

SCHOLARSHIPS

The opinion and decision of the International Amateur Athletics Federation

Forty-six national federations were represented at the last Congress of the International Amateur Athletics Federation, held in Stockholm in August 1958.

Among the numerous topics under discussion at this Conference the International Amateur Athletics Federation adopted a definite position regarding the problem of athletes who are incited to enrol in American universities as beneficiaries of *educational scholarships* which are considered purely as *athletics scholarships*. The Congress condemned this practice by a majority vote when applied to eminent foreign athletes, on the grounds that such scholarships are based entirely on their athletic value. If, as the result of an enquiry made by the appropriate sports organization of the country where the athlete resides, it is found that he does not possess the adequate basic academic knowledge to warrant the benefit of such a scholarship, it will be the duty of that organization to refuse the athlete his certificate of amateur status. Furthermore, this organization must inform the sports authorities of the region where the college or university is situated, of the decision which has been taken. Without such a certificate of amateur status the athlete will be denied the right to compete.

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Other opinions on Scholarship in U.S.A.

Some quotations from *World Sports*, November 1958 edition, the official magazine of the British Olympic Association.

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'Stop ragging the scholarship, boys' says Bob Busby, American sports-writer of the *Kansas City Star*.

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What the critics claim :

'Sports scholarships are against the amateur spirit and make those who accept them neo-professionals.'

'Universities merely want the students as *propaganda* pupils to bring them sporting successes.'

'Sportsmen with no academic qualifications can get these grants.'

'Coaches and agents act as touts to attract overseas athletes.'

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Statement voiced by Walter Byers, executive director of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, which governs inter. college competition in the States :

'We are confident that the rules of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, and its various subsidiary organizations fully satisfy the amateur requirements of the various international sports federations and of the U.S.A. and International Olympic Organizations. The scholarship programmes of the colleges have been submitted to American Olympic and Amateur Athletic Union officials in the past, and we shall be happy to re-submit detailed information to any International Federations which may have an interest in the subject as the result of a recent decision' (of the International Amateur Athletic Federation. *Ed.*)

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What say the colleges :

'Financial assistance to student-athletes is part of a new philosophy of higher education in the States – an *education-for-all* concept developed since World War II. There is a desire to recognize extra-curricular talent as an important element in a student's make-up. A variety of these extra-curricular talents are honoured – and one of them of athletic ability. To participate in sport a boy must be a student first and an athlete second.'

He must successfully meet a variety of academic requirements ; satisfy the entrance-requirements of his institution, pass a specified number of hours of work, maintain satisfactory progress toward a degree and conduct himself properly as a citizen of the college. After all this has been done, he may represent his institution in inter-collegiate sporting competition. Control and regulations for implementing policy are as important as the basic philosophy itself. In United States colleges that control comes through the Academic Faculty, and this group applies regulatory measures at institutional, regional and national level.'

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An Australian voice : Dick Cornish, Australian official said :

'American Universities using professional offers to entice our men... are able to guarantee up to 2,000 Pounds a year expenses. Few of the athletes have academic qualifications.'

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From Jack Wardrop, Scottish swimmer :

'Brother Bert and I didn't get scholarships just because we were good swimmers. We had to work and pass our exams, and

thereafter had to keep above a *B* average in studies.'

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From Frank Leahy, ex-football coach at Notre-Dame University :

'The athletic scholarship gives the poor boy an equal chance with the rich boy. At Notre-Dame University, an athlete must show he is capable of doing college work before gaining admittance ; cannot receive the scholarship unless financial aid is necessary to him... no part of it is in cash.'

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Harold Abrahams, advisory editor of World Sports says :

'Scholarships awarded solely for athletic prowess are undesirable ; but I see no objection to scholarships in the award of which consideration is given to the athletic activities of the probable recipient as one of the factors.'

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'A great and important problem, indeed,' says the editor of *World Sports* !