

Citrus Bowl tradition squeezed dry

by Jack McManus '13

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It feels like a long time ago, but I remember my first time visiting Hamilton pretty clearly. I had an energetic tour guide that gushed over everything on the lush, sprawling campus. She had a particular fondness for Yodapez if I remember correctly, but she really caught my attention with her description of the Citrus Bowl, a raucous tradition where students packed into the rink for the first home Men's Ice Hockey game and showered the opposing goaltender with oranges after Hamilton's first goal. Coming from a sports-obsessed all-boys high school with a similar devotion to hockey and shenanigans, I was encouraged by the idea that Hamilton students shared my appreciation for sporting events as fun shared experiences, able to unite a community in support of the simple common idea that we all want our team to beat the other team.

Four years later, I've come to realize that Hamilton doesn't really operate that way—not enough of us have the interest or free time needed to sustain a sports fan culture. That's fine, we have other thriving cultures like the arts and outdoor leadership that make up for it. However, our traditions haven't changed with our campus' shifting interests and the Citrus Bowl has come to expose that on a yearly basis.

Originally, the Citrus Bowl was a very simple, easily defined tradition. It had two parts: the setting (the first home Men's Ice Hockey game) and the event (ev-

erybody attends and throws fruit). With these two basic elements in mind, I have a simple question: what happened last Friday? Nobody threw oranges. It wasn't the team's first home game. So, according to the simple definition, I don't understand what made it the

exciting back when the community used to care about sports. However, as the two defining features of the Citrus Bowl have been eliminated, the tradition has also lost its purpose. While there are practical reasons for both these eliminations, one represents a

to do with the true meaning of the Citrus Bowl. The scheduling part is actually far more relevant. This year the first home game was right before Thanksgiving break, the second was on a Tuesday, and the rest were over winter break. Obviously the vacation games wouldn't

the Citrus Bowl didn't need to be scheduled by anyone—its day and time were determined by the hockey schedule.

The fact that the first hockey games this year weren't attended nearly as well as the one chosen by Social Traditions shows how the Citrus Bowl is now an altogether new tradition—one in which many students attend a convenient game en masse. It's still technically a tradition, as it occurs annually and has a vaguely significant connection to past Citrus Bowls, but it has taken on a new, less sincere meaning. It still reflects campus interest and opinion, but the reflection is one of a barely interested community that needs special incentive to participate.

My intention with this observation isn't to directly criticize the Social Traditions Committee. I believe that their function on campus is important and has created or fostered the growth of many completely worthwhile campus traditions. On the other hand, organic, crowd-constructed events like the Citrus Bowl don't lend themselves to official planning and control, as they're based on the unique identity of the group that participates in the event.

When a tradition no longer reflects the participants' identity, the participants quickly lose the desire to participate, allowing the tradition to end naturally. Just like compulsory chapel and other former Hamilton establishments, the Citrus Bowl has lost its relevance on campus and should be retired in favor of traditions that better reflect the identity of Hamilton's students like Silent Disco, the Rocky Horror party and Mr. Hamilton.



PHOTO BY KEVIN PRIOR '13

Citrus Bowl. It certainly wasn't the Citrus Bowl that my tour guide described.

The two pillars that defined original Citrus Bowl gave the tradition its meaning and purpose, which was to celebrate the beginning of the hockey season in a minimally mischievous way. Ice Hockey has always been one of Hamilton's most loved, respected and successful sporting events, and its arrival was legitimately

much more significant change in the character of the tradition.

While some might argue that the prohibition of orange tossing killed the tradition, that's actually the more acceptable change that has happened over the years. Throwing the oranges was probably fun, and it gave the tradition its name, but it also explicitly breaks several sets of rules, it has the potential to be unsafe for the players and it really has nothing

work, but why wait until this past weekend if the community were truly excited about hockey? Obviously this tradition has lost its roots.

