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INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS AND BIG-TIME SPORT AT MICHIGAN  
STATE UNIVERSITY: OR "THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD AND  
GREAT IS A LITTLE EXTRA EFFORT"

*Michigan State University*

PH.D. 1982

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SPORT AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY: OR  
"THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD AND GREAT  
IS A LITTLE EXTRA EFFORT"

By  
Beth J. Shapiro

A DISSERTATION

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Department of Sociology

1982

## ABSTRACT

### INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS AND BIG-TIME SPORT AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY; OR "THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD AND GREAT IS A LITTLE EXTRA EFFORT"

By

Beth J. Shapiro

Questions surrounding the growth of big-time intercollegiate athletics, the fiscal importance of intercollegiate athletics to institutions, the educational and occupational careers of college athletes, and racism in college sport have been examined with Michigan State University as the focus for study.

John Hannah's plan for developing M.S.U. into a world-class institution included a strategy of strengthening the intercollegiate athletic program because he firmly believed that big-time intercollegiate sport was a cohesive influence on the University community and cultivated a positive image of the University.

The athletic program also earned financial rewards for the University. The Athletic Department's surplus earnings have, in recent years, totaled nearly one million dollars with the revenue producing sports of football, basketball, and hockey supporting twenty-one additional men's and women's sports. Michigan State's fiscal success has been dependent upon its facilities combined with athletic success. But football remains the primary revenue producer.

The educational attainment and occupational status of Michigan State's football, basketball, hockey and baseball players was examined. Athletes were found to graduate at higher rates than athletes at other NCAA Division I schools and at higher rates than non-athletes at M.S.U..

The integration of black athletes at M.S.U. were also explored. M.S.U. recruited and started black athletes in both football and basketball during the 1950's and was known as a "good place" for black athletes to attend college. Nevertheless, black athletes experienced some social isolation and believed they were treated differently by some of the coaching staff.

In spite of some progressive leadership, M.S.U.'s athletic program experienced many of the problems that have plagued other institutions with big-time athletic programs. Even though individuals like John Hannah have and will continue to influence the structure and functioning of intercollegiate athletics, change has and will continue to occur as a result of complex social and structural interrelationships.

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Special thanks are offered to my dear friends and comrades Harry Mika, Clark White, and Rick Hill who gave me the support, understanding and encouragement I needed this past year, to Becky Fox who provided me with editorial assistance and to Richard Chapin, Director of Libraries, Michigan State University, who so patiently awaited the completion of this study. Very special thanks are offered to James McKee, Peter Levine and the other members of my dissertation committee who have provided me with invaluable assistance in pulling together the final stages of this research. And finally, my love and appreciation are offered to my parents, Harold and Marilyn, from whom I received the desire to achieve and to my brother Alan from whom I received editorial advice, an appreciation of the beauty of sport, and many hearty laughs that helped me to survive this past year.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

"I think of all sports as a mixture of art and war. The mixture changes with different sports, but it's always there."

Bill Russell

"Sport reflects the character of the human and ideological relationship of society. It always has and always will."

Harry Edwards

"The difference between good and great is a little extra effort."

Biggie Munn

Sport touches nearly all aspects of modern American life from childhood to old age; from schools to the workplace, and from playgrounds to the political arena. Instruction in physical education is required in almost all education institutions from kindergarten through secondary school, and each year Americans of all ages and socioeconomic classes participate directly in various sports, while many more do so indirectly as spectators.<sup>1</sup> Professional sporting events attract mass audiences and their production becomes big business. In addition, sport has so permeated the political realm that its symbolism is reflected in political language and in the public subsidization of several professional athletic teams.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the evidence of its importance in American life, sociologists have been slower to analyze sport than they have other aspects of American society. The sociology of sport, therefore, is a relatively new subdiscipline within sociology and has achieved a sustained growth only in the past decade.<sup>3</sup> This study will examine the political, social and economic functions of one sector of the American sports world - intercollegiate athletics - at one particular institution, Michigan State University. Intercollegiate athletics has been a rather visible feature of most large publicly supported universities, and at Michigan State University today, intercollegiate athletics, particularly football, is an integral part of campus life.

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

An earlier literature often interpreted sports within the perspective of leisure time, emphasizing the positive social functions of play. The classic study here is Johann Huizinga's Home Ludens.<sup>4</sup> Huizinga defines play as the "opposite of seriousness" and suggests that play exists in both animal and human environments. But for humans, play has both symbolic and social functions. Huizinga mourns what he perceives to be the degradation of unfettered play into organized and politicized sport. True play should be above politics. Sport that is used to legitimate a particular social order he calls "false play."<sup>5</sup> More recently, others have extolled sport in much the same way as Huizinga extolls play, believing that sport need not be a degradation of pure play, but becomes so only when politicized and routinized.<sup>6</sup>

But the origins of the sociology of sport can be seen in that literature which sought to understand the meaning and function of sport in modern society, particularly as a form of popular culture, comparable to music, films and television. Some authors examined sport as a passive reflection of society's dominant values, while others characterized it as an active socializing instrument.<sup>7</sup> But still others saw no need to pose an either/or issue and conceived of sport as both a reflection of society's dominant values and as an instrumental legitimating force.<sup>8</sup>

That has led a number of sociologists of sport to make use of the work of Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist, drawing on his concept of "ideological hegemony".<sup>9</sup> This he characterized as the permeation of an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs and morality that support the established order.<sup>10</sup> Gramsci believed that no political regime could be completely sustained through the use of only physical coercion. To be sustained, political power also requires the use of ideological coercion, or hegemony.

Jean-Marie Brohm, for example, calls sport an "ideological state apparatus" that "contributes to the reproduction of the social relations of production...and to the spreading of ruling ideology."<sup>11</sup> He views sport as an ideological form of social control that serves political, economic, and social functions in society, perhaps the most important of which is as a diversion from the harshness of everyday life as well as a unifying force that promotes community, regional or national solidarity through the identification with a sports team or hero. Brohm also discusses sport as a profitable sector of the entertainment and advertising industries.

Richard Lipsky examines those political functions of sport which contribute to the political and social cohesion in America by providing meaning to people's lives when meaning seems to be in short supply.<sup>12</sup> According to Lipsky, sport performs four major socialization functions:<sup>13</sup>

1. it enacts a process of democratization on the field;

2. it is a staging area for racial harmony;
3. it reaffirms the legal order by prescribing adherence to its rules; and
4. it operates as a metaphor for cooperation and teamwork.

But unlike Brohm, Lipsky also realizes that sport has a dramatic pull on society:

"Here is a world that can engage us actively and vicariously from childhood to old age. Here is a world where one game can feel like a lifetime with numerous little deaths and rebirths...It is a charismatic cosmos that warms the icy cold bars of Max Weber's cage."<sup>14</sup>

Harry Edwards maintains that, on the one hand, sport is able to reproduce capitalist social relations through socialization, legitimation and regulation; and on the other hand it experiences the contradictions and crises of capitalist social relations, such as racism and fiscal stress.<sup>15</sup> In other words, sport is a social institution that mystifies capitalist social relations at the same time that it experiences crises caused by built-in structural conditions. Edwards' central thesis is that athletes and coaches adhere to ideologies that allow them to resolve conflicts they experience due to competing and often conflicting social roles. Ideology provides them with the psychological tools they need to meet the social, economic, and political demands of everyday life.<sup>16</sup>

This literature has provided a global interpretation of sports; namely, the functions of sport for society. A more specific literature, however, has been about

intercollegiate athletics. Since this more restricted sphere is the subject of this study, a brief examination of this literature is necessary.

Most of the studies that have focused on the institutional functions of intercollegiate athletics have examined its economic role.<sup>17</sup> All have demonstrated that the fiscal conditions surrounding big-time intercollegiate athletic programs generate tremendous pressures on the athletic program to win which, in turn, may lead to an overemphasis on intercollegiate athletics.<sup>18</sup> Most journalistic accounts and scholarly research have examined the impact that the overemphasis of inter-collegiate athletics may have on the athletes: their recruitment to college; their educational attainment; their occupational mobility; and the differential treatment afforded black and white athletes.

Kenneth Denlinger and Leonard Shapiro followed several high school athletes through the recruiting process and concluded that intercollegiate athletics is more concerned with the income that "blue-chip" athletes might generate than it is with the athletes themselves.<sup>19</sup> Joseph Durso, on the other hand, demonstrated that many college athletic programs are in danger of extinction because they are spending an inordinate amount of money on recruiting without a comparable rise in revenues.<sup>20</sup>

Several studies in the last 15 years have tried to measure the comparative academic achievement of student



athletes and non-athletes and of black and white athletes. In the only longitudinal study, Donald Spivey and Thomas Jones focused on the educational differences between black and white University of Illinois athletes between 1931 and 1967.<sup>21</sup> They found that black athletes graduated at significantly lower rates than their white counterparts. Unfortunately, their results are suspect because of the small number of black athletes (35) who attended the University of Illinois between 1931 and 1967. All of the other studies of academic achievement examine a period of only one to five years at specific institutions.<sup>22</sup> The only consistent feature among them is that black athletes tend to perform less well than white athletes. The results of many of these studies will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 4.

One of the most prevalent statements about sport is that it is a "path out of the ghetto", an avenue of social mobility. A few sociologists have tried to measure this phenomenon. One of the earliest studies was conducted by John Loy, Jr. who surveyed former UCLA athletes who had earned at least three varsity letters.<sup>23</sup> His study covered a 50-year period, including the Depression and the post-World War II period. Measuring their occupational status, educational achievement, political affiliation, and parents' occupational and educational status, he concluded that sport had facilitated upward mobility for these athletes.

The most significant criticism of Loy's study is that it was heavily weighted in favor of those athletes who were successful. First, Loy surveyed only those athletes who had earned at least three varsity letters and had completed college. Second, the return rate for Loy's survey was only 17%. One could hypothesize that the most successful athletes were the ones most likely to respond to this survey.

In 1956, Notre Dame conducted a survey of all of its football letterwinners.<sup>24</sup> Questionnaires were mailed to 1,412 former football players. Approximately 50 percent of those surveyed responded. Of these athletes, two-thirds became coaches or played professional football and then moved on to other careers. Sports Illustrated located another 8 percent and interviewed them:

"With the worst of intentions, SI could not locate a single jailbird, convicted rapist, forger, swindler, or even anyone to fit the common belief that football heroes turn out to be hood carriers in the end!"<sup>25</sup>

In a more recent study of both Notre Dame football players and non-athletic students, Allen Sack and Robert Thiel found that while athletes tend to come from lower socio-economic backgrounds than non-athletes, both groups of Notre Dame graduates experienced significant social mobility.<sup>26</sup> The only significant difference was that non-athletes were more likely to have earned a graduate degree than athletes. One interesting result was that first team players experienced greater mobility than second and third

stringers. But the Sack and Thiel study was also weighed favorably to the successful athlete. First, only college graduates were studied. And second, while the response rate was high (64 percent), it is still possible that the less successful athletes and students chose not to respond.

Another study examined the occupational success of male athletes who graduated between 1946 and 1965 from Indiana University.<sup>27</sup> A total of 1,143 athletes were surveyed with a return rate of approximately 56 percent. Letterwinners and nonletterwinners were differentiated only with respect to income level. First string letterwinners were disproportionately represented in the group with incomes greater than \$15,000. Once again, this study is also weighted in favor of the more successful student because only college graduates were included in the study.

Viewing sport as a "path out of the ghetto" also focuses attention on a more difficult issue in intercollegiate athletes: race and racism. Some journalists and sociologists have examined the experiences of black athletes at predominantly white institutions. Jack Olsen, a sportswriter, was one of the first to explore the problems that faced black college athletes. In a 1968 series for Sports Illustrated, Olsen wrote that most black athletes felt exploited.<sup>28</sup> After interviewing athletes, coaches and college administrators, Olsen was able to describe the subtle and flagrant racism black athletes experienced from other students, athletes, faculty and

coaches. He concluded that integration in American sport was largely a myth, that equality was nonexistent, and that the world of intercollegiate sport reflected the basic inequalities present in American society. Harry Edwards' book on black athletes appeared shortly after Olsen's study and he has continued to write and speak out about the difficult conditions that face black athletes.<sup>29</sup>

Little empirical work on racial discrimination against black college athletes exists apart from the academic attainment literature discussed above. One exception is the research on segregation by playing position conducted by Charles Tolbert II.<sup>30</sup> His research was modeled after studies conducted on position segregation in professional football conducted by Barry Brower and in professional baseball conducted by Loy and McElvogue. They defined central positions as those requiring leadership, thinking ability, highly refined techniques, stability under pressure and responsibility for game outcome, while non-central positions required speed, quickness, aggressiveness, good hands and instinct. Tolbert found that black football players in the Southwestern Conference were disproportionately represented in non-central positions. But Barry MacPherson has suggested that alternative explanations may exist for the preponderance of blacks in certain football positions apart from discrimination by coaches.<sup>32</sup> He hypothesized that position stratification might be

self-induced and caused by the differential socialization experiences of black children.

Harry Edwards and others have claimed that black athletes are recruited to college differently from white athletes: black athletes must be "superstars" in high school to be offered scholarships at major white institutions, while white athletes of lesser ability are frequently recruited.<sup>33</sup> In a study of recruiting practices at Kansas State University, Arthur Evans found that KSU's black athletes had earned more athletic honors and awards in high school than had the white athletes. Another approach to studying Edwards' hypothesis is to examine the racial composition of starting line-ups and bench warmers. Norman Yetman and Stanley Eitzen surveyed NCAA Division I basketball teams in 1969 and found that 66 percent of all black athletes started while only 44 percent of the whites started.<sup>35</sup>

#### THE PROBLEM OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

What a review of the literature of intercollegiate athletics reveals is that most studies have been concerned with the individual athlete, particularly his academic attainment and occupational mobility, and the black athlete's encounters with racism. But there are no institutional studies of sports as a program within the contemporary public university. Nor are there any studies that provide evidence about an imputed ideological function for intercollegiate athletics. And apart from public

relations "puff" pieces produced by sports information offices, no longitudinal case studies on the growth of an intercollegiate athletic program and its resulting effect on an institution and its athletes has been attempted. This study will be such an attempt.

The literature has suggested a number of issues about the growth of big-time intercollegiate athletics, the fiscal importance of intercollegiate athletics, the educational and occupational careers of college athletes and racism in college sport. These issues will be tested out by studying in detail one specific university, Michigan State University, about which the following questions will be posed:

First, what were the reasons for the growth and development of big-time intercollegiate athletics at Michigan State University? Was intercollegiate athletics meant to function as a form of ideological control, as an escape from the harshness of everyday life, and as a vehicle for social cohesion as suggested by Brohm; or as a vehicle for socialization to the ideals of democracy, racial harmony, and cooperation as suggested by Lipsky?

Second, what fiscal impact has intercollegiate athletics had on Michigan State University and have economic pressures created an overemphasis on intercollegiate athletics as has been suggested by Underwood, Denlinger and Shapiro and others?

Third, what impact has intercollegiate participation and matriculation at Michigan State had on the academic achievement and occupational possibilities of the athletes who have competed in football, basketball, hockey and baseball? Have these athletes received benefits from attending Michigan State University or have they been exploited? And have black athletes received less from their experiences as "student athletes" than white athletes?

And finally, have black athletes, in addition to educational and occupational achievement, been integrated into the mainstream of campus and athletic life or have they experienced social isolation and discriminatory behavior on the part of coaches?

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to develop an understanding of how and why big-time intercollegiate athletics has become so pervasive at Michigan State University and an understanding of its effect on the University and its athletes. Such a detailed analysis of Michigan State University is done on the assumption that its experience in intercollegiate athletics can serve as a fruitful case study.

#### METHODOLOGY

Sociological research methods usually fall into two major categories: qualitative and quantitative. But according to C. Wright Mills, regardless of the specific research methods employed, sociologists must have "a

quality of mind that will help them to use information and to develop reason in order to achieve lucid summations of what is going on in the world and of what may be happening within themselves."<sup>36</sup> This study will try to employ Mills' "sociological imagination" using both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis.

A case study approach is employed because it allows for a more detailed investigation than is otherwise available when examining a number of cases. But in spite of the advantages of a case study approach to research, a number of weaknesses are also present. First, there is the danger that the case selected is very unrepresentative. Consequently, the applicability of the results to other cases may be questionable. And second, the researcher is also in danger of getting lost in the particularistic detail of an individual case.

Though the events and circumstances described in the following pages occurred during the last thirty years, they are, nevertheless, historical events. Sociologists can use historical analysis to identify long term trends, to test theoretical ideas through historical case studies, to analyze personal documents and life histories as part of larger ethnographic studies, or to study institutional change by using available institutional records.<sup>37</sup>

The personal papers and life histories of a number of key individuals in Michigan State University's athletic history were explored in archives. When engaged in



archival reserach, one is always faced with the problem of missing data. For example, when reading through John Hannah's extensive papers, it became apparent that some correspondence was missing. Consequently, it was not always possible to verify the final resolution of some incidents that were alluded to in some of the correspondence. Missing documents might have been intentionally removed or inadvertantly lost. It also became apparent that Hannah preferred to handle some problems verbally. Therefore, correspondence or written transcripts on some issues never existed. In addition, every principal character has not deposited his or her papers in the Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections even though it is University policy for the record of all University-related business to be so deposited. Consequently, it was necessary to rely on corroborating information received from interviews or from personal contacts.

Interviews were also used to collect much of the data on the black athlete. A major problem with interviews is that a person's memories of past events may change dramatically over time. Personal histories may also suffer from this same problem. It was therefore necessary to obtain corroborating testimony from a number of subjects.

Most of the data for the final two chapers were obtained by unobtrusive means.<sup>38</sup> Access to data collected by the Michigan State University Registrar's Office,

Sports Information Service, and Alumni-Donor Records Division was granted through the University. The first task was to identify all of the black athletes who played football, basketball, hockey or baseball, and who appeared on freshman, junior varsity or varsity rosters, and who were freshmen from Fall 1950 through Fall 1974 or who were transfer students to Michigan State but who would have been freshmen during this same time period. Each of the 1,642 identified athletes' pictures were examined to identify race, and individual files and varsity letter awards lists were checked at Sports Information to identify other relevant data on the athletes. Each athlete's name was searched in the Alumni-Donor Records data base for current occupations and in the Registrar's files for educational attainment data.

A major disadvantage with using unobtrusive means was that the data were limited to those collected by the University. For example, originally one portion of this study was to focus on the relationship of admissions criteria used by the University with each athlete's ultimate success. But two problems prevented this from being done. First, the complete record of each student's admissions qualifications was not recorded on the student's transcript card, but instead was located in a separate admissions file. To compile these data would have required an additional 200 hours of data-collection time.

The second problem concerned the usefulness of the data once collected. The university has used a number of different criteria for admitting students during the last thirty years. The University used to administer its own admissions tests. These tests, together with high school grade point averages and class rank, were used to evaluate each applicant. During the 1960's, ACT or SAT test scores could be substituted for the M.S.U. tests. It would have been difficult, if not impossible, to correlate all of the various test scores.<sup>39</sup>

To explore more fully the relationship between athletic participation and the athletes' educational and occupational attainment would have required an examination of the relationship between the athletes' success with their parents' socio-economic status. But this information was also not collected or retained by the University.

The lack of University-collected data on departmental budgets also presented a problem. A more detailed analysis of the Athletic Department budgets would have been preferable to analyzing the financial reports which are less detailed. Detailed financial and budgetary information is compiled and retained by each department. The departments are supposed to deposit their historical records in the University Archives. But the Athletic Department records prior to 1970 were inadvertantly deposited in the load-lugger instead of in the Archives. Consequently, it was impossible to identify the real

causes of rising athletic expenses (such as recruiting practices, travel costs, etc.).

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

No study of Michigan State University's recent history can begin without a discussion of John Hannah's role. The growth of the University's intercollegiate athletic program would not have been possible without his involvement. Three major areas will be explored in Chapter 2. First, the functions Hannah believed would be served by building a big-time intercollegiate athletic program will be investigated. Second, the reasons for his involvement in the intercollegiate athletic reform movement will be discussed. And finally, Hannah's role in implementing his version of big-time intercollegiate athletics will be analyzed.

The discussion of the institutional functions of intercollegiate athletics will be continued in Chapter 3, but the focus will shift from Hannah to the economic conditions that have surrounded intercollegiate athletics since 1950. The relationship between game attendance, winning seasons, and revenue and fundraising trends will be explored to determine the importance of winning to an athletic programs' fiscal health. In addition, the overall revenue and expenditure trends for intercollegiate athletics at Michigan State will be discussed.

The remainder of this study will examine the effect of intercollegiate participation on the athletes who have

competed in the four most visible sports: football, basketball, hockey and baseball. Have these athletes been exploited merely to raise revenues for the institution or have they also received benefits?

Chapter 4 will examine the educational experiences of these athletes: support services received, graduation and attrition rates, academic majors, and grade point averages. Comparisons will be made between athletes and non-athletes, between black and white athletes, among sports played, and among decade of matriculation. Finally, the athletes' post-college occupational status will be briefly discussed.

As mentioned previously, a number of studies have been conducted at other institutions on racism in intercollegiate sport. The final chapter will focus on the social conditions that have faced Michigan State University's black athletes during the last thirty years. Has their participation in sport provided them with the benefits of integration on campus? Black athletes attended Michigan State when no southern and few northern universities were integrated. The administrative policies and decisions that encouraged this will be explored. But the major focus of this chapter will be on the athletes' social integration into the mainstream of the University, their relationships with their white coaches and teammates, their recruitment and playing status and the conditions that finally led to black athletes' protests in the last 1960's and early 1970's.

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## CHAPTER II

### JOHN HANNAH AND THE GROWTH OF BIG-TIME INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS AT M.S.U.

"There are two ways to have a great university.  
It must have a great football team or a great  
president."

Robert M. Hutchins, President  
University of Chicago

"If it means the betterment of Michigan State,  
our football team would play any eleven gorillas  
from Barnum and Bailey any Saturday."

John A. Hannah, President,  
Michigan State University

## INTRODUCTION

John Hannah, Michigan State University's president from 1941-1969, was the person most responsible for engineering the University's growth from a small agricultural college to a mega-university. The development of the University's athletic program paralleled the University's growth and Hannah's role here was equally as important. This chapter will explore Hannah's reasons for encouraging the development of a big-time intercollegiate athletic program and will include a discussion of his involvement in the intercollegiate athletic reform movement. This chapter will first begin with a brief historical review of the events that preceded Hannah's appointment as President of Michigan State University. In addition, Hannah's role in the administration of the program will be discussed. All of this will attempt to identify the reasons for the growth and development of big-time intercollegiate athletics at M.S.U..

## PRE-HANNAH YEARS

Despite popular perceptions, big-time intercollegiate athletics is a fairly recent phenomenon at Michigan State. While football and other sports were developing rapidly at other colleges, Michigan Agricultural College (M.A.C.) lagged far behind. Prior to the late 1880's, the educational and training requirements of the College left little time for intercollegiate competition. In addition, the Board of Agriculture was opposed to collegiate sports and games;

consequently, athletic participation was informal until the turn of the century.<sup>1</sup>

Even though the College's athletic teams enjoyed some success in the early days, the "modern era" of intercollegiate athletics did not reach East Lansing until the 1920's. After World War I, the College's stagnant enrollments concerned the Board of Agriculture. L. Whitney Watkins, a member of the Board, believed that enrollments were low because the College had such poor athletic facilities.<sup>2</sup> The Governor of Michigan, A. J. Groesbeck, proposed that the State lend the College the money it needed to build a new stadium because he believed "that the inability to schedule strong teams at home was perpetuating the tradition of a cow college."<sup>3</sup> The Legislature lent M.A.C. \$160,000 in 1923 for a stadium which was completed by the start of the 1923 football season.

Ralph Young was hired as athletic director in 1923. According to Fred Stabley, the College's growth "and that of the athletic establishment were as one, and Ralph Young was an integral part of it all."<sup>4</sup> Young's public relations skills enabled him to improve the College's athletic schedule and to hire a coaching staff of the quality necessary to bring the College "into the big-time". For example, Jim Crowley, one of Notre Dame's Four Horsemen, was hired as head football coach in 1929. Crowley brought with him a winning tradition along with numerous problems.

Since Crowley believed that a strong athletic program could never be developed through legitimate scholarship channels, he organized a downtown coaches organization to help recruit and finance talented athletes. These irregular practices caused the North Central Association, of which Michigan State College (M.S.C.) was a member, to investigate the college in 1933.

The North Central investigation uncovered the following conditions:

1. Grades given in physical education classes were uniformly high;
2. Athletes received eleven to twelve percent of the available student loan money even though they comprised only five percent of the male student population;
3. The percent of athletes employed on campus exceeded that of any other groups of students; and
4. The percent of athletes indebted to the College exceed that of any other group.

The North Central investigator eventually ruled that "there has been an overemphasis on intercollegiate athletics" at Michigan State College.<sup>5</sup>

John Hannah was appointed the College's Secretary to the Board of Agriculture in 1935. Taking advantage of President Shaw's unique idea of the private financing of new dormitories, and of the Public Works Administration and

Works Progress Administration funds for capital projects, Hannah planned the construction of many new campus buildings and a vastly improved athletic plant. The stadium was enlarged to 29,000 seats, a new cinder track was constructed, Jenison Gymnasium and Fieldhouse was built and a baseball pre-season practice field was developed. Besides allowing for a greatly improved intercollegiate athletic program, these new facilities encouraged the development of an expanded physical education program for all students.<sup>6</sup>

Between 1935 and 1941 Hannah conceived and executed a six million dollar building program; he stimulated the effort to bring higher quality students to campus; he supervised the integration of the athletic program into the mainstream of the College; he pushed for higher faculty salaries; he successfully lobbied the legislature for the equitable allocation of state higher education funds; and he developed a pension system for all College employees.<sup>7</sup>

#### JOHN HANNAH AND THE GROWTH OF MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

In 1941, when John Hannah became President of M.S.C., the nation was preparing for war and the College, in spite of its ambitious building program, was still a small agricultural college of under 6,000 students, with an annual budget of \$4 million, and consisted of six divisions and fewer than 50 departments. By the time Hannah retired in 1969, the College had grown into a mega-university of more than 40,000 students, with an annual budget of more than

\$100 million and consisted of fifteen colleges and more than two hundred and fifty academic programs.

