8-13-1968

Merrick discusses role of sports in Cold War

University of Montana--Missoula. Office of University Relations

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.umt.edu/newsreleases

Recommended Citation
http://scholarworks.umt.edu/newsreleases/3917

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the University Relations at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Montana News Releases by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mail.lib.umt.edu.
MISSOULA--

Sports play an increasingly important part in the cold war, according to Dr. Roswell D. Merrick, former professional basketball player who spoke Tuesday, Aug. 13 at the University of Montana, Missoula.

Dr. Merrick, a consultant to the Peace Corps on physical education, gave a speech entitled "Role of Sports and the Olympics in International Relations." He said the U.S. can "communicate better with the foreign masses through the medium of sports than we can with any of the other cultural exchange media." He said emerging nations and powers alike are putting increasing emphasis on sports prowess as a means of achieving international recognition and acclaim, since superiority in sports is often interpreted as national vitality.

The U.S.S.R. is attempting to portray the U.S. as a lazy, decaying nation of soft adults and unfit teenagers by producing superior athletes, Dr. Merrick said. In contrast, they are trying to portray themselves as a vigorous "nation of the future."

Dr. Merrick listed weak governing bodies for athletic groups, absence of financial aid by the federal government, inadequate sports training facilities and a shortage of trained coaches as reasons for U.S. defeats in certain competition.

In 1964, according to Merrick, the U.S.S.R. sent athletes to 237 world championships. The U.S. sent representative competitors to fewer than 30 championships.

###