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Oregon Daily Emerald

Friday, January 19, 1990

Eugene, Oregon

Volume 91, Number 81

Berkeley sociologist decries exploitation

By Stephanie Mencimer
Emerald Contributor

The "plantation system" of collegiate athletics makes black athletes "20th century gladiators doing nothing but paying white coaches mortgages," said Dr. Harry Edwards, sports activist and professor at the University of California at Berkeley.

Edwards spoke on the exploitation of black athletes in a speech at EMU Fir Room Thursday night.

The condition of black athletes is inextricably tied with the condition of blacks in society, Edwards said. Despite the notion that blacks have integrated sports, Edwards said 90 percent of all sports are still inaccessible to the black community in terms of participation as well as management.

"Blacks have moved laterally from the cotton fields to the

football fields," he said.

Blacks are underrepresented in policy-making and coaching positions throughout collegiate and professional athletics, Edwards said. Because of this, a system of relationships develops that socializes whole generations of blacks and whites to gravitate toward these racially-defined roles.

"An athlete never sees a black in a position of power," he said, adding, "many black athletes never test the water in terms of alternative careers."

Americans have been conditioned to accept the "natural primitivism" of blacks and to believe in the superiority of blacks in designated areas such as pop music, dance, sports and certain types of labor, Edwards said.

Out of the 650,000 lawyers in America, less than one percent

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Photo by Steve Card

Dr. Harry Edwards answers questions after his speech Thursday night on the exploitation of black student-athletes at the University of California-Berkeley.

Byrne happy with new Prop 26 Convention drops controversial rule

By Ashley Conklin
Emerald Sports reporter

University Athletic Director Bill Byrne said he is pleased with the modifications made to the controversial Proposition 42 at last week's NCAA convention in Dallas.

Prop 42 was a modification of Proposition 48, which required student-athletes to have a high school grade point average of 2.0 in college core-curriculum classes, and a combined score of 700 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test to be eligible for a collegiate sport as a freshman.

Prop 42, though, rescinded financial aid for Prop 48 athletes, making them ineligible for any type of monetary assistance.

Many cried foul and said Prop 42 was racially discriminatory since most of those affected were black student-athletes. A new, modified form, Proposition 26, which was easily passed at the NCAA convention, will allow Prop 48 athletes to acquire financial aid, but only as a need-based student, not as an athlete.

"It's a compromise," Byrne said. "Since (Prop) 42 was in place those who couldn't meet the academic qualifications couldn't receive need-based aid. I don't see the reasoning behind that. With the new form, at least that way those needing the aid can get it."

The biggest criticism many



Bill Byrne

have with the NCAA's academic regulations concerns the SAT test, which some research has indicated to be racially discriminatory. Opinions are mixed on whether the tests are good indicators of how a student will perform in college.

Byrne, and Gary Gray, the athletic department's academic coordinator, have their differences on the SAT issue.

"I think the SAT and ACT (American College Test) are good indicators of how a student will do in college," Byrne said, "but I think their high school grades are a better indicator of how they would do in college and I would like to see more emphasis on the grades."

"There are some proven biases in the SAT," Gray said. "A truer indicator, I believe, is the core-curriculum grades. If the student takes a good,

strong core-curriculum in high school, it's a good indicator how they will do."

Byrne said he believes that Prop 26 will allow the athletes who fall into Prop 48 restrictions the opportunity now to begin their academic career at a four-year college or university, rather than going to a junior college where the individual doesn't fall into Prop 48 restrictions and is immediately eligible for athletics.

"I don't want to force these people on the junior colleges who are ill-prepared to handle these student-athletes because they're more woefully underfunded than we (four-year schools) are," he said.

Several Prop 48 athletes have come to Oregon since the original plan went into place in 1986. Chris Oldham, an all-American cornerback on the football team, and Terrell Brandon, the starting point guard on the basketball team, are two student-athletes who were Prop 48. Both have succeeded in the classroom as well as the gridiron and hardwood, which shows the original form is one that works.

Byrne sees the successes of Oldham and Brandon as positive proof of the strength of Oregon's tutorial programs available for student-athletes.

"We have a strong tutorial program and support here," he said. "Disadvantaged students can come here instead

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GTFF disturbed over graduate school letter Says 'misleading' on policy

By Chris Bouneff
Emerald Associate Editor

The Graduate Teaching Fellow Federation is upset over a letter sent to GTFs from the graduate school that the GTFF says provides misleading information about the collective bargaining agreement between GTFs and the University.

"We want to let our constituency know that (the letter) is misleading," said Cindy LaCom, GTFF vice president for University relations.

The letter, from graduate school Dean Kenneth Ramsing, outlines the school's institutional policies governing GTF appointments.

However, LaCom said the letter is misleading because it was mailed to GTFs at the same time as the collective bargaining agreement, which might lead GTFs to conclude the letter is referring to the contract and not school policy.

The GTFF is specifically concerned about one point in the letter that states a graduate teacher cannot be employed for more than .49 Full Time Equivalence, which is a measure of working hours used by higher education institutions.

The letter closes with the warning that violation of any of the graduate school's policies could lead to termination of a GTF's appointment, which is unnecessarily threatening, LaCom said.

"There are many GTFs on campus that are appointed for more than .49 FTEs," LaCom said. "Nowhere in the contract does it say you can't be appointed for more than .49 FTEs."

The GTFF raised some of the same complaints two years ago when a similar letter from the graduate school was inserted in the contract, LaCom said.

After numerous complaints from the GTFF, the graduate school agreed not to insert letters in GTFF mailings, she said.

Ramsing said the letter and contracts arrived in GTFs' boxes at the same time because they were mailed on the same day, and that it was not the graduate school's intention to mislead anybody.

Moreover, it is standard policy at Oregon State University and the University to limit GTFs to .49 FTEs, Ramsing said.

"It was not intended to be misleading," he said. "The intent was to bring (GTFs) back under a .49."

However, the GTFF is still upset because the mailing appeared in GTFs' boxes at the same time the contract was distributed and because the letter does not adequately state that it is an institutional reminder, LaCom said.

The federation is further disturbed that wording changes suggested by the GTFF in the letter were not implemented, she said.