

2/12/68

Moon over North Lake

+

like all true amateurs,

I once played on a basketball team that made ^{a unique} ~~what~~ was some kind of world's record the like of which I have ~~never~~ ^{never heard nor} heard of before or since. At the time I was a student in a ^{small} U.P. Teachers' college (since magically transformed, by ^{the} legislative fiat, into a university) ^{and} our team was a pickup squad of ^{students} kids who played not for glory, not for tuition, not even ^{for} ~~for~~ victory, but, simply for the ^{sheer} fun of it. We called ourselves the Spreaders and, since I was the tallest kid, naturally played center.

Spartan

^{looking apart} There were only ~~two~~ ^{one} ~~men~~ ^{team} on our team and Chester Ross was our combined manager, coach, and water boy, ^{our} ~~our~~ ^{team} ~~formed~~ ^{but} one substitute, and our opponents were similar pickup squads of amateurs from the surrounding towns in the area. Generally we played on weekends. For a team that only ~~practiced~~ ^{got} to practice when it played, the Spreaders had a modestly impressive record.

This was possibly due in large part to the fact that we had one ~~to~~ ^{varsity} ~~ringer~~ ⁱⁿ our squad -- we'd simply fed the ball to Hank Carter our running guard, Hank Carter (imaginatively transformed to Carter Henry for purposes of disguise) and bedded ⁱⁿ the points

91

at the college gym ^{Because of school and (back in those days) during}

we played only on weekends or holidays. Thus during Thanksgiving vacation we took on the North Lake Miners and, ^{managed} ~~hardly~~ ^{hardly} ~~defeated~~ ^{them} in a tough overtime game. Naturally the Miners clamored for revenge -- on their ^{of} ~~game~~ ^{own} floor -- and our amiable manager promised ^{them} a return match during the coming Christmas vacation holidays.

The problems of transportation

and drained the radiators

there were no cabs and

My town was the closest to North Lake, ~~the mining town~~ an unincorporated ^{town} mining village (in the U. P. ^{unusually} called "location") about five miles away. Accordingly I was put in charge of transportation and ~~sent~~ ^{back} in those ^{primitive} days, most people ^{stored} their cars ~~at~~ on blocks with the ^{first} snowfall, I hired a team of horses and a sleigh boy from Burke's Livery; the Foreadors ~~the~~ would make a gala holiday ~~sleigh~~ ^{hay} ride out of ~~the~~ ^{then} return match with ^{the} North Lake ^{ominous}...

It was ^{just about} six o'clock and ^{the} members of

Team met at Pop Bellan's prologum and, with chattering teeth, climbed into the ^{warm} chummy sleigh box, Nenty Anderson driving [Donna: This is ~~quicker~~ but I can change it if you wish], and took off ^{for} in a cloud of vapor and squealing runners. It was at this point that our coach and manager, Chet Ross, displayed his resource and imagination: from a sort of bowling-ball bag he ^{carried} produced a gallon of colorless U. P. marmaline, ^{solemnly} took a ~~gustatory~~ ^{gustatory} swig, and passed it to the next man.

"Drink," he ordered. "It will drive away the chill."

Five miles later ^{his} ~~four~~ ^{stunning} horses when Nenty drove ^{into} the barn behind the North Lake Clubhouse the Foreadors had so far ^{chased} ~~away~~ ^{dispersed} the chill that only about half the gallon remained. "Thumps, Chet," I murmured, ^{groped} ~~our~~ ^{way} into the crowded ^{club} ~~house~~ ^{together}. "You sure soured the day -- ~~I~~ ^{just} feel ^{great} nice and warm ^{and} all over."

