

A COMPARISON OF THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF LETTERMEN AND
NON-ATHLETES AT JUNCTION CITY HIGH SCHOOL, 1965-1969

by ⁶⁴⁰⁸

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Is it true that high school football players are generally dull academically? Is it a fair general assumption that high school lettermen who outwit their opponents in competitive sports are just as easily outwitted by their classmates in the classroom? How accurately does the old cliché, "Oh he is just another dumb athlete," fit the field?

In reviewing the literature, one discovers that many opinions and discussions for and against the inclusion of athletics in the high school program have been presented throughout the years. The term athletics has often been regarded by some individuals as a field chosen primarily by young men who specialize in the use of "brawn" and lack the aptitude or "brain power" necessary to cope with the everyday problem of attaining high scholastic achievement. It has been common among many, including teachers, to down-grade athletes' scholastic efforts and abilities. It is often assumed that participation in athletic endeavors is either an invitation to low quality academic performance or that it attracts individuals who do not succeed academically.

Academic institutions today require that students attain a certain scholastic level before they are able to participate in sports, and it is necessary that they maintain these standards throughout the students' institutional athletic career.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the scholastic status of the lettermen of Junction City High School extending through the four-year period from 1965 to 1969.

A comparison will also be made of the scholastic achievement of lettermen (football, basketball, track, cross country, wrestling, and tennis) and non-lettermen to determine whether or not participation in athletics has interfered with the scholastic achievement of senior boys in Junction City High School.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Academic Achievement. Knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subjects, usually designated by test scores or by marks assigned by teachers, or by both.

Academic Record. The official marks assigned to a student in the subjects in which he has been registered.

Athletics. Games and physical contests engaged in on a competitive basis between teams or individuals representing organizations or groups, most commonly schools and colleges.

Grade Point. Numerical evaluation of scholastic achievement based upon a formula of equivalents that grants credit varying with the grade attained, as, for example, four points for A, three points for B, etc., with zero or negative points for failure.

Intelligence Quotient. A number expressing the intelligence of a person determined by dividing his mental age by his

chronological age and multiplying by 100.

Letterman. A student who wears the letter of a school as an award for achievement in athletics.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This particular study, at Junction City High School, is entirely concerned with lettermen and non-athletes. Another group of students worthy of inspection are youths who participated in a sport yet did not letter. Frequently people fail to realize that not all those who take part in an athletic activity are awarded letters.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

An extensive review of the references indexes in the Farrell Library and the Physical Education Departmental Library was made to determine what previous literature had been written on the chosen topic.

Pangle (13, p. 363) conducted a football and basketball study at Madisonville High School, Madisonville, Tennessee. He concluded that there is no significant difference in scholastic attainment for those who participate in the athletic program of Madisonville High School and those who do not.

William Alfred Hargrave (9), a graduate of Kansas State University, made a comparative study of the freshmen in Manhattan Junior High School in 1958. He found that the scholastic attainment of the athletes of Manhattan Junior High School were not affected by their participation in athletics. It was concluded in this study that the athletes had higher I.Q. averages than the non-participants. The non-participants had the lower grade-point averages.

In a Master's study made by Virgil Rodney Enos (7) in 1958, a graduate of Kansas State University, on the senior high level of sophomores, juniors, and seniors, he concluded that the athletes at Turner High School made better grades than all other boys in the school. The boys participating in athletics usually had higher I.Q. averages than the non-participants.

In a large study of the academic averages of 592 Iowa high school football players, Eldsmoe (6, p. 53) indicated that those who are capable of playing football on the high school team of today are superior to the average of their classroom colleagues in academic performance. The total grade-point average of 592 players in all subjects carried was 2.523, whereas the grade-point average of their non-participating classmates was 2.085.

Eldsmoe (5, p. 20) also made a survey of the academic standing of the members of the sixteen boys' basketball teams representing their high schools in the Iowa Boys' Sub-State and State Tournaments. The results of the survey were very satisfying to those who were advocates of competitive athletics and proved surprising to those who had been convinced of the negative academic effects of interscholastic sports. The grade-point results for the 168 basketball boys in all courses enrolled averaged 2.566. The grade-point for the members of the classes in which these players were enrolled averaged 2.186.

Waldo Keating (12, p. 4) made an interesting study of high school football seniors at Catholic Central High School in Omaha, Nebraska. The selected students did not participate in any extracurricular activity during the second nine-week marking period. Only 56 students fulfilled these requirements in the seven-year history of Catholic Central High. The accumulated data showed that 29 students or 51.7 per cent of those studied maintained a higher academic average during the period when they played football than in the succeeding marking period. The data also showed that 15 students, or 26.8 per cent of those studied,

increased their academic average after the football season had ended, and 12 students or 21.5 per cent of those studied maintained the same academic record average during both nine-week marking periods.

