

After careful debate a vote was taken first on the British amendment and this having been carried by 31 votes to 11, the Commission proposes that the Plenary Session of the Congress pass the following resolution:

“Athletes who are qualified by the regulations and rules of their International Federation are considered as amateurs for the Olympic Games provided they are qualified in compliance with the resolution passed at Prague by the Olympic Congress 1925, i. e.:

An athlete taking part in the Olympic Games must satisfy the following conditions: —

1. must not be, or knowingly have become, a professional in the sport for which he is entered or in any other sport,
2. must not have received re-imbusement or compensation for loss of salary.”

II. “The granting of leave . . .

Second Meeting

... Following the agenda, the President opened the discussion on the preliminary question submitted by the International Cyclists' Union.

The Olympic Congress considering however, that the qualification of an athlete as an amateur comes under the control of the International Sporting Federations, whose definitions are known by everybody, resolved that: Athletes, qualified as amateurs by the International Sporting Federations, shall be allowed to participate in the Olympic Games.

Third Meeting

After the General Secretary had read the Report of the Commission for Amateurism in French and English a discussion was opened on the first proposal (see No. I) of the above Commission.

Then the vote was taken by the calling of names, and the Congress accepted Proposal No. I of the Commission for Amateurism by 90 votes to 20.

The Problem of Coaching an Eight

by Coach Al Ulbrickson, University of Washington, Seattle, Wash.

We plan to include in the „Olympic Review" an exchange of opinions regarding sporting questions and have therefore approached a number of outstanding sports leaden throughout the world, particularly from U.S. A., with the request that they explain to us the principles according to which they train their teams. The following article is the first of the series, which we shall continue in future numbers.

It is with a great amount of doubt and concern that I attempt to put into words the reasons why an eight may or may not have speed. The question of what gives an eight its speed will be argued forever and never settled. Some claim it is just a matter of physical strength and man power by pointing out that all styles of rowing have won races. Others will maintain that rowing style or technique gives the speed. You also find a third group that states that morale and spirit in the eight is the greatest factor for success. Then there are those who believe that it takes a happy combination of man power, style and morale to turn out the best performance. I class myself in this last group which, I believe, numbers by far the largest among men who know rowing. Always bear in mind that the following discussion is merely my own opinion as to what goes into making a winning combination.

A description of our rowing style seems to be the first in order. We use a modified orthodox style in that the body angle forward and back is shorter than is generally used, which naturally gives us a shorter reach and layback. The amount of reach forward at the beginning of the stroke is not a set distance but is determined by the individual himself. He is told to get all the reach he can comfortably by bending in the hips, keeping the back fairly straight,

but not to strain or exert himself to stretch out too far. We believe it is not so important that all eight men reach the same distance as it is that the blades drive through the water and release at the same time. A stronger man can pull a longer stroke in the same time as one with less strength. This strength should be used by making this man reach and swing through farther than the man who may not have his strength. This difference in length of stroke does not break the swing or rhythm if the timing is exact on catching and releasing the water with the oar blade. With each man getting a natural, easy reach he is in a better position to apply his power quickly and effectively and is not wasting energy in any useless, or even harmful, motions. We strive to start the leg drive, arm pull and body swing at the instant the blade takes the water on the catch and to make the three motions coordinate so that all three will finish at the same time. The idea behind this is to have legs, arms and back exerting their maximum power when the oar is at right angles to the side of the boat which is the most effective part of the stroke for moving the boat ahead. Because we use a shorter body swing than in most styles it is necessary that the arms be brought into use almost immediately on the catch so that they can finish with the legs and back swing. If these nations are coordinated, starting and finishing together, the blade will come through the water with one quick, smooth motion of constant power. This early draw of the arms has led many to call this style the "Arm and Leg" stroke, but the back still plays a big part in that the arms and legs must be synchronized with body swing to give the best results.

