

# College Competition -- Impending Disaster

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It all started pretty innocently, I think. Probably, a couple of hot operators got W8UM, the University of Michigan's station, wound up for the DX contest. Everything was right and it turned out to be a smash.

Last year W8UM was first in line for just about everything. They just sat there calling the roll like DX themselves. They were even working 80 as if it were the SS contest.

This stellar performance at a great university is fine. It is gratifying to see colleges enjoy ham competition. Up to a point, that is. But what does this portend?

How does a loyal Wisconsin alumnus feel when he learns the so-so score of W9YT? Does he hang his head in shame when he meets a Michigan colleague? Perhaps, holding back his tears, he pretends that it is just a game and unimportant.

What is the reaction of a Purdue alum when he compares the score of W9YB to UM? Anger? Humiliation? Need of revenge? Probably all three.

Are the Michigan graduates generous in their victory? Do they say, "Just a bit of luck, you'll do better next year." Probably not, a lesson learned from football that remarks like this usually come true.

W8UM can't be expected to dominate college competition year after year any more than Minnesota could in football a few decades ago. Alumni pressure will mount. Students will organize protests. Station trustees will be hung in effigy.

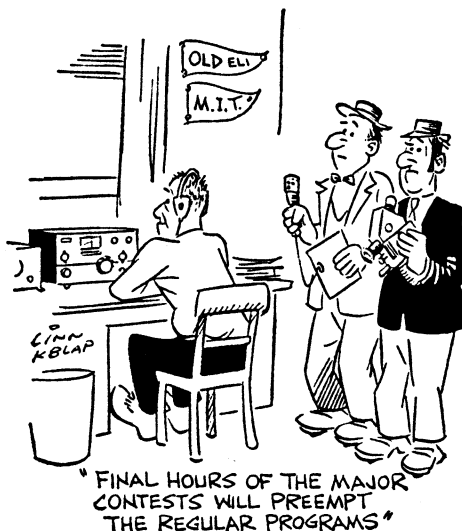
Soon there will be recruiting, ham-radio scholarships, ham training tables, red-shirting and regional conferences. The Novice Round-up high scorers, still in high school, will be visited by the ham-radio coaches.

Fund drives for rhombics, new stations and expanded staff will be under way by the 3000 colleges. Hams will become the Big Men on Campus. Letters will be earned, courses given in Amateur Radio Psychology. Then there will be an advanced degree MAC, Masters in Amateur Contesting.

All of this frenzied competition will quickly lead to expanded publicity, what with 3000 public relations officers feeding news releases to the press, radio and TV.

The weekly competition between conference schools will fill the sport pages. Box scores will appear in all the papers. Statistics will be published. W0YQ, they will say, has had 74.8% of

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its CQs answered. On 7 Mc., W7UQ has worked 80.7% of all stations called, all bands. W1MX has had an average RST signal report of 4.951 - 7.132 - 9 compared with 4.768 - 7.103 - 9 last year, same period. Nice increase, especially the R.

Radio and TV coverage of the final hours of the major contests will preempt the regular programs. Sponsored, perhaps, by No-Doz. The cameras will switch from one high scorer to another as they fight for time in the closing minutes. The excitement will be dimmed somewhat by the computer forecast made during the first three minutes of the contest.

Then, inevitably, on to professional ham radio, the greatest spectator sport of all. Amateur amateurs and professional amateurs. Bowl contests.

Let's stamp out college ham radio before it is too late!

QST