A study made by Walter E. Schafer (14, p. 24) of two midwestern high schools attempted to control initial differences by matching 152 athletes with 152 non-athletes. Each athlete was matched with a non-athlete on intelligence-test scores, occupations of fathers, curriculums, and C.P.As for the final semester of junior high school. The athletes still received slightly higher grades, the mean grade-point average being 2.35 for athletes and 2.24 for matched non-athletes.

According to a survey conducted by Earl Cline (2, p. 31) among the 75 largest and best schools of the State of Nebraska, no schools responded that the effects of the athletic contests were injurious to academic work. Eight per cent said they could see no change either way, while 92 per cent said that competitive contests assisted remarkably in raising the standards of the work.

Ninth grade boys from a California junior high school who were participants in interscholastic athletics were compared with non-participants with respect to academic achievement by Airolidi (1). The athletic group tested higher on academic ability on the School and College Ability Test and earned a higher academic grade-point average. The majority of boys who participated in sports for only one semester did as well as or better academically during their semester of participation than they did the other ninth grade semester.

CHAPTER III

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The data used in compiling this report included the grade-point averages and intelligence quotients of 364 sophomore, junior, and senior male students. The grades used for determining the grade-point averages were taken from the permanent records from the office of the principal at Junction City High School. The intelligence test scores were obtained from the principal's office also.

The following procedure was used to determine grade-point averages of the letter grades achieved by the students.

- A equaled four (4) points
- B equaled three (3) points
- C equaled two (2) points
- D equaled one (1) point
- F equaled zero (0) point

Only grade-point averages of male students enrolled at Junction City High School for the full three years were used. It was felt that this would add stability to the study.

The I.Q. test used in this study was the California Short Form. Before a student enrolled in school, he completed this test for the school records.

The names of all the athletes were obtained from the annual report of athletes and also the yearly report of the Kansas State High School Activities Association kept on file in the athletic director's office. The names of all non-athletes were obtained from graduate listings in the guidance office.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data in Table 1 shows the grade-point averages and I.Q. scores of 16 football lettermen, 8 basketball lettermen, 5 cross country lettermen, 8 wrestling lettermen, 3 tennis lettermen, and 47 non-athletes at Junction City High School for the school year 1965-1966. This included sophomore, junior, and senior boys.

Table 1

A Comparison of Grade-Point and I.Q. Averages of Football, Basketball, Track, Cross Country, Wrestling, and Tennis Lettermen with Non-Athletes for the 1965-1966 School Year

Classification	Number	Grade-Point Average	I.Q. Average
Football Lettermen	16	2.35	107
Basketball Lettermen	8	2.33	106
Track Lettermen	5	2.37	105
Cross Country Lettermen	5	2.81	114
Wrestling Lettermen	8	2.81	107
Tennis Lettermen	3	2.63	108
Non-Athletes	47	2.15	101

The data indicated that in terms of grade-point averages, wrestling (2.81), cross country (2.81), tennis (2.63), track (2.37), football, (2.35), and basketball lettermen (2.33) ranked

one, two, three, four, five, and six for the 1965-1966 school year. Non-athletes had the lowest grade-point average (2.15).

Cross country lettermen had the highest I.Q. average (114); non-athletes had the lowest (101) for the school year. Data from Table 1 disclose that tennis lettermen had an I.Q. average of 108, football and wrestling lettermen (107), basketball lettermen (106), and track lettermen (105).

Table 2 includes the grade-point and I.Q. averages of 14 football lettermen, 6 track lettermen, 6 basketball lettermen, 2 cross country lettermen, 3 wrestling lettermen, 1 tennis letterman and 68 non-athletes at Junction City High School for the school year 1966-1967.

Table 2

A Comparison of Grade-Point and I.Q. Averages of Football, Basketball, Track, Cross Country, Wrestling, and Tennis Lettermen with Non-Athletes for the 1966-1967 School year

Classification	Number	Grade-Point Average	I.Q. Average
Football Lettermen	14	2.55	103
Basketball Lettermen	6	2.75	102
Track Lettermen	6	2.60	101
Cross Country Lettermen	2	2.13	102
Wrestling Lettermen	3	2.75	110
Tennis Letterman	1	3.55	121
Non-Athletes	68	2.19	104

Of the seven groups in this table, the tennis letterman emerged with the highest grade-point average (3.55). In grade-point average, basketball lettermen (2.75), wrestling lettermen (2.75), track lettermen (2.60), football lettermen (2.55), non-athletes (2.19), and cross country lettermen (2.13) followed the tennis letterman (3.55).