"Planned it that way," Chet said, ^{usually} ~~batting~~ ^{keeping} his ^{trusty} ~~bowling~~ ^{bag} ^{and} ^{grabbing} ^{it} ^{which} he carried over ^{water} jug.

had either never known or had

It is truly remarkable one thing:

But Chet had overlooked the fact that the locker room of the North Lake Clubhouse was ^{located} right next to the furnace, and ^{through} ^{naturally} the night being so ^{dramatically} ^{automatically} cold, the janitor had it and the radiators in the place fairly jumping. By the time the Foreadors had changed and trotted ^{uncertainly} ^{off} on the floor ^{of} the crowded ^{and cheering} gym, the temperature must have been at least a hundred -- and to a ^{man} ^{to a man} the Foreadors were stoned...

I shall ^{dwindling} ^{charitably} draw a veil of silence over the ^{ensuing} game that followed. I shall do so for two reasons: out of ^{one's} ^{respect} charity for my teammates and, two, because I do not remember much of what ^{took} followed. I do recall that our captain called frequent timeouts, whereupon we ^{gratefully} flopped to the floor and our faithful ^{coach and} manager trotted out with ^{his} "water" jug.

one other thing:

I also recall ^{one} that the Foreadors shot a basket ^{this happened} when its going center dimly perceived a spherical missile hurtling toward him, instinctively raised his ^{hands} for protection, found himself holding the missile, dazedly turned and saw a hoop with a net on it, and, with ^{surrealist} ^{deliberation} ^{coolly} ^{hurled} through the missile ^{at} through the hoop -- ^{through} ^{wholly} ^{to} it dropped scurrying another two points for the North Lake Miners.

Final score: North Lake Miners, 57; Foreadors, 0. It ^{had} ^{been} ^{at} ^{memorable} ^{night} was also the night the Foreadors disbanded.

X U
Re-written

But Chet has overlooked one thing: the fact that the locker room of the North Lake Clubhouse was located right next to the furnace. And naturally, the night being so damnably cold, the janitor had it and all the radiators in the place ~~fairly~~ fairly jumping. By the time we had changed and trotted uncertainly out on the floor of the crowded and cheering gym, the temperature must have been at least a hundred—and the Toreadors to a man were stoned...

standing ^{stunned} ~~wondered~~ and pensive ^{and swaying} in a corner, ^{(inflated) → round leather ^{table} object} ^{this he examined}

Small correction. I recall one other thing: that the Foreadors shot ^{one} lone basket. This miracle occurred near the end of the game when its gangling ~~and~~ ^{dimly} ~~center~~ perceived a spherical object hurtling toward him, threw up his hands to protect himself, ^{and} found himself holding ~~the~~ basketball, ^{whereupon} ~~he~~ ^{he} ~~glazedly~~ turned and saw a metal ~~hoop~~ hoop with netting on it, ^{and} extravagantly squinted ~~and~~ ^{aimed} ~~and~~ with dreamy deliberation lofted the ball at the hoop -- falling ^{abruptly} on his fanny from the effort -- from which ^{he} vantage point he watched with a detached smile ^{as} the ball rolled ^{uncertainly} around the ~~hoop~~ hoop and ^{presently} dropped ^{through} ~~the~~ hoop. The crowd ^{wildly} cheered ^{and} the ^{center}, still ^{prone}, ^{indulgently} acknowledged their plaudits ^{with} ~~a~~ ^{series} ~~of~~ ^{smiley} ~~and~~ ^{long} ~~and~~ ^{languid} waves. ^{He} ~~had~~ ^{just} ~~scored~~ ^{dropped} ~~the~~ ^{ball} ~~in~~ ^{the} ~~wrong~~ ^{wrong} ~~basket~~, ^{and} ~~thus~~ ^{scored} ~~another~~ ^{two} ~~points~~ ^{points} for ~~his~~ ^{the} opponents...

only later did he learn that

clapped and

nodded

possibly a ball and discovered it was a basketball

Final score: North Lake miners, 57;

Foreadors, 0. It was a memorable night. It was also the night the Foreadors disbanded.