By taking it under their control, the Social Traditions Committee started managing the Citrus Bowl in a way that both ignores its original purpose and prevents the tradition from being phased out naturally due to changing campus interests. In its original form,

Athletic scandals cloud vision of integrity

by Chris Delacruz '13

OPINION CONTRIBUTOR

The ever-increasing number of sport scandals in recent years leads us to question whether athletic integrity is a thing of the past. Two of the most recent scandals include Lance Armstrong's recent confession to his use of illegal steroids and the hoax surrounding Manti Te'o's non-existent girlfriend. Steroid scandals are not new to the world of sports. Many prominent sports figures have been found guilty of using steroids in the past including baseball player Mark McGwire, Olympic sprinter Marion Jones and Armstrong's fellow Tour de Franceman Floyd Landis. The question of whether athletic integrity still exists in this age is difficult to answer, as seen by the complex cases of Armstrong and Te'o.

However, Armstrong's use of illegal steroids is not necessarily symbolic of a drop in athletic integrity. World-class athletes are often under a lot of pressure to go to extreme measures to improve their athletic performance. While most contend that hard work is the biggest factor in determining how

good an athlete will become, athletic prowess is also determined by diet, supplements, coaching and equipment.

If athletes feel like they were shorted in the genetic lottery and don't see it possible to compete otherwise, they may feel the need to level the playing field. Often athletes must search for a way to overcome common disadvantages. Steroids pose a convenient and easy, yet illegal, path to overcome these disadvantages. Armstrong was featured in a two-night interview where he exposed his wrongdoings. There he argued that without the help of illegal substances, there was no way to keep up with the competition, most of which also was doping. If steroids are the norm and not using them means inevitable failure, must they be considered immoral?

Armstrong's use of steroids, if not indicative of problems with integrity, is symbolic of athletes being forced to turn to steroids to keep up with the rigorous pace of international competition. His use of steroids in order to be better able to compete at the international level does not corrupt his integrity in any way except that it broke the rules. The larger part of Armstrong's scandal lies in the way

in which he constantly lied to the public and, in his words "was a bully" to those around him. Knowing the fragility of his situation, Armstrong often threatened those around him to dispel rumors or project an image. Armstrong may not have been immoral by simply using steroids, but his integrity in his actions around those matters certainly should be questioned.

Manti Te'o's athletic integrity is a more difficult case to analyze because much remains unknown. A Notre Dame linebacker in BCS spotlight, Te'o claimed to have lost his online girlfriend Lennay Kekua mid-season in a weird scenario that can be best described as an NCAA version of MTV's *Catfish*. Many strange developments later, it is said that he found out that she was merely a construction of old acquaintance Ronaiah Tuiasosopo. Even though the evidence suggests so far that Te'o was the victim, the oddity of the situation lends itself to much outside doubt. If Te'o ends up being guilty of participating, the story suggests both a lack of integrity and a trend towards a craving for spotlight among college athletes. Te'o would have been banking off the fact that everyone

loves an underdog story to rally for an unlikely defensive Heisman Bid. This case still is clearly fuzzy, but could be an unfortunate case that doesn't bode well for the future of neither Manti nor the integrity of college sports.

In both Armstrong and Te'o's cases, the line between athletic integrity and outside pressure can be blurry. Fortunately, Hamilton College's Athletics Department stands as a strong example that students can follow the rules placed by the NCAA and garner the respect of outsiders. Examples of Hamilton's stunning and rule-abiding athletes includes superstar Peter Kosgei '12 who graduated from Hamilton with nine national titles and 11 All-American awards. Another recent achievement by one of Hamilton's athletes includes Madie Harlem '13, who became the ninth player in Hamilton College women's basketball history to score 1,000 points. Hamilton's athletes stand as a great example that athletes do not need to break the rules to be successful. We can only hope that scandals like Armstrong's and Te'o's are treated accordingly and prove not to be indicative of a loss of integrity in the athletic sphere.