The tennis letterman was also higher in I.Q. average (121). The wrestling lettermen were second in this category (110) with non-athletes (104), football lettermen (103), basketball lettermen (102), cross country lettermen (102), and track lettermen (101).

The information included in Table 3 shows the grade-point average and I.Q. average of 11 football lettermen, 2 basketball lettermen, 5 track lettermen, 2 cross country lettermen, 6 wrestling lettermen, 2 tennis lettermen, and 45 non-athletes for the 1967-1968 school year.

Table 3

A Comparison of Grade-Point and I.Q. Averages of Football, Basketball, Track, Cross Country, Wrestling, and Tennis Lettermen with Non-Athletes for the 1967-1968 School Year

Classification	Number	Grade-Point Average	I.Q. Average
Football Lettermen	11	2.70	109
Basketball Lettermen	2	2.30	116
Track Lettermen	5	2.66	112
Cross Country Lettermen	2	2.84	107
Wrestling Lettermen	6	2.61	102
Tennis Lettermen	2	2.68	110
Non-Athletes	45	2.04	103

The table showed that all lettermen had a higher grade-point average than the non-athletes. The cross country lettermen had the highest grade-point average (2.84), non-athletes the lowest (2.04). Football lettermen were second with a grade-point average of 2.70. Tennis lettermen (2.68), track lettermen (2.66), wrestling lettermen (2.61) and basketball lettermen (2.30) followed.

Basketball lettermen had the highest I.Q. average (116) while wrestling lettermen had the lowest (102). Track lettermen were second to basketball lettermen in I.Q. average (112), with tennis lettermen (110), football lettermen (109), cross country lettermen (107), and non-athletes (103) following in that order.

Table 4

A Comparison of Grade-Point and I.Q. Averages of Football, Basketball, Track, Cross Country, Wrestling, and Tennis Lettermen with Non-Athletes for the 1968-1969 School Year

Classification	Number	Grade-Point Average	I.Q. Average
Football Lettermen	11	2.47	104
Basketball Lettermen	5	2.46	110
Track Lettermen	11	2.71	108
Cross Country Lettermen	5	3.11	109
Wrestling Lettermen	4	2.59	109
Tennis Lettermen	3	3.09	111
Non-Athletes	60	2.44	104

According to Table 4, cross country lettermen had the highest grade-point average (3.11) for the 1968-1969 school year,

followed by tennis lettermen (3.09). Track lettermen (2.71), wrestling lettermen (2.59), football lettermen (2.47), basketball lettermen (2.46), and non-athletes (2.44) followed in successive order.

The tennis lettermen for the 1968-1969 had an I.Q. average of 111. Non-athletes and football players were lowest in I.Q. average (104) for the school year. I.Q. averages of basketball lettermen (110), wrestling lettermen (109), cross country lettermen (109), and track lettermen (108) ranked second, third (tie), and fourth, respectively.

From Table 1 through Table 4 the following comparisons can be made.

Tennis lettermen were highest for two years in I.Q. averages. Basketball lettermen had the highest I.Q. average (116) in the 1967-1968 school year. The non-athletes of the 1965-1966 school year and the track lettermen of the 1966-1967 school year tied for the lowest I.Q. average (101).

Cross country lettermen had the highest grade-point average for three of the four years. The 1968-1969 cross country lettermen had the highest grade-point average (3.11), and the 1967-1968 non-athletes had the lowest grade-point average (2.04).

The data in Table 5, for the four-year period 1965-1969, showed that the grade-point average (2.99) of the 9 tennis lettermen ranked higher than all other groups for this study. The 14 cross country and the 21 wrestling lettermen ranked second (2.72) and third (2.69) in grade-point average. The 220 non-athletes received the lowest grade average (2.21), with the track lettermen

ranking fourth (2.59), the football lettermen (2.52), and the basketball lettermen sixth (2.46).