Hannah's desire to build the College into a major university was grounded in his basic philosophy of the role of public education in democratic societies. He believed that education was not to be taken lightly if democracy and stability were to be preserved.

"A democracy that is interested in its future will give each of its members as much liberal education as he can take...Education in a democracy must encourage each individual to be all that he could be. Democracy and freedom and equality of education are inseparable."<sup>8</sup>

Throughout his career, Hannah was committed to the principles of equal educational opportunity for all citizens regardless of race, creed, sex, nationality, political affiliation, or class. He eloquently stated his philosophy of public education before the Detroit Economic Club in 1948:

"...I can sum up the goals of education in a very few words. For me, there is but one goal--the development of effective citizens of our democracy... If we continue closing the door of opportunity on increasing numbers of our young men and women of intelligence, personality, and initiative because they lack the money to attend college, we rob ourselves of our best potential leadership for the future. We will create an upper class of the sort for which there is no room in a democracy."<sup>9</sup>

And for Hannah, Michigan State University should present a model for the rest of the world to follow:

"Finally, my own image of the Michigan State University of the future is an institution where intellectual achievement is respected, where quality always comes before quantity, and where quality is justly rewarded. I see it as an institution capable of offering education of the highest quality to students

"with the highest intellectual ability, but not too proud to have time and patience for those less richly endowed, knowing full well that they too have much to contribute to the upbuilding of our state and nation..."<sup>10</sup>

Hannah's philosophy also included a significant role for intercollegiate athletics and Hannah himself became an important factor in Michigan State's rise to major status in intercollegiate athletics.

#### INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS: THE DIAMOND POLISHER

Charlie Bachman, who was head football coach at State from 1933-1946, lived next door to John Hannah during his first season at M.S.C. They became close friends and Bachman recalled Hannah saying to him that, "Michigan State is a diamond in the rough; all it needs is a football victory over Michigan--no, two victories--so people will not say it was a fluke, and the College will become a great educational institution."<sup>11</sup> According to Bachman, Hannah realized the value Notre Dame and the University of Michigan received from "free" football advertising and "he chose that path to polish the diamond."<sup>12</sup>

Hannah's own recollection of why he encouraged the growth of intercollegiate athletics does not support Bachman's statement. In his memoirs, Hannah states that he had no idea that a strong football program would benefit the College in any way.<sup>13</sup> Yet, in a 1946 speech before the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and in nearly every speech before an athletic group after that, Hannah indicated that he believed intercollegiate



athletics to be a positive influence on college campuses because he believed competitive sport unified the students, faculty, townspeople and alumni in a way no other activity can.<sup>14</sup> However, he also believed that athletics would neither add to nor detract from the quality of an institution's academic programs even though many colleges are so judged.<sup>15</sup>

Hannah believed that universities achieved certain political and social benefits from a successful intercollegiate athletic program. First, football and all competitive athletics provide a natural outlet for the enthusiasm and energy of youth and an escape from the pressures of daily life:

"The players like the game because it is in the nature of vigorous, healthy young males to compete, to seek notice and acclaim, and most of all, to belt each other around lustily for the sheer fun of it...Alumni like it because football games give them a legitimate excuse to return to the college campuses where they have had some of the best years of their lives and to let off some of the pressure of modern living conditions that builds up in so many of us. Football games permit us to return to the unrestrained enthusiasm of youth."<sup>16</sup>

Second, as mentioned above, football provides a natural rallying point for the entire university community and is able to unify the campus and the community. And third, sport provides both participants and spectators with an example of democracy in its purest form:

"(it) offers repeated object lessons for all to see of democracy at work. The size of a father's pocketbook or mother's position on the social register, nor the color of one's skin nor his religion mean anything at all when competing

"with others for places on a team, or against teams from other colleges. Here only skill and intelligence and willingness to work hard..."<sup>17</sup>

Hannah was also confident that Michigan State's academic reputation would be greatly improved if the College were to affiliate officially with other quality institutions. Specifically, he believed that membership in the Big Ten would provide Michigan State with the kind of academic respectability it needed.<sup>18</sup> Hannah first approached the Western Conference (the Big Ten) asking to be considered for membership as early as 1942 after the University of Chicago withdrew from the Conference.<sup>19</sup> But the response from the Presidents of the member universities was not encouraging.

A column in the Detroit News that same year suggested that Michigan State would not be admitted to the Big Ten because its stadium was too small and its geographic location was such that gate receipts for home games would be too small.<sup>20</sup> Hannah argued that the stadium could be increased to a seating capacity of 60,000 and that the largest portion of Michigan's population lived within an 80 mile radius of the campus.<sup>21</sup>

But by the Spring of 1943, it was apparent that all intercollegiate sport would have to be suspended for the duration of World War II because too few civilian men were on campus to comprise the teams. As soon as World War II ended, Hannah renewed his quest for Big Ten membership. In January, 1946, he formally requested

admission to the Big Ten.<sup>22</sup> But opposition was still quite strong.

Opposition to Michigan State's admission came from two fronts. First, the University of Michigan (UM) vehemently opposed Big Ten membership for Michigan State because they did not want to be forced to compete with Michigan State for the best high school athletes or for Saturday afternoon football attendance.<sup>23</sup> Second, most of the Big Ten schools were opposed to Michigan State's athletic scholarship program. In the late 1930's, Fred Jenison, a local insurance executive, died and willed a half million dollars to the College. John Hannah, as Secretary to the Board of Agriculture, was named administrator of the estate and decided to put the money to what he "believed a legitimate and practical use by the establishment of athletic scholarships."<sup>24</sup>

Hannah believed it better to be open and above board with athletic scholarships, having them under the direct control of the College's scholarship office rather than in the form of an uncontrollable slush fund. The Jenison Scholarship covered tuition, books, room and board. Athletes were granted this aid regardless of financial need, but they were required to maintain at least a "C" average to retain the scholarship.<sup>25</sup> On May 29, 1947, President Hannah appeared before the athletic directors and faculty representatives of the Big Ten to describe the operation of the Jenison Scholarship program. He

indicated that while Michigan State was a firm believer in athletic scholarships that were closely controlled, they would voluntarily abolish the program to comply with NCAA and Big Ten standards.<sup>26</sup>

In spite of UM's opposition, Michigan State was officially invited to become a member of the Big Ten on December 12, 1948.<sup>27</sup> The stadium had been enlarged, the Jenison Scholarships had been abolished, and the University of Michigan's opposition had been neutralized.<sup>28</sup> The press predicted that Michigan State's athletic program would reap tremendous benefits from participation in the Big Ten such as increased athletic prestige and increased gate receipts.<sup>29</sup> But for Hannah, Big Ten membership meant that Michigan State would be welcomed as an equal to the academic committees of the Conference such as the Committee on Interinstitutional Cooperation (CIC) and the Council of Ten.<sup>30</sup>

#### JOHN HANNAH AND THE REFORM OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

At the same time that John Hannah was building Michigan State's athletic program into a nationally ranked, top flight program, he was also concerned with the abuses that were prevalent within intercollegiate sport, such as recruiting violations and academic cheating. He saw no apparent contradiction between growth and reform because he believed that the abuses could be curbed without de-emphasizing intercollegiate competition. All Hannah believed was necessary was a commitment to honesty on the part of college presidents and coaches.<sup>31</sup>

In 1951, the American Council on Education, concerned about the abuses within intercollegiate athletics, appointed a Special Committee on Athletic Policy with John Hannah as its chair, to develop some recommendations. The consensus of this Committee was that the abuses existed because of excessive pressures to win which were motivated by many universities' desire for prestige or profit or both.<sup>32</sup> In addition, many of the committee members believed that the national recognition brought by athletics placed undue pressure on the coaches and athletes to win.<sup>33</sup>

As a result of this concern, one area the Special Committee examined was the academic status of athletic departments and coaches. One of their recommendations stated that departments of intercollegiate athletics should be subjected to the same academic and budgetary policies as other college departments and that coaches should be given the same rights and responsibilities as other faculty.<sup>34</sup>

During Hannah's tenure at Michigan State, coaches and assistant coaches were hired in the tenure stream and received all of the rights and responsibilities associated with faculty status. Hannah gave four reasons for this:

1. "We believe that coaches are performing important educational functions and are entitled to faculty rights and privileges...
2. "We believe that coaches and the athletic staff are entitled to protection against those who would bring unjustified pressure against them;

3. "We believe they are entitled to the same backing from the University against unjustified criticism as any member of the faculty or staff;
4. "No one clamors for the scalp of the professor of an academic subject if his students fail in their classes. His pupils do not take an examination in public every Saturday afternoon."<sup>35</sup>

Hannah believed that faculty status would remove the "win-at-all-costs" mentality that plagued intercollegiate athletics. While M.S.U.'s coaches were not fearful of losing their jobs, they nevertheless could be moved from coaching to another position within the University. So for those coaches to whom coaching was more than a job, the threat of losing still loomed quite large.

Hannah's active role in reforming intercollegiate athletics while, at the same time, encouraging its growth is reminiscent of the role played by many industrialists during the Progressive Era in the early part of the twentieth century. A number of industrialists and financiers believed that the social and economic instability caused by laissez-faire capitalism and uncontrolled economic growth threatened the fabric of American capitalism. They lobbied for the rationalization of the economy through reform and regulation to achieve stability, predictability, and security and their eventual success reaped tremendous financial rewards.<sup>36</sup> In the same vein, Hannah did not want intercollegiate athletics abolished or de-emphasized because it brought too many benefits to institutions like Michigan State. Rather, he wanted intercollegiate athletics reformed and regulated so that its benefits would be maximized.

"Football is a college's show window. It's a false front too often. That's why I don't want the product we're selling the public misrepresented. I see nothing wrong in having good teams and giving scholarships to athletes. Helping a boy through college is an altruistic act that benefits society, provided one condition is observed. The boy must get passing grades...and make normal progress towards a degree every year...Football unifies college communities and creates a morale that is desireable. That's why I don't want to see the game degenerate unto a muscle show between two gangs of hired gladiators." 37

#### HANNAH'S INSTRUMENTAL USE OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

John Hannah was a masterful politician and used inter-collegiate athletics to promote Michigan State University. Athletic events became a wonderful excuse for showing off the institution, and he used them as devices to get politicians, and industrialists to come and see for themselves that Michigan State was a quality institution.<sup>38</sup>

For each home football game, President Hannah invited a select number of individuals to a pre-game brunch and to be his guests in the President's Box at the stadium. The guest lists read like a "who's who of Michigan." From government, it was not unusual for the Governor and Congressman Gerald Ford to be invited. But businessmen clearly dominated the lists: Edward Cole, General Manager of Chevrolet; George Romney, President of American Motors; Howard Stoddard, President of Michigan National Bank; Arthur Fushman, President of Manufacturers National Bank; William Mayberry, Chairman of the Board, American Bank and Trust; Malcolm Ferguson, President of Bendix Corporation; Henry Bodman, President of the National Bank of

Detroit; Frederick Eckley, President and General Manager of Michigan Bell Telephone; Ray Eppert, Burroughs Corporation; Charles Stewart Mott; Dan Gerber, President of Gerber Baby Foods; Arjay Miller, President of Ford Motor Company; Jack Wolfram, General Manager of Oldsmobile; and Leland Doan, Chairman of the Board, Dow Chemical Corporation.<sup>39</sup>

When asked why such luminaries were invited to be his guests, Hannah said,

"It was part of the program of building this University. We started out as a small A & M type college and our overall objective was to make Michigan State University the best possible university across the board. And that required support, public support...A University has to have quality before it has any right to expect to be recognized as a quality institution. One of our problems was to convince the leadership of Michigan that here was an institution growing, not only in size, but also in quality...and we used many devices to (get them) to come and see for themselves; to meet our people."<sup>40</sup>

In keeping with Hannah's wishes, these occasions were always done with style:

"There was no solicitation...It was just a personal, friendly relationship. And many useful things happened to this University as a result of personal friendly relationships--one family to another between the people like C. S. Mott...and the Kresge's, the Wilsons', the Dodge's and all the rest of the people in Detroit...and politicians..."<sup>41</sup>

The Hannah tradition of entertaining influential persons at athletic events has remained to this day. But these occasions are explicitly used as fundraising devices.<sup>42</sup> According to President Hannah, no other campus event could match the value received from entertaining at one home football game.<sup>43</sup>



In a secondary way, athletic events also presented Hannah with many opportunities to speak with alumni. Hannah was a very popular banquet speaker and on consecutive evenings he might speak at the Economic Club of Detroit and then at a poultry plucking contest. But a large number of his speeches were delivered to alumni gatherings that occurred at athletic events or post-season banquets to honor the athletes. It was at these events that he continually reemphasized his philosophy of both education and sport. Without a moderately successful football team, he would have lost many opportunities to reach the University's alumni.

Michigan State's successful athletic program also gave John Hannah and the University quite a bit of exposure in the national press. Very few articles on Michigan State or Hannah appeared prior to Hannah's involvement with the ACE's Special Committee on Athletic Policy.<sup>44</sup> Hannah received far more press coverage as Chair of that Committee than he had for his work with the War Department during World War II.

During the 1940's, John Hannah was vocally opposed to post-season football competition in the form of bowl games and he took every available opportunity to speak out against the evils of post-season competition.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, when Michigan State was selected to represent the Big Ten at the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day 1954, the College anxiously awaited and willingly accepted the invitation. When asked

why he had experienced a change of heart regarding bowl games, President Hannah responded that the administration of bowl games had been questionable in the past and that opposing teams had often maintained low academic standards for their athletes. He rationalized Michigan State's ultimate bowl game participation on the grounds that conditions had improved and that he had become convinced that Rose Bowl competition would be good for Michigan State and for campus morale.<sup>46</sup>

#### INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS IN PRACTICE UNDER JOHN HANNAH

John Hannah did not merely encourage the growth and development of intercollegiate athletics at Michigan State, he also took an active role in its implementation. Hannah believed that many of the abuses of intercollegiate athletics could be curbed if university presidents would take a more active interest in the operations of their athletic departments. Hannah took such an interest.

As mentioned previously, John Hannah believed athletics presented positive object lessons with respect to race relations. The incident described below is one example of Hannah's actions in this area. In 1960, Professor Walter Adams, a member of the Athletic Council, discovered that the baseball team had difficulty locating integrated accommodations for its spring break southern road trip. John Kobs, the baseball coach, believed that he had only two alternatives: ask the black athletes to accept segregated facilities; or ask the black athletes not to

make the trip.<sup>47</sup> Adams was outraged by this situation because he believed that "no member of an MSU athletic team should be confronted with this kind of Hobson's choice."<sup>48</sup> Consequently, he proposed that the Athletic Council endorse the following resolutions to prevent Michigan State from tacitly agreeing to segregation in any form:

1. "That no Michigan State University Athletic team shall take part in a contest where any athlete is barred from participation because of race, religion or national origin;
2. "That no Michigan State University athletic team shall accept engagements in any area where a Michigan State University team member may be barred from equal access to housing or team facilities by virtue of his race, religion or national origin; and
3. "That no Michigan State University athlete shall participate in any contest where participation is denied to others because of race, religion, or national origin."<sup>49</sup>

Not only did the Athletic Council defeat these proposals ("for fear of stirring things up"), but they also struck all mention of the resolutions from the minutes of the Athletic Council meeting.<sup>50</sup> Adams wrote to President Hannah, asking him to intercede. Hannah consulted with Biggie Munn and then informed Adams that "(Munn) assures me that it is the intention of the athletic department to essentially follow the procedure outlined in your resolutions."<sup>51</sup> From that time forward, the spirit of Adams' resolutions were followed although Hannah never confronted the Athletic Council with their lack of action.<sup>52</sup>

In spite of stating that athletes should be considered no different from other students on campus, some University officials believed that John Hannah did not always take a strong enough stand with the Athletic Department when it came to academic matters. Harold Tukey, who served as Faculty Representative from 1956-59, was involved in numerous confrontations with the Athletic Department; at times these confrontations found their way into the press. Tukey took his role as the "faculty representative" very seriously and often found himself philosophically in opposition to the activities of Biggie Munn and Duffy Daugherty. His activities as Faculty Representative also brought him into contact with Hannah over athletic issues and Tukey was less than satisfied with what he saw:

"I talked this over with President Hannah many times and he told me not to be disturbed, that really there were two codes of ethics involved, namely the one which dealt with athletics and the one which dealt with life."<sup>53</sup>

Tukey also stated that the existence of grade fixing, drug use and slush funds were well known by the administration but were overlooked as long as the University didn't get caught.<sup>54</sup>

Definitively proving Tukey's allegations was nearly impossible. Nevertheless, some evidence was discovered that demonstrated Hannah did not always stand by this publicly stated principles. By 1961, correspondence between John Hannah, Gordon Sabine (the Dean of Admissions) and Daugherty began to appear in Hannah's files quite

regularly. Daugherty continually tried getting admitted to Michigan State athletes who did not meet State's minimum admissions requirements. One such example concerned a high school student from Pontiac who had earned only a 1.3 grade point in high school. In a memorandum from Gordon Sabine to John Hannah, the efforts of the football coaching staff to get this student admitted were outlined.<sup>55</sup> In June of 1960, the student's high school principal believing the student's admission to M.S.U. was merely a formality in spite of his poor academic record, forwarded the student's college application to Michigan State's admissions office with a bitter comment about the "unusual circumstances" surrounding the student's admission. The student was eventually refused admission because of his grades and poor test scores and in February 1961 he was re-tested and again failed. The football department was upset with the decision of the Admissions Office; however, Sabine tried to hold his ground:

"Seems to me we can't admit the boy because to do so would be patently dishonest to the young man, would expose us to all sorts of criticism in a crucial area of the state, would bring the Big Ten investigators in pronto."<sup>56</sup>

Duffy Daugherty complained bitterly and eloquently to Hannah about the problems he encountered with the Admissions Office. Daugherty felt that Michigan State's admissions standards were too high for athletes and that these tough admissions requirements were hurting the quality of State's athletic programs:

"However, many of the outstanding players in high school are average or below average students. It takes a number of these outstanding players to turn an average squad into one of fine ability...Many of those who have been refused admissions here even though they qualify for unearned aid under the Big Ten plan will be competing against us in the future as they have been accepted at other conference schools."<sup>57</sup>

Hannah evidently intervened in this case on the side of the athletic department since this student was eventually admitted to Michigan State, became a star football player both in the collegiate and professional ranks, and is currently a successful businessman even though he never graduated from college.

Hannah also became disgruntled about having to constantly mediate between the Athletic Department and the Admissions Office over the admission of athletes. He finally suggested to Sabine that athletic admissions be mediated by the Athletic Council.<sup>58</sup> (This was never implemented.) Sabine pursued this issue further accusing Daugherty and his coaches of consistently misrepresenting both students' academic records and the admissions action of other institutions.<sup>59</sup>

Daugherty continued to blame his recruiting problems on the Admissions Office but Sabine continued to maintain that Daugherty was blaming him for his (Daugherty's) own failures in administration and recruiting.<sup>60</sup> In retrospect, Sabine's concern about the academic success of many athletes who might be admitted with grades and test scores well below the minimum requirements were well-founded. Academic success and failure for athletes did undergo a marked change during

the 1960's and 1970's. One cause might very well have been the relaxed admissions standards that were applied to athletes. A more detailed discussion of the academic experience of athletes will follow in the Chapter Four.

#### LIFE IN THE BIG-TIME: OVEREMPHASIS OR NOT?

Even though John Hannah firmly believed that big-time intercollegiate athletic programs could exist without abuses, and even though he took steps to see that many reforms were implemented, Michigan State University's intercollegiate athletic program nevertheless experienced a number of confrontations with the Big Ten and the NCAA over rule violations. Shortly after becoming a full-fledged member of the Big Ten, Michigan State was faced with its first confrontation over the administration of the Athletic Department. In May of 1952, Tug Wilson, then Commissioner of the Big Ten, notified Hannah that his preliminary investigation of charges made against the University uncovered certain irregularities that could result in punitive action being taken by the Conference.<sup>61</sup>

The most serious charges concerned the operation of an organization that was not formally associated with the College: The Spartan Foundation. This booster club of alumni and community supporters allegedly disbursed illegal funds to athletes. According to the official reporting documents, Michigan State and John Hannah fully cooperated with the Big Ten investigators. But the Conference demanded

access to the financial records of the Foundation which the Foundation's Board of Directors refused to do.

The investigators never succeeded in locating even one athlete who had received funds illegally from the Foundation.<sup>62</sup> While the investigation was underway, the Foundation disbanded and its remaining funds were donated to the College's scholarship office for proper disbursement to eligible students. Nevertheless, Tug Wilson placed Michigan State College on probation for one year.<sup>63</sup>

At that time, John Hannah was Chair of the ACE's Special Committee on Athletic Policy and the Committee's recommendations for reforming intercollegiate athletics had just been released. These allegations against Michigan State were a source of embarrassment to him. In addition, he was outraged by the methods used by the Big Ten since no proof of the College's guilt or complicity was ever proven. Hannah requested a hearing on the charges asking the Conference to prove Michigan State's guilt. Wilson responded that it was up to Michigan State to prove its innocence.<sup>64</sup>

Many of Michigan State's supporters believed that these charges had been leveled against the College because of Hannah's vocal stand for intercollegiate athletic reform and because of jealousy over Michigan State's remarkable gridiron success between 1947 and 1952.<sup>65</sup> John Hannah decided to fight the charges and in a letter to all Big Ten Presidents, he presented Michigan State's case and said,



"Michigan State College protests the high handed proceedings to which it has been subjected...We have reached a sorry state of affairs when honorable institutions are convicted in advance solely on the basis of rumor, inference and innuendo."<sup>66</sup>

Hannah and Biggie Munn also believed that the University of Michigan was behind the allegations because they wanted to discredit Hannah and the College.<sup>67</sup>

The widespread belief that the University of Michigan had "blown the whistle" on Michigan State was not an isolated incident. Most conference investigations are initiated by other institutions and the regulatory arm of the Big Ten, has, at times, been perceived as carrying out institutional vendettas. Michigan State's other confrontations with the Big Ten's enforcement division have followed similar patterns to the one described above.

In 1962, an assistant coach at the University of Colorado contacted the NCAA about Michigan State's alleged violations of NCAA regulations. Most of these charges concerned an illegal slush fund administered by the Athletic Department.<sup>68</sup> After investigations by the University administration, the Athletic Council, and the Big Ten, the existence of the slush fund was verified.<sup>69</sup>

Duffy Daugherty had initiated the slush fund in 1953 when he was still an assistant football coach. He borrowed \$3,000 to pay the tuition of several football players who were not eligible to receive institutional scholarship assistance.<sup>70</sup> Daugherty then enlisted the assistance of three supporters to help him pay back the loan. This

practice continued and became quasi-institutionalized once Daugherty became head football coach. Each year the original three supporters plus several other business people, collected money for this "fund" and turned the money over Daugherty who in turn disbursed the money to athletes for tuition. Daugherty administered the fund for two years and insisted the money was disbursed only for tuition.<sup>71</sup>

In 1955, Daugherty asked Everett (Sonny) Grandelius, an assistant football coach, to assume responsibility for the fund. Grandelius was to inform the "benefactors" of the amount of money required, was to receive the funds, and was to disburse the money to needy athletes. Grandelius administered the fund until 1959, when he accepted a head coaching position at the University of Colorado. Daugherty then asked two other assistant coaches to assume responsibility for the fund. They refused and evidently confronted Daugherty with protests.<sup>72</sup>

Evidently, Grandelius had never informed any of the other assistant coaches of the existence of this fund and the only athletes that received this special assistance were those Grandelius had personally recruited. This gave Grandelius a recruiting advantage over the other assistant coaches. In addition, he had used the funds to provide the athletes with services other than tuition. Daugherty discontinued the fund at the end of the 1959 academic year.<sup>73</sup>

The Big Ten chose not to take any action against Michigan State in spite of the flagrant violation of its rules. According to William Reed, Commissioner of the Big Ten, he established a cut-off date on the prosecution of violations for incidents that occurred prior to his taking office to allow all schools to put their houses in order. Since the Michigan State incidents occurred before the cut-off date, he decided not to prosecute. Second, the Big Ten's enforcement program was designed to reward schools for taking corrective action on their own.<sup>74</sup>

Nevertheless the NCAA did decide to penalize Michigan State and the University was placed on suspended probation for three years with the provisions that the probation would be reinstituted should Michigan State violate any rules during that period.<sup>75</sup> As a result of this slush fund incident, Hannah sent the following memorandum to John Fuzak, Chair of the Athletic Council, Biggie Munn, Director of Athletics, and all athletic staff members:

"This University will have little patience with any staff member who circumvents aid to athletes. The University will not continue to employ any staff member found to be so disloyal to its interest as to be involved in any way in these practices. Because of the recent revelations regarding the conduct of the football department prior to 1959, I wish to make clear that this department in particular will be the subject of continuing scrutiny by the Athletic Council."<sup>76</sup>

Alleged irregularities with Michigan State's football program surfaced once again during 1968. In an article appearing in the University of Michigan's student paper, Michigan State was accused of recruiting violations, such

as promising recruits summer jobs and illegal dinner invitations, and other violations of Big Ten rules such as special grill passes for free snacks, discount cards for movies and shopping in East Lansing, and illegal free football tickets.<sup>77</sup> Daugherty vehemently denied the allegations and a subsequent investigation by the Big Ten cleared the Athletic Department of willful violations but did uncover what it called weaknesses in the administration of the Athletic Department.<sup>78</sup>

In spite of John Hannah's desire to develop an athletic program that was free from scandal, Michigan State's experiences nevertheless parallel the experiences of many other schools.<sup>79</sup> Nor did the situation improve under Hannah's successor as Michigan State was once again embroiled in a major controversy involving recruiting violations.<sup>80</sup> The first question that comes to mind then is why did Michigan State's athletic program experience the abuses of rules violations that seem to accompany an overemphasis on intercollegiate athletics? According to Duffy Daugherty,

"When a coach is hired, he must understand that he has one job, and that's to fill the stadium. You don't fill it by losing. Winning is the name of this game, and it's an unwritten understanding between the coach and the man who hires him. Win, but don't you get caught cheating."<sup>81</sup>

In spite of the desire for an athletic program run honestly and above board, the concurrent desire to develop and sustain a big-time athletic program can tempt a coaching staff to cheat.

