

Coach John Robert Wooden

Purdue '32

Oxford Cup Roll N° 009

There will surely never be another to match the All-Everything-of-Every-Year UCLA Coach John Wooden. He seems universally accepted as the most respected man in basketball history.

His Oxford Cup was presented at a Greater Los Angeles Beta Alumni gathering November 17, 1987, at the Bel-Air Country Club. It had been on Betas' agenda for a long time, but Coach had been too busy, too much in demand, too nice to put off people to whom he felt committed, to take time out for kudos.

John Wooden had announced his retirement from active basketball coaching in 1975 after 27 years with UCLA. His 40-year record of 905 wins and 203 losses is considered the winningest record in basketball history.

It is a record which brackets 10 NCAA championships in his last 12 seasons; 38 straight NCAA tournament victories; an all-time NCAA consecutive-win streak of 88 in a row over four seasons, and 16 conference championships. All this was part of his years at UCLA. It came like this: the last 15 games of 1970-71, all 30 games in 1971-72 and all 30 in 1972-73, and 13 games of 1973-74 before the spell was broken. Spell? Wasn't he known as the Wizard of Westwood?

He remains the only person to have been inducted into the National Basketball Hall of Fame both as a player and as a coach. At Purdue, he was a three-year All-American, captain of the 1932 national championship team, 1932 Helms Foundation player of the year and a Helms All-Time All-American selection.

The National Association of Basketball Writers named him Coach of the Year six times. *Sporting News* named him "Man of the Year" in 1970. *Sports Illustrated* called him "Sportsman of the Year" for 1973.

He was named California Father of the Year in 1964 and again in 1975. He received the Whitney Young Award of the Urban League in 1973, was first recipient of the annual Velvet Covered Brick Award of the Layman's Leadership Institute in 1974 and was first recipient of the annual Dr. Naismith Peach Basket Award in 1974. He received the Bellarmine College medal of excellence 1987.

He published two books: *Practical Modern Basketball* (1966) and *They Call Me Coach* (1972). He contributes regularly to professional journals and maintained a heavy schedule of clinics, workshops and inspirational talks. They all stress teamwork, discipline, conditioning, fundamentals, respect and self-respect.

Wooden was born at Martinsville, Ind., Oct. 14, 1910. Following graduation from Purdue, he was teacher and coach of all sports at Dayton (Ky.) High School. Two years later, he moved to South Bend (Ind.) Central to teach English and coach basketball, baseball and tennis. With a wartime break as a Navy lieutenant 1943-46, he next became athletic director and basketball-baseball coach at Indiana State Teachers College, now Indiana State University. In his two years there before moving on to UCLA, he completed work on a master's degree.

Robert T. Howard, DePauw '37, Historian