Table 5

Comparison of Grade-Point and I.Q. Averages of the Total Number of Football, Basketball, Track, Cross Country, Wrestling, and Tennis Lettermen with the Total Number of Non-Athletes over the Four-Year Period 1965-1969

Classification	Number	Grade-Point Average	I.Q. Average
Football Lettermen	52	2.52	106
Basketball Lettermen	21	2.46	109
Track Lettermen	27	2.59	107
Cross Country Lettermen	14	2.72	108
Wrestling Lettermen	21	2.69	107
Tennis Lettermen	9	2.99	112
Non-Athletes	220	2.21	103

The study showed tennis lettermen ranking first in I.Q. average with 112. Basketball and cross country lettermen ranked second (109) and third (108) in I.Q. average. Track and wrestling lettermen tied for fourth, both having an identical score of 107. The non-athletes received the lowest I.Q. average (103), with the football lettermen ranking fifth (106).

The information in Table 6, for the 1965-1966 school year, showed that 45 lettermen had the highest grade-point (2.55) and I.Q. average (108). The 47 non-athletes had a grade-point average of 2.15 and an I.Q. average of 101.

Table 6

A Comparison of the Grade-Point and I.Q.
Averages of Lettermen and Non-Athletes
for the 1965-1966 School Year

Classification	Number	Grade-Point Average	I.Q. Average
Lettermen	45	2.55	108
Non-Athletes	47	2.15	101

Table 7 shows the total number of lettermen and non-athletes with their grade-point averages and I.Q. averages for the school year 1966-1967. In football, basketball, track, cross country, wrestling, and tennis combined, there was a total of 32 boys that lettered. There were 68 non-athletes.

The lettermen had the highest grade-point average (2.72) and I.Q. average (107). The non-athletes followed with a 2.19 grade-point average and 104 I.Q. average.

Table 7

A Comparison of the Grade-Point and I.Q.
Averages of Lettermen and Non-Athletes
for the 1966-1967 School Year

Classification	Number	Grade-Point Average	I.Q. Average
Lettermen	32	2.72	107
Non-Athletes	68	2.19	104

Table 8 includes the grade-point and I.Q. averages of 28 lettermen and 45 non-athletes for the 1967-1968 school year.

Lettermen were high in grade-point average with 2.62 and I.Q. average with 109. Non-athletes had a 2.04 grade-point average and a 103 I.Q. average.

Table 8

A Comparison of the Grade-Point and I.Q.
Averages of Lettermen and Non-Athletes
for the 1967-1968 School Year

Classification	Number	Grade-Point Average	I.Q. Average
Lettermen	28	2.62	109
Non-Athletes	45	2.04	103

Table 9 shows the grade-point and I.Q. averages of 39 lettermen and 60 non-athletes for the 1968-1969 school year.

For the fourth consecutive year this study showed that the lettermen maintained the highest grade-point average (2.74) and I.Q. average (109). The non-athletes, however, managed their highest grade-point average (2.44) and I.Q. average (104).

Table 9

A Comparison of the Grade-Point and I.Q.
Averages of Lettermen and Non-Athletes
for the 1968-1969 School Year

Classification	Number	Grade-Point Average	I.Q. Average
Lettermen	39	2.74	109
Non-Athletes	60	2.44	104

Table 10 shows that lettermen had the highest grade-point and I.Q. average for each year.

Table 10

Composite Average over the Four-Year Period (1965-1969) of Grade-Point and I.Q. Averages of Lettermen and Non-Athletes

Year	Lettermen			Non-Athletes		
	No.	Grade-Point Ave.	I.Q. Ave.	No.	Grade-Point Ave.	I.Q. Ave.
1965-1966	45	2.55	108	47	2.15	101
1966-1967	32	2.72	107	68	2.19	104
1967-1968	28	2.62	109	45	2.04	103
1968-1969	39	2.74	109	60	2.44	104
Totals and Average	144	2.66	108	220	2.21	103

The highest grade-point average achieved was 2.74 by lettermen in 1968. In comparison, the lowest grade-point average (2.04) was made by non-athletes in 1967. Lettermen had the highest I.Q. average (109) in 1967 and 1968 and the non-athletes had the lowest I.Q. average (101) in 1965.

The information in Table 11 shows grade-point and I.Q. averages of 64 one-sport lettermen, 28 two-sport lettermen, 8 three-sport lettermen, and 220 non-athletes. These figures show the total number of participants for each group for the four-year period.

Table 11

Comparison of Grade-Point Averages and I.Q. Averages of
One-Sport, Two-Sport, and Three-Sport Lettermen with
Non-Athletes for the Four-Year Period 1965-1969

Classification	Number	Grade-Point Average	I.Q. Average
One-Sport Lettermen	64	2.48	104
Two-Sport Lettermen	28	2.69	106
Three-Sport Lettermen	8	2.72	112
Non-Athletes	220	2.21	103

Three-sport lettermen had the highest grade-point average (2.72) of any group in this table. Data also showed this group highest in I.Q. scores (112). Two-sport lettermen were second in grade-point (2.69) and I.Q. scores (106). One-sport lettermen rated third in grade-point (2.48) and I.Q. average (104). Non-athletes were lowest in grade-point average (2.21) and I.Q. (103).