## CONCLUSION

John Hannah promoted and developed intercollegiate athletics because he believed it would provide political and social benefits to the campus. He repeatedly stated that sport projected the dominant values of American society and provided a model for democracy and fair play. He also firmly believed that intercollegiate competition unified the campus and the community in a way that no other event might and that athletic events provided a stage upon which the campus might be promoted and advertised.

Nevertheless, Hannah was fully cognizant of the negative influences that accompanied big-time athletic programs. Through his participation in national reform movements and his administration of the athletic program on campus he tried to exert a progressive influence on intercollegiate athletics because he realized that if intercollegiate athletics were to continue to benefit colleges and universities, it would have to become further rationalized through the enforcement of rules and regulations.

But in spite of Hannah's close supervision of Michigan State athletics and in spite of his commitment to reform, intercollegiate athletics at Michigan State University has experienced problems comparable to those at other institutions. Even John Hannah, when it suited him, chose to look the other way when the athletic department made demands on the University that violated academic standards. The most obvious question to be asked is "why"? The following

statement by Duffy Daugherty most closely approximates the truth:

"The name of the game is win. Coaches must understand one basic thing: The stadium was built to be occupied."<sup>82</sup>

The structural necessity to generate profits and consequently to win is the source of the contradictions inherent within big-time intercollegiate athletics. The following chapter will explore the relationship between winning and revenues in more detail.

ENDNOTES

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3. Kuhn, p. 329

4. Stabley, p. 57

5. North Central Association of College and Secondary Schools. "Report on Athletics at Michigan State College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences" (Chicago: 1933) p. 4.

6. Kuhn.

7. Kuhn, p. 401

8. John A Hannah. "Speech to the Birmingham Alumni Meeting", Birmingham, Michigan, April 26, 1944. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

9. Hannah. "The Challenge to Education in a World Like This". Speech before the Economic Club of Detroit, Detroit, Michigan, January 12, 1948. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

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11. Charles Bachman. "The Athletic Side of John Hannah". p. 1. In Charles W. Bachman Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

12. Ibid., p. 8

13. Hannah. A Memoir. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, 1980), p. 116.

14. Hannah. "Speech before the National Collegiate Athletic Association (Annual Meeting)", St. Louis, Missouri, January 9, 1946. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing, p. 2

15. Hannah. "Speech before the 1965 Football Bust, East Lansing, November 23, 1965." In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

16. Hannah. "Speech Before the East Lansing High School Football Banquet, East Lansing, November 17, 1959". In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

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18. Hannah. A Memoir. p. 118.

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28. Ibid.

29. Devine. "Big Ten A Real Exclusive Club", Detroit Free Press (December 15, 1948), p. 28; Frank., p. 30.

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31. Hannah. "Speech Before the National Collegiate Athletic Association", p. 7-8.

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34. American Council on Education. Special Committee on Athletic Policy. Report. (Washington, D.C.: 1952).

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46. Interview with John Hannah, East Lansing, March 10, 1981.

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48. Ibid.

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50. Ibid.

51. John A. Hannah to Walter Adams, January 18, 1961. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

52. Interview with Walter Adams, November 2, 1981, East Lansing.

53. Harold B. Tukey. "Reminiscences on My Relationship With John Hannah and the Athletic Program at Michigan State University" (1971) p. 3. In Harold B. Tukey Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

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61. Tug Wilson to John Hannah, May 17, 1952. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

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64. Emmons, p. 13.

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66. John A. Hannah to all Big Ten Presidents, June 6, 1952. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

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69. The following discussion is a summary of the information provided in: Michigan State University. "Infractions: Response to Specific NCAA Inquiries". In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

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74. William Reed to A. J. Bergstrom, Assistant Director, NCAA, October 27, 1964. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

75. Robert Ray, President of the NCAA, to John A. Hannah, November 4, 1964. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

76. John Hannah to Dean John Fuzak, Chairman, Athletic Council, C. L. Munn, Director of Athletics, Athletic Staff Members, July 24, 1964. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

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80. In April 1975, the NCAA filed charges against MSU for 90 alleged recruiting violations. On January 25, 1976, the University was placed on three year probation for 21 infractions.

81. Duffy Daugherty. Duffy. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1974), p. 68.

82. Ibid.

CHAPTER III  
THE PURSUIT OF THE ALL-AMERICAN DOLLAR

"Hockey might make a tiny bit of money and perhaps basketball breaks even, but king football has to support the others. That's why even some of our thickheaded faculty representatives cannot kill football, because football is the sugar daddy ..."

"When you're playing for the national championship, it's not a matter of life or death. It's more important than that."

Duffy Daugherty

Intercollegiate athletics at Michigan State University and other NCAA Division I schools is big business. In 1978, more than 34 million spectators attended NCAA football games, nine million people watched televised college football on Saturday afternoons, and the combined ABC-TV and NBC-TV contracts for televising football and basketball produced nearly \$50 million dollars.<sup>1</sup> Yet only ten percent of all collegiate athletic programs show a profit each year.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter will explore the fiscal pressures that have faced the intercollegiate athletic program at Michigan State University during the last thirty years. Intercollegiate athletics has played such a special role at M.S.U. that last year, as the University was engaged in a painful budget cutting process that resulted in the elimination of some academic programs, the Athletic Department experienced only minimal reductions. Peter Fletcher, a member of Michigan State University's Board of Trustees, explained that,

"Intercollegiate athletics plays a significant role in this University. We don't want to touch athletics."<sup>3</sup>

### FISCAL TRENDS

The financial condition of intercollegiate athletics has concerned the NCAA and the American Council on Education for a number of years.<sup>4</sup> Cost increases and overruns have caused additional concern recently not only because of inflation, but also because of increased costs associated with the legally-mandated growth of and increased support

for women's intercollegiate athletics. Even Michigan State University's revenues and expenditures have been precariously balanced during the last thirty years. (See Table 3.1) In twelve of the last thirty years, the athletic program has run a deficit.

(Insert Table 3.1)

In a study conducted for the NCAA, Mitchell Railborn has developed a useful approach for analyzing athletic department revenues and expenditures which will be employed in this study.<sup>5</sup> As a means of measuring the real growth in revenues and expenditures, Railborn's figures take into account the general inflationary trends present in the U.S. economy. He adjusts his figures so that the real growth in the quantity of goods and services purchased is accurately measured.<sup>6</sup> To adjust for inflation, Railborn uses the U.S. Department of Commerce Gross National Product Price Deflator Index as a measure against which athletic revenues and expenditures are adjusted.

Railborn collected data for NCAA institutions with Division I football programs (Class A) for 1970-1977 and found that expenses have grown slightly faster than revenues. (See Tables 3.2 and 3.3) But at Michigan State, for the same time period, real expenses declined, while revenues grew at about the same rate as revenues at other Class A institutions. These figures by themselves are not particularly interesting. Because of the breadth and

Table 3.1

M.S.U. ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT REVENUES AND  
EXPENDITURES, FY 1951-1980

<u>FISCAL</u> <u>YEAR</u>	<u>REVENUES</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>FUND</u> <u>BALANCE</u>	<u>SUMMER</u> <u>CLINICS</u>	<u>PRESS</u> <u>BOX</u>	<u>STUDENT</u> <u>FEES</u>
1951	\$ 524,864	\$ 516,467	\$ 8,397	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$102,450
1952	575,493	558,866	16,627	---	---	97,500
1953	579,426	553,287	46,139	---	---	---
1954	628,628	626,228	2,400	---	---	88,275
1955	818,525	818,159	336	---	---	105,000
1956	722,673	830,307	(107,633)	---	---	144,000
1957	1,052,015	959,389	92,627	---	---	171,000
1958	957,594	1,114,460	(156,866)	---	---	184,000
1959	973,191	1,062,617	( 89,426)	---	45,000	194,000
*1960	1,093,803	1,093,823	( 20)	---	57,658	194,000
1961	1,093,924	1,043,985	49,939	---	50,000	200,000
1962	1,127,359	1,092,533	84,765	---	50,000	200,000
1963	1,113,246	1,185,170	12,839	---	50,000	200,000
1964	1,270,446	1,257,143	26,143	---	50,000	215,000
1965	1,310,923	1,262,288	74,777	---	50,000	249,800
1966	1,633,550	1,527,512	106,038	---	50,000	284,260
1967	1,599,304	1,618,319	( 19,015)	---	50,000	306,000
1968	1,883,762	1,681,104	165,256	---	50,000	320,000
1969	1,883,712	1,855,116	28,597	---	50,000	320,000
1970	1,987,132	2,122,901	(135,769)	---	100,000	320,000
@1971	2,075,512	2,090,716	( 15,204)	---	156,500	335,000
@1972	2,364,844	2,122,581	473,665	---	257,000	374,300
@1973	2,384,268	2,241,600	616,633	45,000	150,000	374,300
@1974	2,182,453	2,378,647	420,614	55,000	80,000	374,300
@1975	2,948,902	2,541,820	827,697	66,094	80,000	374,300
@1976	2,996,472	3,054,835	769,334	79,077	80,000	374,300
@1977	3,331,882	3,162,329	938,787	90,000	120,000	429,228
@1978	3,960,955	3,694,343	1,205,399	180,754	100,000	429,228
@1979	4,875,621	5,372,566	708,454	158,702	230,000	469,226
@1980	6,294,180	5,602,061	1,400,573	165,331	200,000	469,226

Source: Michigan State University Annual Financial Reports,  
FY 1951-1980. (East Lansing: 1951-1980).

\* First full year of full athletic scholarships based  
strictly on athletic ability, not need.

@ Revenue and expenditures are calculated from the Financial  
Reports. Expenses include property/building maintenance  
and debt service retirement.



diversity of Michigan State's intercollegiate athletic programs, it is also important to examine the expenditure and revenue trends of the individual revenue-producing sports: basketball, hockey and football.

(Insert Table 3.2 and Table 3.3)

While real expenses for football have risen moderately and for basketball have declined since 1970, hockey expenses have risen sharply. (See Table 3.2) This rise in expenses is primarily due to transportation costs. When Michigan State first reinstituted hockey in the early 1950's, few Big Ten schools supported an intercollegiate hockey program. Consequently, Michigan State was forced to join a league that included schools as far away as Colorado and North Dakota. Intercollegiate hockey has only recently become popular enough so that truly regional leagues might adequately function. Even today, only five Big Ten schools support hockey. Because of increased travel costs, Michigan State withdrew from the Eastern Collegiate Hockey Association in 1981, and along with the University of Michigan, Northern Michigan University, and Michigan Technological University joined the Central Collegiate Hockey Association which consists of primarily Michigan schools. Michigan State should be able to cut thousands of dollars from its hockey budget as a result.

The hockey program also experienced significant revenue growth during the 1970's. (See Table 3.3) Hockey's

Table 3.2

M.S.U. ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT EXPENSE TRENDS  
AND GENERAL PRICE-LEVEL CHANGES, FY 1970-1980

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>
Average Price Level Index (a)	100	105	110	115	124	134	154	160	172	187
Class A Inst. Base-year (b) ratio-actual	100	112	118	128	139	152	175	---	---	---
Adjusted (c) Base Year	100	106	108	111	113	111	114	---	---	---
MSU Total Exp.										
Base year (b)	100	98	100	106	112	120	149	174	253	264
Adjusted (c)	100	93	90	90	88	83	95	114	181	177
MSU Football										
Base Year (b)	100	99	105	114	126	131	155	161	189	205
Adjusted (c)	100	94	95	99	102	106	101	101	117	118
MSU Basketball										
Base Year (b)	100	82	89	82	91	101	128	157	168	173
Adjusted (c)	100	77	79	67	67	64	74	97	96	86
MSU Hockey										
Base Year (b)	100	104	103	111	119	163	199	209	251	271
Adjusted (c)	100	99	93	96	95	126	145	149	179	184

- (a) GNP Price Deflator for years ending June 30, restated such that 1970=100; Source: Economic Report of the President, 1981. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1981)
- (b) Average Total Expenditures as a percent of 1970 average. Class A Institution source: Mitchell Railborn. Revenues and Expenditures of Intercollegiate Athletic Programs, 1977-77. (Shawnee Mission, KS: NCAA, 1978) p. 25.
- (c) Revised Base Year ratio using the average total expenditures stated in terms of the 1970 average price level.

Table 3.3

M.S.U. ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT REVENUE TRENDS AND GENERAL PRICE-LEVEL CHANGES, FY 1970-1980										
	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1977	1978	1979	1980
Average Price Level Index (a)	100	105	110	115	124	137	154	160	172	187
Class A Inst. Base-year (b) ratio-actual	100	109	114	124	135	146	173	---	---	---
Adjusted (c) Base Year	100	104	104	108	109	107	112	---	---	---
MSU Total Revenues										
Base year (b)	100	104	119	120	110	148	167	199	245	317
Adjusted (c)	100	99	109	105	86	111	113	139	173	230
MSU Football										
Base Year (b)	100	96	105	119	101	137	139	140	171	209
Adjusted (c)	100	89	95	104	123	100	85	80	99	122
MSU Basketball										
Base Year (b)	100	90	116	156	183	192	249	628	808	802
Adjusted (c)	100	85	106	146	168	155	195	568	736	715
MSU Hockey										
Base Year (b)	100	125	171	265	269	1191	1741	1713	1329	1352
Adjusted (c)	100	120	161	150	245	1154	1687	1653	1257	1265
Student Fees										
Base Year (b)	100	112	112	112	112	112	128	134	147	147
Adjusted (c)	100	107	102	97	88	75	74	74	75	60

- (a) GNP Price Deflator for years ending June 30, restated such that 1970=100; Source: Economic Report of the President, 1981. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1981)
- (b) Average Total Expenditures as a percent of 1970 average. Class A Institution source: Mitchell Railborn. Revenues and Expenditures of Intercollegiate Athletic Programs, 1977-77. (Shawnee Mission, KS: NCAA, 1978) p. 13.
- (c) Revised Base Year ratio using the average total revenues stated in terms of 1970 dollars.

remarkable growth of nearly 1200 percent is almost entirely due to the opening of a new ice arena during the 1974 season.

Though not as dramatic as hockey, basketball's revenues have also grown substantially; attendance increased for winning teams. This relationship will be explored more fully later in this chapter.

Basketball and hockey revenues can, for short periods of time, shore up a struggling athletic department's budget. But the long term financial stability of a big-time athletic program (that includes football) is dependent upon the revenue producing potential of the football program. And football revenue growth has been struggling just to keep pace with inflation in the last several years. (See Table 3.3)

The flagship of Michigan State's athletic program has always been football. During the early 1950's, football generated 75 to 80 percent of all athletic revenues, yet spent under 15 percent of the Athletic Department's budget. (See Table 3.4) Michigan State has consistently spent less money on football than have other Class A institutions. (See Table 3.5) Football has also used a smaller portion of the Athletic Department budget than other Class A schools. This is undoubtedly due to M.S.U. supporting 24 varsity sports while the average Class A institution supports only ten sports.<sup>7</sup>

(Insert Table 3.4 and Table 3.5)

Table 3.4

M.S.U. FOOTBALL REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES, FY 51-80

<u>FISCAL YEAR</u>	<u>REVENUES</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>SURPLUS</u>	<u>% TOTAL REVENUES</u>	<u>RECORD</u>
1951	\$ 395,386	\$ 65,277	\$ 330,559	75%	8-1
1952	425,132	89,225	345,907	76%	9-0
1953	457,719	95,726	361,993	79%	9-0
1954	496,639	119,879	376,490	79%	9-1
1955	663,220	113,386	549,834	81%	3-6
1956	564,803	100,874	463,929	78%	9-1
1957	824,474	129,361	695,113	78%	7-2
1958	723,134	133,172	589,962	76%	8-1
1959	690,508	137,469	553,039	71%	3-5-1
*1960	789,631	317,157	472,474	72%	5-4
1961	847,129	308,969	538,160	77%	6-2-1
1962	725,663	325,667	399,996	64%	7-2
1963	694,519	359,874	334,645	62%	5-4
1964	831,747	392,182	439,565	65%	6-2-1
1965	757,797	401,393	356,404	58%	4-5
1966	1,031,054	402,758	628,296	63%	10-1
1967	869,180	460,900	435,280	56%	9-0-1
1968	1,128,951	459,480	669,471	61%	3-7
1969	1,124,228	523,473	600,755	60%	5-5
1970	1,128,715	624,832	503,823	57%	4-6
1971	1,085,746	621,132	464,614	52%	4-6
1972	1,185,517	655,090	530,427	57%	6-5
1973	1,340,088	710,261	629,827	61%	5-5-1
1974	1,134,888	785,185	349,703	56%	5-6
1975	1,547,872	819,013	728,859	55%	7-3-1
1976	1,418,535	1,073,570	344,965	24%	7-4
1977	1,571,914	965,888	606,026	47%	4-6-1
1978	1,581,411	1,007,588	573,823	40%	7-3-1
1979	1,929,593	1,180,368	749,225	40%	8-3
1980	2,258,981	1,280,563	1,078,418	37%	5-6

Sources: Michigan State University Annual Financial Reports,  
FY 1950-1980. (East Lansing, MI: 1950-1980);  
Michigan State Spartans 1980 Football Media Guide.  
(East Lansing: MSU Sports Information Service, 1980).

\*First full year of athletic scholarships awarded strictly  
on athletic ability.

Table 3.5

TRENDS IN M.S.U. FOOTBALL EXPENSES  
(In Thousands of Dollars)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>AVERAGE FOOTBALL EXPENSES</u>		<u>PER CENT OF TOTAL EXPENSES</u>		<u>RATIO TO 1960 DOLLARS</u>	
	<u>CLASS A</u>	<u>MSU</u>	<u>CLASS A</u>	<u>MSU</u>	<u>CLASS A</u>	<u>MSU</u>
1961	\$352	\$309	51%	30%	107	97
1965	460	401	52%	32%	139	126
1969	668	523	51%	28%	202	165
1973	793	710	48%	32%	240	224
1977	1045	966	47%	31%	317	304

(Source of Class A Data: Mitchell Railborn. Revenues and Expenditures of Intercollegiate Athletics. (Shawnee Mission, KS: NCAA, 1978) p.33.

Football revenues were really expected to support the rest of the intercollegiate athletics program. But times have changed and in FY 1980 football revenues accounted for only 37 percent of the total Athletic Department's revenues. (See Table 3.4) Today, a financially successful athletic program is dependent upon not only a profitable football program, but also on profitable basketball and hockey programs and other sources of income such as television royalties, concessions, parking fees, event programs, summer clinics and alumni contributions. Nevertheless, the potential \$1 million dollar surplus that football can generate remains crucial to the fiscal health of Michigan State University's Athletic Department because the hockey and basketball surpluses are not substantial enough to support the rest of the non-revenue producing sports.

In the past, student fees accounted for 15 to 20 percent of the total revenues earned by the Athletic Department. But even this trend is changing. For the last several years, student fees have accounted for only 7 to 8 percent of all revenues. As economic conditions in the state of Michigan continue to decline, M.S.U. will find it more and more difficult to support the athletic program out of the University's General Fund. As a result, reliance on auxiliary revenues from summer clinics and the press box and on stable revenues from hockey and basketball will have to increase.

WINNING, SPECTATORS AND REVENUES

Athletic department concerns with balancing the budget are not only centered on cutting expenses, they are also centered on generating sufficient revenues. The two most important factors influencing game attendance and revenue production are the size of the facility and/or the perceived quality of the athletic team.

Until recently, regardless of how successful the hockey team was, hockey was unable to generate enough revenue to support itself. (See Table 3.6) Yet once a new ice arena was opened in 1974, hockey's financial picture changed dramatically as revenues more than quadrupled. In recent years, hockey revenues have dropped because of the quality of the team, but the hockey program no longer loses money.

(Insert Table 3.6)

Basketball has never consistently generated surplus revenue. Fiscal success has occurred when athletic success has occurred. (See Table 3.7) During the 1950's when Michigan State basketball was moderately successful, basketball profits were generated in seven out of ten seasons. Yet from 1959/60 through 1976/77, basketball was operated at a substantial deficit, at its height losing more than \$70,000 annually. But the Earvin Johnson era turned the tide for basketball. Since 1978, basketball has generated an annual



Table 3.6

M.S.U. HOCKEY REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES, FY 1951-1980

<u>FISCAL YEAR</u>	<u>REVENUES</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>RECORD</u>
1951	\$ 000	\$ 8,373	-	6-11
1952	1,991	10,562	-	7-13
1953	3,095	13,570	-	5-16-1
1954	6,021	12,815	-	8-14-1
1955	6,680	19,610	-	9-17-1
1956	7,460	15,401	-	5-18
1957	5,362	18,619	-	7-15
1958	6,787	16,137	-	12-11
1959	11,913	18,152	-	17- 6-1
*1960	4,584	40,107	-	4-18-2
1961	11,514	40,580	-	11-16
1962	11,706	39,364	-	13-11
1963	14,197	40,968	-	11-12
1964	6,114	41,483	-	8-17-1
1965	16,009	50,189	-	17-12
1966	13,217	57,654	-	16-13
1967	13,115	59,053	-	16-15
1968	15,417	59,760	-	11-16-2
1969	17,527	59,892	-	11-16-1
1970	20,756	97,518	-	13-16
1971	25,906	102,025	-	19-12
1972	35,483	100,120	-	20-16
1973	55,082	108,660	-	23-12
1974	55,743	115,982	-	23-14
@1975	247,297	159,140	+	22-17-1
1976	275,069	168,705	+	23-16-2
1977	361,430	193,643	+	14-21-1
1978	355,635	204,026	+	7-27-1
1979	275,947	244,325	+	15-21
1980	280,606	264,733	+	14-24

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Source: Michigan State University Annual Financial Reports, FY 1951-1980. (East Lansing, MI: 1951-1980); Michigan State Spartans 1980/81 Hockey Media Guide. (East Lansing, MI: 1981).

\* First full year of athletic scholarships based on athletic ability.

@ Year the Munn Ice Arena opened.

profit exceeding \$200,000. But sustaining this profit level is dependent upon the continued success of the basketball team.

(Insert Table 3.7)

But basketball and hockey will never, under the best of circumstances, be able to generate enough profit to support Michigan State's twenty-one non-revenue producing varsity sports. The financial reports of the M.S.U. Athletic Department reveal that football has consistently generated more income than it has spent. But to attract quality teams and to meet Big Ten admissions requirements, it was necessary to increase the stadium's seating capacity. In 1948, the stadium was enlarged from 26,000 to 51,000; and by 1957, seating capacity was increased to 76,000. Yet football game attendance has averaged more than 70,000 only five times since 1957.<sup>9</sup> Michigan State enjoyed winning records during only two of those seasons and average attendance has sometimes been low when the football team has been successful.

More so than for basketball and hockey, football attendance has secondary financial consequences. First, with respect to the Athletic Department, if game attendance is down, parking, concession stand and program revenues will also be down. Second, when the football team loses and attendance goes down, the economic climate in the surrounding community is also affected. According to M.S.U.'s Director of the School of Hotel, Restaurant and

Table 3.7

M.S.U. BASKETBALL REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES, FY 1951-1980

<u>FISCAL YEAR</u>	<u>REVENUES</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>RECORD</u>
1951	\$ 18,687	\$ 19,497	-	10-11
1952	24,662	11,657	+	13- 9
1953	20,428	18,688	+	13- 9
1954	26,668	25,847	+	9-13
1955	15,256	26,205	-	13- 9
1956	45,283	26,695	-	13- 9
1957	51,808	30,058	-	16-10
1958	55,689	34,266	+	16- 6
1959	62,115	31,858	+	19- 4
*1960	47,706	80,413	-	10-11
1961	58,476	69,171	-	7-17
1962	55,138	86,167	-	8-14
1963	59,756	90,399	-	4-16
1964	68,237	89,440	-	14-10
1965	59,622	96,111	-	15-18
1966	68,162	104,293	-	15- 7
1967	87,412	109,440	-	16- 7
1968	58,291	114,520	-	12-12
1969	76,612	125,678	-	11-12
1970	59,345	156,066	-	9-15
1971	53,441	127,846	-	10-14
1972	69,100	138,955	-	13-11
1973	92,479	127,621	-	13-11
1974	108,591	141,749	-	13-11
1975	114,025	157,043	-	17- 9
1976	107,991	179,832	-	14-13
1977	147,744	199,931	-	12-15
1978	372,665	244,212	+	25- 5
1979	479,759	261,799	+	26- 6
1980	475,768	269,765	+	12-15

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Sources: Michigan State University Annual Financial Reports, FY 1951-1980. (East Lansing, MI: 1950-1980); Michigan State Spartans 1980/81 Basketball Media Guide. (East Lansing: MSU Sports Information Service, 1980).

\* First full year of athletic scholarships awarded strictly on athletic ability.

