About Mercer's Latest Lost Art

by Willard Clutchmyer

Ah, fall and football . . . terms as synonymous as teacher and shaft. It is an object of sore melancholy to view uninformed frosh with blankets, pennants and hip flasks in hand trying to find their way to Mercer football games on Saturday afternoons. Yes, once there was a football team on the Tatnall Tech campi but it was discontinued in 1938 when the player who owned the ball was expelled from school for stabbing a chapel speaker. The last year was possibly the Bear's greatest as they trounced teams such as Erskine, West Georgia, Locust Grove, Alexander II and Morehouse. The Bruins lost only one game that year, to Wesleyan. Wesleyan scored late in the fourth quarter after the Mercerians were handed four consecutive 15-yard penalties for illegal use of hands. They went on to defeat a hefty U. D. C. team 7-6 in the grease bowl.

Mercer's most widely known gridiron great, Ajax Babalusko, (rhymes with Babaluski) still holds the official record for left-footed drop-kicks missed in protest games. In 1936 Ajax missed 23 left-footed drop kicks in one game ! ! !

Also numbered among Mercer's past sporting greats is Newt Rockknee, famed coach who developed the two-platoon system as early as 1918, quite a feat considering the fact that Mercer had only nine men out for football that year.

Mercer tamed quite a few of the larger teams in their day also. Many a Bear fan can recall the afternoon a cocky and confident Notre Dame team came to Macon only to be held 213-6 by great Mercer defensive squad. It was also in this year that Mercer's ace scout and recruiter, Pop Doberman, was fired after Head Coach Waldo Butts found that he had recruited two one-legged halfbacks from Pavo, Ga. Butts however was not without faults. He introduced the forward pass to Mercer in 1931 not knowing other teams had been using it since 1912.

Perhaps Mercer's most deadly backfield was composed of Stooldryer, Brutkowski, Abuh Ben Haissen and Faubus, four gridiron greats who were studying to be undertakers . . . locally known as "the four hearsemen."

Fame was late coming to some M. U. athletes. Otto Shinsplint did not win laurels in football but became widely known when he coined that now famous saying, "close cover before striking." His latest pamphlet, **People Who Live in Gaul Bladders Shouldn't Throw Stones**, can be found on the P. E. reserve shelf in the library.

Last but not least is "Wrong Way Roy Ruggles" who, while the Bear team was leaving for a game with North Carolina State, got on the wrong bus and was last seen in Key West, Fla.

But enough of the M. U. greats . . . the season is upon us now. Maynard sold me two tickets to the Georgia-Michigan game in Athens last weekend. They were good seats but I sat in the stadium until 5:30 Saturday afternoon before a kindly custodian told me the game was being played in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

On the way back to our glum campi I heard over the radio that I had lost my parley. I'll never bet on Agnes Scott again.

Well back to M. U. where we have no football but we do have basketball. Studies prohibit my playing for the Bruins this year but in my high school days I was quite a hoopster. Played varsity for three years. The coach said if I had stayed out one more year I might have made the boys team.

Fellowships Now Offered

Mercer seniors and recent graduates planning to teach and to enter graduate school for their first year next September are eligible for Danforth fellowships.

President G. B. Connell has appointed Dean R. C. Burts Jr. as the liaison officer of the Danforth Foundation to nominate two or three candidates from Mercer for these scholarships.

In recent years two Mercerians, Alfred Perkins (1957) and Mrs. Louise Gossett (1958), have won these fellowships.

Following his graduation from Mercer, Perkins took his master's degree in history from Harvard. After a current stint with the U. S. Army, he will return to Harvard for work on his doctrate.

Mrs. Louise Gossett, an associate professor in English at Mercer, is now on leave of absence while doing graduate work at Duke University.

Anyone interested should contact Dean Burts soon, as all applications must be completed by Jan. 31, 1959.

Davison's
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Carter, Finch Optimistic

By Pat Norton

With basketball season getting underway this week, Mercer's co-captains Norman Carter and Bill Finch voice optimistic opinions about the coming season.

"We are hoping for another good season such as the one we had last year," Finch ventured. "It will depend on a lot of factors and anything can happen. But, taken together we are hopeful of another winning season."

