

## The I. H. S. A. A.

As the twentieth century opened Iowa high school athletics were in a sorry plight. There were few rules and those that existed were not uniform. Athletes were expected to be enrolled in the school, but many "ringers" somehow found their way to the gridiron and diamond. Confusion and lack of uniformity finally brought the high school principals together. In 1903 the Iowa High School Principals' Club acted to end the jumble of regulations by appointing a rules committee to draft a uniform code. Out of this action came one set of rules for all schools participating in Iowa scholastic sports. Thus school officials paved the way for the founding of the Iowa High School Athletic Association.

The first rules committee had two members — Forest C. Ensign of Council Bluffs and Maurice Ricker of Burlington. Their labors resulted in the Ensign-Ricker report which the principals adopted in 1904. Carrying out one of the recommendations on December 28, 1904, the superintendents and principals formed the Iowa High School Athletic Association. The idea that had been forming for so many years at state teachers conventions was now a reality.

Board members over those early first years included D. A. Thornburg, Grinnell; George Edward Marshall, Sioux City; Frank L. Smart, Dubuque; A. V. Storm, Cherokee; R. S. Whitley, Sioux City; M. M. Bedall, Boone; R. B. Crone, Washington; Eugene Henely, Grinnell; and Seth Thomas, Fort Dodge. These men served at various times during the first years of the IHSAA. Marshall, indeed, was off the board after his first term, moved to Davenport, and was then elected to a new term. The board of control governed often by "what it thought was right." When the schools had legal problems they frequently called in lawyers to help settle the difficulties.

George Edward Marshall — he was never just George Marshall — more than any other man gave of his time to the IHSAA. A member of the board for twenty-seven years, his imprint on the high school athletic field went far beyond the confines of his state. He played a leading part in the formation of the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations. That group, working with the various state organizations, has moved high school athletics to a level of the highest ideals of play and sportsmanship.

Marshall died in 1932, but the impact of the man is still felt in the state and nation wherever high school athletics are conducted.

Seth Thomas, now a United States District Court Judge and still residing in Fort Dodge, in

discussing the period when he served on the board of control, said there were few "kicks" over decisions. Often, he said, Marshall would simply explain the decisions by mail and that would end any problem. School men, he pointed out, realized the need for organization and ethics, and accepted the early rulings most gracefully.

As the IHSAA moved along it became too large an organization to be handled solely by the part-time work of the board members. On January 1, 1927, George A. Brown of Des Moines was appointed executive secretary of the IHSAA. He served in that capacity until he resigned in 1940. During his period of office the IHSAA grew larger and larger and had the usual growing pains.

During the 1930's when the IHSAA was expanding rapidly there developed a difference of opinion over how much supervision it should exercise. There was wide disagreement among board members, and often Brown disagreed with the board. As a result of these differences of opinion Brown resigned in 1941. Lyle T. Quinn, who had been named assistant secretary in February, 1940, was named manager of the IHSAA on March 29, 1941. His term was to expire August 31, 1942. In November of 1941 Quinn was elected executive secretary for a three-year period. His contract has been renewed by the Board of Control at three-year intervals since that time.

The IHSAA has continued to grow and expand

as it has sought to improve play, coaching, and sportsmanship among the players of the Iowa high schools. In 1953-1954 nearly 950 schools held membership in the association.

Member schools now direct their activities through three organizations: the Representative Council, the Board of Control, and the office of the executive secretary. The council meets twice each year to determine policy for the group; the board meets periodically to conduct the matter of policy execution; the executive secretary handles the details for both groups in the matter of directing the affairs of the association.

Where early activities included some supervision of track meets and later fairly casual contact with basketball tournaments, the IHSAA today directs one of the largest athletic programs in the nation. It includes the basketball tourney, one of the biggest in the nation; state-wide programs for track, baseball, wrestling, swimming, cross country, golf, tennis, and related activities. The association also holds two coaching clinics each year at a minimum cost to coaches and officials. In addition it holds more than fifty rules clinics each year in football, basketball, baseball, and wrestling. This is to improve the caliber of officiating and to promote uniform understanding and interpretation of the rules.

In 1939 the Iowa High School Insurance Company began operation to give low-cost medical

protection for the high school athletes. This group pays out far better than 90 per cent of its premiums to lessen the economic burden when high school athletes are hurt.

The offices of the IHSAA were located from 1923 to 1944 in Des Moines. In 1944 they were moved to Boone, where the association now owns its own building.

Perhaps the great work done by the Iowa High School Athletic Association can best be explained by reading the precise language of the group's constitution:

The purpose of this Association shall be: to promote, develop, direct, protect, and regulate amateur interscholastic athletic relationships between member schools and to stimulate fair play, friendly rivalry, and good sportsmanship among the contestants, schools and communities throughout the state.

HARRY G. BURRELL