Institutional Management,

"This is mega-bucks to the hospitality industry. The difference between winning and losing seasons is 25% in sales."<sup>10</sup>

One local member of the business community stated that it's not just the number of fans that stay home, but the quality. Business entertaining at football games, "high rollers", stops if the quality of football being played is poor.<sup>11</sup>

But the relationship among winning, game attendance and revenues for football is complex. It is clear that successful teams exert a positive influence on revenues, but Michigan State's football revenue producing potential is yet to be exhausted, even during the best of seasons. In the early 1950's M.S.U. purchased highway billboards around the state to sell football tickets, but that pales in comparison to the marketing techniques of Don Canham, the University of Michigan's Athletic Director who has become the prototype of the modern athletic director. Canham has turned Michigan's athletic program into a multi-million dollar operation by marketing all aspects of Michigan's athletic program: souvenirs, parking, tickets, and even the facilities which are leased to professional teams for exhibition games and practice.<sup>12</sup>

#### FUNDRAISING TRENDS

Winning teams and an aggressive public relations campaign not only solidify the financial base of the athletic program, they also affect the fundraising capabilities of an institution. Fundraisers in the M.S.U.

Development Fund have acknowledged that university fundraising is simplified if the University's revenue-producing sports are winning championships.<sup>13</sup> Everyone loves to be associated with a winner.

In spite of the political uses John Hannah made of intercollegiate athletics, the actual use of athletic events for fundraising activities is a very recent phenomenon. Hannah firmly believed in the concept of "public education". Consequently, his fundraising activities were concentrated on the State Legislature. He believed Michigan State should be supported by the State, not by the private sector. Because fundraising activities did not begin to mature at Michigan State until the mid-1970's the relationship between winning athletic teams and contributions to the University is somewhat muddled. A complicating factor is that during the 1960's, the University's alumni were increasing at a tremendous rate as a result of the overall growth of the University. Nevertheless, the data in Table 3.8 are worth discussing.

(Insert Table 3.8)

During the 1960's, the Development Fund experienced declining revenue growth during three seasons. In two of those seasons, 1962 and 1968, both the football and basketball teams had poor records. The slight decline in revenues for 1963 is more difficult to explain because the football team did have a good season and was in contention

Table 3.8

M.S.U. DEVELOPMENT FUND CONTRIBUTIONS, 1957-FY 79

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CONTRIBUTIONS</u>	<u>PERCENT INCREASE</u>	<u>FOOTBALL RECORD</u>	<u>BASKETBALL RECORD</u>
1957	\$ 90,014	--	8-1	16-10
1958	101,114	12.3%	3-5-1	16- 6
1959	117,038	15.7%	5-4	20- 4
1960	225,035	92.3%	6-2-1	10-11
1961	502,540	123 %	7-2	7-17
1962	293,061	-41.7%	5-4	8-14
1963	277,976	- 5 %	6-2-1	4-16
1964	416,715	50 %	4-5	14-10
1965	754,275	81 %	10-1	5-18
1966	905,803	20 %	9-0-1	17- 7
1967	1,373,828	51.7%	3-7	16- 7
1968	935,851	-31.9%	5-5	12-12
1969	1,016,396	8.6%	4-6	11-12
1970			4-6	9-15
@1971	1,683,032	65.6%	6-5	10-14
*FY73	3,258,285	48.3%	6-5	13-11
FY74	2,515,291	-22.8%	5-6	13-11
FY75	2,819,849	12.1%	7-3-1	17- 9
FY76	3,214,866	14 %	7-4	14-13
FY77	3,844,574	19.6%	4-6-1	12-15
FY78	4,571,118	18.9%	7-3-1	25- 5
FY79	5,485,431	20.0%	8-3	26- 6

\*Includes 18 months in the switch from calendar year accounting to fiscal year accounting.

@ Percent increase is over two years

Source: Michigan State University Development Fund.  
Annual Reports, 1957-1978/79. (East Lansing)

for the Big Ten championship until the last game of the season. The Development Fund experienced dramatic growth during 1960, 1961, 1965, and 1967. In 1960 and 1965 the football team was nationally ranked as one of the top ten teams, and in 1961 they were ranked in the top twenty.<sup>14</sup> In 1967, the football team had a very poor season, but the basketball team was successful.

Analyzing fundraising for the 1970's is more difficult. Regardless of the success or failure of the football and basketball teams, the Development Fund has experienced steadily increasing revenues.<sup>15</sup> This was due primarily to the increasing sophistication of the Development Fund Staff. Regional solicitation committees were established in the early 1970's and by 1977 an ambitious enrichment drive was begun.

The Ralph Young Fund for Athletics is a designated fund within the Development Fund. It was begun in 1960 to raise money to support athletic scholarships. But analyzing these data has the same problems associated with it as the Development Fund. The early growth figures are due more to the fact that the fund was being started rather than to the success of any team and the growth during the 1970's was due primarily to improved solicitation techniques. Between 1965 and 1966, when the football was ranked number one in the nation, the fund grew by more than 40 percent. (See Table 3.9) And during Earvin

Johnson's tenure at Michigan State, contributions grew by 58 percent and 35 percent in successive years.

(Insert Table 3.9)

As an enticement to contribute to this Fund, certain benefits are offered to large contributors: excellent seats for football and basketball games, parking passes and personal access to the players. But this is not much of an enticement if the teams aren't winning. In the late 1960's, when both the football and basketball teams were mediocre, contributions did not even keep up with inflation.

The fundraising data for Michigan State University are certainly not as impressive as one might expect. However, it is necessary to consider the relative infancy of fundraising programs at this campus. The officials of the Ralph Young fund do admit that winning teams make their job easier and that increases do occur as a result of athletic success. But they are quick to add that creative solicitation techniques can minimize the problems associated with intermittently poor seasons.<sup>16</sup>

#### FISCAL MANAGEMENT OF ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT RESOURCES

In the past, university administrators looked for big-name former athletes and coaches to serve as athletic directors for their fundraising abilities. Today, it is also necessary for this former hero to possess financial business acumen. Clarence "Biggie" Munn, M.S.U.'s athletic director from 1954-1971, was cut in the old mold: a



Table 3.9

RALPH YOUNG FUND CONTRIBUTIONS, 1960-1980/81

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CONTRIBUTIONS</u>	<u>PER CENT INCREASE</u>	<u>FOOTBALL RECORD</u>	<u>BASKETBALL RECORD</u>
1960	\$ 1,437	---	6-2-1	10-11
1961	959	---	7-2	7-17
1962	2,153	125%	5-4	8-14
1963	31,468	1362%	6-2-1	4-16
1964	65,844	109%	4-5	14-10
1965	93,388	42%	10-1	5-18
1966	103,294	11%	9-0-1	17- 7
1967	132,172	28%	3-7	16- 7
1968	131,231	- 1%	5-5	12-12
1969	135,860	4%	4-6	11-12
1970	174,577	28%	4-6	9-15
1971	192,602	10%	6-5	10-14
FY73	279,557	45%	6-5	13-11
FY74	228,358	18%	5-6	13-11
FY75	342,046	50%	7-3-1	17- 9
FY76	357,376	5%	7-4	14-13
FY77	431,000	21%	4-6-1	12-15
FY78	680,000	58%	7-3-1	25- 5
FY79	918,000	35%	8-3	26- 6
FY80	856,000	- 7%	5-6	12-15
FY81	962,000	12%	4-7	12-15

Source: Michigan State University Development Fund.  
Annual Reports 1960-1978/79. (East Lansing);  
 Terri Fossum, Ralph Young Scholarship Fund.

successful coach with a large alumni following. But according to John Hannah, he was not skilled at managing the personnel and financial matters of the department.<sup>17</sup> Despite highly successful football and basketball programs, Michigan State's athletic program had difficulty breaking even by the late 1950's. Between 1950 and 1960 athletic expenses had grown more rapidly than revenues. (See Table 3.1)

While preparing the 1958/59 budget, L. L. Frimodig, the sports business manager, tried to convince Munn that the way to cut costs was to reduce the activities of the minor sports by limiting their schedules, mode of travel, long distance phone budgets, and tenders.<sup>18</sup> But Munn was committed to supporting the minor sports, even at the expense of football. He suggested that costs be reduced by limiting the football training table and by limiting football recruiting expenses.<sup>19</sup> For the 1960/61 academic year, the Athletic Department was limited in the following ways to cut expenses:<sup>20</sup>

1. Except for football, basketball and hockey competition was limited to Big Ten competition, NCAA championships and competition with Notre Dame and Michigan schools;
2. No support for any sports clubs not included in the intercollegiate program;

3. Air travel only for meets of more than 500 miles from M.S.U., using University buses whenever possible;
4. Meal allowances for teams could not exceed the University travel limits;
5. No staff reimbursements for AAU meetings; and
6. Athletic aid budget cut by \$25,000.

The Athletic Department once again faced difficult financial times during 1981 and Doug Weaver, the current athletic director confronted many of the same problems that faced John Hannah and Biggie Munn. The University's 1981/82 General Fund appropriation to the Athletic Department was cut by \$50,000 and Weaver had to decide from where the cuts would come. Most of the money was cut from the academic support services budget. But savings were accrued by implementing many of the same restrictions that were imposed during 1960/61: mode of travel was significantly restricted, and athletic scholarship aid was cut (this was a result of the NCAA regulations).<sup>21</sup>

### CONCLUSION

It is clear that intercollegiate athletics at Michigan State University is considered a high priority by the administration, but that difficult financial times have in the past challenged the existing structure and will continue to do so. Athletic department revenues and expenditures are precariously balanced and the Athletic Department has been continuously challenged to cut costs and raise revenues.

In additon, football, while still the primary revenue producer, has played a gradually diminishing role.

There is a definite relationship among winning seasons, game attendance and the generation of revenues. For hockey to generate sufficient revenues to break even it was necessary for a larger facility to be built. And for basketball to break even, the quality of the team and success on the court were deciding factors. But the revenue-producing potential of football has not been developed to its fullest even with a large facility and successful teams. The one additonal factor is the creative marketing of the product.

While most University fundraisers admit that highly successful football and basketball teams are a fundraising asset, that the athletic events are useful fundraising tools, the data for Michigan State is inconclusive as to the relationship between winning seasons and the amount of donations to the Development Fund.

ENDNOTES

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5. Raiborn.

6. Ibid., p. 12.

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13. Michigan State University Development Fund. 1978/79 Annual Report. (East Lansing, MI: 1979), p. 60.

14. Michigan State Spartans 1981 Football Media Guide. p. 91.

15. The 1971 percent increase is for 1971 and 1970 and is consequently inflated. The FY 73 figure is also inflated because it includes 18 months for the switch from calendar year accounting to fiscal year accounting. Consequently, the FY 74 decline is exaggerated.

16. Conversation with Terry Fossum of the Ralph Young Fund, East, Lansing, February 1981.

17. Interview with John Hannah, East Lansing, March 1981.

18. L. L. Frimodig to Biggie Munn, March 18, 1958. In Biggie Munn Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

19. Biggie Munn to L. L. Frimodig, March 19, 1958. In Biggie Munn Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE TICKET OUT OF THE GHETTO: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERCOLLEGIATE PARTICIPATION AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND OCCUPATIONAL SUCCESS

"Rarely does a professor flunk a student--the student usually flunks himself..."

Biggie Munn

"Our grants-in-aid are awarded for academic achievement and need. By academic achievement--if he can read and write. By need--well, we don't take a boy unless we need him."

Duffy Daugherty

Sport is commonly thought of as a social leveler providing many athletes with social opportunities that might not otherwise be available to them. The main purpose of this chapter is to examine whether or not sport has in fact provided Michigan State University's athletes with educational and occupational opportunities they might not have received otherwise. When possible, the experiences of athletes will be compared with non-athletes. The following components of the athletes' academic experiences will be examined: support services, graduation and attrition rates, grade point averages, academic majors and advanced degrees earned. In addition, the number of athletes who have pursued professional athletic careers, the lengths of those careers and the other occupations of M.S.U.'s athletes will be explored.

During the last fifteen years, the educational experiences of collegiate student-athletes has become a popular focus for study and discussion. Journalists, such as John Underwood of Sports Illustrated, have written exposes on the "sham" of the educational experiences of college athletes; budding young sociologists have examined the educational attainment of college athletes for masters and doctoral theses; and scholars, university officials and athletic conferences have studied the comparative academic experiences of athletes and non-athletes.<sup>1</sup> Though all of these studies are interesting and informative,



developing data that are comparable across institutions is quite difficult.

Much of the research has looked only at varsity letterwinners or only at those athletes who have received financial aid, while others have included all athletes a university certifies as eligible for intercollegiate competition according to NCAA and conference rules. In a previous study, I examined male letterwinners who were freshman from Fall 1960 through Fall 1964 and who had competed in football, basketball, track and wrestling.<sup>2</sup> This study expands on the previous study by including letterwinners and non-letterwinners for football, basketball, baseball and hockey and who were freshmen at Michigan State University between Fall 1950 and Fall 1974 and all correlative transfer students.<sup>3</sup>

#### ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VARSITY ATHLETES

During the last ten years, Michigan State University's Athletic Department has created and developed an active, though sometimes flawed, structure for academically advising and counseling all student-athletes. In 1972, partially in response to the demands of black athletes, an Assistant Director for Academic Affairs was hired to advise and counsel student-athletes; to monitor and coordinate the tutoring program for athletes; and to monitor Michigan State's compliance with Big Ten academic regulations. Prior to 1972, the coaches were primarily responsible for seeing that academically deficient athletes received

proper tutoring and were "guided" into appropriate course offerings.

Some coaches took their role as educators very seriously. During the Spring practice in 1948, then football head coach, Clarence "Biggie" Munn left the following piece of advice in each athlete's locker:<sup>4</sup>

"Rarely does a professor flunk a student--the student usually flunks himself through the following factors:

1. "Missing classes.
2. "Failure to pay attention to lectures and outlining lectures.
3. "Failing to hand in daily classroom work.
4. "Failure to budget his time.
5. "His failure to keep up a good notebook and to have it outlined in such a way so he can review the coursework for examinations.
6. "Lack of application and putting off until tomorrow what can be done today.
7. "Attitude in class. Always know your professor and if you miss because of a football trip do not use football as an excuse. Always make up your work after trips and find out what you can study while you are away. You will find that all professors will cooperate with you in this way as they realize that athletics are a part of college life.
8. "After every class review the lecture as a whole and then pick it apart in detail and remember definitions and dates. You are here for a college education. Remember there have been more potential all-Americans who have flunked out of school than there have been actual all-Americans.
9. "This spring and with the warm weather coming on it will become increasingly difficult for you to study and spend your time in the library,

"but if you are going to make a contribution to the football team next fall, you must be eligible. There isn't anyone in the world who can do this for you--you must do it yourself!"

But not all coaches have been cut in the mold of Biggie Munn. Many of the athletes spoken with as part of an earlier study, indicated that the coaches "strongly" urged them to take physical education classes rather than substantive coursework. The coaches' rationale was that the athletes were not academically prepared to handle many college level courses.<sup>5</sup> One former football player said that "most of the guys don't want to take physical education courses, but they get so hung up in phys. ed. because of the Athletic Department, that by their senior years, they are only freshmen academically."

An examination of the athletes' transcripts, reveals that many athletes who had attended Michigan State during the 1960's had enrolled in what seemed to be an unusual number of physical education classes. Many would enroll for 10 to 12 credits of physical education coursework each quarter during their freshmen and sophomore years to strengthen their grade point averages and would not begin to take substantive courses until the junior year. Current Big Ten regulations (the "meaningful progress rule") and University regulations ("minimum academic progress steps") require that the athletes approach the junior year having fulfilled minimum basic education requirements. These regulations do provide certain safeguards against the kind of abuses mentioned above, but this system is not foolproof. Many athletes have stated that to this day they are guided to

"easy" courses and/or "easy" professors in order to keep up their grade point averages to remain eligible.

Having the coaches involved with advising the athletes also created a number of problems because the majority of coaches were more concerned with maintaining the athlete's eligibility rather than with his academic progress. One former athlete commented in an interview on what he perceived the coaches' attitudes towards academics to be:

"I think it's their job to try and emphasize the importance of education. But their main job, for which they get their livelihood, is to stress sports. Football is the most important thing you, as an athlete, do. I don't care what anybody says-- it's your bread and butter. Particularly if you are on scholarship. You didn't get a scholarship to go to Michigan State because (the coach) liked you or because you were academically superior. You got a scholarship to go to Michigan State to play football... under the guise of getting an education...The coaches' primary job is to coach. He doesn't get paid to be an academic advisor, to be a dean, to be a sociologist. He gets paid to be a coach, period...If it were any different, you would play football at the convenience of academics."

Even though the current system of advising the athletes is a significant improvement over past practices, problems still remain. The Assistant Athletic Director for Academic Affairs works for the coaches, and his primary responsibility is to keep the athletes eligible for competition. As long as the academic support program for athletes is part and parcel of the Athletic Department, the academic advisors are caught in the middle between the academic welfare of the student-athlete and the athletic welfare of the coach and team.

The academic advisor also has no say as to who is admitted to the University. Although the advisor may be involved with the recruitment process, he or she is not the one responsible for bringing the athlete to campus or for deciding if the athlete is academically capable of succeeding at Michigan State. Clarence Underwood, who has held the position of Assistant Athletic Director for Academic Affairs since 1972, has said that many student-athletes are admitted to college without the requisite training or ability to succeed:

"These men are helped into the college ranks by the NCAA rule that requires only a 2.0 overall high school grade average for a player to be eligible for intercollegiate sports participation and scholarship aid. This 2.0 average may not be indicative of the student-athletes' ability to do college work..."<sup>6</sup>

One way the system tries to compensate for poor college preparatory training is through the advising and tutoring program established by Underwood and his staff. All incoming freshmen and transfer student-athletes, both male and female, must attend a one credit class for ten weeks as a group orientation to the University, and to the rules, policies, and regulations that will guide their careers at Michigan State. Various speakers are brought in each week to discuss specific aspects of academic life at M.S.U. including deans, professors and librarians.

Gary Shaw, in Meat on the Hoof, a book about his experiences as a student-athlete at the University of Texas, mentions that athletes were required to attend

study hall as a means of teaching them discipline and as a means of regimenting their lives.<sup>7</sup> Mandatory study hall at Michigan State is required of all first year student-athletes and of all upperclassmen experiencing academic difficulties. Attendance is taken and study hall is offered two hours per night four nights per week. Shaw criticizes such programs for "babying" the athletes and for being too regimented but many athletes may, in fact, need this type of discipline if they are to ever survive academically. Underwood maintains that many of the students learn such good study habits at study hall, that some attend voluntarily. But the success of study hall depends on the study hall supervisor. If the study hall is noisy and chaotic anyone seriously trying to accomplish academic work would be easily distracted. Study hall can also become a hangout if the students are not required to study and/or meet with tutors.

Twice each quarter, progress reports are requested from each of the athlete's instructors. Ideally, the instructor lets the advisor know how well the athlete is doing. If an athlete is experiencing some difficulty, the advisor arranges for tutoring. But in practice, many faculty resent receiving these report cards and ignore them. In addition, many of the classes may have 100 or more students enrolled in them and the instructor does not know who the athlete is or how well he or she is doing.

The program has other flaws. Until recently, there was very little control over the quality of tutoring the athletes received. A number of the tutors needed to be tutored themselves, and some of the more diligent tutors have indicated that they have become quite frustrated when their "charges" refuse to do the work or miss scheduled appointments.

Underpinning the success of any academic support program must be not only the quality of the counselors, tutors, and the overall program, but also the desire and motivation of the students themselves. Within the athletic environment, one additional factor is required: the active cooperation and support of the coaching staff. If the coaches are not willing to back up the academic support staff, then the entire program can become ineffective. The athlete can always run back to the coach for a reprieve. Today, many of the coaches seem to be committed to the notion of "student-athletes" but that is not always the case. When word gets out that a coach can get a grade changed for an athlete, the credibility of the academic support system is severely jeopardized. But when a coach will bench an athlete for failing academically, the advising staff can amass the necessary influence to sustain a successful academic program.

Athletes experience many distractions in college that the average student does not--an often grueling physical schedule. Besides the strains of competition and travel

during the season, the major sports, and several of the minor sports require tremendous physical and emotional output from their athletes during the entire academic year. During the off-season, the athletes are required to stay in shape by working out and engaging in weight training activities two to three hours per day. While some students might find the regimentation instrumental in helping them to better budget their time, for many athletes who are not good students, this schedule can become an insurmountable obstacle to academic success. The ultimate litmus test for the success of an academic support program is the retention, attrition and graduation rates of the population being served.

#### RETENTION AND ATTRITION

Educational literature is filled with research on the attrition and persistence of college students. Some national bodies, such as the American Council on Education and the American College Testing Program have conducted national studies.<sup>8</sup> Michigan State University's Office of Institutional Research (OIR) has also examined various aspects of attrition at M.S.U. for the last twenty-five years. The data collected for this section will be compared with data collected for other segments of the student body by OIR.

Differences in the attrition rates by race, sport played and cohort group were examined for the 1,642 M.S.U. athletes included in this study.<sup>9</sup> Across sports, black



athletes leave school at a higher rate than white athletes; and football players leave school at a higher rate than athletes in any other sport. (See Table 4.1) In a study of students admitted to Michigan State University under a special admittance program during the late 1960's, the attrition rate ranged from 55 to 71 percent.<sup>10</sup> The attrition rate for athletes, regardless of race is significantly below this figure. Because the athletes are recruited to M.S.U. primarily to contribute to the athletic program (as opposed to being given an opportunity to attend college), the athletic program undoubtedly works very hard at keeping the athletes enrolled.

(Insert Table 4.1)

The higher attrition rates for black athletes may be attributed to several factors. First, black athletes may be admitted to the University with poorer test scores and high school g.p.a.'s than white athletes. With their academic predictors of success questionable, their college persistence may suffer. Second, many of the black athletes may, for the first time in their lives, find themselves in a predominantly white environment. The problems they may encounter as a result of their race could also account for a higher attrition rate.<sup>11</sup>

According to standards established by the M.S.U. Admissions Office, 50 percent of the athletes have been consistently admitted to M.S.U. with special consideration

Table 4.1

RETENTION AND ATTRITION OF STUDENT ATHLETES AT  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY BY SPORT AND RACE,  
COHORTS 1950-1974

	RETENTION					DROPPED BY M.S.U. FOR GRADES					TRANSFERRED OUT					PERSONAL REASONS				
	WHITE		BLACK		TOTAL	WHITE		BLACK		TOTAL	WHITE		BLACK		TOTAL	WHITE		BLACK		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	%	#	%	#	%	%	#	%	#	%	%	#	%	#	%	%
FOOTBALL (847)	431	64%	83	49%	60%	100	15%	35	21%	15%	17	3%	1	.5%	2%	129	19%	51	30%	21%
BASKETBALL (216)	151	70%	29	53%	66%	29	13%	18	33%	17%	12	6%	0	0	4%	24	11%	8	15%	21%
BASEBALL (351)	275	80%	6	67%	80%	24	7%	1	11%	7%	4	1%	0	0	1%	39	11%	2	22%	12%
HOCKEY (232)	170	73%	0	0	73%	21	9%	0	0	9%	1	.4%	0	0	.4%	40	17%	0	0	17%
TOTAL (1642)	1027	70%	118	50%	66%	174	12%	54	23%	14%	35	2%	1	.4%	2%	232	16%	61	26%	18%

(high school g.p.a. below 2.49 and/or poor test scores) whereas only three or four percent of the rest of the student body is similarly admitted.<sup>12</sup> Since the attrition rate of "high risk" students is greater than for other students, one could assume that athletes should experience a significantly higher attrition rate than non-athletes. But the facts belie this. After six quarters of enrollment, athletes admitted to the University with special consideration were enrolled in good standing (with a g.p.a. greater than 2.0) at a significantly higher rate than all other categories of students admitted with consideration.<sup>13</sup> In two surveys of students who had left Michigan State, the primary reason given by male students was financial.<sup>14</sup> Athletes, as a specific category of student, may have lower attrition rates than non-athletes because their athletic scholarship reduces the financial burden. The academic support system as well as the possible directing of athletes to "easy" courses may also account for a smaller attrition rate.

Another way to look at attrition data is to examine the differences by decade. (See Table 4.2) The attrition rates for football players have remained constant since the 1950's. The attrition rate for baseball, though lower than for all other sports during the 1960's and 1970's has, nevertheless, experienced a significant elevation during the 1970's. But the attrition rates for basketball and hockey have increased sharply during the 1970's. The

attrition rate for basketball has surpassed football and the attrition rate for hockey now matches football.

(Insert Table 4.2)

Several explanations for these drastic increases during the 1970's can be posited. First, basketball has experienced a tremendous influx of black athletes during the last fifteen years which might account for the attrition increases. But football has also experienced a significant increase in black players and has not experienced rising attrition rates; and hockey, which has no black athletes has also experienced a rising attrition rate. A second, but unproven hypothesis is that as a sport experiences increases visibility, success, and importance on campus, the academic success of its athletes suffers. Football has, since the late 1940's, been the most important, heavily endowed intercollegiate sport on campus. Basketball and hockey have really become "big-time" sports only within the last decade.

By 1970, the University altered its method of recording probation difficulties on the students' academic record cards. Prior to that time, the record cards contained a nearly complete record of students' academic progress. Students who are experiencing academic difficulties are frequently placed on academic probation as a means of monitoring their academic progress. Black athletes were placed on academic probation at consistently higher rates than were white athletes. (See Table 4.3) In addition, football players

Table 4.2

ATTRITION RATES OF STUDENT ATHLETES AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
BY SPORT AND DECADE,  
CONCRTS 1950-1974

SPORT	RETENTION				DROPPED BY M.S.U. FOR GRADES				TRANSFERRED OUT				DROPPED OUT (PERSONAL)			
	50's	60's	70's	tot	50's	60's	70's	tot	50's	60's	70's	tot	50's	60's	70's	tot
FOOTBALL n= (771) %=	128 60	175 58.7	154 58.7	457 59.2	28 13.2	60 20.1	44 16.7	132 17.1	10 4.7	5 1.6	3 1.1	18 2.3	45 21.3	58 19.4	61 23.2	164 21.2
BASKETBALL n= (244) %=	44 84.6	64 62.7	50 55.5	158 64.7	4 7.6	24 23.5	17 18.8	45 18.4	3 5.7	3 2.9	6 6.6	12 4.9	1 1.9	11 10.7	17 18.8	29 11.8
BASEBALL n= (304) %=	62 78.4	117 87.3	64 70.3	243 79.9	9 11.3	8 5.9	6 6.5	23 7.5	-- --	1 .7	3 3.2	4 1.3	8 10.1	8 5.9	18 19.7	34 11.1
HOCKEY n= (221) %=	47 83.9	68 79.0	47 59.4	162 73.3	3 5.3	6 6.9	12 15.1	21 9.5	-- --	1 1.1	-- --	1 .4	6 10.7	11 12.7	20 25.3	37 16.7
2 or more sports played n= (102) %=	23 76.0	38 74	16 72.0	77 75.4	1 3.3	2 4.0	-- --	3 2.9	3 9.9	-- --	-- --	3 2.9	3 9.9	10 20.0	6 28.0	19 18.6

were placed on probation more frequently than were athletes in other sports.

