FROM GATOR TO GONE IN FOUR YEARS

By Frank A. Parsons
Fortnightly Club, February 17, 1984

Robert Frost offered some useful advice:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Back in 1954 — it will be thirty years ago this summer — Washington and Lee University came to a divergence in the road it was traveling in college sports. A hard choice was made, a path less traveled by. And it has made a difference.

Washington and Lee's road was, at the time, so little traveled that it often seemed that the university was blazing a trail through a perilous jungle filled with head-hunting adversaries. There are controversies aplenty in the university's long history, and the index remains open on this listing. Few issues, however, have drawn the initial storm of reaction that the abrupt change in athletic policy did in 1954. Few have seen unrest and disgruntlement growl on for as long as the debate continued in the aftermath of that policy change.

In 1954 the Washington and Lee trustees canceled that year's football schedule, permanently discontinued further athletic grants-in-aid, and set the university on a new "simon pure" athletic policy. Those astonishing moves touched off a storm of controversy that raged for months, then rumbled ominously for several years, and now have become only an infrequent and faint flash in the background as the tempest fades into the past.

Today, with the university engaged in debate and study of another issue that divides alumni opinion, memories of the football crisis return and comparisons are drawn. I have reminded President John Wilson that the handful of critics who impugn his motives for raising the coeducation question are weak sisters indeed in contrast to those in 1954 who raged against President Francis P. Gaines, Dean James G. Leyburn, and Dean Frank J. Gilliam. (It might be noted that two or three of President Wilson's critics are some of the same folks, their vitriol perhaps somewhat diluted with age. And they promised then we'd never hear from them again!)

Well, what was the football crisis?

First, let me say that I'm here tonight because of that crisis. When Washington and Lee gave up major college football in 1954, the university's director of publicity quit in protest over the decision. There were only a few short weeks until the start of a new school year, and the university found itself desperate enough to hire a recent graduate, then working on practically the world's smallest daily newspaper, to take his place. I've been here ever since.

Now, a bit of background on the evolution of football at Washington and Lee. Early records are scarce. The school traces its football origins to 1873 and a series of games against VMI and a few other opponents over the next two decades. The student newspaper, its very name — Ring-tum Phi — derived from a football cheer, first appeared in 1897, and it is possible to reconstruct the seasons from then on from the sports pages.

Over the first sixty-nine seasons there were slightly more victories than defeats. Washington and Lee was able, occasionally, to smite the mighty Kentuckys and Alabamas and the prestigious Harvards. The Golden Years came in 1912–15.
when the legendary Cy Young’ helped W&L to a football record of thirty-two wins, three losses and a single tie, a Southern Conference championship in 1934 under Coach W. E. “Tex” Tilson.

Hard times followed that championship season in 1934, with a series of losing years, culminating in 1942, when Coach Jerry Holstein took what was left of the university’s war-decimated enrollment and managed only one win in nine games. There were no football teams at W&L for three years, and envious alumni read about the exploits of Glen Davis and Doc Blanchard of Army and Angelo Bertelli and Johnny Lujack of Notre Dame, among others. If such things could happen at West Point and in South Bend, why not Lexington?

Eventually they did, up to a point. Perhaps the crest was reached in the early ’50s, when the Generals capped an 8–2 season with a Gator Bowl appearance on January 1, 1951, and then handed a great University of Virginia team its only loss the following season by a memorable 42–14 score.

At the start of that run, Art Lewis had signed on as coach, and with great energy and persuasive powers, he made life in Lexington look good indeed to strapping youngsters from McKeesport and Swoyersville, Steubenville and Massillon, Beckley, Wheeling, and Charleston. Of such men was the team fashioned when in 1949 Lewis moved on to greener pastures, or perhaps richer coal dust, in Morgantown.

Coach George Barclay inherited a richly talented team, whose two best players were a sleight-of-hand magician named Gil Bocetti and a tree-trunk linebacker and fullback named Walt Michaels. If God had intended for Washington and Lee to be a big-time football power, he wouldn’t have struck down Michaels with appendicitis the week before the Gator Bowl. And so it is that W&L’s great moment in the national spotlight is remembered as an “appearance” in the Gator Bowl, not a victory. Wyoming won, 20–7.

