



# glenn miller

## A Tip of the Beanie

You hoisted your "We're No. 1!" Banner a little early, McFarland fans.

It was a little closer than you expected.

But other than that, you were great.

And don't let those boos that were ringing in your ears bother you, either. They didn't bother your coach, Sam Mills. You won.

I know why McFarland plays such jazzy basketball. The band sets the beat. And the crowd provides the spirit.

I like McFarland's spirit, its old-fashioned pep. (Do they still call it that any more?)

I like those silly little blue and white skull caps the McFarland students wear. I liked the great welcome they gave the Spartans when they came on the floor Friday. I liked the swinging to "Sweet Georgia Brown," whether it's bummed from the Globetrotters or not.

But especially, of course, as an old pep man, a former cheerleader, I liked that McFarland band. What a band! What jazz!

I specially like that rousing thing (I am sorry I do now know its name) with the trumpet introduction by David Jones—the one where all the McFarland fans stand with their hands in the air and do a little dance in the bleachers.

And, of course, I liked the way that McFarland band director brought out his own trumpet to join three of his students in another brassy number.

That McFarland band carried on all alone for 20 minutes before the game. No one was bored. And the McFarland pep had been raised to a fever pitch. It was a great show.

## Pompons and Pin Stripes

Of course, I am partial to jazz and color and spirit. I like nice lineups of dancing pompon girls—and McFarland has a dandy. I like cheerleaders with dash in cute-short skirts—and McFarland has five cuties.

I even like those pin-striped basketball uniforms that give the warm-up an extra little life.



And so it was that even before the game I fell in love with that McFarland pep at the Field House Saturday afternoon.

And those McFarland fans didn't disappoint me during the game. They kept up a steady barrage of noise than never ceased.

I've heard the "Beat 'em! Beat 'em!" cheer before, but McFarland uses it best—like a club to silence the opposing cheering section.

"DEE-fense! DEE-fense! DEE-fence!" yells the McFarland crowd every time its team doesn't have the ball. No wonder McFarland plays such good defense. It is exhorted to do so so often. (Of course, Sam Mills may have a little something to do with it.)

The old cheerleader especially liked the way the McFarland cheerleaders popped up at every timeout. They always beat the opposition onto the floor. Some cheerleaders are timid, hanging back, making up their minds. Other are ready, like the McFarland cheerleaders. I am of that school.

## Surviving the Test

And then the McFarland fans survived the greatest test of all.

Suddenly, they were turned from the heroes of the tournament to the villains. Sam Mills' fourth quarter stall did it.

The boos rang through the Field House. A stall is never a popular thing. Suddenly, McFarland was outnumbered. The majority of the Field House fans clambered on Luck's bandwagon. McFarland stood alone. At the same time, McFarland's lovely lead in the basketball was being eroded—no, being melted!—away.

Did McFarland panic? Did it stand in terror and in frozen silence? Did McFarland give up? It did not.

For a while, McFarland even won the battle of the noise.

Eventually, the boos won out. Their volume topped McFarland's volume. But McFarland never quit cheering. When the Spartans had the ball, the McFarland cheering actually paced and tempoed the stall, in somewhat the same way Marquette's fans tempo their team's offense.

And I am sure, in my old cheerleader's heart, the Spartans were hearing their crowd through the boos.

Even at five seconds, with the ball out of bounds on a bad McFarland pass and the lead cut to two points, McFarland's fans staged a marvelous cheer.

And you were rewarded, McFarland fans. Don't mind the boos. You won.

My hat—a blue and white beanie, of course—is off to the Class B champions. Team and fans.