(Insert Table 4.3)

With success and an increased pressure to win, coaches recruit athletes to Michigan State with little regard for their academic ability. The end result is that athletes, with fewer possibilities for academic success, are admitted under special admittance programs to compete for Michigan State. Michigan State has historically made a commitment to admit less qualified students to the University. In spite of the fact that 50 percent or more of the athletes are admitted to M.S.U. with special considerations, fewer than 8 percent of all Special Admits are athletes.<sup>14</sup> Michigan State has not abused its special admittance programs by overloading it with athletes.

#### GRADUATION RATES

Numerous studies have compared the graduation rates of athletes with non-athletes. But except for the Spivey and Jones study, none have examined the long-term trends of student-athletes' graduation rates.<sup>15</sup> In order to compare the data collected for this study with the data from other studies, the data have been generated in a number of ways.

The graduation rate for all athletes included in this study is seventy-one percent and by sport are: 67 percent for football, 68 percent for basketball, 83 percent for baseball and 77 percent for hockey.<sup>16</sup> (See Table 4.4)

Table 4.3

ACADEMIC PROBATION RATES OF STUDENT ATHLETES AT  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY BY SPORT AND RACE,  
COHORTS 1950-1974

	WHITE	BLACK	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK	TOTAL	TOTAL
FOOTBALL							
n=	295	89	389	381	81	462	846*
%=	43.6%	52.4%	45.4%	56.4%	47.6%	54.6%	
BASKETBALL							
n=	77	35	112	136	20	156	268*
%=	36.1%	63.6%	41.8%	63.8%	36.4%	58.2%	
BASEBALL							
n=	82	2	84	171	3	174	258*
%=	32.4%	40.0%	32.6%	67.6%	60.0%	67.4%	
HOCKEY							
n=	93	---	93	139	---	139	232
%=	40.0%		40.0%	60.0%		60.0%	
TOTAL							
n=	523	124	647	796	102	898	1545*
%=	39.7%	54.9%	41.9%	60.3%	45.1%	58.1%	

\*Probation data was inadvertently not collected for 97 subjects.  
They are omitted from this table. 93 of the subjects were baseball  
players.

But an analysis of the data by decade of matriculation demonstrates that the graduation rate for all athletes across sports has been steadily declining since the 1950's. While the graduation rate of football players has declined only eight percent since the 1950's, the rate for basketball has declined thirty-one percent.

(Insert Table 4.4)

A partial explanation for such a dramatic decline is that athletes attending M.S.U. during the 1970's have had only six to ten years within which to graduate while the athletes who matriculated during the 1950's have had eleven to thirty years. But only a total of seven athletes from the 1950-1974 cohort groups were enrolled as undergraduate students at M.S.U. at the time these data were collected. In addition, for all those who have graduated, more than ninety percent graduated within seven years of their freshman entrance or within four years of their transfer entrance. (See Table 4.5) This rate holds true even for football players who, after four years from date of entrance, have a significantly lower graduation rate than all of the other athletes. Another possible explanation for the declining graduation rates is the visibility factor mentioned in the discussion of rising attrition rates: as a sport experiences increased visibility, success and importance on campus, the academic success of its athletes may suffer.



Table 4.4

GRADUATION RATES OF STUDENT ATHLETES AT  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY BY SPORT AND DECADE,  
COHORTS 1950-1974

	1950's		1960's		1970's		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
FOOTBALL								
Graduated	165	71.4	225	67.2	178	63.3	568	67.1
Not Graduated	66	28.6	110	32.8	103	36.7	279	32.9
BASKETBALL								
Graduated	50	87.7	79	68.7	56	56.6	185	68.3
Not Graduated	7	12.3	36	31.3	43	43.4	86	31.7
BASEBALL								
Graduated	83	87.4	139	88.5	70	70.7	292	83.2
Not Graduated	12	12.6	18	11.5	29	29.3	59	16.8
HOCKEY								
Graduated	53	86.9	74	82.2	52	64.2	179	77.2
Not Graduated	8	13.1	16	17.8	29	35.8	53	22.8
TWO OR MORE SPORTS								
Graduated	26	96.3	37	74.0	17	70.8	80	79.2
Not Graduated	1	3.7	13	26.0	7	29.2	21	20.8
TOTALS****								
Graduated	334	78.4	495	73.9	348	63.6	1176	71.6
Not Graduated	92	21.6	175	26.1	199	36.4	466	28.4

\*\*\*\*Numbers do not add up because multiple sport subjects included in each sport played and in "Two or More" category.

(Insert Table 4.5)

When compared by race, the overall graduation rate for white athletes is significantly higher than the rate for black athletes, 74 percent and 55.6 percent respectively. (See Table 4.6) Proportionately more white athletes than black athletes have graduated from Michigan State and this rate has declined more slowly for whites than for blacks. During the 1950's, black athletes graduated at a relatively high rate (70.5 percent), but that rate declined sharply during the 1960's and was only slightly higher during the 1970's. The data suggest that when the number of black athletes attending Michigan State grew sharply during the 1960's, the academic support system was not prepared to handle the educational problems many of these athletes brought with them to college. As the support system grew more sophisticated and responsive to the needs of black athletes, their graduation rates began to rise.

(Insert Table 4.6)

My previous study of the graduation rates of letter-winners in football, basketball, wrestling and track, differed sharply from the data in this study.<sup>17</sup> In the earlier study, eighty-two percent of the white athletes and only forty-seven percent of the black athletes had graduated. There are two explanations for these differences. First, the earlier study follows the athletes' careers for

Table 4.5

LENGTH OF TIME TO GRADUATE OF STUDENT ATHLETES AT  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY BY SPORT AND RACE,  
COHORTS 1950-1974

n= graduates only

<u>YEARS AFTER FRESHMAN ENTRANCE</u>	<u>FOOTBALL</u>		<u>BASKETBALL</u>		<u>BASEBALL</u>		<u>HOCKEY</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>CUM%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>CUM%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>CUM%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>CUM%</u>
4	110	19.4%	65	35.1%	112	38.4%	47	26.3%
5	324	76.4%	77	76.8%	131	83.2%	92	77.7%
6	62	87.3%	16	85.4%	28	92.8%	27	92.7%
7	29	92.4%	9	90.3%	5	96.6%	7	96.6%
8++	43	100.0%	18	100.0%	16	100.0%	6	100.0%

<u>YEARS AFTER FRESHMAN ENTRANCE</u>	<u>WHITES</u>		<u>BLACKS</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>CUM%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>CUM%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>CUM%</u>
4	309	29.5%	20	15.6%	329	28.0%
5	535	80.5%	61	63.3%	596	78.7%
6	108	90.8%	21	78.9%	129	89.6%
7	38	94.4%	9	86.7%	47	93.6%
8+++	58	100.0%	17	100.0%	75	100.0%
	1048		128		1176	

Table 4.6

GRADUATION RATES OF STUDENT ATHLETES AT  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY BY RACE AND DECADE,  
COHORTS 1950-1974

	1950's		1960's		1970's		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
WHITES/OTHERS								
Graduated	309	79.0%	448	77.4%	291	65.8%	1048	74.0%
Not Graduated	82	21.0%	131	22.6%	151	34.2%	364	26.0%
Total	391	100%	579	100%	442	100%	1412	100%
BLACKS								
Graduated	24	70.5%	47	51.6%	57	54.2%	128	55.6%
Not Graduated	10	29.5%	44	48.4%	48	45.8%	102	44.4%
Total	34	100%	91	100%	105	100%	230	100%

only five to eight years. As the data in Table 4.5 demonstrate, there is a significant change in the number of black athletes who graduate after eight years from entering M.S.U. Consequently, the time period covered was not long enough. Second, the number of black athletes included in the earlier study (43) was small enough that the figures for black athletes were highly volatile.

For the athletes in this study, earning a varsity letter had a significant effect on the athlete's graduation. (See Table 4.7) Letterwinners had a graduation rate of eighty-one percent while non-letterwinners graduated at only fifty-eight percent.<sup>18</sup> According to a statement made in an NCAA study of graduation rates, the higher graduation rates for letterwinners might demonstrate an ability to maintain academic eligibility.<sup>19</sup> Couching such a statement in terms of academic eligibility rather than in terms of academic ability is telling in and of itself. The sports with the highest visibility, football and basketball, also award the lowest percentage of varsity letters, and these sports also have the lowest graduation rates.

(Insert Table 4.7)

There also appears to be a significant relationship between the number of sports in which an athlete competes and his graduation rate. One hundred-one (101) athletes competed in two or more sports and graduated at a rate of nearly eighty percent. The higher graduation rates for

Table 4.7

GRADUATION RATES OF STUDENT ATHLETES  
AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
BY VARSITY AWARDS EARNED,  
1950-1974 COHORT GROUPS

	LETTERED		NOT LETTERED		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Graduated	770	81.3%	406	58.4%	1176	71.6%
Not Graduated	177	18.7%	289	41.5%	466	28.4%
Totals	947	100.0%	695	100.0%	1642	100.0%

letterwinners and multiple sport athletes might reflect the notion that bright, well-rounded individuals are successful in everything they attempt. Another hypothesis is that a greater emphasis is placed by the Athletic Department on keeping "star" athletes eligible than on less successful athletes. Letterwinners and two sport athletes become an investment to be protected.

According to a study conducted by Michigan State University, the graduation rate for all freshmen who were admitted in the Fall 1970 was sixty-four percent after seven years.<sup>20</sup> For all athletes who were admitted in 1970, the graduation rate was 63 percent after seven years. The Michigan State University Office of Institutional Research (OIR) periodically compiles graduation rate data for specific cohort groups. Table 4.8 presents the ORI results for non-athletes with the data on athletes collected for this study.

(Insert Table 4.8)

For the 1953 cohort group, athletes graduated at a significantly higher rate than non-athletes. But the differences between these two groups have declined sharply in twenty years. As the graduation rate for athletes has declined, the graduation rate for non-athletes has increased to the point where they are about equal. An explanation for the declining rates for athletes was discussed above. It was also suggested above that one reason for non-athletes

Table 4.8

GRADUATION RATES OF MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
STUDENTS SEVEN YEARS AFTER FIRST TIME  
ENROLLMENT

<u>Freshman Entrance Date</u>	<u>M.S.U. Student Athletes</u>	<u>M.S.U. Students*</u>
Fall 1953	80%	45%
Fall 1958	56%	46%
Fall 1970	63%	64%
Fall 1973**	61%	62%

\*Source: Michigan State University Office of  
Institutional Research

\*\*Fall 1973 data was calculated on 6 years after  
freshman entrance rather than 7 years because  
the Office of Institutional Research did not  
have 7 year data. In addition, the 1973 student  
data is only for male students. Male-female  
breakdowns were not available prior to 1973.



dropping out of school was financial--to earn more money. During the 1970's, the attrition rate for non-athletes may have decreased because the availability of jobs declined, so more students remained in school and consequently graduated. And during the 1960's and the height of the Vietnam War, these students may have stayed in school rather than be drafted.

Comparing the graduation rates of Michigan State's athletes with athletes attending other institutions must be approached carefully. Not only do institutions collect academic data in different forms, but institutions also have varying levels and expectations for graduation rates. For example, smaller, private institutions with restrictive admissions policies have graduation rates that are higher than rates for large, public institutions with more liberal admissions standards. At Michigan State University, it has become increasingly unrealistic to expect the average student to graduate four years after his or her entrance. This may differ sharply from the situation at other institutions.

The National Longitudinal Study of High School Students (NLS) is frequently cited as a benchmark for graduation rate studies.<sup>21</sup> Of those male students in the NLS who entered college, thirty-four percent had graduated after six years. If the same cohort group (1972) of M.S.U. athletes is examined, their graduation rate after six years was fifty-three percent. All of the figures for M.S.U., across both sport and race, exceed the figures in the NLS.

The NCAA has also recently completed a study of forty-six institutions that are primarily Division I schools. This study found that for those athletes who entered college as freshmen in the Fall 1975, 42.4 percent had graduated after five years.<sup>22</sup> Since data for Fall 1975 entrants were not collected for M.S.U. athletes, the NCAA data have been compared with the M.S.U. data collected for 1974 entrants. (See Table 4.9) Across all categories, M.S.U. graduation rates are higher than the mean rates for the other NCAA institutions. One could assume that this is as much a result of the academic support program at Michigan State as it is the result of the educational experience that face all M.S.U. students.

(Insert Table 4.9)

Harry Edwards and others have claimed that once an athlete's eligibility is completed, he is surreptitiously ignored and is not encouraged to complete his degree. The data from Michigan State suggest that this is not the case. During the 1950's and 1960's, if an athlete was within one year of completing his degree when his eligibility expired, he was provided with an 'undergraduate' assistant's position to help defray his educational expenses. More recently, these athletes have been provided with the guidance and assistance necessary to get a part-time job on campus or to receive a need-based scholarship and loan package through the University. In addition, many former athletes who do

Table 4.9

MSU-NCAA COMPARATIVE GRADUATION RATES  
FIVE YEARS AFTER FRESHMAN ENTRANCE

<u>SPORT</u>	<u>MSU 1974 COHORT</u>	<u>** NCAA 1975 COHORT</u>
Football	51.5%	42.9%
Basketball	53.2%	41.9%
Baseball	69.2%	48.6%
Non-athlete	53.0%	41.5%

\*\*Source: "Athletes' Graduation Rates Surpass  
Non-athletes'", NCAA News, 30 April  
1981, p. 1.

graduate and who attend graduate school at M.S.U. in Health, Physical Education and Recreation are awarded graduate teaching assistantships.

The Athletic Department has also made a concerted effort to encourage former athletes who have not graduated to return to school to complete their degrees. Several years ago, Clarence Underwood wrote to all of the former athletes that he could locate who had not graduated. He invited them to return to M.S.U. to complete their degrees and offered to assist them in identifying relevant funding opportunities. Underwood told me that the response rate was disappointing; only a handful of the former athletes responded.

#### ACADEMIC MAJORS

In their study of the University of Illinois, Spivey and Jones indicted the educational experiences of the black athletes because they were overrepresented in physical education majors.<sup>23</sup> Harry Edwards is also critical of the physical education phenomenon because he maintains that between 1954 and 1971, more than 2,000 black coaches lost their jobs due to the integration of previously all-black schools.<sup>24</sup> But in spite of all of this, it is not unreasonable to expect that athletes might major in a field in which they excel.

At Michigan State University, a large percentage of athletes majored in physical education.<sup>25</sup> (See Table 4.10) Nevertheless, this figure is significantly less than the data presented in the Spivey and Jones study. When examined

by sport played, some interesting differences appear. Forty-one percent of all football players majored in physical education. This is the largest portion across all sports and majors. Higher percentages of hockey and basketball players majored in business than athletes in any of the other sports.

(Insert Table 4.10)

White and black football players major in physical education at approximately the same rates, 41.1 percent and 41.7 percent respectively. (See Table 4.11) But the differences are more marked in basketball: 19.4 percent for whites and 36.4 percent for blacks. Major differences do exist between blacks and whites with respect to the College of Business. More than twenty-five percent of white basketball players and nearly twenty percent of white football players majored in business, but less than ten percent of the black athletes did. One of the most interesting results is the data on the College of Urban Development. More than 9 percent of the black athletes majored in the College of Urban Development while no whites did. This is all the more interesting because Urban Development has been a college only since 1972, yet in that short time has garnered 9 percent of all of the black athletes. One could hypothesize that black athletes have been guided to this major because it was assumed they would be "given a break" by the faculty. But one could also hypothesize that black athletes chose urban development as

Table 4.10

UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR COLLEGE OF STUDENT ATHLETES AT  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY BY SPORT,  
1950-1974 COHORTS

COLLEGE	FOOTBALL		BASKETBALL		BASEBALL		HOCKEY		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Univ. Coll.	---	---	14	5.2%	58	13.4%	6	2.6%	78	4.8%
Agric./NS	54	6.4%	22	8.1%	13	3.0%	18	7.8%	107	6.5%
Business	145	17.1%	60	22.1%	62	14.3%	52	22.4%	319	19.4%
Engineering	19	2.2%	13	4.8%	15	3.5%	9	3.4%	55	3.3%
Human Ecology	1	.1%	---	---	---	---	1	.4%	2	.1%
Natural Science	31	3.7%	21	7.7%	18	4.2%	19	8.2%	89	5.4%
Vet. Medicine	2	.2%	2	.7%	1	.2%	1	.4%	6	.4%
Education	349	41.2%	62	22.9%	89	20.6%	77	33.2%	577	35.1%
Comm. Arts	27	3.2%	12	4.4%	20	4.6%	11	4.7%	70	4.3%
Arts & Let.	24	2.8%	12	4.4%	11	2.5%	6	2.6%	53	3.2%
Madison	---	---	---	---	1	.2%	---	---	1	.1%
Briggs	---	---	---	---	1	.2%	---	---	1	.1%
Social Science	132	15.6%	46	17.0%	142	32.8%	33	14.2%	253	15.4%
Human Medicine	1	.1%	1	.3%	---	---	---	---	2	.1%
Ost. Medicine	---	---	---	---	1	.2%	---	---	1	.1%
Urban Dev.	16	1.9%	5	1.8%	1	.2%	---	---	22	1.3%
Missing	2	.2%	1	.3%	---	---	---	---	6	.4%
TOTALS	847	100%	271	100%	433	100%	232	100%	1642	100%

a major because it directly relates to their personal interests.

(Insert Table 4.11)

Data were also collected on advanced degrees earned by the athletes. This data need to be analyzed carefully because complete post-undergraduate degree data are available only for those athletes who have earned graduate degrees at Michigan State University.<sup>26</sup> Surprisingly, black athletes have earned graduate degrees in greater proportions than their white counterparts. (See Table 4.12) White football players have earned the fewest number of graduate degrees.

(Insert Table 4.12)

If the data are analyzed by decade, 16 percent of the 1950's and 17.5 percent of the 1960's athletes earned advanced degrees. For the 1970's the rate is only eight percent, but that is to be expected given the short amount of time that has elapsed. Across each cohort group, fourteen to eighteen percent of all athletes have earned graduate degrees. The two exceptions are the 1969/70 and 1970/71 groups where twenty-seven percent of the athletes earned a graduate degree.

As might be expected, the single most frequent advanced degree major is physical education, but educational administration, marketing and finance also make respectable showings. Smaller percentages of blacks (9 percent) major

Table 4.11

UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR COLLEGE OF STUDENT ATHLETES AT  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY BY RACE AND SPORT,  
1950-1974 COHORTS

COLLEGE	FOOTBALL				BASKETBALL			
	WHITE		BLACK		WHITE		BLACK	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Univ. Coll	---	---	---	---	12	5.5%	2	3.6%
Agric./NS	44	6.5%	10	5.9%	18	8.3%	4	7.3%
Business	134	19.8%	11	6.5%	55	25.5%	5	9.1%
Engineering	16	2.4%	3	1.8%	12	5.5%	1	1.8%
Human Ecology	1	.1%	---	---	---	---	---	---
Natural Science	27	4.0%	4	2.4%	21	9.7%	---	---
Vet. Medicine	2	.3%	---	---	1	.5%	1	1.8%
Education	278	41.1%	71	41.7%	42	19.4%	20	36.4%
Comm. Arts	18	2.7%	9	5.3%	10	4.6%	2	3.6%
Arts & Let.	18	2.7%	6	3.5%	9	4.2%	3	5.5%
Social Science	99	14.6%	33	19.4%	36	16.7%	10	18.1%
Human Medicine	1	.1%	---	---	---	---	1	1.8%
Urban Dev.	---	---	16	9.4%	---	---	5	9.1%
Missing	2	.3%	---	---	---	---	1	1.8%
TOTAL	677	100%	170	100%	216	100%	55	100%



Table 4.12

ADVANCED DEGREES EARNED BY STUDENT ATHLETES AT  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY BY SPORT/RACE,  
1950-1974 COHORT GROUPS

	GRADUATE DEGREE		NO GRADUATE DEGREE		TOTAL	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
FOOTBALL	89	10.5%	758	89.5%	847	100%
White	65	9.6%	612	90.4%	677	100%
Black	24	14.0%	146	86.0%	170	100%
BASKETBALL	31	14.0%	187	86.0%	218	100%
White	23	14.0%	140	86.0%	163	100%
Black	8	15.0%	47	85.0%	55	100%
BASEBALL	52	15.0%	299	85.0%	351	100%
White	49	14.0%	293	86.0%	342	100%
Black	3	33.3%	6	66.7%	9	100%
HOCKEY	29	12.5%	203	87.5%	232	100%

in educational administration than do white football and basketball players (16 percent), and black athletes seem to major in the less lucrative fields such as education than do whites.

#### GRADE POINT AVERAGES

Another means of measuring the athletes' academic success is to examine the grade point averages they have earned in college. At the close of each quarter, the Registrar's Office, to certify the athlete's eligibility for the Big Ten, compiles cumulative grade point averages (g.p.a.) for each athlete. Team g.p.a.'s are also compiled and are compared with those of all male undergraduate students. It was not possible to gain access to any reports since 1965/66, but Table 4.13 displays those from 1953/54 through 1965/66. During the 1950's and 1960's, athletes consistently received higher g.p.a.'s than male non-athletes. This may be partially accounted for by the athletes' academic majors because significant differences in g.p.a.'s by academic major do exist. One other noticeable trend is the increasing g.p.a.'s of football players and the decreasing g.p.a.'s of basketball players. Apart from curriculum changes, there appears to be no explanation for this phenomenon.

(Insert Table 4.13)

Final, cumulative g.p.a.'s were calculated for each of the athletes in this study. These g.p.a.'s have been analyzed by race, sport and college. (See Table 4.14)

Table 4.13

SELECTED COMPARATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGES OF  
STUDENT ATHLETES AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

SPORT	53/54	54/55	55/56	56/57	57/58	58/59	63/64	64/65	65/66
BASEBALL									
Winter					2.43	2.29	2.41	2.43	2.44
Spring	2.50	2.37	2.41	2.41	2.43	2.32	2.39	2.41	2.41
BASKETBALL									
Fall	2.45	2.87	2.53	2.53	2.50	2.59	2.42	2.47	2.37
Winter					2.56	2.57	2.42	2.44	2.36
FOOTBALL									
Winter	2.23	2.28	2.29	2.29	2.34	2.30	2.35	2.44	2.43
HOCKEY									
Fall					2.31	2.23	2.26	2.33	2.35
Winter	2.44	2.34	2.35	2.35	2.32	2.20	2.24	2.30	2.29
ALL SPORTS	2.43	2.43	2.48	2.48	2.45	2.43	2.42	2.49	2.46
MALE STUDENTS									
Fall		2.34	2.36	2.38	2.24	2.28		2.36	2.34

Source: Michigan State University. Office of the Registrar.  
Comparative Academic Report for Michigan State University  
Intercollegiate Teams, 1953/54-58/59 and 1963/64-65/66.  
 East Lansing, MI.

Black athletes consistently earned lower g.p.a.'s than white athletes and white baseball players generally earned higher grades than athletes in other sports.

(Insert Table 4.14)

All of the data on grade point averages presented here should be analyzed with caution. First, comparable data for the male student body population was not available. Second, for a large number of the sport, race and academic major categories, the "N" was less than ten, making the g.p.a.'s quite volatile. And third, grade inflation has been a significant feature at M.S.U. since the mid-1960's, but data were not available on athlete g.p.a.'s since the mid-1960's (Table 4.14) to measure the effect on grade inflation on athlete g.p.a.'s.

#### PROFESSIONAL ATHLETIC CAREERS

Complete information is available on all of those Michigan State athletes who have played major league professional football, basketball, baseball and hockey. Information on semi-professional, minor league and farm team professional participation is incomplete and has been omitted from this study. Given the record of Michigan State's athletes of the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's, a high school athlete attending M.S.U. today has a one in ten chance of becoming a professional athlete.<sup>27</sup> A total of 160 out of 1642 athletes played at least one year of major league professional sports and three athletes have competed

Table 4.14

GRADE POINT AVERAGES OF STUDENT ATHLETES AT  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY BY COLLEGE AND RACE,  
1950-1974 COHORTS

COLLEGE	TOTAL		FOOTBALL		BASKETBALL		BASEBALL		HOCKEY
	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE
Agriculture	2.30	2.05	2.35	*2.02	2.27	*2.10	2.25		2.30
Business	2.40	2.14	2.38	2.13	2.43	*2.12	2.44	*2.21	2.37
Engineering	2.57	*2.39	2.60	*2.39	2.69	*2.39	2.62		*2.25
Human Ecology	*2.62		*3.06						*2.18
Natural Science	2.64	*2.41	2.76	*2.36	2.63		2.70	2.50	2.42
Veterinary Medicine	*2.74		*2.69		*2.44		*3.15		*2.75
Education	2.33	2.17	2.30	2.17	2.29	2.11	2.39	*2.56	2.35
Communications	2.53	2.13	2.52	*2.12	2.55	*2.16	2.67		2.27
Arts & Letters	2.52	2.19	2.29	*2.36	*2.53	*1.91	2.74	*2.03	*2.81
Madison	*2.71						*2.71		
Briggs	*2.23						*2.23		
Social Science	2.47	2.22	2.44	2.21	2.52	2.25	2.54	*2.21	2.38
Human Medicine	*2.82	*2.82	*2.82			*2.82			
Urban Development		2.30		2.25		*2.30		*3.01	
Mean Total	2.35	2.10	2.35	2.17	2.43	2.14	2.49	*2.42	2.35

\* N less than 10

professional in three sports. (See Table 4.15) According to a recent study, the odds for the average freshman are only 1.5 in 100.<sup>28</sup>

(Insert Table 4.15)

Of the hockey players who competed on major league professional teams, 87.5 percent were members of post-1965 cohort groups. Most professional hockey players prior to that time did not attend college, but instead worked their ways up the professional ladder through minor league hockey teams. The way to major league professional baseball is still not primarily via collegiate competition. Very few professional baseball players are drafted from the college ranks. Most are recruited directly out of high school on to the farm club of a major league team. One high school player who was recruited to play baseball at Michigan State, turned down his athletic scholarship to play professional baseball right out of high school. He, nevertheless, attended Michigan State, graduated, and went on to earn a Ph.D. while we was playing professional baseball.

