By Gregg Stock

Many changes have taken place in athletics at MIT in the past two decades. Swimming and diving expert Professor Charles Bat- 
terman is now in his seventh year as coach and re- 

stru ctor here for 22 years. In a re- 
cent interview, he told the story of how the history and future of athletics at MIT.

There has been several great moments in sports for MIT, ac- 
cording to Battermann. At the top of 
the list was the 1921 lacrosse team which started the season with no prior playing experience 
and won the NCAA Division II 
National Championship. Other spectacular team performances include the soccer team Bat- 
terman coached more than fifteen years ago which beat Harvard twice and Navy once. On an in- 
dividual basis, head coach Mike Moore took 
second in the NCAA College Divi-
sion III hammer throw in 1973. Also in track, Frank Richard '77, a Danbury, Conn., native, won the NCAA Division III 10,000 meter run. Bill Reif '77 and Bob Howe '79 both won All-American honors in diving in the same year. 

Athletics at MIT, however, ex-

sends far beyond the varsity level. There has been an incredible ex-

pansion of the physical education program. Courses now offer the 
gym for sketching to rock climbing. Major changes have been made to enlarge the athletic program in the last ten years. Women's athletics is a prime exa-

mple. Battermann recalled that when he came to MIT after seven 
years at Harvard, there was no physical education requirement and no teams for women. Presently 
there are two varsity teams and several clubs for women.

During Professor Battermann's years at Harvard only the best 
players were coached. Others played on a "game form" basis and received no attention. In this 
area, MIT's program is unique. There are opportunities on every 
level so that students can par-

ticipate and be rewarded according to their ability and interest. "Instruction," Battermann stated, 
"feels that teaching is as important as coaching. Which doesn't mean that they don't want to win." 

The image of MIT as a 
showman has been changing. An article in Sports Illustrated in the spring of 1975 was very helpful. Previously, it was common for people to be 
surprised to discover that MIT fielded 
teams. 

While outsiders' opinions of MIT sports are rising, the collec-
tive team record is falling. "MIT coaches make athletes of anyone who comes in." Considering the 
lack of high school experience, there have been an amazing number of 
numbers, wrestlers, divers, tennis players and soccer players here who have achieved 
national recognition. Mark Smith '75, who played soccer in the past year's Nationals for MIT, was a good 
field prior coming to school here. 

Active recruiting by other schools has taken its toll on MIT. 
Other schools have been able to recruit players according to their philosophies towards sports. 

Battermann feels that if the future 
will become more and more dif-

ficult for MIT to remain com-
petitive. To counter this trend, 
Battermann believes that MIT 
"should have special considera-

tions for athletes in the admis-
sions process." He feels that if 
two applicants are equal academically and one is an 
athlete, the athlete should be given priority. Battermann is op-
popted, however, to accepting 
athletes without regard to scholastic credentials.

MIT has been blessed with 
consistently good coaches. Any 
way, given talented athletes to work 
with, suddenly "becomes a good coach." "You don't need to know a lot of scientific principles or have any physical insights into the sport to be a good coach, but you want to be a good coach." Bat-
terman is the author of The 
Technique of Springboard Diving, the first attempt to apply 
physical science to the art of 
diving. Many MIT coaches use a "scientific ap-
proach," a methodology that has now been widely copied. 

Some things haven't changed in twenty years. There never has 
been a change for an MIT athletic 
event and that will not change in 
the near future. And Professor Battermann, four 
times National Olympic champion, can still be found at the Alumni Pool teaching swimming and diving.