beacon and Second Streets, but its equipment was informality at its best. The Tech, at that time, was without a permanent building, and the building of tennis courts was the least, informal. Before his time, the college was simply a place for students to live and study. The athletics department was informal, with no defined rules or regulations. The students took part in any activity they wanted, and there was no formal competition.

Before the creation of the athletic department, sporting activities were organized by the students themselves. They played soccer on the lawns, basketball in the gymnasium, and baseball in the vacant lots. These activities were open to everyone, and they were a great hit with the students. The Tech's 1890 football team

The events were open, and the students were enthusiastic. The Tech was at heart an athletic institution, and the students were proud of their college. The Tech was a place where students could let loose and enjoy themselves.

Indeed, in the next ten years, Track and Cross-country teams emerged, followed by football, basketball, and baseball. The students were encouraged to participate in these sports, and they did so enthusiastically. The Tech was a place where students could let loose and enjoy themselves.

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