X

Back in those days
had

our clothes

~~safety~~

~~Now~~ neither Chet nor any of us was
much given to drinking, in those days, just as none of
us was aware that, while a person may imbibe (EMBIBE)
a remarkable quantity of alcohol if he does so
outdoors in intense cold, it behooves him to
remain there. None of us ^{was} aware, either, that
the ^{cube} place where we ^{were} had to change ^{immediately} the
ragging clubhouse furnace. Nature did the rest;
by the time we changed and dreamily trotted out on
the gym floor, to a man the Forenders were stoned.

Re-written

giggling

lumbered and
romped and

overheated
the gym

Beyond that I have but a vague impression
 that my teammates and I lurched around like
 young elephants on a trampoline; the whole nightmare
 frequently falling down, careening into the bleachers, fumbling
 the ball or throwing it away or to our
 opponents. ^{in muddled retrospect} The whole nightmare affair ~~possessed~~
~~possessed~~ the wavering, slow-motion, surrealist quality of
^{hypnotized} ~~men~~ ^{sleeping} ~~men~~ ^{children} ~~men~~ ^{children} ~~men~~ ^{children} ~~men~~ ^{children}
 cartwheels at the bottom of the sea dragged
 cartwheels under water.

to the accompaniment of
 -- all ~~accompanied~~ ^{by} wild
 cheering ~~from~~ ^{by} the partisan crowd.

X Re-written

falling flat on his
fanny from the effort --
Small correction,

which he ~~stretched~~ ^{blinkingly} ~~stretched~~ ^{stretched} ~~it~~ ^{it} for a spell, and then

I recall one other thing: that the Toreadors shot a
lone basket. This ~~happened~~ ^{miracle occurred near the end of the game} when its gangling center dimly
perceived a spherical ~~missile~~ ^{leather object} hurtling toward him,
instinctively raised his hands ^{to protect himself,} for protection, found
himself holding the missile, ~~cazedly~~ ^{dreamily} looked up and
hoop with a net on it, and, with ~~surrealist~~ ^{dreamy} deliberation,
~~hurled~~ ^{extravagantly & lofted} the missile at the hoop, ~~through~~ ^{around} which ~~it~~ ^{it} ~~rolled~~ ^{uncertainly (through which,}
~~dropped~~ ^{dropped} --thus scoring another two points for the North
Lake Miners.

to, it ^{presently} ~~finally~~

Final score: North Lake Miners 57; Toreadors, 0.

It had been a memorable night. It was also the night
the Toreadors disbanded.

Re-typed
page

besides youth,

when we in school

by sheer chance

T

On the long drive I pondered what ~~the~~
dark mysterious compulsion drove people back to reunions.

After all, the main thing my classmates and I
~~was~~ had in common was that we ^{all} happened to ~~have~~ be
~~pursuing~~ pursued our ^{little} trade certificates, those ^{would} meal-tickets called
diplomas, at the same time in the same place.

In solemn truth I scarcely recalled even a score of
them; those few I really ^{longed} wanted to see could be counted
on ^{the fingers of} one hand. ^{After all these years} It wasn't true something faintly morbid

about going back to face and be faced by ~~the~~ our
dwindling host of survivors?

J

down from the ramp and

About five o'clock I arrived on the fifth floor of the parking ramp of my motel in Ann Arbor. A half hour later I had fought all my luggage (which included an eighty-pound short-wave radio whimsically called portable) up to my room, revived myself with a slug

while and sensibly

Then, gravely pirouetting before my mirror, I checked of bourbon, and carefully combed my hair and checked my bridgework, and carefully combed my hair, snipping off a

Then I made my way down to our

descended to face the music at our pre-banquet cocktail party.

a few fugitive gray locks that my hair had overlooked, and then I brushed

to clank off my shoulder and, taking a deep breath, regarding them and

[Handwritten flourish]