Table 12 shows grade-point and I.Q. averages of 220 non-athletes, 64 one-sport lettermen, 28 two-sport lettermen, 8 three-sport lettermen, 52 football lettermen, 21 basketball lettermen, 27 track lettermen, 14 cross country lettermen, 21 wrestling lettermen, and 9 tennis lettermen.

In the grade-point averages the tennis lettermen had the highest mark with 2.99. Following the tennis lettermen in order were: three-sport lettermen (2.72), cross country lettermen (2.72), two-sport lettermen (2.69), wrestling lettermen (2.69), track lettermen (2.59), football lettermen (2.52), one-sport lettermen (2.48), basketball lettermen (2.46), and non-athletes (2.21).

Table 12

Comparison of Grade-Point and I.Q. Averages of Non-Athletes
One-, Two-, and Three-Sport Lettermen, Football Lettermen
Basketball Lettermen, Track Lettermen, Cross Country
Lettermen, Wrestling Lettermen, and Tennis Lettermen

Classification	Number	Grade-Point Average	I.Q. Average
Non-Athletes	220	2.21	103
One-Sport Lettermen	64	2.48	104
Two-Sport Lettermen	28	2.69	106
Three-Sport Lettermen	8	2.72	112
Football Lettermen	52	2.52	106
Basketball Lettermen	21	2.46	109
Track Lettermen	27	2.59	107
Cross Country Lettermen	14	2.72	108
Wrestling Lettermen	21	2.69	107
Tennis Lettermen	9	2.99	112

The three-sport lettermen and the tennis lettermen had the highest I.Q. average (112). Basketball lettermen were second with 109. The order of the remaining groups was as follows: cross country lettermen (108), track lettermen (107), wrestling lettermen (107), two-sport lettermen (106), football lettermen (106), one-sport lettermen (104), and non-athletes (103) over the four years.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The academic achievements of lettermen at Junction City High School surpassed those of non-athletes for every year from 1965 through 1969.

The non-athletes grade-point and I.Q. averages were lower than those of the lettermen. In grade-point average, the lettermen ranged from .78 to .25 higher and in I.Q. average from 9 to 1 point higher.

One-sport, two-sport, and three-sport lettermen had higher grade-point and I.Q. averages than those of the non-athletes.

The more sports an athlete participated in, the better his grade-point and I.Q. averages became.

The boys participating in athletics usually had higher I.Q. averages than non-participants.

Tennis lettermen were superior in grade-point and I.Q. averages than non-participants.

A comparison of non-athletes with lettermen of equal I.Q. showed that the lettermen achieved higher academic standards in the classroom.

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by

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The purpose of this report was to compare the academic achievements of lettermen with that of non-athletes of the sophomore, junior, and senior boys of 1965 through 1969 at Junction City High School, Junction City, Kansas, by presenting objective data from the permanent records of the school.

This study included 364 boys at Junction City High School who had taken the California Short Form I.Q. test upon entering their sophomore year of high school.

The groups under study were football, basketball, track, cross country, wrestling, and tennis men: one-, two-, and three-sport lettermen with non-athletes. The grades of each student were given a numerical value, and the grade-point averages were compiled. The scores from the California Short Form test were used to find the I.Q. averages, comparisons of the groups within the report were made. The mean was the average used in this study.

This report showed that over the four-year period 1965 through 1969, football, track, wrestling, cross country, and basketball lettermen all had higher I.Q. averages than non-athletes, with tennis lettermen having the highest (112). Tennis lettermen also had the highest grade-point average (2.99), and non-athletes the lowest (2.21) for participants in the two groups over the four years.

Boys who lettered in one sport, two sports, or three sports surpassed non-athletes in grade-point average. In comparison with non-athletes, three-sport lettermen were 0.51 of a point higher, two-sport lettermen were 0.48 higher, and one-sport

lettermen 0.27 of a point higher. One-, two- and three-sport lettermen also exceeded non-athletes in I.Q. average. In comparison with non-athletes, three-sport lettermen were 9 points higher, two-sport lettermen were 3 points higher, and one-sport lettermen 1 point higher.

It was concluded that all lettermen surpassed non-athletes in grade-point and I.Q. average. It was also proven that with each additional sport, the boy's I.Q. and grade-point average increased accordingly.