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21st March 1957.

Mr. Frank Blalton,
The Seattle Times,
Seattle, Wash.

Dear Frank: As will appear in the enclosed clippings from The (London) Observer, Oxford University is changing over its style of rowing and a young Oxford student from Australia is, ^{apparently getting credit for revolutionizing his own opinions} ~~cashing in on the change to his own gain, in~~ ~~publicly at least in publicity.~~ I noted these stories a month ago and started an inquiry by correspondence with the Coach, J. B. Page. He responded by inviting me to watch the Oxford crew row. He also wrote out his ^{opinions} theory of what good training and rowing techniques consist. He also stated he has held these views for 30 years or more and has had them confirmed by conversations with my Ebright and others not definitely identified. He saw Yale take the "eight" in Australia last fall. I accepted his invitation to an Oxford Tournament and found the crew doing almost the same style of stroke. Rusty Callow and Ed Leader were teaching as the "Conibear" stroke back in the 1920's when you and I were students and when many of America's present rowing coaches were rowing on the University of Washington squad. I told Mr. Page of my impression and he seemed unsurprised as he ^{accurately} readily pointed out that George Pocock was in the background

and George is not only the world's greatest builder of rowing shells but also probably knows as much if not more about rowing techniques than any living person. This all adds up to an impression which may be of interest to you as a practitioner of one of society's ^{most} ~~very~~ important arts, the art of public information. I suspect that Oxford is finally adopting the "Comibear", "Washington" or "American" style of rowing, which may indeed have originally been largely English in origin, carried to ^{Western} America by George Pocock and possibly others, but lost to England by the over stressing of such non-essentials as the ^{excessive} "lay back" and superfluous motions of the arms.

If my thesis is sound it ^{it might} would be an interesting story for your sports editors to investigate at this time of the annual renewal of Oxford-Cambridge competition, the oldest intercollegiate sporting competition in the world. In any case, it might be an interesting story to report that Oxford seems to have adopted a style which is apparently identical with the "Comibear" or "Washington" style of the 1920's.

I'm completing a ^{Research} Fulbright Scholarship in England & expect to return to teaching and crew coaching (amateur) at Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts next August.

Cordially yours,

F Eugene (Gene) Melder.