College football and basketball teams are still considered unofficial "farm clubs" for the professional leagues. Michigan State has only recently begun to contribute basketball players to the professional ranks, but football is quite another story altogether. For the period 1954-1971, no other Big Ten team contributed as many athletes to professional football teams as did Michigan State.<sup>29</sup>

Table 4.15

M.S.U. ATHLETES' PROFESSIONAL ATHLETIC CAREERS  
(1950-1974 Cohort Groups)

SPORT	NUMBER WITH AT LEAST ONE YEAR ON PRO TEAM	% OF MSU PLAYERS WHO PLAYED SPORT
Football	113	13.0%
Basketball	7	2.6%
Baseball	19	5.0%
Hockey	<u>24</u>	<u>10.0%</u>
Total	160*	9.7%

\* Total doesn't add up because of multiple sports  
played by single athletes

In spite of the large number of football players who earned spots on professional teams, 26.5 percent survive for only one season. (See Table 4.16) Several writers have calculated the average career lengths for professional athletes.<sup>30</sup> Michigan State's athletes fare no better nor worse than the athletes in other studies. Very few of M.S.U.'s athletes have been able to sustain professional athletic careers of ten years or more. In fact, the median, across sport, is below three years.

The short careers of professional athletes is an indication that very few athletes will be able to use a professional career to progress up the social ladder. By the time most of these athletes are twenty-six years old, they must begin to think about starting new careers.

(Insert Table 4.16)

#### CURRENT OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

Current occupations were identified for 35 percent of the athletes in this study, but the results vary from sport to sport. (See Table 4.17) Since most of the data were collected from Alumni-Donor Records, the responses are much as one might find from a mailed survey, for the data included are voluntarily submitted by the subjects. Since the response rate is so low, these data should be viewed very cautiously; the results probably reflect the current status of the more occupationally successful athletes.

(Insert Table 4.17)



Table 4.16

DURATION OF PROFESSIONAL ATHLETIC CAREERS FOR FORMER  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY ATHLETES,  
1950-1974 COHORTS

SPORT	AVERAGE CAREER LENGTH	MEAN CAREER LENGTH	% 1 YEAR OR LESS	% 2 YEARS OR LESS	% 5 YEARS OR LESS	% 10 YEARS OR MORE
Football n=113	4.79 years	3.06 years	26.5%	41.5%	69.0%	15.0%
Basketball n=7	4.6 years	1.5 years	42.9%	57.1%	71.4%	14.3%
Baseball n=19	4.8 years	2.25 years	36.8%	47.3%	57.8%	26.3%
Hockey n=24	3.67 years	2.80 years	16.7%	33.4%	87.5%	4.2%

Table 4.17

KNOWN OCCUPATIONS OF FORMER MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT ATHLETES  
1950-1974 COHORTS

	FOOTBALL			BASKETBALL			BASEBALL			HOCKEY
	White	Black	Total	White	Black	Total	White	Black	Total	Total
OCCUPATION KNOWN										
n=	218	44	262	73	16	89	139	3	142	121
%=	32.0	26	30.9	33.0	29.0	32.8	40.5	33	40.5	52.0
OCCUPATION UNKNOWN										
n=	457	124	581	143	38	181	201	6	207	109
%=	67.5	73	68.6	66	69	66.8	59	67	59	47
DECEASED										
n=	2	2	4	---	1	1	2	---	2	2
%=	.5	1	.5	---	2	.4	.5	---	.5	1
TOTALS										
n=	677	170	847	216	55	271	342	9	351	232
%=	100	100	100	100	100		100	100		100

More athletes eventually chose a business occupation than any other. (See Table 4.18) But sports related occupations (professional athlete, school, college or professional head or assistant coach, physical education teacher) follows closely behind. A slightly higher percentage of basketball players go into business (42 percent), a slightly higher percentage of football players go into sports (43 percent) and a higher percentage of basketball players go into health-related fields ( 11 percent) than do other athletes. White athletes are better represented in business fields than are blacks, but blacks are better represented in health-related fields and education administration than are whites.

(Insert Table 4.18)

It is also possible to examine the data another way to see if particular sports contribute to an occupational class at a higher rate than its overall proportion of the population. (See Table 4.19) Football players are overrepresented as professional athletes and college and professional coaches, and are underrepresented in business, health fields and law.

(Insert Table 4.19)

Attending Michigan State also has provided many athletes with a head start on a career. At least twenty-four former football players have been employed at M.S.U. at some time

Table 4.18

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSES OF FORMER MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
STUDENT-ATHLETES BY RACE AND SPORT,  
1950-1974 COHORTS

OCCUPATION		FOOTBALL			BASKETBALL			BASEBALL			HOCKEY		TOTAL	
		White	Black	Total	White	Black	Total	White	Black	Total	White/Total	White	Black	Total
Sports	n=	74	14	88	16	2	18	46	1	47	30	166	17	183
Related	%=	34	32	34	22	13	20	33	33	33	25	30	27	30
Business	n=	88	9	97	30	7	37	50	---	50	46	214	16	230
	%=	40	20	37	41	44	42	36	---	35	38	39	25	38
Education	n=	17	4	21	5	1	6	16	---	16	20	58	5	63
Non-Sport	%=	8	9	8	7	6	7	12	---	11	17	11	8	10
Education	n=	8	2	10	1	2	3	4	---	4	2	16	3	19
Administration	%=	4	5	4	1	13	3	3	---	3	2	3	5	3
Health	n=	4	3	7	8	2	10	6	2	8	2	20	7	27
Related	%=	2	7	3	11	13	11	4	67	6	2	4	11	4
Attorney	n=	7	---	7	4	---	4	3	---	3	4	18	---	18
	%=	3	---	3	6	---	5	2	---	2	3	3	---	3
Miscellaneous	%=	9	27	11	12	11	12	10	---	10	13	11	24	12
Total	%=	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4.19

SPORT CONTRIBUTIONS TO OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES  
1950-1974 COHORT GROUPS

	<u>FOOTBALL</u>	<u>BASKETBALL</u>	<u>BASEBALL</u>	<u>HOCKEY</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
% of Total Population	51.5%	16.5%	21.3%	14.1%	100%
% of Those in Business	45.5%	17.4%	23.5%	21.6%	100%
% of Those Professional Athletes	68.0%	8.0%	32.0%	12.0%	100%
% of Those Coaches in Schools/PE Teachers	50.0%	10.0%	28.0%	18.0%	100%
% of Those College Coaches	61.0%	16.0%	19.0%	19.0%	100%
% of Those Pro Coaches	86.0%	---	29.0%	---	100%
% of Those in Educational Adminstration	52.6%	15.8%	21.1%	10.5%	100%
% of Those in Health Fields	26.9%	38.5%	30.8%	7.7%	100%
% of Those Attorneys	38.9%	22.2%	16.7%	22.2%	100%

as assistant or head coaches, faculty, administrative support staff, a member of the Board of Trustees or as Director of Public Safety; six former basketball players have been hired as assistant basketball coaches; three former baseball players as assistant coaches, director of alumni relations or faculty; four tracksters as track coaches, faculty or trainers; two soccer players as coaches; two tennis players as head tennis coach or director of intramural facilities; a former wrestler as chair of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation; and a former hockey player as an assistant coach.

### CONCLUSION

During this century, the role of intercollegiate sport within academia has been periodically challenged.<sup>31</sup> But one of the more prevalent rationales for continuing intercollegiate sport is that participation within it provides athletes with opportunities for education and advancement that they might not otherwise have. This chapter has examined the academic and occupational experiences of Michigan State's major sport athletes during the last thirty years. Have M.S.U.'s athletes been exploited for their athletic ability without receiving anything in return?

In spite of the problems inherent in an academic support system administered by an athletic department, Michigan State's athletic academic support system has been moderately successful. With the employment of qualified and dedicated advisors and tutors, the athletes are contin-

usually encouraged to succeed in the classroom as well as on the field. In addition, many of the coaches have been supportive of the counseling programs and have reinforced the importance of academic work. But many athletes are still guided to "easy" courses or sympathetic instructors.

Some critics might counter that an academic support program that so closely monitors athletes' academic progress and that tries to closely regiment their academic habits merely babies them and further sets them apart from the student body. But since the mid-1960's, Michigan State University has developed extensive academic support services to meet the needs of academically disadvantaged students who have been admitted under special admittance programs.<sup>32</sup> Since more than fifty percent of the athletes are admitted to the University with special academic consideration, the need for special academic support programs is certainly warranted. This support program has been so successful, that specially admitted athletes have performed better than non-athletes.

Across all sports, black athletes were found to have higher attrition rates, lower graduation rates, and lower grade point averages than their white counterparts and football players generally performed less well than athletes in other sports. Nevertheless, when athletes are compared with non-athletes, it was found that athletes generally graduated and/or persisted at the University at the same or better rates than non-athletes. During the 1950's and

1960's athletes significantly outperformed non-athletes. But more recent data show that their performances are equalizing. Given the fact that a higher proportion of athletes than non-athletes were special admissions, one could assume that either the academic support system is working or that athletes are given academic "breaks." Both factors are probably involved.

With respect to academic majors, athletes appear to be slightly overrepresented in physical education majors, but they are also overrepresented in business majors. In football, black and white athletes are equally represented in physical education, but blacks are disproportionately underrepresented in the lucrative fields such as business. This is also true for the athletes current occupations. While the largest number of athletes chose majors in physical education and business, the largest number of careers were also represented in this fields.

But to understand the relationship between inter-collegiate participation and academic and occupational success, further work needs to be done. First, it would be useful to correlate test scores with graduation rates. Second, it would also be useful to fully analyze the athletes' transcripts to plot their academic progress, selection of major and course selection. How many athletes enter college with the desire to major in zoology but find they must switch to physical education because they can't devote the necessary time to their coursework to stay eligible? Future



studies might track a sample group of athletes' academic progress from high school. Third, it would also be illuminating to correlate academic and occupational success with parental socio-economic status.

Much of this chapter compared the successes and failures of black athletes with white athletes. Generally, across all categories, black athletes were found to perform less well than white athletes. These differences may be as a result of poor preparation for college in high school or the result of institutional racism that may pervade the University and the Athletic Department. It was not possible to document the black athletes' previous educational experiences, but the following chapter does explore a number of non-educational issues surrounding the black athlete at Michigan State University.

## ENDNOTES

1. John Underwood. "The Writing Is On The Wall", Sports Illustrated 52 (May 19, 1980): 36-44, 47-72; Bobby A. Frazier. "The Current Socio-Economic Status of Black Football and Basketball Athletes Who Enrolled As Freshmen at Bethune-Cookman College and Florida A & M University During the Years, 1965-1970" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Florida State University, 1979); Beth Janet Shapiro. "The Black Athlete at Michigan State University" (M.A. Thesis, Michigan State University, 1970); Charles Tolbert II. "The Black Athlete in the Southwestern Conference; A Study of Institutional Racism" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Baylor University, 1975); J. H. Harrison. "Intercollegiate Football Participation and Academic Achievement", paper presented at the Southwestern Sociological Association Meetings, Dallas, Texas, April 1976; Donald Spivey and Thomas A. Jones, "Intercollegiate Athletic Servitude: A Case Study of the Black Illini Student-Athletes, 1931-1967", Social Science Quarterly 55 (1975): 939-947; John E. Stecklien and Logan Dameron. Intercollegiate Athletics and Academic Progress: A Comparison of Academic Characteristics of Athletes and Non-Athletes at the University of Minnesota. (University of Minnesota Bureau of Institutional Research, 1965); Harry Webb. "Reaction to Loy", in Aspects of Contemporary Sport Sociology (North Palm Beach, FL: The Athletic Institute, 1969), pp. 120-131; American College Testing Program, Research Services Department. National Collegiate Athletic Association Varsity Student-Athlete Survey. (Iowa City: American College Testing Program, Spring 1975).

2. Shapiro; The sports selected for this particular study were chosen because a large number of black athletes competed in them.

3. Time and money would not permit me to study all varsity sports. I therefore decided to study all athletes who competed in major, or revenue, sports plus baseball. See Appendix A for a complete description of the population.

4. Biggie Munn to Football Team, 1948. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

5. Shapiro, p. 10.

6. Clarence Underwood. "MSU Athletes Not Exploited; Point of View", State Journal, 17 February 1980, p. A-15.

7. Gary Shaw. Meat on the Hoof. (N.Y.: St. Martins Press, 1972), p. 42.

8. Alexander Astin. College Dropouts: A National Profile. (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1972).

9. Athletes were considered to have left school if they dropped out for three or more consecutive quarters, if they transferred or if they were dropped by the University for poor grades. Identifying transfer students is most often not possible. Transfers are, therefore, included in the "dropped out" category. Some students in this category returned to college and graduated. They are, nonetheless, included in this section as dropouts. The same hold true for some athletes who were dropped for poor grades.

10. Margaret Lorimer. A Report of the Persistence and Progress of Developmental Program Students Admitted Fall 1967 through Fall 1972 and Some Comparisons of Developmental Students with Other Students. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Office of Institutional Research, May 11, 1973), p. 6.

11. Charles V. Willie and Arline Sakuma McCord. Black Students at White Colleges. (N.Y.: Praeger, 1972); Black Students on White Campuses: The Impact of Increased Black Enrollment. (Ann Arbor: Survey Research Center, University of Michigan, 1978), pp. 6-9.

12. Lorimer. A Study of the Persistence and Performance of First Time Freshmen Admitted on Criteria Other Than High School G.P.A.'s and Test Scores. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Office of Institutional Research, 1972), p. 6.

13. Ibid., p. 9

14. John A. Centra. A Survey of the Reasons Michigan State University Students Withdraw; A Preliminary Report. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Office of Institutional Research, August 1, 1964), pp. 2-3; Joseph G. Rossmeier. A Survey of the Reasons Which Influenced Some Students Not To Re-enroll at Michigan State University; A Preliminary Report Survey. (East Lansing: Michigan State University office of Institutional Research, February 1973) pp. 8-9.

15. Spivey and Jones.

16. Freshmen and transfer entrants are included in this table together. In addition, athletes who competed in two sports are listed within each sport competed. Consequently, the sum of the subject of football, basketball, baseball and hockey add up to a figure greater than 1642.

17. Shapiro, p. 12.

18. 56 percent of the football players, 48 percent of the basketball players, 59 percent of the baseball players and 80 percent of the hockey players earned varsity letters.

19. American College Testing Program. Research Services Department. National Collegiate Athletic Association Varsity Student-Athlete Survey. (Iowa City: Spring, 1975), p. 5.

20. Lorimer. Persistence, Performance, and Major Preferences of Students Who Entered Michigan State University as Freshmen, Fall 1970-1976. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Office of Institutional Reserach, August 1978)

21. Bruce K. Eckland and Joseph M. Wisenbaker. A Capsule Description of Young Adults Four and One-Half Years After High School (National Longitudinal Study). (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, 1979)

22. "Athletes' Graduation Rates Surpass Nonathletes'", NCAA News, 30 April 1981, p. 1.

23. Spivey and Jones, pp. 942-943.

24. Harry Edwards. "The Olympic Project for Human Rights: An Assessment Ten Years Later", Black Scholar, (March/April 1979): 5.

25. 94 percent of the athletes who majored in Education majored in physical education. Education in this analysis is nearly synonymous with physical education.

26. The data presented here include information gleaned from the Michigan State University Registrar's Office and from Alumni-Donor records. If an alumnus' occupation was listed as physician and he did not earn his degree at Michigan State, he was nevertheless recorded as having earned an advanced degree.

27. By "professional athlete", I am referring to an athlete who earns a salary for competing on major league professional football, basketball, baseball and hockey teams.

28. Harold Blitz. "The Drive to Win: Careers in Professional Sports, Occupational Outlook Quarterly, 17 (1973) 2: 3-16.

29. Roger Treat. The Official Encyclopedia of Football. 10th Edition. (N.Y.: Barnes and Co., 1972), pp. 319-596. Apparently, this was the last year this work was available in the Michigan State University Library.

30. Blitz; Edwin Rosenberg. "Sports as Work: Characteristics and Career Patterns", Sociological Symposium, 30 (Spring 1980): 48-49; Don Atyeo. Blood and Guts: Violence in Sports, (N.Y.: Paddington Press, 1979), p. 222.

31. George Hanford. "Controversies in College Sports", Annals of the AAPSS, 445 (1979): 68.

32. Michigan State University. Committee on Supportive Services for Minority Students and Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds. Report to the Provost. (East Lansing: July 1979).

CHAPTER V  
RACISM AND THE BLACK ATHLETE

"I was the representative of a lot of Negro boys who wanted to play football, who wanted to go to college, who wanted to be somebody; and as their representative, I had to show that I could take whatever they handed out...That was part of the struggle."

Paul Robeson

"Let's face it, M.S.U. couldn't put a team on the field and win without any black guys on it. You got to have the good black athletes to win. That's why they're recruiting them in the south now."

Jimmy Raye (M.S.U.'s  
first black quarterback,  
1964-68)

During the last twenty years, blacks have become increasingly visible in both intercollegiate and professional sports. These arenas have, on the surface, become integrated faster than other segments of society. Some might suggest that the integration of sport is an indication of the meritocratic nature of athletics. But the real conditions that have faced black collegiate and professional athletes belie this.

In recent years, a number of studies have documented the racism that has plagued America's black athletes.<sup>1</sup> In one such study, several types of discrimination were identified: inferior housing, stereotyping and other forms of discriminatory behavior on the part of the coaches (e.g.: position stacking, playing quotas, ineffective communication with white coaches, intolerance of political and religious views and dating and grooming habits), and social isolation.<sup>2</sup> A number of these issues, as they relate to Michigan State University's black athletes, will be explored in this chapter.<sup>3</sup>

#### ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

As early as 1913, Michigan Agricultural College fielded a football team that started a black athlete: in the early 1950's, Michigan State was the second Big Ten team with a black on the basketball team; and it was one of the few colleges ever to play a black hockey player.<sup>4</sup> Though black athletes have consistently contri-

buted to the athletic fortunes of Michigan State, they did not begin to appear on campus in any significant numbers until the 1950's when black athletes were actively recruited by Biggie Munn, Duffy Daugherty and Pete Newell.<sup>5</sup>

Black football and basketball players were not only recruited but were also regularly fielded during the 1940's and 1950's, a practice which few other universities followed. Michigan State developed a reputation as a "good place" for black athletes. Initially, this reputation was transmitted through the recruitment process. Interviews with former athletes and my own observations showed that black athletes at M.S.U. and black alumni encouraged other blacks to attend the University. Most black athletes willingly cooperated with the Athletic Department in the recruitment process because they believed the coaching staff to be sensitive to the needs of blacks or they believed they would get to play even though they were black.

But the athletic staff also recognized that Michigan State would also benefit significantly from recruiting black athletes. The black athletes from the 1950's and 1960's who were interviewed for this study indicated that Michigan State was the only major university to recruit them. The Athletic Department identified a pool of talented athletes that were little recruited. Duffy Daugherty admitted that recruiting became much more difficult for him when integration became more prevalent at other major institutions.<sup>6</sup>



Despite this, black athletes did not find Michigan State to be free from racism. While recognizing the problems of racism on campus and in the East Lansing area, all of the black athletes interviewed still believed that these problems were outweighed by the strong support given black athletes by the Lansing black community, by the fairness of the coaching staff, or by the positive aspects of attending a university like Michigan State. As one athlete who attended Michigan State during the 1960's said,

"When you do something, you want to get the maximum out of it and you won't get any recognition at a small school...it's just an experience going to a larger school like Michigan State...State's a big melting pot with learning experiences outside of the classroom. You may feel as if you are swallowed, but it prepares you to be competitive in life."

During the 1960's, Michigan State began to capitalize on its reputation as a good place for black athletes to attend school. The Spartan Sports Service of the Department of Information Services released press statements that bragged about the number of blacks on M.S.U.'s athletic teams. In 1962, one of these releases found its way into print in Muhammed Speaks:

"...Michigan State University probably has the largest delegation of Negro football players in the history of major college football. MSU's 70-man grid squad features 17 highly rated Negro players."<sup>7</sup>

A February 1963 release stated that "outstanding Negro athletes are adding speed and point potential to Michigan State's basketball and indoor track teams this winter"

and a release dated August 17, 1963 began with the statement, "Sixteen Negro players figure to play prominent roles in Michigan State's football production this fall."

Harry Edwards claims that universities recruit black junior college athletes in disproportionate numbers to reduce their costs.<sup>8</sup> But Michigan State University has sparingly recruited junior college athletes. Between 1950 and 1978, only 139 of 1,642 athletes in football, basketball, baseball and hockey were junior college transfers. And black junior college athletes have not been disproportionately recruited: 8.3 percent of the white athletes and 8.7 percent of the black athletes in this study were transfer students. Dr. Gwendolyn Norrell, Director of Michigan State's Testing Office and M.S.U.'s Faculty Representative to the Big Ten stated that Michigan State's policy has been that it was better for an athlete to develop his or her education skills at Michigan State rather than at a junior college where the curriculum might not match up to that at M.S.U.<sup>9</sup>

#### PLAYING STATUS

A number of authors have documented that race is a factor in an athlete's playing status, and that black athletes to be recruited by major white institutions, must possess greater athletic ability than white athletes.<sup>10</sup> But these studies have examined only one or two seasons rather than long term trends. Because of seasonal variations, it is necessary to examine playing status trends

over time rather than to rely on data from only one or two seasons. At Michigan University, the number of black athletes on the football and basketball teams has undergone significant change over the last thirty years.

Black participation in basketball grew significantly during the 1960's. (See Table 5.1) During the 1950's only 9 percent of all basketball players were black. But for the 1960's, the figure grew to 15 percent and by the 1980's, the figure has consistently hovered about 50 percent. At one point during the 1970's, 83 percent of the basketball team were black. Data from Michigan State supports the Yetman and Eitzen study which states that blacks are disproportionately represented in the starting lineups of NCAA basketball teams.<sup>11</sup> Since 1950/51, higher percentages of the black athletes have been starters than white athletes. But since the 1979/80 season, the percentages of white and black athletes to start has reversed: higher percentages of white athletes are starting.

(Insert Table 5.1)

Black participation in football has steadily increased. (See Table 5.2) Blacks comprised only 4 percent of the team during the late 1940's, but were 32 percent of the team during the 1980's. Yet the percent of blacks to start compared with the percent of whites to start has remained reasonably close. There are exceptions during

Table 5.1

M.S.U. VARSITY BASKETBALL PLAYING STATUS  
BY RACE 1950/51-80/81

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>SIZE OF TEAM</u>	<u>% BLACK</u>	<u>% STARTERS BLACK</u>	<u>% BLACKS TO START</u>	<u>% WHITES TO START</u>
1950/51	15	00%	00%	00%	33% (5)
1951/52	15	7% (1)	20% (1)	100% (1)	28% (4)
1952/53	18	6% (1)	20% (1)	100% (1)	23% (4)
1953/54	18	11% (2)	20% (1)	50% (1)	25% (4)
1955/56	18	6% (1)	20% (1)	100% (1)	23% (4)
1956/57	18	00% (0)	00% (0)	00% (0)	28% (5)
1957/58	17	18% (3)	20% (1)	33% (1)	36% (4)
1958/59	15	27% (4)	40% (2)	50% (2)	27% (3)
1950's	134	9% (12)	18% (7)	58% (7)	27% (33)
1959/60	15	20% (3)	20% (1)	33% (1)	33% (4)
1960/61	16	19% (3)	00% (0)	00% (0)	38% (5)
1961/62	17	18% (3)	20% (1)	33% (1)	28% (4)
1962/63	16	19% (3)	40% (2)	66% (2)	25% (3)
1963/64	18	22% (4)	40% (2)	50% (2)	21% (3)
1964/65	16	25% (4)	80% (4)	100% (4)	8% (1)
1965/66	17	29% (5)	60% (3)	60% (3)	17% (2)
1966/67	18	28% (5)	60% (3)	60% (3)	15% (2)
1967/68	18	33% (6)	80% (4)	67% (4)	8% (1)
1968/69	16	38% (6)	60% (3)	50% (3)	20% (2)
1960's	167	25% (42)	46% (23)	55%	22% (27)
1969/70	15	27% (4)	40% (2)	50% (2)	27% (3)
1970/71	15	27% (4)	40% (2)	50% (2)	27% (3)
1971/72	14	29% (4)	60% (3)	75% (3)	20% (2)
1972/73	18	61% (11)	100% (5)	45% (5)	00% (0)
1973/74	19	68% (13)	100% (5)	39% (5)	00% (0)
1974/75	12	83% (10)	100% (5)	50% (5)	00% (0)
1975/76	15	73% (11)	100% (5)	45% (5)	00% (0)
1976/77	15	66% (10)	60% (3)	30% (3)	40% (2)
1977/78	16	56% (9)	80% (4)	44% (4)	14% (1)
1978/79	14	50% (7)	60% (3)	43% (3)	28% (2)
1970's	153	54% (83)	74% (37)	45% (37)	19% (13)
1979/80	14	43% (6)	40% (2)	33% (2)	38% (3)
1980/81	13	54% (7)	40% (2)	28% (2)	50% (3)
1980's	27	48% (13)	40% (4)	31% (4)	43% (6)

certain seasons (1959, 1963, 1965, 1966, 1971) but, overall, the differences have been minimal.