Barclay was a better coach than he was a recruiter. After a 6–4 season in 1951, he was hired away by North Carolina, his alma mater. His best assistant, Carl Wise, became the Generals’ head coach. The big talents and gratifying wins were suddenly in scarce supply. The team was undermanned and over-scheduled, and elsewhere

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Harry K. Young, W&L class of 1917, unimaginably gifted W&L athlete: captain of all four major sports teams, leading football and baseball scorers for four years, basketball All American. Young later became W&L’s alumni director.

Richard A. Smith: Cap’n Dick.
the salaries of football coaches and the basketball coach, who was often pressed into service as a game scout for football.

Admissions then was a one-man affair. Frank Gilliam was both dean of students and director of admissions, and he was excellent in both capacities. Under his direction Washington and Lee became, in 1950, the first college in the South to require the College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Tests of entering students. Yet there was an understanding with the athletic department not to worry. Many of the football recruits were indeed what Dean Leyburn referred to as “calculated academic risks.”

Thus it was in 1952 and 1953 that Washington and Lee's football program was finding it more and more difficult to sustain itself financially and provide support for other sports. At the same time, increasing competition for gifted players was forcing recruiters to bring in players who were less and less well-prepared to handle a curriculum that provided no easy path toward assured eligibility. In 1952-53, the Athletic Department asked the university to pay $8,000 in outstanding bills it could not cover from revenues; in 1953-54, the deficit approached $22,000. Not big money as we measure it today, but in 1954, $22,000 bought the services of four full professors. Or perhaps a good football coach.

Even so, finances alone didn't precipitate the summer crisis of 1954. People did. Or, more precisely, the lack of people.

The 1953 football season ended on a good note: consecutive victories over Virginia, Davidson and William & Mary, a 4–6 season overall, definitely looking up. At November’s end, it looked like thirty-eight players would be returning in 1954, and the customary fifteen-scholarship recruiting class would be newly eligible for immediate varsity play.

Then catastrophe struck.

By June 1954, twenty-one of the thirty-eight veteran players had left school. Nine flunked out and twelve others left under the cloud of a major, organized violation of the revered Honor System.

I was a senior that year, house manager of my fraternity, Phi Kappa Psi, concerned but not alarmed over the constant arrears in which the half-dozen or so subsidized athletes in our house seemed to find themselves. The exam period then covered the better part of two weeks, and I'd taken all but one early and gone home to Clifton Forge for a long weekend. I returned on a Sunday afternoon to prepare for my last exam. When I walked into the fraternity house I found the living room filled with unsmiling, silent friends who greeted the sound of my arrival with anxious eyes until they recognized who it was.

The reason? Six times that day, members of the Executive Committee, the student judiciary, had come to our house and taken away brothers who, it was revealed, had been charged with honor violations. Each man subsequently confessed to involvement in a widespread cheating syndicate and elected to withdraw immediately from the university.

The so-called syndicate had been uncovered by the student leaders some six weeks earlier. Two football players had turned in identical, extraordinarily accurate and perceptive quiz papers in a geology course that had been giving them a good bit of trouble. (That in itself says something about the intelligence level of the athletes we were recruiting.) The student judiciary, known as the Executive Committee, was asked to investigate, and under questioning the accused students not only admitted their collaborative cheating on the quiz, but they decided that they might as well blow the whistle on a few others.

Those disclosures inspired a secret inquiry by the Executive Committee members that led to what became known in our fraternity as Black Sunday. In all, fifteen students — all but one of them athletes — withdrew in the face of the evidence against them.

In a special student body assembly called in the final days of the exam period, the Executive Committee president told a jammed Lee Chapel the sordid details of how the syndicate worked, a story of master keys that unlocked professors’ offices and the central duplicating office where quizzes were typed and stored, of a cooperative student wife who worked in that duplicating office, and a night watchman who looked the other way for a price. For what he said about what had been done, the students in Lee Chapel gave him and his fellow committeemen a prolonged standing ovation.

The effect of the attrition among football players was immediate. The coaching staff counted heads and found that, at best, they would have only thirty-two players with whom to meet a nine-game schedule that included West Virginia, Vanderbilt, Virginia and Pennsylvania (before Penn grew Ivy). President Gaines informed the university’s trustees on June 15 that it appeared possible that W&L might have to cancel its 1954 season. He wrote:

"Please read this statement with utmost care. It implies the possibility of a drastic decision. And there are elements of great urgency . . .
"The local athletic committee, with the concurrence of our athletic officials, have recommended to me that we abandon football immediately. My administrative colleagues agree . . .