~~I found~~ ^{downstairs was milling and} the lobby awash with old grads of all ages ^{swarming}
 and varieties. My first blow came while I stood ^{peering through my} gaping
^{bifocals} at the bulletin board trying to ^{discover} find out where ^{in this beehive my} ~~my ex~~
^{old classmates were} ~~class~~ was meeting to imbibe ^{and recapture} a little pre-supper youth
 and hilarity. Somebody ^{touching my arm} nudged me and I turned and beheld
^{palsied} a wispy-haired, sunken eyed, ravaged-necked old man who ^{leaning on a cane.}
~~He~~ ^{teeth clicking} addressed me in a quavering voice.

drive them off by pelting

But mercifully

None of us had forgotten how to swallow, however,
and after several ^{stimulating} rounds some of us even began to
reminesce. "Remember that Spring the begowned and

marching → graduating engineers invaded

the Law Club arch and we pelted them from the tower

them ^{rotten} with eggs and old fruit?" "Member when ol' Smitty
ran down and ^{glorious} made that flying tackle on that lone engineer who ^{lil} dared stand

steed his ground?" "Remember...?"

I modestly refrained

from telling them about the recent collision ^{id had} with

my MY engineer. ~~...~~

-- I morosely reflected between drinks --

Between drinks I reflected that compassionate

Nature has both a sly and merciful way with this

business of growing old: after contemplating and shaving

the same old mug for umpty-odd years the ^{its} possessor

~~he~~ tends to overlook the ^{inevitable} ravages of time. But when

suddenly he confronts a group of contemporaries he

hasn't seen for forty years the shock is all but shattering.

Can these doddering ^{and bragging} old men possibly be the same boys ^{eager}

^{he once} ~~one~~ went to school with? ^{And} Has he really changed as

much as they? ^{beginningly} Pride and his ego keep ^{whispering}

no, but reason ^{not to mention} (and that old goat out at the bulletin board) keep shouting "Hell yes!"

During there was a ^{morbid} session of ^{of} vital statistics during which

At supper we learned from Duke that almost half our classmates had already ^{expired} died and that ^{almost more sobering,} only a fraction of survivors the living had showed up. ^{Some had simply dropped out of sight.} Many had sent their ^{various} regrets from hospitals and nursing homes. One of our more colorful classmates had mailed his from a midwest prison where ^{he explained,} he more or less permanently resided because of ^{his} ^{and} incorrigible penchant for swindling ^{his clients.} After supper those of us who ^{still} remained awake ^{quarrelingly} sang some old Michigan songs; by nine o'clock most of us were snug in the sack. ^{Only} Fred and Ernie and I ^{in our pride later repaired to and} ^{doggedly} closed the bar; ^{We would be bugs if it killed us.}

f

Next noon only about a dozen of the hardier of us

showed up for the football game--after all there was the
^{awful} ^{long trek}
~~problem of walking from the car to the stadium and,~~ ^{negotiating that ordeal,}
^{the problem of} ~~then~~ ^{our} scaling the concrete cliffs to ~~one's~~ ^{our} seat. After
^{-- yep,} Michigan retained the Little Brown Jug --
the game Ernie and Fred and I plodded our way to the
^{stinky}
nearest bar and applied ourselves to the business at
^{the sixth}
hand. After about ~~six~~ rounds we were so far mellowed
^{came right out and boldly}
and relaxed that Ernie suggested we plan to meet at
^{that}
our fiftieth class reunion.

"Here's to our fiftieth!" Fred toasted, ~~merrily~~
raising his glass -- *and we solemnly clinked glasses.*

^{off}
"Too bad it's ten years ~~away~~," I responded, suddenly
grown giggly. "I can scarcely wait."