(Insert Table 5.2)

All the same, the data for football should be analyzed with caution because of the confusion surrounding the one and two platoon rule changes during the 1950's and 1960's. Until 1953, football teams were allowed to field two platoons, one for offense and one for defense. But the game programs only listed the starting lineups for the offensive platoon. Consequently, it was impossible to identify whites or blacks who started on defensive squads. In 1953, two platoon football was prohibited. By the end of the 1950's a confusing limited substitution rule was implemented. This remained in effect until 1964 when two platoon football was reinstituted. The problem of identifying the "real" starters remained complicated until 1964. Therefore, a better indication of the relationship between playing status and race is found by examining letterwinners and non-letterwinners.

The percentage of athletes who earn varsity letters varies from sport to sport. During the last thirty years, 56 percent of the football players, 48 percent of the basketball players, 59 percent of the baseball players and 80 percent of the hockey players earned varsity awards. (See Table 5.3) Black athletes have consistently earned varsity awards at significantly higher rates than

Table 5.2

M.S.U. VARSITY FOOTBALL PLAYING STATUS  
BY RACE, 1946-1978

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>SIZE OF TEAM</u>	<u>% BLACK</u>	<u>% STARTERS BLACK</u>	<u>% WHITE TO START</u>	<u>% BLACK TO START</u>
1946	87	1% (1)	-----	13% (11)	-----
1947	65	3% (2)	-----	17% (11)	-----
1948	58	5% (3)	-----	20% (11)	-----
1949	60	7% (4)	9% (1)	18% (10)	25% (1)
1940's	270	4% (10)	2% (1)	17% (43)	10% (1)
1950	50	10% (5)	9% (1)	22% (10)	20% (1)
1951	56	11% (6)	9% (1)	20% (10)	17% (1)
1952	68	6% (4)	-----	17% (11)	-----
1953	65	12% (8)	9% (1)	17% (10)	13% (1)
1954	68	13% (9)	18% (2)	15% (9)	22% (2)
1955	72	14% (10)	18% (2)	15% (9)	20% (2)
1956	74	9% (7)	9% (1)	15% (10)	14% (1)
1957	83	11% (9)	18% (2)	12% (9)	22% (2)
1958	80	11% (9)	27% (3)	11% (8)	33% (3)
1959	69	12% (8)	27% (3)	13% (8)	38% (3)
1950's	685	11% (75)	14% (16)	15% (94)	21% (16)
1960	78	14% (11)	18% (4)	27% (18)	36% (4)
1961	61	23% (14)	27% (6)	35% (16)	43% (6)
1962	69	26% (18)	18% (4)	14% (7)	22% (4)
1963	67	18% (12)	45% (5)	11% (6)	42% (5)
1964	81	23% (19)	23% (5)	27% (16)	26% (5)
1965	83	27% (22)	45% (10)	20% (12)	45% (10)
1966	67	25% (17)	50% (11)	22% (11)	65% (11)
1967	56	34% (19)	27% (6)	43% (16)	32% (6)
1968	73	27% (20)	27% (6)	30% (16)	30% (6)
1969	82	28% (23)	27% (6)	27% (16)	26% (6)
1960's	717	24% (175)	32% (63)	25% (134)	26% (63)
1970	88	25% (22)	36% (8)	21% (14)	36% (8)
1971	80	20% (16)	36% (8)	22% (14)	50% (8)
1974	92	39% (36)	41% (9)	23% (13)	25% (9)
1976	85	35% (30)	36% (8)	25% (14)	27% (8)
1978	89	37% (33)	41% (9)	23% (13)	27% (9)
1970's	434	32% (153)	38% (42)	24% (68)	27% (42)

their white counterparts: 76 percent of the black football players, 73 percent of the black basketball players, and 89 percent of the black baseball players earned varsity letters. These data do support the contentions of researchers such as Yetman and Eitzen that black athletes are not recruited to sit on the bench. They are recruited to make a significant contribution to the team.

(Insert Table 5.3)

### SOCIAL ISOLATION

In spite of the visible role of black athletes on Michigan State's playing fields, they were still quite isolated from the mainstream of campus life during the 1950's and 1960's. The City of East Lansing maintained a restrictive housing ordinance until 1965, so if blacks wanted to live off campus, they had to live in Lansing. And while blacks were not prevented from attending campus events, they were excluded from many off-campus activities. As one black athlete from the 1950's stated, "you knew where you weren't welcome".

Typically, most athletes were housed in the same dormitories or dormitory complexes. During the 1950's and 1960's, black athletes roomed with one another as a result of the initial room assignments made by the coaching staff. When the football team went on road trips, not only were blacks paired with other blacks, but they were also housed at the same end of the hallway. Today,

Table 5.3

<u>VARSITY LETTERS EARNED BY STUDENT ATHLETES</u> <u>AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY BY RACE AND SPORT</u> <u>1950-1974 COHORTS</u>					
	LETTERED		NOT LETTERED		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	%
FOOTBALL					
Whites & Others	343	51%	334	49%	100%
Blacks	129	76%	41	24%	100%
Total	472	56%	375	44%	100%
BASKETBALL					
Whites & Others	91	42%	125	58%	100%
Blacks	40	73%	15	27%	100%
Total	131	48%	140	52%	100%
BASEBALL					
Whites & Others	199	58%	143	42%	100%
Blacks	8	89%	1	11%	100%
Total	207	59%	144	41%	100%
HOCKEY					
Whites & Others	185	80%	47	20%	100%
Total	185	80%	47	20%	100%



according to one of the coaches, initial room assignments are made by playing position. Black athletes testified that they preferred rooming with other blacks. As one 1950's athlete responded,

"You felt comfortable with your own...Biggie, no doubt had the empathy to realize that there is strength in being with your own... Nobody likes to be turned away from a social situation...and I would anticipate that the socially acceptable thing to do was to place all black players together. And there were some positive things that emanated out of that. We played cards together, we shared a common concern for each other's survival.. we became very close."

Social relations among the races have undergone tremendous changes in the last thirty years as blacks have become increasingly integrated into mainstream America. But the patterns of personal socializing among blacks and whites on Michigan State's athletic teams has continued unchanged. When asked why black and white athletes do not socialize much together off the field, the response was uniform:

"I can't say we ran together. You know, white guys and black guys didn't run together and they still don't now. But I think that's because they don't have a lot in common... I remember when I was in college, we played whist--white guys didn't play whist--we just went our separate ways."

During the 1940's through the mid-1950's, very few blacks attended Michigan State and often the black men outnumbered black women. To meet other black college students, the black athletes and other black students

congregated in the Union Building Grill. Blacks from all over campus gathered there between and after classes.

Blacks rarely felt welcome at most of the bars in the vicinity of campus, and it was not uncommon for blacks, athletes and non-athletes alike, to party and go dancing in Lansing. In fact, the black Lansing community took a lot of pride in the blacks who attended Michigan State. Black athletes' social isolation on campus was partially ameliorated by the activities available to them in Lansing. As one black athlete said:

"There was a sense of isolation in terms of activities that occurred on campus, but we compensated for that by developing ties with the black Lansing community. Since the accepted social status at that time was to associate with your own, we developed excellent contacts off campus. We got to Lansing by bus. There were not a sufficient number of black females on campus for dating, so when there were social events on campus, like the J-hop, we had a transportation problem. There was a sense of pride that the black Lansing community had with the black students who were at Michigan State...There was a sense of loyalty with the black community that I don't see today because there are so many other social activities."

Black athletes may also feel socially isolated if all of the trainers and coaches they deal with are white and if all the others involved in athletic events were white students. Until 1968, all coaches, trainers and other athletic staff were white. But since 1970, the coaching staffs have contained a number of blacks, there are black cheerleaders, blacks on the homecoming courts, and blacks represented on the clerical and other support staffs.

All of the black athletes interviewed believed that the coaches treated black athletes different from whites, but varying levels of hostility were expressed. In the late 1940's and 1950's, some athletes expressed that they "knew their place". Still others felt that Biggie Munn and Duffy Daugherty and their coaching staffs understood the social and emotional needs of the black athletes. But most of the athletes who competed during the 1960's felt that the white coaches did treat black athletes different from white athletes. Some adamantly insisted that positional stacking occurred because the coaches did not want to play too many black athletes. Yet during 1965 and 1966, 45-50 percent of the starting lineups were black with no adverse repercussions. And Michigan State was one of the first, if not the first, major college to start a black quarterback during the 1960's. Several black athletes believed the coaches treated them like animals, and asked more of them than of the white athletes:

"As the season progressed, I felt as if I were a human dummy."

"They figured a black guy couldn't get hurt practicing. You were an animal and had to play like one to start."

A former assistant coach who is black believed that some of the white coaches did not know how to motivate black athletes and often talked down to them or stripped them of their manhood.<sup>12</sup> But another black assistant coach credited Duffy Daugherty with really trying to respond to the demand of the black athletes because Duffy

did not treat him as a token hired merely to appease the black players. He said:

"Duffy gave me an opportunity to coach and has treated me well. He gave me responsibility. A lot of black coaches that came in then (late 1960's), they were just token and had no responsibility. They came in just because it was what the kids wanted; a kind of liaison between the staff and the (black) players. He brought me in and got my feet wet one year and the next year he gave me the defensive backfield. That was a hell of a responsibility. Probably one of the toughest jobs on the team. He showed a lot of confidence in the fact he gave me a responsible position. He just didn't bring me in and say 'OK, you take the scouting team', which is a job most black coaches would get."

Blacks gradually began to appear on the homecoming court in the late 1960's but the cheerleading squads remained all white until the 1970's. The only male black head coach is and has been the track coach. But football and basketball have several assistant coaching positions each year that are filled by blacks. At least one of the three assistants in basketball is always black, and at least two of eight assistants in football are black.

### DATING

In the daily life of an athlete, the coach and his staff play very important roles. The athlete, if he is concerned with starting or playing, must conform. Very often, conforming has included the athlete's behavior off the field. During the 1950's and 1960's, interracial dating was not a particularly common phenomenon at Michigan State. When it did occur, it was usually done on the sly. Most black athletes were never directly told not to date white

women, but the stories of what might happen to one's career if he were caught dating white women were many.<sup>13</sup>

One black athlete stated that the head coach took him aside and told him that society would be very rough on him if he continued to date white women, and other athletes mentioned similar incidents which could not be substantiated. But the most significant aspect of this is that all of these stories served as unofficial warnings to the athletes to behave in certain ways. As one athlete stated,

"There was this thing about blacks who dated whites. I don't think anybody on our team could honestly say that some coach said you couldn't date a white girl. But there was an unwritten rule when you came--you got the message you'd better not mess with a white girl if you wanted to play."

Another athlete said that it would be very easy to be labeled a trouble-maker if one were dating white women. He said that "troublemaker" was a euphamism for not behaving exactly as the coaches wished. Being labeled a troublemaker could stick with an athlete throughout his career because of the power coaches wield over their athletes:

"...and you unleash this power and it can be very damaging. This man has so much control over your life and you've got to take that into consideration. It's very easy to say he's a troublemaker or he dates white girls--and that has a direct relationship to how you are drafted, or if you are drafted."

What is important about such stories is that regardless of the behavior of the coaches, as long as these stories get handed down from one generation of athlete to another, the athletes' perceptions of racism are reinforced. The end

result is the same as if the coaches really did warn the athletes not to date white women.

### POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Several authors have indicated that black athletes have been penalized by white coaches for participation in liberal or radical politics.<sup>14</sup> Others have addressed the natural conservatism of coaches.<sup>15</sup> There appear to be no such "threats" to athletes, black or white, today. But campus life during the height of the civil rights and anti-war movements was very different. Many of the 1960's athletes indicated that the coaches never warned them to stay away from political groups, but they stayed away because they didn't have time to attend meetings.

But one incident occurred which demonstrated that the coaches were in fact concerned with political involvement of the athletes.<sup>16</sup> During the Winter Quarter 1969, students for a Democratic Society (SDS) were demonstrating around two demands: 1) The rehiring of a radical professor; and 2) The implementation of an open admissions policy for the University. Several white athletes attended an evening rally with the intention of disrupting it. Fights between the demonstrators and the athletes broke out, and at a demonstration the following day the athletes returned once again.

Several black athletes had been approached to join the white athletes' counter-demonstration but refused. One of the white athletes reportedly said the following to a

black athlete: "\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (two white assistant football coaches) said it was okay to go beat up the hippies--oh, I forgot, you're one of them". The black athletes quickly organized and joined the SDS demonstration as a way of showing their solidarity with the SDS and to try to "protect" them. The blacks arrived at the demonstration ready to fight, believing that the white athletes were encouraged by the coaching staff. In fact, several white assistant coaches were observing the confrontation at the Administration Building. And when it appeared that white and black athletes might face off against one another, the white coaches stepped in and dispersed the white athletes.

#### MSU BLACK ATHLETES' PROTESTS

The racial problems that existed on the football team had undoubtedly been exacerbated by a short boycott of all athletic events by black athletes a year earlier. During 1967, 1968, and 1969, athletic departments throughout the United States were experiencing athletic boycotts and protests by black athletes who believed they were being racially exploited. Much of Harry Edwards' Revolt of the Black Athlete was devoted to descriptions of such conflicts. Michigan State was not to experience conflicts as severe as some, but they were, nevertheless, emotionally charged. On April 25, 1968, thirty-eight black athletes at MSU called a boycott of all athletic events and practices to protect what they believed were discriminatory practices of the

Athletic Department.<sup>17</sup> All freshmen, sophomore and junior black athletes participated.

This demonstration belied the widespread impression that Michigan State was a "good place" for blacks. At the time of the boycott, Michigan State led the nation in athletic scholarships for blacks and provided twice the number of scholarships to black athletes as any other Big Ten university.<sup>18</sup> But the Athletic Department's record for employing blacks as coaches, assistants, trainers, doctors and laborers was very poor.

Prompted by the increased militancy of other black students on campus and by the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., the athletes voiced the following concerns:

1. MSU has no black coaches. Black coaches and assistants should be recruited for all sports.
2. The Athletic Department has a tendency to discourage black athletes from participating in certain sports such as baseball.
3. No blacks are employed at Jenison Fieldhouse or the ice arena. Since black athletes contribute so much to the university, blacks should be represented as employees of the Athletic Department.
4. No black trainers or doctors have ever been hired to treat the athletes. This should be rectified.
5. Burt Smith (Assistant Athletic Director who advised the athletes during their freshmen and sophomore years) has too much to do advising all athletes. A black counselor should be hired to assist him.
6. Academic counseling has been designed to keep the athletes eligible and has contributed to their low graduation rates.
7. No black cheerleaders have ever been elected.



John Hannah was not pleased that this public display of conflict had occurred, but publically evidenced sympathy to the athletes' "demands". He indicated the University would move as rapidly as possible to respond to their concerns and the boycott was suspended on April 27, 1968.

But in spite of Hannah's support, many white alumni and university supporters were angered by the boycott and by what they perceived to be the University's capitulation to the black athletes' demands. Nevertheless, Hannah stood by his principles of equality of opportunity. The following is his response to one alumnus:

"Black athletes are not calling the shots for the Athletic Department. The University was already committed to taking several of the steps they listed among their so-called 'demands', such as the employment of Negro coaches in the major sports...Then I must dispute your assertion that black athletes are the 'privileged few'. Most of them are indeed poor, and could not hope for a college education if they did not have athletic ability. So they were in a real sense offering to sacrifice their hopes for the future to accomplish what they believed to be right."<sup>20</sup>

But in spite of Hannah's words of support, the concerns of these athletes were not fully resolved. By 1972, black athletes once again felt compelled to take some action. Despite an increase in the number of black assistant coaches, many black athletes and faculty believed conditions for black athletes were still unacceptable.

Several incidents prompted the formation of the Coalition of Black Athletes in February 1972. First, was the demotion of soccer from varsity to club status for financial reasons. Soccer had become a varsity sport

at Michigan State in 1956 and the soccer team had enjoyed great success, winning two NCAA titles, and making it to the final four a total of six times. In addition, by the 1960's, a majority of the team was black and most of the team members were not U.S. citizens. In 1970, Payton Fuller was named head coach and became the second black head coach at Michigan State. Varsity status meant funds to travel to other institutions for competition, scholarship assistance for some of the athletes and qualification for NCAA competition. Black athletes believed that reducing soccer's status to club status was a direct slap at black athletes.

Second, on February 9, 1972, three MSU black administrators sent a letter to Wayne Duke, Commissioner of the Big Ten, in response to a racial incident that had occurred the previous weekend between blacks on the University of Minnesota and whites on the Ohio State basketball teams. These M.S.U. faculty believed that the Big Ten needed to take some positive action to immediately improve conditions for black athletes in the Big Ten.<sup>21</sup> Their letter expressed five major concerns:

1. The multitude of problems facing black athletes because of their race.
2. The number of black athletes who never complete their formal education once their eligibility has expired.
3. Financial aid and other support for athletes terminates once eligibility has ended making it impossible for many athletes to complete their education.

4. Lack of black officials in Big Ten Athletics.
5. Method used to select Big Ten officials which is based on the recommendations of Big Ten coaches all of whom are white.

In addition, they requested that the Big Ten take the following steps to improve the status of blacks throughout the Big Ten:

1. For the remainder of the basketball season, one black official should be present at every Big Ten contest.
2. No later than Fall 1972, black officials should be hired and used at every level and at each Big Ten sanctioned event.
3. The status of black athletes in the Big Ten should be on the agenda of the next Big Ten Athletic Directors meeting.
4. Black athletes and black faculty and administrators should be brought to this meeting to testify.

A majority of the members of Michigan State's Board of Trustees denounced the actions of these black administrators in the form of a resolution that was sent to the Big Ten that dissassociated the Board from the resolution.<sup>22</sup>

Third, a new Athletic Director was about to be selected. The Acting Athletic Director, who had served since the illness of Clarence Munn, was Burt Smith who had been serving as the academic advisor to all freshmen and sophomore athletes. Athletes interviewed during the 1960's did not like Smith and believed him to be racist and saw him as the cause for their academic difficulties.<sup>23</sup>

On February 22, 1972, the Coalition of Black Athletes convened a press conference to explain why they formed this organization and to demand that the university take specific

actions to rectify the unsuitable conditions they believed faced black athletes at Michigan State University. And on February 26, 1972, approximately 100 black students staged a demonstration prior to a basketball game between Michigan State and the University of Iowa. They made the following demands:

1. "The appointment of a black academic advisor in the Athletic Department. The purpose of this advisor will be to outline academic courses to the black athletes, that will be functional to us as black men and members of the black community.
2. "Financial assistance after athletic eligibility ends. This demand will be more sharply focussed when we enter into actual negotiations with the administration.
3. "The immediate formation of a Grievance Board composed of black athletes, coaches and members of the black faculty. This demand accentuates the needs for some sensitive body that listens and functions in ways that will be of benefit to the black athletes rather than to our detriment.
4. "Total renegotiation of the present tender of black soccer players. We specifically allude to the soccer players because their problems are of the nature of either enrollment today or dropping out tomorrow.
5. "Institution of a medical program that will cover athletes irrespective of season, starting role or place of injury. This program must seek to provide hospitalization, surgical benefits and basic out-patient treatment.
6. "Immediate representation of athletes on the screening committee for the new athletic director. Specifically, we urge the placement of at least two black athletes on the respective committee. This demand arises out of black athletes performing an integral role in Michigan State University's athletic program and our intense desire to exercise some control over an appointment that will heavily influence our careers.

7. "In demanding more black athletic officials, varsity coaches and trainers, we not only implore the Athletic Department but we urge the President of Michigan State University to advocate immediate settlement of the presently appalling situation. Michigan State University occupies the leadership position in terms of black enrollment in the Big Ten, and as such the Central Administration should pioneer the quest for desegregation in the athletic arena."<sup>24</sup>

To resolve the conflict, Michigan State's president, Clifton Wharton asked Jack Breslin, Executive Vice President of M.S.U. and a representative of the Coalition of Black Athletes to develop proposals for the University to follow. On April 16, 1972, Breslin and Allen Smith (Coalition of Black Athletes) issued a statement that agreed on the following points:<sup>25</sup>

1. A black academic advisor will be appointed in the Athletic Department.
2. Regular financial assistance will be provided to qualified athletes in the fall term following the end of an athlete's eligibility. This program will be need based and is applicable to all MSU students.
3. A grievance board will be formed immediately that will be composed of black athletes, coaches and members of the black faculty and will be chaired by the Ombudsman.
4. Present tenders of all black soccer players will be renegotiated.
5. A medical program will be instituted that will cover athletes irrespective of season, starting role or place of injury.
6. Two athletes, one black and one white, will be represented on the search committee for the new Athletic Director.
7. More black athletic officials, varsity coaches and trainers will be hired, and MSU will actively encourage the Big Ten to hire more black officials.

With slight modifications, the demands of the Coalition of Black Athletes were agreed to by the University administration.

The Athletic Department lived up to the agreement, but racial problems remained. The basketball program underwent a dramatic change in its racial makeup during the early 1970's. In 1971/72, only 29 percent of the team was black. But in 1972/73, the percentage jumped to 61 percent and by 1974/75, the percentage had reached an all-time high of 83 percent. In fact, there were only two white basketball players on the team and they were freshmen. During this period, it was not uncommon for Michigan State to start five black players. Basketball had become the predominant black sport on campus.

But the black athletes felt ignored by the Athletic Department believing they played in an antiquated, drafty building and that their equipment and supplies were third rate. Though they personally liked the coach, they expressed little respect for his coaching abilities. On January 4, 1975, all of the black basketball players walked out of practice prior to a basketball game because the coach was planning to start one of the white freshman players, a player they believed had not been playing well. The coach suspended all the black players.<sup>26</sup>

The athletes maintained that the walkout was not related to prejudice on the part of the coach or their white teammates but was directed at the Athletic Department

over a series of minor things that had been building up such as the drafty building and no sweat clothes. In addition, one of the players criticized the coach for his lack of discipline. The suspension of the black athletes lasted for only two days and the coach was able to resolve his differences with the team. But the two white players on the team transferred the following year, and the head coach was transferred to a non-coaching position in the Athletic Department.

### CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated that in spite of administrative policies that were progressive vis a vis race relations, Michigan State University's black athletes still experienced some differential treatment at the hands of coaches, were still socially isolated on campus, and still perceived they lived in a racist world. But these black athletes also seemed to believe that Michigan State was, nevertheless, a better place for black athletes to attend college than other predominantly white institutions might be.

ENDNOTES

1. Jack Olsen. The Black Athlete: A Shameful Story. (N.Y.: Time-Life Books, 1969); Harry Edwards. Revolt of the Black Athlete. (N.Y.: Fress Press, 1969); Edwards. The Struggle that Must Be. (N.Y.: MacMillan, 1980); Edwards. "Black Athletes: 20th Centry Gladiators for White America", Psychology Today, 7 (1973) 6: 43-52; Charles M. Tolbert II. "The Black Athlete in the South-western Conference; A Study of Institutional Racism". (Ph.D. Dissertation, Baylor University, 1975).

2. Roscoe Browne. "Race, Sport and Academe; Report of the Task Force of the Black Athlete", Appendix D of An Inquiry Into The Need for and Feasibility of a National Study of Intercollegiate Athletics. (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1974), pp. 5-5a.

3. A total of 21 athletes were interviewed. They were predominately black, predominantly football players and for the most part attended M.S.U. during the 1960's: a) football and wrestling, black, 1963-67 (1); b) football, black, 1963-67 (3); c) football and track, black, 1963-67 (2); d) football, black 1965-69 (3); e) football, black, 1966-70 (1); h) track, black, 1964-68 (1); i) football and track, black 1962-66 (1); j) football, black, 1959-63 (1); k) football, black, 1949-53 (1); l) basketball, white, 1977-81 (1); m) football, white, 1964-68 (1). See Appendix B for a sample of the interview schedule.

4. Gideon Smith attended Michigan Agricultural College from 1912-1916 and was believed to be the first black to play professional football. Dick Lord played hockey for Michigan State in 1950 and 1951.

5. An examination of team photographs shows that in football, only a handful of blacks made the varsity team prior to 1947. But under coach Biggie Munn, State gradually increased the number of blacks on the football team. Coach Daugherty continued recruiting black football players and the number of blacks on the football team increased dramatically during the 1960's.

6. Duffy Daugherty. Duffy. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974), p. 7.

7. "MSU's 17 Negro Players May Top Major Colleges in Football", Muhammed Speaks, 31 October 1962. News-clipping in the John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.



8. Harry Edwards. "The Olympic Project on Human Rights: An Assessment Ten Years Later", Black Scholar, March/April 1979, p. 4.

9. Interview with Gwendolyn Norrell, June 1981, East Lansing.

10. Norman Yetman and D. S. Eitzen. "Black Athletes on Intercollegiate Basketball Teams: An Empirical Test of Discrimination". In Majority and Minority: The Dynamics of Racial and Ethnic Relations. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1971), pp. 513-514; Tolbert. "Some Unobtrusive Indicators of Racial Discrimination in Intercollegiate Athletics". Paper presented at the Sport and Society Section, Southwestern Sociological Association Meeting, Dallas, Texas, April 8, 1976, p. 10.

11. Yetman and Eitzen.

12. Beth J. Shapiro. "The Black Athlete at Michigan State University". (M.A. Thesis, Michigan State University, East Lansing, 1970), p. 26.

