

# Organization seeking to change college athletic system

(continued from page 1)  
 misplaced priorities," DeVenzio said, "but they have a short time to take advantage of college sports and are forced to take a light load of classes."  
 Wally Groff, associate director of finance of the Texas A&M Athletic Department, agreed there is a need to extend scholarships beyond the five-year limit set by the NCAA.  
 Currently, athletic scholarships can cover five years of school over a

six-year period, he said, allowing a year off for work or personal reasons.  
 After their four years of athletic eligibility, they still might have several years of course work to complete for their degree and no scholarship money to cover the expense, he said.  
 DeVenzio said it's tragic that athletes from poor families can't afford to finish their education. Often, he says, these athletes leave without a degree or a professional contract.

Nationally, less than one-third of the athletes from revenue-producing programs graduate, DeVenzio said.  
 Groff, however, said over 60 percent of the scholarship athletes at A&M graduate — about the same percentage as the entire student body.  
 DeVenzio said he thinks the organization will gain power this year and convince players to stage strikes

at several of the major bowl games of the 1986 season.  
 Strikes would be aimed at post-season games because the players aren't required to participate and because these games are the most lucrative, he said.  
 DeVenzio said if the RPMCPA did strike, people would realize it was a "changing of the guard." Such a dramatic action would result in a landslide of support, he said.

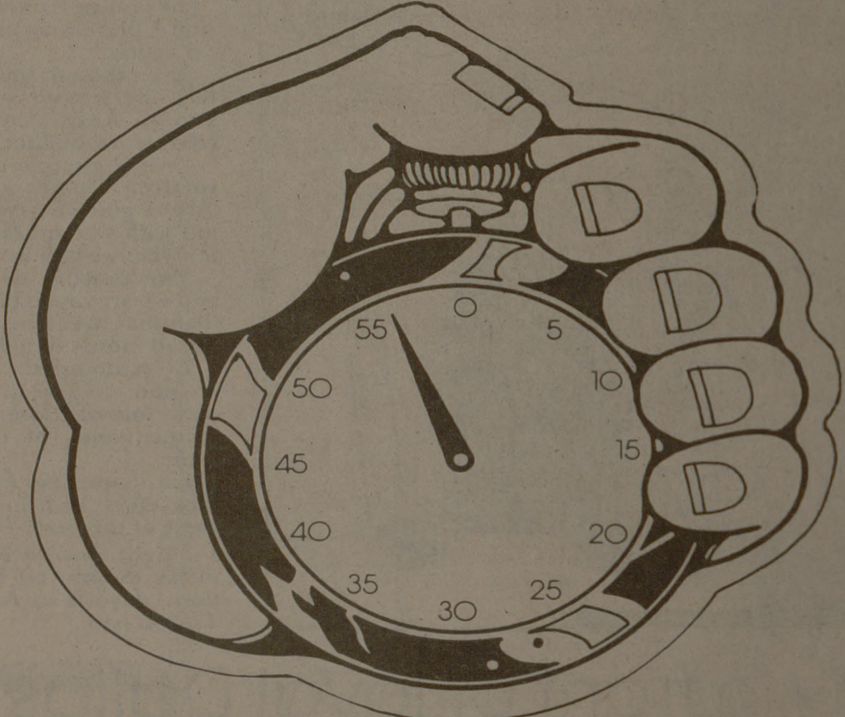
"It would be an athletic Boston Tea Party," he said.  
 Groff acknowledged that the current system is not perfect but said the goals of the RPMCPA are extreme. He said that pushing for such drastic changes, however, could improve the current system.  
 If the money currently paid to schools for bowl appearances and network coverage went instead to a general players' fund, he said, it

would affect non-revenue sports—possibly forcing schools to eliminate them.  
 Football is the only sport that actually produces revenue at A&M, Groff said, and basketball is the sport that breaks even.  
 DeVenzio said, "We're not on a cause problems. The problem is the system. If we fail, we'll fall back on our athletic experience, learn from our mistakes and try again."

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