



**BUYING VOTES:** Mercer co-eds Mike Samford and Tina O'Brien vote for their candidates in Alpha Phi Omega's "Ugly Man Contest." Votes in this off-beat election cost one cent each, and voters may buy as many as they can afford. Proceeds from the election are given to charity. Candidates this year are: Phi Delta Theta, Jim Blum; Kappa Sigma, Andy Wasden; Sigma Nu, Brady Croel; Lambda Chi Alpha, Roger Nunn; SAE, Charlie Willis; MIMA, Buddy Myzel; and Phi Mu, Tommy Day Wilcox. (Photo by Tommy McGehee)

## HARRIS GIVEN STUDENT PETITION FOR OTTO'S RENEWAL AS CHAPEL DEAN

The student petition requesting that Mercer renew Dr. F. Robert Otto's term as dean of chapel has been presented to President Rufus C. Harris.

Student Government Association President Tommy Day Wilcox and Mercer Cluster Editor Bill Dayton carried the petition to Dr. Harris.

The petition, one of the largest in Mercer history, had over 700 signatures requesting that Dean Otto's ministry as Dean of Chapel be continued "in the light of his ability and his genuine concern in the handling of his duties in that office and of the problems which face the Mercer student body."

Triggered by rumors that a group of local pastors were asking for the removal of Dr. Otto from

his post, the petition was taken "realizing that there is involved the principle, first, of the Baptist belief in free interpretation of the scriptures and, second, of the fundamental ideal of academic freedom; and further acknowledging that the dismissal of Dean Otto on the grounds of so-called unorthodoxy would be to act against both of these ideals as they relate to Mercer University."

President Harris's response upon receiving the student petition was: "Thank you. This office is always pleased to receive any manifestation of honest student opinion. The imperfection, however, of such a petition as this one is that it calls for defense not actually required. Sometimes petitions needlessly pose insecurity."

## EDITORIAL

### Who Won?

The emotion-charged atmosphere that surrounded the recent controversy concerning the theological views of Dr. F. Robert Otto has calmed. Now many of the students who were among the more than 700 to sign a petition supporting Otto are beginning to wonder what really happened. Who won?

It is hard to make a point-blank determination in such an issue, but for the present at least, it appears that the student petition has been largely successful.

This is supported by the fact that leaders of the anti-Otto faction in Macon have made statements to students and others that they have no desire to interfere with Dr. Otto at Mercer. This is in direct contradiction to statements made in earlier months to administrative officials and others. In fact, the current position of the people opposing Otto is that they never wished to interfere with his teaching or academic freedom, they were merely debating a theological question. They say the student petition demonstrates a misunderstanding of the situation, a manifestation of bad communications.

Their new position is easy to explain. It would be bad politics to admit to something so obviously condemned by so many students and faculty members. It is good politics to try to quiet protests and wait until the situation is less volatile before reinitiating their efforts.

The petition has shown that Mercer students are capable of recognizing a vital university freedom and working to defend it. It is no secret that many, perhaps a majority, of our students do not enjoy going to chapel. And probably many would disagree with some aspects of Dr. Otto's personal theology. But his private views are his own concern, and he has a right to them. As a result, students were able to secure what is probably the largest petition in the history of the university.

President Harris has said he will never yield to pressure to remove Dr. Otto from as Dean of the Chapel, but he feels the position should be held on a term basis. There is a good argument for the case of having a Dean of the Chapel serve on a term basis, but there is also a powerful argument to support Dr. Otto's reappointment. The decision is Dr. Harris's alone.

The Mercer Cluster wishes to echo the overwhelming vote of confidence in Dr. Otto's work as Dean of the Chapel, and with more than 700 students, ask for his reappointment to this position.

## Mercer Debate Team Wins Five Awards At F.S.U. Tournament

Mercer University's Debate Team won five awards last weekend at the Florida State University Invitational Tournament at Tallahassee, Fla.

"We had a fine, winning team of four girls who won two individual awards and three team honors," said Dr. Helen Thornton, coach of the Mercer Debate Team and chairman of the Department of Speech and Drama.

Karen Kennedy, a senior, won the first place award for impromptu speaking.

The other individual award went to Lynn Smith, a junior. She received a "superior debating" award, and was the only girl to receive such a rating.

The Mercer Debate Team won first place in affirmative debating, took third place in the tournament, and won the third place sweepstakes trophy.

On the team with Misses Kennedy and Smith were Misses Carleen Hart and Betty Jo Freeman.

This weekend the team will participate in the Azalea Tournament at Spring Hill College near Mobile, Ala.



Ace marksman Inga Brditschka shows runners-up Lois Wyatt and Janice Norris how to "shoot the bull". Inga's unusual positioning of the rifle is not a new method being taught the girls, but is done to compensate for a slight defect in her right eye.

