

## LET'S TALK SPORTS

with JOHN DERR

LATE ONE NIGHT, a little after the hour of 12, if we recall correctly, the phone in the sports department rang. This was not uncommon and we expected the caller to be seeking information on the outcome of some sports event, one of a hundred such calls that come every night. But the caller was not seeking information; giving it, instead. He was Casper Wistar Stockard, whose death occurred Friday night.

"This is C. W. Stockard," he said and we recognized the voice of the man who was chairman of the North Carolina and Greensboro wrestling and boxing commissions. "I want to tell you that I fined two wrestlers for their action down at the hall tonight." He then told us the names of the victims and the amount of their fines.

"These boys were pulling too much dirty stuff. We are not going to stand for that. Sure, they can get rough, if they want to, but they must abide by the rules of cleanliness just as everyone else. We had warned them about not wrestling clean and they continued to get dirty so I've put a fine on both of them," he continued.

And that was the way C. W. Stockard thought all sports should be conducted. "If you can't win fair, don't win" could have been his motto. In the sport of wrestling, where there is enough rough stuff even at its best, Chairman Stockard recognized the difference between rough and dirty tactics and for the rough boys he had admiration and for the dirty ones, who didn't come clean, he had fines and a sharp rebuke.

For 10 years he had been a sick man, yet he held to his love of sports by retaining the chairmanship of both wrestling and boxing commissions of the entire state as well as Greensboro. And throughout the state the name of C. W. Stockard meant "no funny business."

### Stockard Once Coached Cagers.

In his more active days, days before pain came to be his daily burden, Mr. Stockard was active in a larger capacity in sports. For several years he coached the basketball team at Greensboro Y. M. C. A. On that team were John A. Kollenberger, Tully Blair, Gus Goodman, "Hec" Clary, Henry Ward Beecher and Ralph L. Lewis. These boys were built into an almost unbeatable unit under the direction of Coach Stockard.

He was also a baseball fan, operator and devotee. In the late 1930's, at the time when Pierce Rucker was president of the Greensboro club in the Piedmont league, Mr. Stockard served as secretary-treasurer of the team. Charlie Carroll was running the ball club then and recalls the enthusiasm that Stockard showed for winning and winning fairly, always.

Mr. Stockard fought in the Spanish-American war after his school days at Oak Ridge. In the early part of his life he was a much larger man, physically, than the little fellow we came to know three years ago when we first met him. Charlie Brown, of the News-Record staff, recalls the late sports czar as a huge man, comparable to Judge Bill Bramham, the minor league baseball director. He was known in those days as "Tub" Stockard, a name many of his close friends continued to call him.

He was ordinarily very quiet. He was quiet the midnight when he phoned us about the fines for the unruly wrestlers. But he was a man of definite convictions and beliefs. To his way of thinking the only way to play, the only way to win or lose was by a clean and gentlemanly way.

Thursday night when the behemoth wrestlers climb through the ropes at Neese hall to stage their weekly performance before hundreds of loyal fans there will be a minute's silence to the memory of the man who did his best to keep sports clean and pure at all times. Heads will be bowed. Hearts will be saddened by his absence. And Rev. R. Murphy Williams, himself a devotee of clean sports, will offer prayer and read a resolution of respect for Casper Wistar Stockard, one of the strongest advocates of wholesome, clean sports in the long athletic history of Greensboro.

C.W. Stockard 1942



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