As soon as the drive has been completed we release the blade from the water with a downward and outward snap of the feathering wrist. This action is decidedly faster than the wrist motion generally used. It must be fast, but still it must be smooth and not jerky. As soon as the hands start away from the body on the release the body starts leaning forward from the hips. When the body is upright on the slide and the hands, and oar handle, just beyond the knees the slide is started out of the bow smartly. These three motions of hands, body and slide action must blend one into the other to give you a fast, flowing motion out of bow, but still not jerky. When the slide has reached the middle of the recovery its speed is slowed so that when it reaches the sternward end of the tracks it is barely in motion. So you may say the first half of the recovery out of bow is very fast to give us more time to ease the body weight forward so as not to stop the run of the boat between strokes. This slowing of the slide must be timed so that the slide reaches the forward end of the tracks the instant the blade takes the water on the next stroke. Theoretically, the slide wants to be in motion all the time and the closer you can approach this perfection the more run the boat will have between strokes. Also, by starting the recovery smartly and slowing towards the stern of the boat it gives the oarsman more time to get balanced and in position to apply his power quickly and in time with the other men in the boat on the next stroke.

In handling the oar we have our men grip the handle with the hands about three or four inches apart and the inboard hand flush with the end of the oar. This seems to give them better balance and control of the body than when the hands are close together on the handle. After the blade is in the water on the catch the oar handle is pulled in a straight line to the top of the stomach for the release. Guard against getting a semi-circular motion with the oar handle on drive and recovery as this tends to unsteady the boat. When the hands are

snapped down and out on the release the oarhandle travels away in a straight line again with the blade clearing the water about two inches. When the oarhandle is just beyond the feet we gradually turn up the feathering wrist during the remainder of the recovery and complete the square up on the blade just before the catch. We believe this is better than a quick snap square up because it is not so apt to unsteady the boat and enables the men to catch together much easier. We use a close feather to the water on the recovery because we keep our boat in balance by allowing the blades to touch the water when the boat is off keel and not by shifting, or correcting, with the body weight. This is another reason why we insist the oarhandle must travel out in a straight line on the recovery. So much for our rowing style.

There is a big difference between rowing and racing. It is in racing that the spirit or morale of an eight comes to the front. Everything else being equal the crew with the morale and determination to win is invariably the one that comes in first. Strangely enough, this spirit, that is so necessary to a winning boat, is usually the hardest thing to get. It is something that must come from the men themselves and no amount of work or coaching from the coach can give it to them. Another thing that is intangible but necessary to a winning boat is the swing, or rythm, of eight men in perfect unison. This can usually be secured by miles of low stroke rowing, keeping the same eight men together in the boat so that eventually they think and act as one. When this swing is once achieved by a boat the work goes out of rowing and the boat moves along with effortless ease and is a source of greatest satisfaction to the oarsmen. Another great help to an eight in racing is racing experience. The more races a crew have been through together the more confidence they have in themselves and in each other. It gives them poise and the ability to perform at their best under the pressure of competition. A crew that gives you a feeling or impression of control over their boat, or any circumstance that may come up, is a crew with plenty racing experience behind them.

I have left what I consider the most important part of eight oared rowing for my closing lines. That is the training and conditioning of a crew. A crew can not produce its maximum power, row its style correctly, or have a good morale unless each man is in perfect physical condition. To attain this condition a man must adhere strictly to training rules on diet and sleeping hours. He must work conscientiously every stroke during the whole training season to improve his style and increase his strength by pulling all he can every stroke. The more energy he puts out today the more strength he will have tomorrow. This conditioning period is of necessity a long and tedious one due to the strenuousness of the sport. It takes many miles of rowing at a low stroke and a good number of trial races over the racing distance to put a crew in proper physical trim to do their best. It is mileage that makes a crew. Once a crew is in good condition they must be given plenty of work to keep them there, The only way to keep your strength in rowing is to keep using up that energy every day. You cannot rest for more than a day without losing some of this hard won strength and condition. After this condition is achieved in an eight you see an immediate improvement in rowing form and morale. Rowing is no longer work and it is a pleasure to the oarsman to see just how much he can pull each stroke. He glories in this new found strength and would as soon row then miles as one. He knows he is as good as he ever will be and when all eight men feel this way they are ready to row their best race.