

I love
my
SELF!

ball fan but I recognize that a man must be judged by standards of some sort. My question is this: Is the won-lost record the main criterion of a coach's ability?"

A plump, balding man in a rear chair waved a hand for recognition. "I think we should approach this thing from a business standpoint. Now let's take the production manager in the woolen mill down the street." The balding man's finger pointed out the window.

"Sure, production is his job, but he isn't judged solely on that basis. There are other considerations—like how he gets along with the employees and the kind of impression he makes on visitors. Nope, production isn't the whole story. And it's a good thing it isn't. It would be a mighty uncomfortable world if everything were that cold-blooded."

Irv cringed. He saw some members nodding agreement. Mr. Nicholas obviously was pleased. "Then I think it's safe to assume that is the feeling of the board."

He turned toward Irv. "So that's how it is," he said simply. "The record isn't everything. We hope you understand that."

Irv nodded. He understood.

"Now, Mr. Looten, we have investigated your situation thoroughly. We have thrown out the record and looked at your efforts from a more important point of view."

Irv asked for an explanation.

"Well, to be real frank about the matter," Mr. Nicholas said, "the board considers molding character and teaching sportsmanship more important than an imposing record."

Irv was hesitant to speak. Finally he blurted: "Does that mean I..."

Mr. Nicholas interrupted, "Yes, young man, it means your request for a salary increase has been approved. A coach who retains your vigorous outlook after three seasons deserves anything we can offer."

Irv's knees were weak. He steadied himself by grasping the back of a chair. Laughter was muffled in the rear of the room.

A smile creased Mr. Nicholas' face. "Congratulations, coach," he said, extending his hand. Irv accepted it happily. Then he signed a contract offered by Mr. Nicholas.

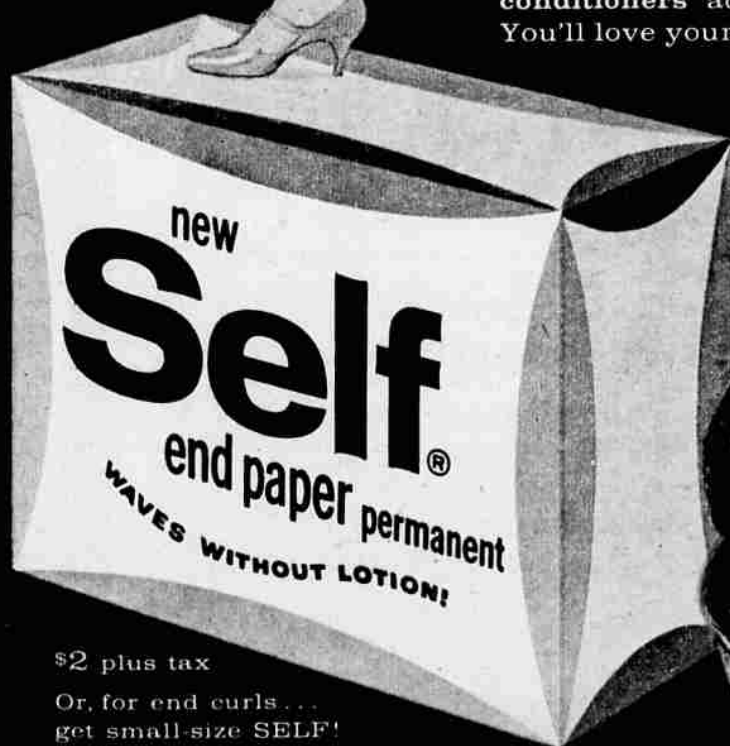
In boldface printing it read: "To Irv Looten, best coach ever to lose 25 games in three seasons!"

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