Is there style in losing?

By Gordon Haff

There is an unusual attitude toward sports at MIT. For this reason I usually have a great deal of trouble understanding the sportspersons of other schools. As most colleges a losing sports team is an embarrassment, whereas you don’t find out about it. One does talk about it, the purpose is to grumble about the loss of money, which the team is usually without, and which they would rather have

Thus, when I read articles in magazines and newspapers about college sports, they seem off in some strange way that they aren’t interesting enough in their own right, but what happens at these colleges has nothing to do with my own experience with sports.

Here is the truth—idly, with an Ohio State-Alabama game when the big news was the Sigma Alpha Epsilon! Or how can you conceive of football being removed from the athletic program because they haven’t been winning? At one point MIT’s hockey team went almost three seasons without a win.

Personally, I have always thought that some of the things about a sports program like MIT’s are pretty interesting. I assume that college football loses me a bit. After all, who reads about minor league hockey?—what’s that? Is this big time college football or minor league? Basketball is much more interesting.

For example, there is the story of the puck once breaking when it was dropped on the ice during an MIT game. It happened on BC’s rink. Then there are all the quirky things which happen in college games, like what big time college basketball or college league hockey. In the end, the rule books are frequently oxidized. I mean to get the new participants some idea of what’s going on.

Last week, I saw an article in Sports Illustrated which I could really identify with. Anyone who has ever seen two MIT football players should try to get their hands on a copy. (P.S. It’s also the annual fashion issue!) The story was about a “New England’s Blackout.”

“We didn’t lose because of a lack of talent. I would not have written it. It had been the worst team on the ice in 22 of its 23 games. It lost because there is a kind of art to losing, and the Princeton players excelled in that. There is also an art to quitting, but they never discovered that. We wanted and waited, but they never quit. They never figured out why they lost either. Which games is why they kept playing.”

In particular I was reminded of last spring’s baseball team. Having a ten game losing streak is bad enough in itself, but in one game they had a six run lead going into the final inning. They lost. There is one final paragraph from that article which I can’t resist quoting. When I read it, I couldn’t help recalling the times of when an MIT coach had told his team after a game: “You’ve played a good game. You really kept them from winning. This is after an 18-9 defeat. Keeping within ten goals was an achievement to be proud of.”

“BU scored five goals in the first period, the most Connecticut had ever let slip by in a single session. In the second period, BU scored six. There were 56 shots on Copper’s goal in the first two periods. The puck was never out of the Princeton zone. Between periods the Zamboni men froze the ice to the point that the rule books (frequently oxidized) but to get the new participants some idea of what’s going on.

Hockey off to great start

By Tom Stagliano

The MIT hockey team enters this week with its best season start ever, posting a 3-1-0 record. Playing two December games and four January contests, the Beavers swept Gordon College 4-1, 4-2 and 3-2, split with Quincy College 2-0, 2-3, and defeated North American College 3-1 and Clark University 6-3.

The Beaver offense has been bolstered by the addition of two wings. Andy Jarrell ’71 from "Vermont’s" Montpelier and Barski ’71 ’s performance in the 200 butterfly against BC last Saturday. (Photo by Gordon Haff)

The MIT offense has been bolstered by the addition of two wings. Andy Jarrell ’71 from gave the team a fast start ever, posting a 5-1-0 record. The team has a sound understanding of the fundamentals of the first two seasons. Pecknold believes that the flexibility allowed him with three line units, a fourth reserve line, and six competent defensemen. (the rule books are frequently oxidized, but to get the new participants some idea of what’s going on)

Two specialists

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By Gordon Haff

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Is there style in losing?

By Gordon Haff

Last Saturday, in their first mainstays with the Vanir Vikings Team Limited Edition College a decisive 8-2 win.

Coach John Benedick was extremely pleased with the team’s performance. He remarked that although there were no such super individual times, a number of people turned in better times than he had expected. He cited George Dow ’81’s performance in the 200 butterfly in particular. He added that in spite of the 53 point margin, “BC gave more competition than expected.”

Benedick expects this year’s team to have a good season. He says that there is a “tremendous amount of potential.” He added this is the best team personnel-wise in at least four years.

Benedick hopes to place the team in the top ten in New England. Last year they placed 11th.

The championship meet, which New England and National are of particular interest to Benedick, since “championships are what swimming is all about. In the national championships, you hope to see Preston Vorlick ’79 in the 200 and 100 yd. breast, the Medley relay team, Chris Mess ’81 in the 200 and 50 yd breast, and possibly John Dieken ’80 and Mark Huntzinger ’81 in backstroke or freestyle.

Benedick stated that one of the reasons that he expects the squad to do so well is that he has “never seen the swim team as much as a team before. They are a very close-knit unit.” Benedick cited their training trip in Melbourne, Florida as one of the chief reasons. Over a period of two weeks from the 1st to the 16th of January, they swam an average of 10,000 meters a day. Benedick felt that this trip helped get the people on the team together and working with each other which should significantly improve their chances of winning in the upcoming season.

The diving squad also performed well last Saturdays, particularly in view of the inexperience of most of the team’s members. According to Charlie Battermann, the diving coach, “Ken Brady ‘81, and I think ’79, are the best divers I’ve ever participated in MIT sports should try to get a better idea of what’s going on.”

Three inexperienced swimmers are looking out for the team. They have been swimming only a couple of weeks.