With this statement, co-captain Carter agreed. "We have the potential for a good year. With no unforeseen misfortunes, we are expecting a promising campaign."

Both Finch and Carter commented on several factors which they considered as possible strong and weak spots for the '58-59 Bruins.

Trouble on Rebounds

Carter pointed out that due to lack of height, their opponents will give the Bears a lot of trouble with rebounds.

"We are going to have to hustle in order to beat out some of these larger boys under the boards."

Carter went on to other difficulties which the Mercer team will have to overcome.

"Next to height, our lack of an experienced reserve will be another problem. We only have a couple of alternates back from last year. A lot of these freshmen will help out when they get a little more experience. Incidentally, I expect the reserve problem to be improved about 50 per cent when Earl Tidwell becomes eligible."

Finch pointed out the need for accurate shooting and speed to overcome taller opponents. Finch also pointed out another transfer who promises to aid the Bruin cause along.

Davis Will Help

"Alec Davis will be eligible later on during winter quarter. He ought to be a lot of help in building up a stronger reserve."

Layfield Is First In Debate Trial

Mercer debater Marty Layfield took overall first place in the recent Southern region debate tournament of Tau Kappa Alpha, national debate fraternity.

The negative team, composed of Layfield and Bob Trammell, took first place honors in competition, while Mercer overall won third place.

Trammell was sixth place overall debater. Others in the Mercer delegation were Larry Bryant and Bev Bates.

Other schools represented at the debate tournament were Miami, Vanderbilt, South Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee, Florida, L. S. U., Memphis State and Duke. First and second place winners were South Carolina and Alabama, respectively.

Another group of Mercer debaters left Thursday for Gainesville, Fla., where they will compete in a debate at the University of Florida.

They are Tommy Holland, Charles Gregory, Sara Cordell and David Blankenship.

New Era Dawns Here; Wait For The Wagon

by Cliff Hendrix
Cluster Sports Editor

Two faithful servants of the Mercer Athletic Department have been let out to pasture after some eight years of steadfast adherence to the demands of duty and obligation.

The Department's two Ford station wagons, long an essential part of every basketball, tennis and baseball trip are with us no more. The two have been traded off, as they say in the auto racket, for a later model.

The new replacement for the pair of work horses, known affectionately as One and Two, is a brand new Ford 9-passenger Wagon,

Which with one private automobile alone, as a supplement, will carry Mercer basketeers and other athletes out on road trips.

Not exactly nostalgic about the passing of these two great old members of the Mercer family, Athletic Director Zeb Vance had high words of praise for the now departed Fabulous Fords.

"They gave us about eight years of good service, Mr. Vance commented. "I can't remember them breaking down but a couple of times. Once we had to leave one up in South Carolina. Then there was that time last year down in Florida."

This latter instance was one in which one of the faithful Fords was abandoned in DeLand after the Stetson contest. That was on a Sunday. The boys were due in Lakeland Monday night to tangle with Florida Southern. The journey was made using one of the Stetson wagons and the ailing MUmobile was picked up later.

"It was time for a trade," Mr. Vance explained. "After using the things for eight years, running them fully loaded most of the time, out on the road a good deal, you can start looking for an automobile to start giving you considerable trouble." Hence the trading horses in the middle of the street or wherever it is you change horses.

Even as they shuffled off the Mercer coil, Old One and Two went down, serving the University to the last.

"We got $500 apiece trade on the two wagons," Mr. Vance went on.

The new vehicles ought to arrive some time this week. Mr. Vance thought the maiden voyage might be the trip to North Georgia this week-end for the basketball game Saturday night.

Thus comes an end to an era. And it brings a new beginning. Three cheers for our side.

Finch, who makes his home in Union Point, is a transfer from Young Harris, where he saw two years service before coming to Mercer. During his stay at Young Harris, he was All-State Junior College and played on the '56-57 championship squad.

Carter, who hails from Talbotton, is another transfer player coming from Clemson College, where he played one year on a grant-in-aid there. Carter was high scorer for the Bears last season, averaging 19.4 points per game for the year.

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