13. Shapiro, p. 25.

14. Jack Scott. The Athletic Revolution. (N.Y.: Free Press, 1971).

15. Ibid., pp. 35-49.

16. This incident was also described in Shapiro, pp. 28-30.

17. Joe Mitch. "Negro Athletes Call Boycott", Michigan State New, 26 April 1968, p. 1.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. John A. Hannah to Edward Soergel, May 22, 1968. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

21. Drs. Robert Green, Joseph McMillan, and Thomas Gunnings to Wayne Duke, Commissioner of the Big Ten Athletic Conference, February 9, 1972.

22. Michigan State University Board of Trustees, Resolution of February 24, 1972 on the Recent Actions of Professor Robert Green and Associates. In M.S.U. Sports Information Service Files, East Lansing.

23. Shapiro, pp. 9-11.

24. Coalition of Black Athletes. Press Statement, February 22, 1972; Crispin Campbell, "Blacks Reveal Demands", Michigan State News, 28 February 1972, p. 1.

25. Jack Breslin, Executive Vice President of Michigan State University and Allen Smith, Coalition of Black Athletes, Press, Release, April 26, 1972. (East Lansing: MSU Department of Information Services, News Bureau, 1972).

26. Charles Johnson and Mike Litaker, "Ganakas Reinstates Suspended Cagers", Michigan State News, 6 January 1975, p. 1.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

"When the one great scorer comes to write  
against your name, he marks not that you  
won or lost, but how you played the game."

Grantland Rice

"If it's under 'W' for won, nobody asks  
you how."

Leo Durocher

"Winning is living. Every time you win,  
you're reborn. When you lose, you die  
a little."

George Allen

Previous studies of intercollegiate athletics have suggested that a number of issues surround the growth of big-time intercollegiate athletic programs, the fiscal importance of intercollegiate athletics to institutions, the educational and occupational careers of college athletes, and racism in college sport. These issues have been examined in light of the experiences of intercollegiate athletics at Michigan State University during the last thirty years.

Michigan State University provides a good case study because intercollegiate athletics has a very special and prominent place in campus life. Not only is the campus transformed on football Saturdays, but athletics is also a prominent feature of the budgeting process. For example, in 1981, as the University was engaged in a painful budget cutting process that resulted in the elimination of some academic programs and dismissal of some faculty, the Athletic Department experienced only minimal budgetary reductions. Peter Fletcher, a member of the Michigan State University Board of Trustees, responded to critics that,

"Intercollegiate athletics play a significant role in this University. We don't want to touch athletics."<sup>1</sup>

Given the local importance of intercollegiate athletics at Michigan State University, the following questions have been addressed:

1. What were the reasons for the growth and development of big-time intercollegiate athletics at Michigan State University?
2. What fiscal impact has intercollegiate athletics had on the University and have economic pressures contributed to an overemphasis on intercollegiate sport?
3. What impact has intercollegiate participation and matriculation at M.S.U. had on the academic and occupational attainment of athletes who competed in football, basketball, baseball, and hockey?
4. Have black athletes, in addition to education and occupational attainment, been integrated into the mainstream of college life?

#### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF BIG-TIME INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS AT M.S.U.

John Hannah, though not Michigan State University's first president, is generally considered to be its most important. Both the University and its intercollegiate athletic program grew significantly under his leadership. Hannah recognized that intercollegiate athletics might serve a number of functions such as unifying the campus, townspeople and alumni; socializing the athletes to democratic principles; and advertising the campus and its programs to the wider public.

Hannah and all of his successors also used athletic events as devices to develop Michigan State's image as a quality institution. The State of Michigan's most influential business people and politicians have been entertained by the University's administration at home athletic events. An in recent years, Michigan State University's presidents

have used football games and pre- and post-game events as fundraising tools.<sup>2</sup>

In the early 1950's, Hannah was also involved in organizations promoting the reform of intercollegiate athletics and he actively spoke out against the 'win-at-all-costs' mentality that has existed in intercollegiate athletics. Hannah supported the regulation of intercollegiate athletics and was personally active in the Big Ten and the NCAA. His desire to regulate and rationalize intercollegiate athletics was comparable to the activities of those industrialists who were influential in reform movements during the Progressive Era.<sup>3</sup> In other words, Hannah was part of a group of college presidents and athletic officials who favored reforms to protect the status of big-time intercollegiate athletics.

Nevertheless, Michigan State still experienced numerous problems with the administration of its athletic program. During the 1950's, an athletic slush fund was established by some coaches because they thought it would improve the University's recruiting activities which they believed were hindered by Big Ten regulations. The all important activity was filling the stadium. To fill the stadium it was necessary to win and to win it was necessary to have top-ranked athletes.

Even though Hannah wanted athletes treated no differently from other students, coaches tried to pressure admissions officials into admitting students who met none of the

admissions criteria. And unsubstantiated stories abounded about athletes being given grades without attending classes or about grades being changed over the objections of some teaching faculty. Hannah was accused of looking the other way when such abuses occurred by a former Faculty Representative to the Big Ten.

#### THE FISCAL EFFECTS OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS AT M.S.U.

One reason Hannah may have "looked the other way" at times was because of the financial rewards the University received as a result of its athletic program. But financial rewards are not earned merely from successful teams. At Michigan State University, winning seasons alone were not enough to generate revenues great enough to support a large athletic program. To be admitted to the Big Ten, Michigan State was required to increase the size of its stadium. The revenue producing potential of Michigan State was one of the key features considered by the Conference prior to admitting Michigan State. Hockey was also unable to generate sufficient revenues until a new ice arena was built.

Michigan State University, like many other institutions, has been concerned with spiraling costs and with revenues that don't keep pace with expenditures. Real expenses for football have risen moderately since 1970, and have declined slightly for basketball. But hockey expenses experienced significant increases that resulted in Michigan State withdrawing from the Western Collegiate

Hockey Association and joining a conference that would allow for substantial travel reductions.

Until recent years, hockey and basketball rarely broke even with revenues and expenditures. But in the last several years, as a result of a new ice arena and quality basketball teams, these programs have generated surplus revenues. But the long-term financial stability of a big-time athletic program is ultimately dependant upon the revenue producing potential of the football program. During the 1950's, football generated 75-80 percent of Michigan State's athletic revenues, yet spent under 15 percent of the Athletic Department's budget.

Football revenues were expected to support the rest of the intercollegiate athletic program. But today, football generates under 37 percent of the total athletic revenues. Today, a larger portion of the revenues comes from basketball and hockey and from other sources such as summer clinics, parking fees, event program sales, television royalties and alumni contributions.

In financially stretched times, the Athletic Department must be concerned not only with cutting costs, but also with generating more revenue. Winning seasons give football larger profit margins, but highly successful, winning seasons are crucial to profit generation in basketball. But in addition to winning, it is important that an athletic department's product be successfully marketed. Michigan



State football has yet to be marketed so that it can achieve its ultimate revenue producing potential.

The MSU Development Fund also has suggested that fundraising activities are made easier when the athletic program is successful.<sup>5</sup> Alumni seem to take a more active interest in the University when they have a winning athletic team to identify with. The University also utilizes athletic events as fundraising tools. John Hannah, was, no doubt, correct when he stated that an athletic program could neither add to nor detract from the quality of an institution's academic programs.<sup>6</sup> But intercollegiate athletics have made the University administration's job of building a quality institution that much easier.

Hannah was also aware of the benefits that might be reaped by the institution from the increased press coverage generated by athletic events. During the 1950's and 1960's, M.S.U.'s athletic program generated substantial press coverage when the University was trying to increase its enrollments. And today, officials have hypothesized that Michigan State staved off a projected drop in enrollment during the late 1970's because it won the 1979 NCAA basketball championship and won the Big Ten football, basketball, and baseball championships during 1978/79.<sup>7</sup>

#### THE ACADEMIC AND OCCUPATIONAL EFFECTS OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION ON FORMER M.S.U. ATHLETES

It has been suggested by some writers that intercollegiate athletic participation is a magic social leveller

providing its athletes with opportunities for advancement they might not otherwise experience because of their racial and/or class origins. John Hannah and many others have used this as a rationale for developing intercollegiate athletic programs.<sup>8</sup>

Much of this study focused on the actual impact of intercollegiate athletic participation on Michigan State University's major sport athletes. The following questions were explored:

1. Did athletes obtain college educations comparable to non-athletes?
2. Were their educational differences reflected among sports played or decade of matriculation?
3. Were athletes able to achieve a measure of occupational success and/or social mobility as a result of their athletic participation?
4. Were black athletes integrated into the mainstream of college life or did the racism of society at large also appear within the athletic sphere?

In spite of the fact that more than 50 percent of the athletes are admitted to the University with special considerations, they, nevertheless, have graduated and persisted at the University at the same or greater rate than non-athletes. This may be due, in part, to the academic support system that has been created for athletes or it may be the result of athletes being directed to easy courses and instructors.

The educational attainment of football, basketball, baseball and hockey players who were freshmen from 1950 through 1974 was examined. Listed below are the major

## findings:

1. Athletes graduated and persisted at higher rates than non-athletes during the 1950's (80 percent to 45 percent);
2. Graduation rates for athletes who matriculated during the 1950's were significantly higher than for athletes of the 1960's and 1970's;
3. Football players graduate at consistently lower rates than do other athletes (67 percent to 77 percent);
4. Black athletes graduated at significantly lower rates than white athletes (56 percent to 74 percent);
5. Varsity letterwinners graduated at significantly higher rates than non-letterwinners (81 percent to 54 percent);
6. M.S.U. athletes graduate at higher rates than do athletes included in a recent NCAA study;
7. Nearly 33 percent of all athletes major in physical education and more football players major in physical education than do other athletes;
8. 71 percent of all athletes in this study graduated but only 60 percent of those athletes who played at least one year of professional sport graduated;
9. A higher percentage of black athletes (15 percent) earned graduate degrees while only 12 percent of the white athletes did; and
10. During the 1950's and 1960's, athletes consistently earned higher grade point averages than non-athletes.

Overall, Michigan State University's athletes have achieved a modicum of academic success. The poorer academic showing of athletes during the last 15 years may be attributed to several factors such as weakened admissions standards or higher academic standards imposed in the classroom. During the 1950's and 1960's, athletes

were allowed to enroll primarily in physical education classes during their first two years in college. This allowed them to shore up their grade point averages for their final two years of eligibility. Today, this practice is limited by University and NCAA regulations. The declining academic achievement may also result from the increased visibility all sports have been receiving of late, not just football. One surprising result was that the academic success of black athletes during the 1970's has begun to improve, reversing the trend of gradually lowering graduation rates for all other athletes since 1960. The reason for this may be that the academic support program disproportionately benefits black athletes.

Athletes appear to be performing better academically than non-athletes with respect to overall persistence and graduation, and they perform better than athletes at other comparable NCAA schools. Even though black athletes do not perform as well as white athletes, they nevertheless outperform black and white athletes at other institutions. This might lead to the conclusion that sport really has provided Michigan State University's athletes with unique opportunities. But whether or not these athletes would have achieved a college education without the assistance of an athletic scholarship could only be proven by correlating the athletes socio-economic status with their academic success, which was not done for this study.

The current occupational status of the athletes was also explored. More athletes eventually ended up as business managers, owners or sales representatives than in any other occupational category (38 percent). Thirty percent were employed in sports related occupations such as school, college or professional coach. Football players were overrepresented in sports related fields and underrepresented in business, health and law.

Attending Michigan State University provided many athletes with a start in their careers. At least twenty-four former football players have been employed at some time in their career as assistant or head coaches, faculty, or administrative support staff; six former basketball players as assistant basketball coaches; three former baseball players as assistant coaches or alumni officials; four tracksters as coaches, faculty or athletic trainers; two soccer players as coaches; two tennis players as coaches; one wrestler as a faculty member; and one hockey player as an assistant coach.

Approximately ten percent of all the athletes included in this study played at least one year of a professional sport. But the average length of their professional careers was relatively short ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  - 5 years).

From the data collected, it appears that attending Michigan State University has, indeed, had a positive influence on the careers of former athletes. But the data collected thus far should be viewed cautiously because

data were unavailable on 62 percent of the athletes. In addition, without looking at the socio-economic status of the athletes' parents, it is not possible to determine if the athletes really did experience mobility according to any established criteria such as the Hollingshead Index of Social Position or the Duncan Socio-Economic Index.

#### THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF BLACK ATHLETES AT M.S.U.

The social and athletic experiences of black athletes were also examined. Black athletes were found to have experienced a fair amount of social isolation on campus during the 1950's and 1960's. But as the campus became more socially integrated, their social isolation began to diminish. The University administration generally encouraged the recruitment of black athletes and their numbers have consistently grown during the last thirty years. The coaching staff actively recruited black athletes not out of any real sense of social justice, but because they believed it gave them a competitive edge in recruiting. Blue chip black athletes were also disproportionately recruited as demonstrated by black athletes earning varsity letters at much higher rates than white athletes. This supports the claim made by others that black athletes must be "stars" before they will be recruited by predominately white institutions.

Black athletes perceived they were treated differently from white athletes and by the end of the 1960's, Michigan State University's athletic program began to experience

outbursts of discontent from the black athletes. During the Spring of 1968, black athletes engaged in a brief boycott of practices. And once again in 1972, a group of black athletes presented a list of demands to the University concerning the academic support services available to athletes and the employment of more blacks within the Athletic Department. At the root of their protests were the lack of black coaches and assistant coaches, the lack of blacks employed by the Athletic Department, the lack of black cheerleaders, and the poor academic counseling all the athletes were receiving. The University proceeded to hire some black coaches and assistants and some black cheerleaders were selected. And in 1972, an Assistant Athletic Director of Academic Affairs was hired and was provided with a budget for counseling and tutoring.

Throughout the years, Michigan State University was known as a "good place" for black athletes to attend college. But in spite of a relatively progressive administration and coaching staff, racism and the perception of racism persisted. Some of this has undoubtedly been due to the racist behavior on the part of white students, faculty, coaches, and athletes. As an American institution, Michigan State University could not expect to completely overcome the racial problems so prevalent in society at large. The differential educational and occupation experiences of black athletes reflect some of the basic structural problems inherent in all of our educational institutions.

And it would be unreasonable to expect that members of the University community could have avoided being influenced by racist stereotypes that are so prevalent in American society.

#### SUMMARY ASSESSMENT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study should be viewed as a limited first step towards understanding the influence big-time intercollegiate athletics has on American institutions of higher learning. Most big-time programs are located in public institutions, and the current fiscal problems facing public education are causing all concerned parties to reevaluate the educational and institutional roles played by universities' auxiliary programs such as intercollegiate athletics.

In spite of some of the methodological problems discussed earlier, there is room for further research. Future research might involve interviewing more athletes, both black and white about their experiences at and since leaving Michigan State. It would also be helpful to survey all of the athletes to discover detailed information on their career paths, socio-economic origins, and attitudes towards their experiences at Michigan State University.

Another avenue of research might examine, in detail, the educational experiences of a sample population of athletes and non-athletes. This sample might be drawn from several entering classes. Such a study might be modeled after the National Longitudinal Study of High School Students which has surveyed the same sample of



students each year for ten years about their educational, occupational, political, and social experiences.<sup>9</sup>

It would also be useful to compare the results on educational and occupational attainment from this study with data on M.S.U.'s athletes in other sports to see how the athletes in the non-revenue producing, less visible sports measure up to the athletes competing in the big-time sports. The data collected in this study should definitely not be considered generalizable with respect to sports like track, golf, tennis, fencing or swimming.

This study has demonstrated that intercollegiate athletics at Michigan State University has served political, social, and economic functions. John Hannah saw intercollegiate athletics as a major socializer of dominant American values and as a political tool that could provide the University with a means of advertising itself and of unifying the campus and the community. Intercollegiate athletics has also generated revenues that have supported other competitive and intramural sports activities and has provided a focal point for fundraising activities for the University as a whole. Intercollegiate athletics has also had a profound influence on the athletes who have competed in the major sports of football, basketball, baseball and hockey.

But intercollegiate athletics has also been confronted by racism in spite of a somewhat enlightened administration and is facing financial problems that threaten the continued

support of many non-revenue producing sports. Michigan State has also not been immuned from ignoring many of the rules of the Big Ten and NCAA as a result of a "win-at-all-costs" mentality that seems to accompany big-time intercollegiate athletic programs. Even though individuals like John Hannah have and will continue to influence the structure and functioning of intercollegiate athletics, completely rationalized institutional change has and will continue to occur only as the result of complex social and structural interrelationships.

ENDNOTES

1. Beverly Watkins. "Michigan State's Budget Cut \$13.5 Million", Chronicle of Higher Education, 13 April 1981, p. 8.

2. Conversation with Walter Adams (Acting President of Michigan State University, March 1969 - December 1969), East Lansing, September 21, 1981.

3. Intercollegiate sport experienced its first major crisis around the turn of the century. At that time, violence was rampant and many athletes were competing at the college level who were not students. The NCAA, the Western Conference (Big Ten) and several other conferences were formed in an attempt to regulate these flagrant abuses of "sport". The reformists movement in intercollegiate athletics has emerged several times during this century: 1920's, 1950's, and 1970's. James Weinstein, in The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968, p. ix) maintains that the more sophisticated leaders of corporate America were essential to the passage of reformist legislation during the Progressive Era. The same has held true in intercollegiate athletics. John Hannah was a part of that movement during the 1950's. Today, the College Football Association, a rebel group within the NCAA, is composed of 67 institutions with the largest football programs, excluding the Big Ten and the PAC 10. They are now pushing for a restructuring of the NCAA that would consolidate the strengths of these schools within the NCAA, would allow them to earn additional TV revenues, and would institute more stringent regulations for academics. (John Underwood. "To-Do Over What To Do", Sports Illustrated, 55 (1981) 13: 34-39.)

4. Harold Tukey. "Reminiscences on My Relationship with John Hannah and the Athletic Program at Michigan State University". 1971. In Harold B. Tukey Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

5. Michigan State University Development Fund. Annual Report 1978/79. (East Lansing: 1979), p. 60.

6. John Hannah. "Speech Before the 1965 Football Bust", East Lansing, November 23, 1965. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

7. Nancy Brewczak. "Registration Down By 3,000 This Fall", Michigan State News, 28 September, 1981, p.1.

8. Hannah. "Speech Before the Detroit Football Bust", Detroit, November 26, 1957. In John A. Hannah Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

9. Bruce Eckland and Joseph M. Wisenbaker. A Capsule Description of Young Adults Four and One-Half Years After High School (National Longitudinal Study). (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Educational Statistics, 1979).

APPENDIX APOPULATION DESCRIPTION FOR CHAPTER 4

A total of 1,642 male athletes were identified who had competed at the varsity, junior varsity or freshman levels in football, basketball, hockey and baseball at M.S.U. and who were freshmen in college (at M.S.U. or elsewhere) between the Fall 1950 and Fall 1974. Data was collected on sport(s) played, letters earned, race, team, captaincy, academic major, quarters enrolled, grade point average, graduation and/or expected graduation dates, reason for attrition, advanced degree majors, home state/country, number of years played professional sport, and current occupation.

Michigan State University records on the athletes who received athletic financial aid between 1960 and 1970 are incomplete and records on athletes who were certified as eligible to compete for the Big Ten are also incomplete. The subjects were therefore identified from the following sources: varsity, junior varsity, and freshmen team rosters and individual personal information files on M.S.U. student athletes in the M.S.U. Sports Information Service office. As a check on the completeness of these files, all of the subjects were then checked against the available eligibility statements. There were no apparent discrepancies.

The college transcripts of each of the athletes were examined. Entrance and graduation dates were verified and academic majors, degrees earned and grade point averages were noted. Professional athletic career information was

received from the M.S.U. Sports Information Service and the available current occupational data was retrieved from the data base of Michigan State University's Alumni-Donor Records Office.

Listed below is a summary description of the population studied for Chapter 4:

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POPULATION DESCRIPTION BY SPORT PLAYED		
<u>SPORT PLAYED</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>%</u>
Football	808	49.2%
Basketball	249	15.2%
Baseball	304	18.5%
Ice Hockey	223	13.6%
Ice Hockey & Baseball	6	.4%
Football & Baseball	27	1.6%
Basketball & Baseball	13	.8%
Football & Hockey	3	.2%
Football & Basketball	8	.5%
Football, Basketball & Baseball	<u>1</u>	<u>.06%</u>
N =	1642	100.00%

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT #: \_\_\_\_\_

Sport	Letters Earned	Race	Team Captain
1. Football	1. None	0. n/a	0. No
2. Basketball	2. 1 sport	1. white	1. Yes - FB
3. Hockey	3. 2 sport	2. black	2. Yes - BK
4. Baseball	4. 3 sport	3. latino	3. Yes - HO
5. Uncoded		4. hawaiian	4. Yes - BS

Fresh. Entrance \_\_\_\_\_ of Transf. Entrance \_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Grad. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Quarters Enrolled \_\_\_\_\_

Years Over Ex. Grad. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dropped Out	Undergraduate G.P.A.: _____	Advanced Degrees
0. No		0. None
1. For Grades	Advanced Degree Major: _____	1. MA/MS/etc.
2. To Transfer		2. Ph.D./Edd
3. For Personal		3. MD/DO/DDM/DVM
		4. Law

Home State/Country

1. Canada	13. Illinois	25. S. Carolina	37. Colorado
2. Michigan	14. Washington	26. Arizona	38. Kansas
3. Ohio	15. Florida	27. Wisconsin	39. Louisiana
4. Pennsylvania	16. California	28. Virginia	40. Netherlands
5. Hawaii	17. W. Virginia	29. D.C.	41. Mississippi
6. Massachusetts	18. Texas	30. Nevada	42. Alabama
7. New York	19. Indiana	31. Oklahoma	43. Vermont
8. Minnesota	20. Tennessee	32. Kentucky	44. Denmark
9. Maine	21. N. Dakota	33. Utah	45. Iowa
10. Connecticut	22. Georgia	34. S. Dakota	46. Arkansas
11. New Jersey	23. Missouri	35. Nebraska	
12. Rhode Island	24. Maryland	36. N. Carolina	

Years Pro Football: \_\_\_\_\_ Years Pro Basketball: \_\_\_\_\_

Years Pro Hockey: \_\_\_\_\_ Years Pro Baseball: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Occupation:

0 Unknown	31 Dentist	09 Programmer
61 Accountant	25 Education Consultant	94 Prison Counselor
41 Acting	27 Education Fundraiser	95 Prison Warden
21 Administration-College	05 Engineer	56 Prisoner
22 Administration-School	64 Financial Analyst	36 Psychologist
44 Architect	52 Government Research	49 Public Relations
45 Artists	35 Hospital Administration	78 Real Estate Exec.
53 Attorney	74 Insurance Executive	79 Real Estate Sales
62 Bank Executive	75 Insurance Sales	17 Recreation
63 Bank Manager	76 Insurance Agency	93 Secret Service
71 Business Executive	02 Laborer	15 Sports P.R.
72 Business Manager	46 Landscape Architect	16 Scout
73 Business Owner	96 Liquor Control	55 Social Worker
80 Business Sales	08 Meteorologist	29 Student
19 Athlete Business Manager	01 Minister	24 Teacher
03 Army Officer	06 Natural Resources	28 Teacher-Counselor
81 Advertising	34 Optometrist	26 Teacher-Sp. Ed.
48 Author	77 Personnel	47 Urban Planner
11 Coach-College	32 Physician	33 Veterinarian
12 Coach/PE	91 Police	57 Welfare Fraud Inv.
13 Coach-Pro	92 Politics	04 Pilot
18 Coach-Club	14 Professional Athlete	
07 Chemical Sales	23 Professor	

APPENDIX BINTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR BLACK ATHLETES

1. What was your primary reason for wanting to go to college?
2. Why did you decide to attend Michigan State rather than any other school that recruited you?
3. What originally motivated you to pursue athletics?
4. What did you like the most about playing (football, basketball, baseball)? The least?
5. When you were in school, what were the coaches attitudes towards academics?
6. What kind of academic support was provided for athletes by the Athletic Department?
7. What did you like the best about MSU when you were a student? The least?
8. Did you feel that the coaching staff treated black and white athletes the same?
9. What were the relationships on the team among players of different races?
10. If your children were offered both athletic and academic scholarships to attend college, which would you recommend he/she take? Why?
11. If your children were able to attend a big school, like Michigan State, or a small college, which would you recommend? Why?
12. As a black student on a predominately white campus, how did you perceive your acceptance by other students and faculty?
13. Housing logs for road games from the 1950's show that the black players roomed together--the logs identified the players by race and were accompanied by a note from L. Frimodig that stated that the black students preferred to room together at one end of the hall. Was that true of the years that you competed?



14. When you were a student athlete, did you receive, or did you know of anyone who received special financial rewards, special academic consideration or any illegal (by NCAA standards) benefits?
15. If you were 18 years old today and a senior in high school, and you could change the direction your life has taken, what would you do differently?
16. Do you think the athletes today are the same or different from the athletes you went to school with? How?
17. Have you maintained contact with the University via the Development Fund, Ralph Young Fund, or Alumni Association? Why or why not?
18. For former professional athletes: Did you have a difficult time adjusting to a career change when your professional athletic career ended? How?

APPENDIX CAN ATHLETE'S PRAYER

By Frederick Tyner

"Help me to play this game, dear lord,  
With all my might and main;  
Grant me the courage born of right,  
A heart to stand the strain.

Send me a sense of humor, lord,  
To laugh when victory's mine--  
To laugh if I should meet defeat,  
Without a fret or whine.

Give me the grace to follow rules,  
Confess when I am wrong,  
When silence or the other thing  
Wins plaudits from the throng.

When foes are tough and fighting fierce  
and I am getting weak,  
Dear God, don't ever let me show  
A broad, bright yellow streak.

And teach me lord, life's game to play  
Just one day at a time--  
With thee as coach and trainer, lord,  
Real victory must be mine."

Coach Biggie Munn used to lead the football team in prayer with this poem to every football game. A copy of the poem was found in the Biggie Munn Papers, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, East Lansing.

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