P.S. ~~At least we retained the Little Brown Jug.~~

1st
Dec 14, '68

#53 f

MOON OVER NORTH LAKE

2 burial.
Blad

I once played on a basketball team that made ~~a unique~~ ^{what must be a} world's record; ^{at any rate I have never beheld its like} ~~the like of which I have neither beheld~~ ^{heard of} nor ~~heard of~~ ^{the like of it} before or since. At the time I was a student in a small U. P. teacher's college (since ~~magically~~ ^{the magical} transformed, by legislative fiat, ^{blade} into a ^{wave of the hand,} full-fledged university) and our team was a pickup squad of students who played not for glory, not for tuition, not even particularly for victory, but, ^{in the true spirit of the} ~~like all true amateurs,~~ simply ^{sheer} ~~for the sheer~~ ^{hell} animal fun of it. We called ourselves the Toreadors and I, being the tallest ^{youngster on the squad,} ~~kid,~~ naturally played center.

7

Chester Ross was our combined manager, coach, booking agent and water boy ~~our pickup team possessed but one~~

~~substitute~~ and our opponents were similar pickup squads ~~of amateurs~~ ^{the} from surrounding towns in the area. For a

team that only got to practice when it played, the

Toreadors had a modestly impressive record. This was due ^{largely}

~~in large part~~ ^{largely} to the fact that we had one varsity ringer

on our squad--we'd simply feed the ball to our running ^{star}

guard, Hank Carter (imaginatively ~~transformed to~~ ^{renamed} Carter

Henry for purposes of disguise) and ~~he~~ ^{he'd} obligingly drop

in the points.

6

Because of school and ^g(back in those days) ^gthe prickly
problem of transportation we played only on weekends or
during holidays. ~~This~~ ^{the present} During Thanksgiving vacation we ^{had taken}
~~took~~ on the sturdy North Lake Miners at the college gym
and managed barely to defeat them in a tough overtime
game. Naturally the smarting Miners clamored for
revenge--on their home floor, of course--so our
amiable manager promised them a return match during the
coming Christmas holidays.

7

My town was the closest to North Lake, an unincorporated
iron-mining village (in the U. P. invariably called *a*
"location") about five miles away. Accordingly I was put
in charge of transportation and since back in those
primitive days there were no cabs ^{or busses} and most people ~~stored~~ ^{put}
their cars ^{up} on blocks and drained the radiators with the
first snowfall, I hired a team of horses and a ^{high top} sleigh ^{box}
~~from~~ from Burke's Livery; the Toreadors would make a
gala holiday hay ⁽ride out of their return match with the
North Lake Miners...

X

in the evening
a crackling

It was six o'clock and 22 degrees below zero when
the members of our team met at Pop Geelan's poolroom
and, ^{downstairs} ~~and~~ ^{we} With chattering teeth, climbed into the waiting
chilly sleigh box, Henty Anderson driving, and took off
for North Lake in a cloud of vapor and squealing runners.

etc

It was at this point that our ^{crafty} coach and manager, Chet Ross,
displayed his resource and imagination: from a sort of
bowling-ball bag he carried he produced a ^{full jug} gallon of
^{white} ~~colorless~~ U. P. moonshine, ^{unwrapped it and} solemnly took a swig, and
passed it to the next man.

"I'll take ~~the~~ ^{the} help the game simply to get the word out," someone mumbled from under a blanket.

f

"Drink," he ordered. "It will drive away the ~~skull~~ chill."

Five miles later when Henty drove his steaming horses into the barn behind the North Lake Clubhouse the Toreadors had so far chased away the chill that ^{less than} ~~only~~ about half the gallon remained. "Thanks, Chet," I murmured as we groped our way into the crowded ^{and cheering} clubhouse. "You sure saved the day--can't feel a thing, just nice and warm and glowy all over."

~~"Planned it that way," Chet said, patting his trusty~~ ^{bowling ball bag.}

^{sergey answered,}
"Planned it that way," Chet ~~said,~~ patting his trusty bowling bag.

had discovered

6

Back

Now back in those days none of us was much given to drinking; we ~~found~~ that youth alone was sufficiently intoxicating. Nor was any of us aware that, while a person may imbibe a remarkable quantity of alcohol, ~~and~~ ~~fall~~ without becoming horizontal and still remain vertical, ^{provided} if he does so outdoors in intense cold, it behoves him to remain there.