"It is not easy to abandon football. We have commitments to other colleges . . . to our staff . . . to our students.

"I am advised that if we are to abandon football, the decision should be made and announced as quickly as possible.

"I fear bitter disagreement. Fervently do I wish that all who love the University could move in harmony of conviction about this matter. But I know the Trustees will do what they deem right . . . ."

He went on to call a meeting of the board’s executive committee and its athletic committee for July 7.

The trustees were not exactly taken by surprise. As early as January 1952, there had been concern expressed within the board about the costs, both academic and financial, of maintaining a commitment to major college football. In January 1954, the board had heard that football was anticipating a $20,000 deficit by June, and the trustees had instructed the president to “explore a group of colleges with prestige and with some relationship to Washington and Lee willing to organize an athletic program on a non-subsidized basis.”

The meeting on July 7 involved members of the trustee executive committee, campus athletic committee and athletic staff as well as alumni representatives. After some three hours of discussion, the trustees went into executive session, where they formulated these conclusions:

"That the University feels honorably committed to its 1954 schedule and will undertake to fulfill it, subject to some modification. (This is to say we shall ask some of the more powerful teams if they can replace us on their schedules.)

"The Trustee [executive] committee records its conviction that football of some sort or another is an important factor in the life of college boys and should be continued.

"The committee will recommend to the full Board that subsidization as such be stopped as soon as possible and that college sports on this campus be placed on an amateur basis.”

In a memo to all trustees, President Gaines went on to say that academic considerations were the primary motivation for these assertions. “We do not consider it wise to have two programs of educational life on this campus, one for the athletes and one for the students.” He went on to note the considerable financial deficit, now calculated at $25,000, and the fallacy of scheduling only two or three home games in order to permit at least four “money games” to be played away.

The press reported in full on the outcome of the executive committee meeting in Lexington. The recommendation on an end to subsidization was softened in the press statement as a call for gradual de-emphasis. Dr. Gaines looked forward to a full board discussion in October, but the need for a special meeting of the full board was quickly recommended by its executive arm.

On July 15, President Gaines was writing the trustees again. He had been called upon by the football coaching staff with what amounted to an ultimatum. The coaches had developed second thoughts about their ability to meet the 1954 schedule with the players anticipated. Unless they were permitted to bring the number of scholarship players immediately to fifty, they would resign. Dr. Gaines prevailed upon Carl Wise, the head coach, to withhold his resignation pending the outcome of the special meeting, now scheduled for July 23 in Washington, D.C.

The morning papers of July 24 carried a shocker, news big enough in Virginia to make the front pages. Choose your awful metaphor: The trustees had bitten the bullet, they had come to a fork in the road, they had stepped off down an uncertain path, whistling bravely. Their six-point statement said:

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“With regret, W&L suspends intercollegiate football for the time being and cancels all scheduled games. [The president was to explain to the presidents of the affected schools.]

“All other obligations of the W&L sports program, except the playing of football games, are to be carried out faithfully and fully.

“Intramural football is to be further encouraged.

“Consideration is to be given to the possibility of re-establishing intercollegiate football on an amateur basis, by, among other things, trying to find other schools of a similar mind for a joint effort toward unsubsidized college football.

“No other athletic scholarships will be offered beyond those already committed.

“The University will seek to expand its intercollegiate and intramural athletic program so as to interest and enlist participation of the largest number of students possible.”

An electric fan helps create a scatological image of what happened next. Cries of anger and frustration from alumni as individuals and in organized chapters. Bitter condemnation from most sports editors and columnists — most, but, in fairness, not all. Chauncey Durden at the Richmond Times-Dispatch was among those who chose not to join the shrill chorus of critics. Instead, he wrote in his column of July 25: “Friday’s action will not affect Washington and Lee as a university. Even its football-minded alumni will come to know there was no alternative as college football is operated today.” He predicted that Washington and Lee would return to football with schools on its schedule like Sewanee and Centre, two other colleges, with heroic football histories, that had come to the fork in the road ahead of W&L.

