

TO OUR UNIVERSITY

There it stands, its barren, towering heights
Climbing, as it were to the stars' realm
To discover, to learn, and then to take the helm
In guiding Man in his intellectual rights.
In knowledge it excels; in wisdom it shines;
Concentration it urges; on excellence it dines.
To homage it is entitled; respect it is due;
Of recreation it has plenty; in short, faults it has few.
Such is the university which we attend.
A degree, our goal—Heaven our end.
Here learned professors with students are mingled.
Her failures aren't chided; faults aren't singled.
This is St. Dunstan's—a belfry to chime
The bells of truth, and peace and time.

—STELLA HOWARD '62

THE GAME

The team assembled in the locker room at the request of their coach. As a whole, the squad was calm, but the signs of tension were present if one looked closely enough. Tension, the destroyer of strong men, the cause of more defeats in the realm of sports and other fields than any other factor, was present and, if it remained, drastic results might be expected.

Joe Barnes, basketball coach at Southern High for 15 years and now in his last season, emerged from his tiny office and stood silently watching just inside the room. His gaze swept the group, eight in number, and the hardness which filled his eyes as he recognized the signs was not to be taken lightly. Here was what he had feared, and he could not for the life of him think of what he was going to do.

Southern High had never before been a thorn in the side of the larger schools in the conference. This year they had fooled everyone and tonight they faced the supreme test of the season; tonight they entered a game whose outcome would decide the conference championship.

"Well, chaps," said Joe finally, "we've come a long way since that first game last November. Nobody expected to see you advance this far and we're all proud of you, and the way you have fought to gain this shot at the title. This game tonight decides whether or not you have the necessary qualities of champions. I think you have, or you would never have got this far."

He paused for a moment to let this sink in and then said, "That's all for now. Game time is 8 o'clock so be here around 7:15 at the latest.

Matt Parker, Buddy Mann, and Tommy Keller met outside the gym and walked slowly toward Sam's Soda Shop, the downtown meeting place of Southern High students. They entered, took a booth at the rear, ordered cokes and were soon joined by the rest of the squad. No words were spoken as the lads sipped coke and thought, not without some misgivings, about the coming game and what it meant. Time passed quickly and the occupants of Sam's began to drift home for supper. The majority of the departing students stopped at the players' table to wish them luck in the forthcoming encounter before leaving.

"It's nearly five. Maybe we should go home and eat now. A little rest wouldn't hurt either," suggested Tommy as he continued to gaze into thin air.

"Yeah, I guess you're right," replied Buddy. He started to rise, dropping a dime for his coke as he slid off his seat to leave.

Reluctantly Matt left his sombre thoughts to join his chums; the three inseparable walked slowly toward Elm St.—they lived practically next door to each other. After having finally dispersed, they went on home to eat early and catch a bit of a nap before game-time.

The dressing room contained only the team and Joe as the players quietly dressed for the game—the crucial contest. The occasional soft thud of a shoe or sneaker hitting the floor disturbed the silence. Finally all were dressed and ready. Joe took his customary stance before the blackboard with its familiar image of the "key" and slowly surveyed his squad.

Tommy and Buddy were sitting on a bench leaning against the doors of the lockers behind them. Matt lay flat on his back on the tumbling mat in the corner. The other members of the team had assumed much the same relaxed poses. All tried, some successfully, some not, to present no sign of nervousness to the sharp eyes of their coach. He began with his usual greeting.

"Well, chaps, here we go again. This game is pretty important to you, to me, and to the people of Southern. To you because this is the last time you'll ever play for Southern as a whole team; to me because I'll never get another shot at the title as I'm retiring this season, as you already know; to the people of Southern because they have faithfully supported you all season just as they are doing tonight. Show them your response to that support by winning.

"Remember what I told you at the beginning of the year—no team, however good, is a team unless it plays as a team. You've been doing just that and it explains your being here tonight. Keep it up and in a couple of hours you'll be conference champs. Start off slow and feel them out. Make sure of your shots; don't be afraid to shoot through; get as many rebounds as possible, both offensively and defensively. That's it. Get out there and warm up. Do your best, that's all I ask."

Led by Matt, the team left the dressing room and ran lightly on the playing floor amid the cheers of the Southern rooters. A quick, vigorating warm up began and when the referee blew his whistle the lads were sweating slightly. They gathered around the bench for final instructions and the five starters took their positions on the floor.

The boys shook hands with their opponents, the ref. signaled the timer, threw up the ball and the big game was in progress.

Matt lost the tap to his opponent, but a fumble allowed Tommy to gain possession. Three quick passes and Buddy swished a set shot from the corner. The play went rapidly from one end to the other and when Joe called a time out after five minutes the scoreboard said Southern ahead by four points.

