

Among many educators, the argument has persisted that you cannot have emphasis on football and at the same time maintain the proper emphasis on academic matters. As the campus prepared for the forthcoming Orange Bowl clash, the author was assigned the task of determining a faculty point of view on the football vs. education

of the Institute of Asiatic Affairs, extended the view.

Said Dr. Buchanan, "I know of a university in Japan that had received very little recognition until its athletic teams began winning. Then it became known throughout the country with the result that students flocked there, bringing in

Can Football and Scholarship Co-exist?

This topic was the heart of a series of questions the author posed for faculty members in various fields of academic life.

COMPILED By ROBERT TALLEY

debate. The result: serious, well-considered opinions which indicate that the majority of those interviewed do not consider football to be antithetical to a sound academic program.

WHAT EFFECT has football, as the most highly touted O.U. sport, had on the scholastic side of the University? With this question in mind, the author contacted men in faculty positions, both deans and professors, for their opinions. Their answers give an indication of where football stands in this scholastic institution.

The first question asked was whether or not football had improved, hurt, or had no effect upon the University.

Dean Glenn C. Couch, University College, took the positive view. "Yes," he said, "I think it has improved the University. The team is one of the few things the entire state has rallied around and taken pride in. The state once didn't have so much pride in the University or in itself."

James M. Murphy, assistant professor of finance, took a different view. "I don't think football does much harm academically, and I don't think it does much good, either. Several days before and after a weekend like the one at Dallas, the students are a little restless; you can feel it in class. And the University does suffer a little academically, but that is negligible. If there is a really perceptible effect, I don't know what it is."

Clyde L. Farrar, professor of electrical engineering, said he thought the publicity given the school helped, and Dr. Percy Buchanan, professor of history and director

more money. By that means they were able to raise their academic standards. Now it is one of the finest Japanese universities."

Six professors said they saw almost no direct line between pigskin and sheepskin. Several mentioned the restlessness of students before big football weekends, but charged this off as negligible. One professor did maintain that the result was not beneficial.

Dr. Joseph C. Pray, professor of government, declared, "I think that the emphasis given intercollegiate athletics at Oklahoma University and at other colleges has a detrimental effect upon the academic phase of university life.

"I would say," he continued, "the nature of the bad effect lies in what I feel is undue emphasis placed on success in that area in contrast with the emphasis placed on academic success."

To the question, "What do you think other professors feel about the football program?" answers were more consistent. Most considered the views of those associates with whom they had talked to be about like their own.

Dean William E. Livezey, College of Arts and Sciences, however, stated, "I think the best remark I could make there would be that I would like to have a University that would do justice to the team."

Dr. Edward A. Frederickson, professor of geology, said, "All the people I've talked with—and myself—are all backers of the team. I wouldn't say O.U. was a football school above everything else. We seem to be a pretty normal state university. We do the best job we can from the academic

"The general public is tremendously impressed by our football success; it has no doubt brought recognition to our state and campus on a scale heretofore unknown . . . But (it) is a fickle thing."

standpoint and football is only incidental to it. The University of course is here for the education of students, and the two are separate entities."

The third question was, "How do you feel the public, both in Oklahoma and over the nation, look at O.U. in the light of its football success?"

Three sides squared off with differing opinions. Dr. Carl B. Cass, professor of drama, said he felt the "general public tends to feel that if a school has a big team then it is a big university, and that the faculty is also good."

Dr. Lowell Dunham, associate professor of modern languages, added to this view but brought in a warning.

"The general public," he said, "is tremendously impressed by our football success; it has no doubt brought recognition to our state and campus on a scale heretofore unknown. But it must be kept in mind that such recognition by the general public is a fickle thing as any football coach will tell you.

"The general public will forget as quickly as it acclaims once we slip a notch or two in rank. Three things have brought our University and state national and even international acclaim: our magazine, *Books Abroad*, our University Press, and our football team. That seems to make a fair balance."

A slightly different angle was presented by Professor Farrar, who said, "The public seems proud of the teams . . . yet I don't think the people realize how high Oklahoma is academically. In electrical engineering, and in engineering generally, for example, we can hold our heads up anywhere." He added that this thinking was ameliorated by the fact that people "come to the natural conclusion that if you are good at one thing you are good at another. I feel they do associate academics with the football team."

Dr. David P. Bergin, associate professor of journalism, commented that football "is one of the biggest things" in the state, but that "we could have a first-rate University here without football."

Dean Couch cited an example of the public's reaction to Oklahoma through football publicity. He told of a California

student who wrote for information about the University. Later Dean Couch received a letter from him in which the youth said the material indicated that Oklahoma "University is as tremendous in the educational field as on the football field. The number-one ranking Sooners received (in football) is a grand honor the University deserves."

Another view was offered by Dr. Frederickson, who said, ". . . people are aware of Oklahoma being a football power, and they remark about it. But I don't think they necessarily think that Oklahoma is a good scholastic school because it has a winning football team. I don't think the two go together—and some may even think we overemphasize athletics."

Dr. Pray concurred, saying, "I believe most people are favorably impressed with the University, but I do not believe they connect the athletic side with the academic."

"Can you suggest changes you would enjoy seeing in the manner in which the football program is being operated?" This was the final question. Opinion varied:

Dr. Bergin—"I think from what little I know of the program—if we're going to have football—it ought to be run pretty much the way Bud Wilkinson is running it. The boys who come to Oklahoma as players do pretty well academically. If they don't measure up, Bud doesn't stand for any foolishness."

Dean Livezey—"If my figures are correct, the percentage of people playing football who receive degrees is higher than the percentage who enroll in the University as a whole. I think Bud tends to favor high academic work."

Mr. Farrar—"In spite of what has been said, I really think the University is doing a good job. Faculty participation in Athletic Council work is beneficial. The faculty doesn't try to tell the coaches what to do, but they do set up broad policies which the athletic people do follow."

Dr. Frederickson—"No, I have no ideas. As a professor I have always enjoyed a pleasant relationship with the Athletic Department. It seems interested in progressing its players toward graduation. We have never had to my knowledge any pressure

brought to bear to give any player special treatment. I think moreover that the Athletic Department feels that if football were to make a student poorer in academics, it would not want him to play. No, I feel our relations have been very good."

Dr. Pray—"I would approve, favor and work for a general de-emphasis of intercollegiate athletics. There are several reasons: they are a distraction from the academic goals of the University; they help few students in developing themselves in University life."

Dr. Cass—"I don't know of any change in the football management that I can see. It takes care of itself financially. If the legislature had to appropriate money to support it, it might be different. But football takes care of itself and it does attract students, which helps to carry the financial load of the University."

Dean Couch (speaking with the freshmen in mind)—Port Robertson has academic charge of the freshman players, and he is doing a real good job. No, I have no suggestions."

Dr. Ronald P. Shuman, research professor of management—"No one who really knows American college football can honestly claim that everything is as it should be. Over-enthusiastic supporters, not even necessarily alumni, add to the grey hairs of conscientious coaches and University administrators. Football should be kept firmly in hand by the academic side of the University. I feel very strongly that no infringement of academic standards should be permitted. I may add that in twenty years of connection with the University of Oklahoma I have never been asked to give grades to an athlete. I believe our coaches fully agree that we do not need athletes here who lack ability or inclination to meet our academic standards."

Dr. Dunham—"I can make no suggestions. I can only say that the character of those coaches whom I know closely is outstanding and that they are an asset to the faculty of the Athletic Department as well as to our faculty as a whole. I wholly agree with Dr. Cross's pertinent remark of some years ago that we should now attempt to make the football team proud of the University."