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An eminent sociologist at Yale, Leyburn came to W&L in 1947 as dean of the university. Subsequently, he presented the faculty a comprehensive evaluation of the goals and tactics that he believed the university should pursue as an important center of learning. This so-called “Leyburn Plan” became a guiding philosophy in the development of Washington and Lee’s academic programs over the years that followed. In his remarks to the faculty, Dean Leyburn suggested several topics that should be debated within the faculty in the months ahead. The first of those was “The means of inculcating in our students the feeling that the primary goal of college life is intellectual stimulation and achievement, that all extracurricular activities are secondary to this goal, and that Washington and Lee’s reputation should not in any sense rest upon the achievement of its football team, the success of its Fancy Dress balls, or — now this is a little hard to visualize today! — the luxury of its fraternity houses.” Add a reference or two to “substandard students” brought in
to play football, at best “calculated academic risks,” and as far as Randy Rouse was concerned, them was fightin’ words!

At the Roanoke meeting, W. C. “Bill” Raftery, who had coached three winning football teams at W&L in the early ’20’s and who helped found the national leadership society Omicron Delta Kappa a few years earlier, claimed there was an “ax group” at the university out to end football. W. J. Driver, of the class of 1925, who had worked with Randy Rouse in running the Generals’ Fund, complained that “the days of the average student are gone.” All agreed with Rouse that Dean Leyburn and his like were determined “to replace the well-rounded Washington and Lee man of the past with a breed of Phi Beta Kappas.” What’s more, Rouse reminded members of the Generals’ Fund, that they had contributed $16,000 that year (substantially short of their goal) and that the general alumni fund had received $45,000. Would this kind of alumni support continue, he asked. “I think not,” he answered.

After an hour’s diatribe by Rouse (it was indeed a diatribe, for I was there, a silent fly on the wall, so to speak; I had already committed to work for the villains Gaines, Leyburn and Gilliam), the Roanoke alumni passed a formal resolution “deploring” the football decision, deploring the failure to seek alumni counsel and asking for a “modest, middle-of-the-road” athletic subsidization program that would bring back intercollegiate football as soon as possible. The Roanoke Times said the resolution was passed unanimously by all those present. Actually, it was passed without dissent. Discretion, not valor, was called for, I rationalized as I drove back to Clifton Forge, pondering the absolutely terrible things I had heard said about W&L’s administration. I mean awful things! There were jagged edges to many of the well-rounded W&L gentlemen there that night.

The Roanoke action was only the first of a number of formal protests to come from organized alumni groups. From Jacksonville, Charlotte, the Upper Potomac, and Augusta–Rockingham in Virginia came news of concerted protest.

In lonely contrast, a telegram arrived from New Orleans, signed by the executive committee of the alumni chapter there, proclaiming faith in the board of trustees to act wisely, endorsing what it said others called “Leyburnism,” and urging a football schedule that included Sewanee, Amherst, Williams, Swarthmore and Haverford. Those in New Orleans didn’t speak for one alumnus in Alexandria, Louisiana. He wrote to alumni secretary during the maelstrom Cy Young “The traditions and spirit of Washington and Lee must be forgotten things. No one could knock a loser, but by the same token, it is going to be hard to support a quitter . . . . I cannot imagine any alumni being proud of W&L anymore.”

It’s difficult to look at the records of 1954 without feeling sympathy for Cy Young. No figure in W&L sports history stands taller. His exploits — sixteen varsity letters in football, basketball, track, and baseball and the captaincy of each team in his final year — won recognition in Ripley’s “Believe It Or Not.” He is one of two Washington and Lee men in the College Football Hall of Fame. He coached W&L’s basketball team in the early 1930s and won two Southern Conference titles. His “Beat Those Damn Wahoos!” performances at pep rallies were legendary. He’d been W&L’s alumni secretary since 1929, and his friends were legion. His replies to alumni letters are especially poignant, as he tried to temper his own disappointments, avoid fanning alumni discontent, and remain faithful to his university and his responsibilities. To an alumnus in St. Louis, he wrote: “Friend, I don’t mind telling you it is making it tough on the Alumni Secretary.”