"Listen, chaps, they don't know what to expect. They've heard we play a slow game so I want you to run them into the floor. Use the fast break every time you get the chance. They'll try to slow it up so every shot has to be a good one. Get that ball up fast after they shoot and run them hard all the way. O.K., let's see you take them. You're doing well, keep it up".

The game resumed and, sure enough, the opposition, Crestwood High, tried to slow the play. They took their time and tried to make every shot a good one; consequently, they made a few mistakes and the local squad took full advantage of these to increase their lead. Buddy and Bill, playing guard, missed very few rebounds while Matt and Tommy, assisted by the pin point passing of Jack, potted basket after basket. Nevertheless, the Crestwood team played good steady ball and the half ended with the score tied at 33—33. It was the first time the game was tied since the opening jump.

Joe watched the boys eating oranges at half-time and he noticed and approved of the occasional wisecrack between the players. Matt was kidding Tommy for having missed two foul shots and was ribbed in return for having muffed a lay-up.

"All right, chaps, listen closely. They are definitely getting tired and it's starting to show.

"Guards: Buddy, you and Bill watch for a chance to put up those long shots. That might draw them out enough for a quick pass in to the forwards.

"Matt, use your hook more. You're hitting well so shoot more.

"Tommy and Jack, get in for more rebounds. We need every one we can possibly get. Keep throwing up those corner set shots and, above all, work the break whenever you can.

"There goes the horn so let's go."

The tap was taken by Matt and an easy basket was made via the fast break which again caught Crestwood off guard. Southern had a two point lead and they managed to stay in this position until late in the third quarter when Crestwood made a splendid surge and, with nearly ten minutes to play, placed themselves ahead by three baskets to establish the score at 64-58.

Joe called a time out to give his tired quintet a short but much needed rest. Although he substituted regularly, the pace was beginning to tell as these five worked well together and had been carrying the majority of the load. Definite signs of fatigue were present and they could spell defeat.

"We're down by six points, chaps, but that doesn't mean a thing. Matt, you've been playing the whole game so I'm going to take you off because we are going to need a burst of speed in the final minutes. The rest of you lads take it real slow, like we used to do, and keep the ball as much as possible. Here we go now," he concluded as the timer's horn sounded. The four starters and Dave, Matt's replacement, played strictly according to orders for the next five minutes as they kept possession and carefully picked their shots. Crestwood became over anxious and, thinking Southern purely on the defensive, made several mistakes which cost them baskets and their precious lead.

Matt returned to the game with five minutes remaining to play. He brought orders from Joe with him and they were very apparent as Southern went into a full court press. A Crestwood player was off balance while throwing a pass and it was intercepted by Tommy and resulted in another basket. Matt was fouled as he was taking a shot and was awarded two free throws. He made the first but the second was wide of the mark. The score read Southern 64—Crestwood 66; they were behind by two points—one basket.

Bill was shoved from behind by an anxious opponent and he potted one to put Southern behind by only one point.

Immediately they did a most unexpected thing; with two minutes remaining to play and trailing by one point, Southern went into a freeze. Crestwood had never run up against such a manoeuvre and they were too surprised to even call a time out even though their coach was standing by the bench and gesturing violently. Time passed quickly until only one minute remained and still Southern persisted in freezing the ball while behind by one point.

Then it happened. A Crestwood player, Matt's man, made a wild dash for the ball leaving Matt momentarily free. He missed the ball and, turning, saw Matt heading for the basket. He did his best but wasn't fast enough to intercept the pass from Tommy to Matt, who took one dribble and laid the ball off the board to put Southern ahead by one point.

Joe Barnes had watched this with much anticipation. He had never seen anything like it in all his days as coach. It had been Matt's idea and it had worked to perfection. Now, if the rest of the plan worked Southern would have their first conference championship in the history of the school.

Matt and the rest of the boys applied a full court press again with such success that the opposition only had time for one shot which was partially blocked by one of Tommy's beautiful checks.

The final horn went and Southern was conference champion by one point.

Bedlam broke out in the gym as the fans, male and female, who had been sitting watching this strange spectacle suddenly let loose a roar of applause that shook the rafters. The victorious team was mobbed as everybody tried to congratulate them at the same time. Joe was swamped by players and fans alike, and bounced on the spot. Every member of the squad was given the same treatment until they thought they would never be allowed to enter the dressing room in one piece.

Joe finally managed to gather the remnants of the team together in the locker room. He didn't say anything as they lay down to rest. As the lads began to dress after showering, he spoke at last.

"Chaps, you did it. The only thing I can say is that this is the nicest retirement present any coach could possibly receive."

—E. G. T. '60

The world's longest wall is the Great Wall of China. (1900 miles)