

UCSD drops intercollegiate football

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The University of California, San Diego announced today it has dropped intercollegiate football from its list of sports after only one year of varsity competition.

Dr. Ted Forbes, Chairman of the Department of Physical Education, said the decision not to field a team next fall was based on the apparent inability of UCSD to interest a sufficient number of students in the sport and difficulties in scheduling other institutions adhering to the same amateur approach to college athletics which would give them a reasonable chance for victory.

Only a small number of students played varsity football last year and the indications for the coming season are that even fewer students will try out for the team. A boycott of intercollegiate football by most UCSD players and the failure of a recent student body referendum which would have granted financial assistance to athletes are among the reasons so few students will participate in the sport.

The question of awarding direct financial assistance, drawn exclusively from private sources, to athletes irrespective of their need was overwhelmingly defeated by a three to one vote by the UCSD student body during campus elections.

The athletic boycott was brought about by the athletes in their attempt to change current athletic policy on campus. Twenty-eight UCSD athletes signed a petition stating they would not participate in sports during the 1969-70 season if their demands were not met. Another twenty signed as sympathetic to the cause. Among the demands listed were the addition of a physical education major to the curricula of the Third College due to open in the Fall of 1970, a unit credit for all physical education classes, summer jobs to enable athletes to pay for their room and board during the school year, proceeds from food concessions and ticket sales for the use of varsity sports, the allowing of private donors a more active role in supporting the UCSD athletic program and the waiving of incidental fees for those athletes who are financing their own education.

Forbes said that scheduling other institutions which adhere to a "no aid" policy was practically non-existent, especially with football and basketball. He said football was the more serious of the two.

Forbes listed several additional reasons why so few students have turned out for football in the past. He said the heavy pressure of the academic workload keeps many students from participating in intercollegiate sports. Also, the crowded school day makes scheduling of practice sessions extremely difficult. Perhaps the most important reason, he said, is that UCSD is unable to attract many athletes who could hold their own academically, since all other comparable institutions offer such students some kind of financial inducement.

He said that the experience of last year's season was that although the UCSD team was able to play a strong first quarter, the physical drain of going against fresh replacements in the later quarters left them far behind in the scoreboard and greatly increased the probability of injury. It would be irresponsible to allow students with lesser athletic ability to play intercollegiate football because of the injury factor, he said.

Forbes added that at some future time when the prospect for a team looks more hopeful, intercollegiate football will be resumed at UCSD. He said that the 16 other intercollegiate sports will continue and that "playing as

a member of a team on this campus should be for the sheer enjoyment of participation with no financial rewards given nor expected by the athletes."