And so it was in September 1954. Football was gone when the students returned. Controversy was not. The first issue of the Ring-tum Phi had football news and comment on every page. Coach Carl Wise had been granted a three-month leave of absence to coach in the new Canadian professional league. Boyd Williams, a Lexington insurance man and former assistant coach at VMI and Richmond, was named interim coach to help “keep the spark of football alive.” Later that fall, about 45 students, most of them freshmen and sophomores, but including a handful of the few remaining scholarship players, played a four-game schedule against Hargrave Military Academy and jayvee teams from Emory & Henry, Hampden-Sydney and Bridgewater. Most of the grant-in-aid upperclassmen and those expected as freshmen had opted to go elsewhere.
The banner headline and lead story in that first Ring-tum Phi had Dr. Gaines explaining the events of the summer to the opening assembly and promising that football’s demise was only temporary. There was a story about Dean Leyburn’s appearance before Richmond alumni, who heard him say he was not against football, only the subsidy of a special class of students to play it. There were letters to the editor and responses to the letters. A short item near the bottom of the editorial page said that W&L had named a new publicity director from Clifton Forge. The lead editorial asked “What’s Ahead?” and went on to say:

“This is no time for pessimism. Neither is it a time for rash outbreaks by members of the Washington and Lee family, nor blind attacks on personalities. Football has not been dropped permanently, but merely “recessed” for the year. The whole future stands ahead.

“The future will be as good as Washington and Lee students, alumni, and faculty make it. Washington and Lee can come through the ordeal a much better school with a much finer athletic program, or it can suffer serious setbacks on both accounts. The deciding factor will depend on whether or not all members of the W&L family can forget petty differences which may exist, work together, and stay together until the situation is worked out in the best interest of the University.”

When Washington and Lee men fall in line / We’re going to win again, another time!” — so goes the football fight song, the W&L Swing. It would be nice to say that Washington and Lee’s men did fall in line, that we won again another time on Wilson Field. Unfortunately, not right away.

Shortly after the July 24 announcements, Dr. Gaines was approached by 1949 alumnus Bill Chipley about the possibility of coaching football at W&L if and when the sport was resumed. Chipley was selling carpet for James Lees, but he had impressive football credentials: three years varsity play at Clemson before the war, All-Southern Conference end for W&L in 1946, three years as a professional in the short-lived All-American League. To Dr. Gaines, Bill Chipley looked liked the perfect way to quell the continued harping of so many alumni for a repudiation of de-emphasis. If a respected football man like Chipley aligned himself with the new program, it couldn’t be all bad, could it? Dr. Gaines wasn’t worried about Chipley’s lack of coaching experience.

In February, 1955 Chipley was announced as the new head varsity coach, with Boyd Williams staying on as his chief assistant. A seven-game schedule included Centre College, Davidson, Southwestern at Memphis, Washington University of St. Louis, Hampden-Sydney, Sewanee and West Virginia Tech. In the opening game, against Centre, on Wilson Field, W&L’s fullback went sixty-four yards for a touchdown on the first running play from scrimmage. Welcome back, football? Not hardly. The Generals wound up 0-7 for the year, and the controversy boiled on.

By December, Bill Chipley was making headlines by telling alumni chapters that fraternities were to blame for the team’s poor showing. He accused them holding back prime talent to compete in the intramural program. He also accused the other teams on the W&L schedule of being less than open about the help their assumed amateur players were getting. His solution: Weaken the schedule even more, and get better athletes at W&L. He told Harrisonburg alumni “We’ll have to schedule teams that Sweet Briar wouldn’t even play unless more interest in the sport can be generated.” Chipley expressed similar views in a May 1956 letter to Dr. Gaines, although his choice of words was a little more temperate. Dr. Gaines responded warmly with encouragement: “You must not appraise your own contribution in terms of this first unprecedented year. I hope you will have the patience and courage and will always know that I am standing squarely behind you.”

W&L played the same opponents again in 1956, plus Wabash College. The season was a success, but only in comparison with 1955. Everyone beat up on the Generals except Sewanee’s Purple Tigers, who were having problems of their own. After
one win in fifteen games, even patient alumni were getting a little restless. Randy Rouse raved on. The student government launched a fact-finding study whose leadership group included Lacey Putney, then a senior law student. A Ring-tum Phi “extra” in December 1956 announced the study’s recommendations: a return to limited subsidization with fifty athletic grants-in-aid, subject to need and administered by a faculty committee. Fraternities would be asked to provide free board for these athletes.