## Females Tote Rifles On R.O.T.C. Firing Range

By Daniel Sheffield

The beauty of the ROTC rifle range has taken a new swing during the winter quarter with the addition of a rifle course for girls.

On Tues., Wed., and Thurs. of each week the ROTC grounds become inhabited with weapon-carrying females. Forty-two girls participate in a study in the use of individual weapons, such as the

M-1 rifle, the shot gun, and pistol, and in the actual firing of the .22 calibre rifle.

When asked why they take the rifle course they responded that besides being fun "you can never tell when you might have to use one."

It was indicated by S.Maj. Zummach, instructor for the girls, that their scores were "often higher than boys" and that "if the rifles were not so heavy they could shoot better."

The girls fired in a prone position with a high score of 99 by Miss Ingram Brditschka. They fire as many as 15 rounds per day by each girl.

"The past six weeks on the Mercer ROTC Rifle Range have been very enjoyable," remarked Sgt. Zummach. When asked how safe the girls were he added that, "they have been given a very thorough course in safety."

The girls warned that "the boys had better watch their step."

## INSIDE THIS WEEK

- Puritanism and Sex by T. D. Lewis
- Ironies of History By Bill Dayton
- Willard Clutchmyer in Chapel

## A Call For Instrumentalists

If you play any string woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument, and would be interested in playing in an ensemble for the Spring musical production of "Oklahoma" please meet:

Willingham Chapel, Saturday, Feb. 27  
11:00 A.M.

We particularly need violin, cello, bass, clarinet, oboe, flute, trumpet, trombone, French horn, drum, banjo, etc., etc. . .

—WE NEED YOU—(That is if you can play)—

## Ga. Southern Edges Bears In Final Home Game

by Lamar Oglesby

The nationally marked Georgia Eagles finally overcame a Mercer lead late in the first half of the game last Wednesday night, and stubbornly held on for an 81-73 victory. The Eagles are noted thirteenth in the nation among small colleges, but Mercer never seemed to realize it and came close to pulling a major upset. However, floor mistakes and missed driving lay-ups killed any chance the Bears had to win.

Bob Reeves led the Bear-pack with another terrific game to his credit. The slim jumping-jack poured in 27 points even though Southern keyed their defense to stop him.

Don Baxter, Sandy Harris, and Tommy Day Wilcox closed out their varsity days with the same hard-nosed determination and spirit they had four years ago. The trio scored 26 points.

A loss is always tough to take, but when a team gives its all, then no one can rightfully criticize. The overflowing crowd which stood up and cheered Bob Reeves when he had to leave the court because of a foul, also stood and cheered for two

Eagles who had to do likewise; the spirit of Mercer continues in defeat just as it prevails in victory.

In a preliminary game, the Cheshire Cats nipped 55 points in the second half, to defeat the Mercer Freshmen 94-77. Dickie Childs and Charles Weston paced the Cats with 20 and 10 points respectively.

GA. SOUTHERN (81)	PG	FT	PF	TP
Seeley	0	1-2	0	1
Reynolds	9	3-6	4	21
Pickens	7	2-3	1	16
Rose	5	2-3	4	12
Adler	8	1-1	1	17
Owens	1	2-3	5	4
Rickard	1	0-1	2	7
Dial	3	0-2	3	6
Searles	0	2-3	2	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>13-25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>81</b>

  

MERCER (73)	PG	FT	PF	TP
Wilcox	3	0-1	5	6
Moody	5	1-3	2	11
Baxter	3	1-2	4	7
Harris	5	3-6	4	13
Reeves	7	13-15	5	27
Monton	3	3-4	3	9
Anderson	0	0-0	0	0
Newton	0	0-0	0	0
Norris	0	0-0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21-31</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>73</b>

Score by Halves

GA. SOUTHERN	40	41-81
MERCER	30	35-73

CHESHIRE (94) — Veal 17, Harris 22, Heam 23, Churchwell 1, Clifton 29. Subs: Fincher.  
MERCER FRESHMEN (77) — Dunaway 14, Norris 8, Anderson 12, Weston 19, Childs 20. Subs: Stewart 4.

## PHYSICS EXPERT WALTNER SPEAKS

Physics expert, Dr. Arthur Waltner from the University of North Carolina spoke at Mercer this week, addressing the student body in convocations Monday and Tuesday.



Waltner

Waltner's address was entitled "The Impact of Science on Modern Man" and covered modern man's thought regarding his position relative to the universe, citing recent discoveries in astronomy. He also discussed man's development of the utilization of his resources, in his chapel talk.

He concluded the address saying that man has a bright future in the field of atomic energy and will make more constructive progress in the nuclear field, making more extensive use of nuclear fuel.