None of us knew, either, that the cubicle where we had to change our clothes immediately adjoined the raging clubhouse furnace. Nature did the rest; by the time we had changed and trotted dreamily out on the floor, to a man the Soreadors were stoned.

↓
magnificently

7

+

some of whom are ^{still} ~~part~~ [→] teaching
the manly virtues to the young,

I shall draw a charitable veil of silence over the
ensuing game. ^{My reticence springs from two things: one,}
~~I shall do so for two reasons: one first,~~
~~out of~~ ^{out of} respect for my teammates and, ~~two,~~ ^{second,} because I ~~cannot~~ ^{anyway I can't}
~~not~~ remember much of what ^{happened.} followed. I do recall that our
captain called frequent timeouts, whereupon we gratefully
flopped to the floor as our faithful ~~coach~~ ^{his parched players} and manager ~~and coach~~
~~trotted out with his~~ ^{to refresh} dwindling "water" jug ^{from him rapidly}.

and courted

crowded

~~Trying to romp~~ +

grateful

stoidly

Beyond that I have but a hazy impression that the Toreadors lumbered and lurched around the overheated gym like ~~young~~ ^{romping} elephants ~~romping~~ ^{wasn't} on a trampoline. When one or more of us ^{wasn't} picking himself off the floor or careening into the bleachers, he was busily throwing the ball out of bounds or into the hands of our opponents -- all to the accompaniment of wild cheers by the partisan fans. Meanwhile the ~~boys~~ ^{happy} ~~winners~~ ^{stolid} were ~~having a field day~~ racking up ^{the} points. In muddled retrospect the whole nightmare ^{scene} ~~affair~~ ^{performance} possesses the wavering slow-motion quality of bewitched children romping under water.

winded

that Small correction. I recall one other thing: the Foreadors shot one lone basket. This miracle occurred ~~during~~ ^{near} the end of the game when its ~~gonging~~ center, standing ~~prone~~ and swaying in a corner, mistily perceived a spherical object hurtling toward him, threw up his hands to protect himself, and found himself ~~holding~~ holding an inflated leather ball. After examining this curious object carefully he ~~discovered~~ and discovering that, lo, it was a basketball, he turned dazedly and saw a metal hoop with some netting on it ^{at which, after} ~~whereupon~~, extravagantly ~~swinging~~ ^{and squinting} and aiming, he dreamily lofted the ball -- falling abruptly on his fanny from the effort.

From this vantage point ^{with a detached smile as} ~~he~~ he watched the ball roll ~~uncertainly~~ around the hoop, and he ~~closed~~ ^{closed} his eyes when, of all things, ~~it~~ ^{the ball} presently dropped through. The crowd cheered wildly as the center, still prone, indulgently acknowledged their plaudits with nodded smiles and languid waves. Only later did he learn that he had just dropped the ball in the wrong basket, thus ^{scoring} another two points for the ^{shutout!} North Lake Miners...

EXULTANT →

Final score: North Lake Miners, 57; Foreadors, 0. It had been a ^{memorable} ~~remarkable~~ evening. It was also the night the Foreadors disbanded.

Written by:
John D. Voelker
Deer Lake Road
Ishpeming, Michigan
No. 53

MOON OVER NORTH LAKE
by

Robert Traver

I once played on a basketball team that made some sort of world's record; at any rate I have never heard of its like before or since. At the time I was a student in a small U. P. teachers college (since magically transformed by a legislative wave of the hand into a full-fledged university) and our team was a pickup squad of students who played not for glory, not for tuition, not even particularly for victory, but, in the true spirit of the amateur, simply for the sheer hell of it. We called ourselves the Toreadors and I, being the tallest, naturally played center.