When the board of trustees met on January 16, 1957, the student recommendations were on its agenda, along with communications from the Interfraternity Council and alumni chapter presidents. No one expressed satisfaction with the way things had gone so far. The trustees expressed thanks for such keen interest, but reaffirmed their 1954 position. The minutes of that meeting also record this entry:

“On motion, the appointment of William A. Chipley, head coach of football, was extended to cover the present academic year.”

What in the world did that mean? The next day, President Gaines called in his publicity man and tried to explain. Dr. Gaines said he had gone to the Board to recommend that Bill Chipley be given another year. Two years were not a fair test in Gaines opinion, he told me. But trustees’ ears had been sought by others, among them former football players who thought they knew a well-coached team when they saw one. In the 1955 and 1956 Generals they hadn’t. According to Dr. Gaines, there was nothing he could do to avoid the trustees’ insistence that Chipley be relieved of his coaching position.

It put Dr. Gaines squarely on the spot, personally in his close relationship with Chipley, and officially as the head of a college that said so loudly, “Hey, we’re playing for fun! No pressure to win! We’re not like these other schools!”

On January 29, 1957, Dr. Gaines wrote to Bill Chipley this way: “In its session last Saturday, the Board of Trustees extended your present appointment to cover this academic session of 1956-57, and thus brought that appointment in line with the usual appointments for limited periods. With best wishes always . . . ”

Dr. Gaines told me to sit tight until he had a response from Coach Chipley. Every few days I’d check back with the President on my need to deal with the press, and he’d say he hadn’t heard from Bill.

It wasn’t until February 25, nearly a month later, that Chipley figured out he’d been fired. When he finally appeared in Dr. Gaines’ office for an explanation of the situation, he was told that the board found him an ineffective teacher of football, but nonetheless hoped that he would stay on and help teach physical education. An angry and bitter man went back to Doremus gymnasium and wrote Dr. Gaines a letter that wasn’t at all difficult to understand. Chipley said he would remain only as long as it took him to find another job or until September 1, whichever came first.

“I have tried my best to make the program succeed. I am sorry the Board saw fit to allow only two years for our efforts.”

The sports press had a good time with the news of Chipley’s dismissal as head football coach. He pulled no punches in his comments to the press. From where I sat, the situation never looked darker. Where would we find another coach who’d be willing to come here under such clouded circumstances?

Well, to bring this to a quick and happy ending, let me say that a new coach was found. Lee M. McLaughlin, the very successful head coach and athletic director at Episcopal High School in Alexandria, had strong Rockbridge County ties. Moreover, he felt he could succeed. He came, and after two seasons his record was worse than Chipley’s. The Generals had won only one game in sixteen tries. But things had changed, for the better.

W ALTER MITTY lives within me. On fall mornings in 1959 I’d let my mind wander as I made ready for work. My favorite scenario involved some new names on the W&L roster — Steve Suttle, Ned Hobbs, Tommy Goodwin, Terry Fohs, Jim Hickey . . . Barton Dick. Not this year, but maybe next, or the one after that, we’d go undefeated. Sports Illustrated would come and write us up. We’d be the best small college team of all! We’d show Randy Rouse and all those doomsayers!

In 1961, my impossible dream became reality. But perhaps someone else will say something about that.

I’ve left much out in this narrative. Dean Leyburn resigned as dean in 1956 but stayed on to teach. Dr. Gaines quit the presidency in 1959, the last five of his twenty-nine years sorely troubled by the athletic furor.

[Frank Parsons stayed at W&L in administrative leadership roles until 1999 – forty-five years after he was hired, as he wryly said, to clean up the football mess.]

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i Putney went on to become an influential Virginia legislator, serving for 52 years.

ii In the form of a lyrical article in Sports Illustrated engineered by the author in 1961, reproduced on the next two pages.
Winning football on an unsubsidized basis can be as much fun to play and as exciting to watch as any football anywhere.
— *Sports Illustrated*, “A Sport for Gentlemen,” November 6, 1961

“I’ve gotten used to it now. Recruiting is like selling insurance. If you see a thousand boys, maybe you get 10.” — Coach Lee McLaughlin, quoted in *Sports Illustrated*

“It was lonely in the press box. Just the P.A. announcer, a statistician and me.”
— Frank Parsons, reflecting on the 1955 season to *Sports Illustrated*

The resurgence of football has created a new worry among university officials. At the close of last season there were a few moments when it looked as if the school might lose McLaughlin. [It didn’t.] — *Sports Illustrated*