Chester Ross was our combined manager, coach, booking agent and water boy and our opponents were similar pickup squads from the surrounding towns in the area. For a team that only got to practice when it played, the Toreadors had a modestly impressive record. This was due largely to the fact that we had one varsity ringer on our squad—we'd simply feed the ball to our running guard, Hank Carter (imaginatively renamed Carter Henry for purposes of disguise) and he'd obligingly drop in the points.

✓ Because of school and , back in those days, the prickly problem of transportation, we played only on weekends or during holidays. During Thanksgiving vacation we had taken on the sturdy North Lake Miners at the college gym and barely managed to defeat them in a tough overtime game. Naturally the smarting Miners clamored for revenge—on their home floor, of course—so our amiable manager promised them a return match during the coming Christmas holidays.

My town was the closest to North Lake, an unincorporated iron-mining village (in the U. P. invariably called a "location") about five miles away. Accordingly I was put in charge of transportation and since back in those primitive days there were no cabs or busses and most people put their cars up on blocks and drained the radiators with the first snowfall, I hired a team of horses and a sleigh box from Burke's Livery; the Toreadors would make a gala holiday hayride out of their return match with the North Lake Miners...

It was six o'clock in the evening and a crackling 22 degrees below zero when the members of our team met at Pop Geelan's poolroom. With chattering teeth we climbed into the waiting chilly sleigh box, Henty Anderson driving, and took off for North Lake in a cloud of vapor and squealing runners. "It'll take us half the game simply to get thawed out," someone muttered from under a blanket. It was at this point that our crafty coach and manager, Chet Ross, displayed his resource and imagination: from a sort of bowling-ball bag he carried he produced a gallon jug of white U. P. moonshine, solemnly took a swig, and passed it to the next man.

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Now back in those days none of us was much given to drinking; we had discovered that youth alone was sufficiently intoxicating. Nor was any of us aware that, while a person may imbibe a remarkable quantity of alcohol and still remain vertical, provided he does so outdoors in intense cold, it behooves him to remain there. None of us knew, either, that the cubicle where we had to change our clothes immediately adjoined the raging clubhouse furnace. Nature did the rest; by the time we had changed and trotted dreamily out on the floor, to a man the Toreadors were magnificently stoned. ✓

I shall draw a charitable veil of silence over the ensuing game. My reticence springs from two things: one, out of respect for my teammates, some of whom are still teaching the ^{sturdy} ~~manly~~ virtues to the young, and, two, because anyway I can't remember much of what happened. I do recall that our captain called frequent timeouts ^{periods} whereupon we gratefully flopped to the floor as our faithful manager and coach trotted out to refresh his parched players from his rapidly dwindling "water" jug.

Beyond that I have but a hazy impression that the Toreadors lumbered and cavorted and lurched around the overheated gym like young elephants on a trampoline. When one or more of us wasn't picking himself off the floor or careening into the crowded bleachers he was busily throwing the ball out of bounds or into the grateful hands of our opponents—all to the accompaniment of wild cheers by the partisan fans. Meanwhile the Miners were stoicly racking up the points. In muddled retrospect the whole nightmare scene possesses the wavering slow-motion quality of bewitched children romping under water.

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Final score: North Lake Miners, 57; Toreadors, 0. It had been a memorable evening. It was also the night the Toreadors disbanded.

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Chester Ross was our combined manager, coach, booking agent and water boy and our opponents were similar pickup squads from the surrounding towns in the area. For a team that only got to practice when it played, the Toreadors had a modestly impressive record. This was due largely to the fact that we had one varsity ringer on our squad—we'd simply feed the ball to our running guard, Hank Carter (imaginatively renamed Carter Henry for purposes of disguise) and he'd obligingly drop in the points.

Because of school and, back in those days, the prickly problem of transportation we played only on weekends or during holidays. During Thanksgiving vacation we had taken on the sturdy North Lake Miners at the college gym and barely managed to defeat them in a tough overtime game. Naturally the smarting Miners clamored for revenge—on their home floor, of course—so our amiable manager promised them a return match during the coming Christmas holidays.

My town was the closest to North Lake, an unincorporated iron-mining village (in the U. P. invariably called a "location") about five miles away. Accordingly I was put in charge of transportation and since back in those primitive days there were no cabs or busses and most people put their cars up on blocks and drained the radiators with the first snowfall, I hired a team of horses and a sleigh box from Burke's Livery; the Toreadors would make a gala holiday hayride out of their return match with the North Lake Miners...

It was six o'clock in the evening and a crackling 22 degrees below zero when the members of our team met at Pop Geelan's poolroom. With chattering teeth we climbed into the waiting chilly sleigh box, Henty Anderson driving, and took off for North Lake in a cloud of vapor and squealing runners. "It'll take us half the game simply to get thawed out," someone muttered from under a blanket. It was at this point that our crafty coach and manager, Chet Ross, displayed his resource and imagination: from a sort of bowling-ball bag he carried he produced a gallon jug of white U. P. moonshine, solemnly took a swig, and passed it to the next man.

"Drink," he ordered. "It will drive away the chill."

Five miles later when Henty drove his steaming horses into the barn behind the North Lake Clubhouse the Toreadors had so far chased away the chill that less than half the gallon remained. "Thanks, Chet," I murmured as we groped our way into the crowded clubhouse. "You sure saved the day--can't feel a thing, just nice and warm and glowy all over."

"Planned it that way," Chet sagely answered, patting his trusty bowling bag.

Now back in those days none of us was much given to drinking; we had discovered that youth alone was sufficiently intoxicating. Nor was any of us aware that, while a person may imbibe a remarkable quantity of alcohol and still remain vertical provided he does so outdoors in intense cold, it behooves him to remain there. None of us knew, either, that the cubicle where we had to change our clothes immediately adjoined the raging clubhouse furnace. Nature did the rest; by the time we had changed and trotted dreamily out on the floor, to a man the Toreadors were magnificently stoned.

I shall draw a charitable veil of silence over the ensuing game. My reticence springs from two things: one, out of respect for my teammates, some of whom are still teaching the manly virtues to the young, and, two, because anyway I can't remember much of what happened. I do recall that our captain called frequent timeouts, whereupon we gratefully flopped to the floor as our faithful manager and coach trotted out to refresh his parched players from his rapidly dwindling "water" jug.

Beyond that I have but a hazy impression that the Toreadors lumbered and cavorted and lurched around the overheated gym like young elephants on a trampoline. When one or more of us wasn't picking himself off the floor or careening into the crowded bleachers he was busily throwing the ball out of bounds or into the grateful hands of our opponents--all to the accompaniment of wild cheers by the partisan fans. Meanwhile the Miners were stoicly racking up the points. In muddled retrospect the whole nightmare scene possesses the wavering slow-motion quality of bewitched children romping under water.

Small correction. I recall one other thing: that the Toreadors shot one lone basket. This miracle occurred near the end of the game when its winded center, standing pensive and swaying in a corner, mistily perceived a spherical object hurtling toward him, threw up his hands to protect himself, and found himself holding an inflated leather ball. After examining this curious object carefully and discovering that, lo, it was a basketball, he turned dazedly and saw a metal hoop with some netting on it at which, after extravagantly squinting and aiming, he dreamily lofted the ball—falling abruptly on his fanny from the effort.

From this vantage point he watched with a detached smile as the ball rolled uncertainly around the hoop, closing his eyes when, of all things, the ball presently dropped through. The crowd cheered wildly as the center, still prone, indulgently acknowledged their plaudits with nodded smiles and languid waves. Only later did he learn that he had just dropped the ball in the wrong basket, thus scoring another two points for the exultant North Lake Miners...

Final score: North Lake Miners, 57; Toreadors, 0. It had been a memorable evening. It was also the night the Toreadors disbanded.