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Bangor High School Basketball Team Send-Off at Union Station

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Transcript of a sound recording in MS 608, WLBZ Radio Station Records, Bangor, Maine, 1931-1973

Title: Bangor High School Basketball Team Send-Off at Union Station

Date: March 16, 1955

Recording number: Tape 9, part 2

Length of recording: 12:47

[Transcript begins]

[Band playing music]

EDDIE OWEN: At 1:50 this afternoon the Bangor High Rams will entrain to Boston and the New England tournament, and here at Union Station a very large delegation has already turned out in preparation for giving coach "Red" Barry and his team a magnificent send-off on the way to Boston. The music you hear in the background is an informal presentation by the Bangor High School Band playing a little [Grayson?] blues music for us here, waiting for the more formal send-off to take place. Tremendous crowd pouring into the station and in front of the station here now. All hope the state Class L champions for 1955 will be off to a successful start at Boston Garden tomorrow evening at 6:50 when this Bangor team faces the team from Vermont, Burlington High School in the quarterfinals at Boston Garden. Let's just listen to some of the enthusiasm, music and noise here at Union Station.

[Music]

OWEN: I don't know if the director of the Bangor band will appreciate our recording of that informal little jam session there, but I thought it'd be kind of fun to put it on tape just to give you an example of the enthusiasm being generated here at Union Station in Bangor before that train leaves at 1:50 for Boston and the New England tournament. Now we have the train moving into position over here coming up a little closer, and all the students and the adults down here for the send-off. And the band and cheerleaders move up on getting ready to go aboard the train, get their seats for a long ride, but I imagine a very happy ride down to Boston.

[Music]

OWEN: The band strikes up the National Emblem March just as the varsity Bangor High School basketball team, the Rams, go by them and down the long walk to their seats on the train. Coach Red Barry is standing there now in front of the band keeping his eye on the boys, and they look like a million bucks, I'll tell you that right now. Very handsome and well groomed bunch of young men going on the train now, Fred Barry making that last-minute check.

[Music and cheering crowd]

OWEN: Making my way through the mob here I come up beside Fred Barry and see if I can get a word from him before he takes his seat on the train to join the boys. As the band plays in the background

there and this very large crowd mills around us here at Union Station ready to board the Kennebec headed for Boston and the Boston Garden to the New England tournament for 1955, Bangor to face Burlington. Now if I can catch Fred's ear here just to... WLBZ, before you start off, we want to give you our best wishes and wish a very fine team, well coached by you Fred, all the luck in the world down there at Boston Garden.

BARRY: Thank you very much, thank you very, very much. We appreciate it, and we hope we'll do the, that the state of Maine will be proud of us.

OWEN: I'm sure that they will Fred, however things go. I just saw the boys going on the train. They all look to be very well and very happy, very calm and collected. How do they feel about it, just at the start of their long journey?

BARRY: Well, in practice this week we've had a little letdown, but I am sure that the feeling of winning the state has worn off, and now, we have another job to do, and the boys all have sincere desire to bring that trophy back to Bangor if we possibly can.

OWEN: Well again our best wishes, Fred, and we'll either be seeing you down there or we'll be listening to the [?]. Good luck to you, Fred Barry.

BARRY: Thank you.

OWEN: And it is good luck. And of course over WLBZ you'll be hearing John McKiernan's play-by-play broadcast of that game in Boston, so you can count on hearing everything that happens down there. There are the Bangor cheerleaders.

[Loud chanting in background, B-A-N-G-O-R]

OWEN: Bangor cheerleaders are standing out in front of the locomotive here at Union Station in front of the big diesel of the Maine Central Railroad that will take them down to Boston. Broad grins on just about everyone here. You can hear the hum of the diesel engine in the background here. I'm standing right beside it, and being hemmed in more and more now by this crowd as they get closer to the train, ready to wave goodbye to the Bangor Rams, the cheerleaders, and band, and all the other students who are going down to Boston at this time. Putting in a signal, awaiting a signal from the band director now for them to play a selection. I guess they've got them all assembled there, in this milling throng, the cheerleaders out in front dressed in their regular cheerleading uniforms, and here they are prepared, and the cheerleaders.

[Music]

OWEN: There was a special one, a combination of the cheerleaders and the band. It isn't train time yet, but as I said, most of the boys have gone on the train now. There's Ronnie Boynton standing there, very tall and good-looking boy standing beside Fred Barry. Now the rest of them come back down the line again. Bill Daley, Danny Drinon, and Charlie Taylor. Charlie Taylor is climbing up onto the diesel engine there. [Applause]

OWEN: ... And he gets a tremendous round of applause, as he's followed by Bill Daley. These youngsters, just as interested in trains now as they were a few years ago. There's Danny Drinon climbing up on there, a lanky Karl Daigle takes a look, and he decides that he that he won't attempt that particular climb at the time. He and Bob Morin go around the corner followed by Ron Boynton and Bob Cimbollek. And the balance of the team with Fred Barry with a watchful eye walking beside them. Boys getting a big kick out of it, and finally the engineer decided that perhaps he'd better go up there, too, and join them, perhaps show them a few our pointers about how a diesel operates and perhaps they'll give him a few tips on basketball in exchange.

Well, that's just about the picture here at Union Station. We have the team now assembled out in front of the locomotive in line with the cheerleaders and the band. Looking very happy, if just a bit self-conscious. As Fred said, they felt a bit of a letdown in the last couple of practice sessions after the state title wore off. That more or less figures. Things will level out now and they'll build up to that [sense?] of championship feeling the other team has earned its way into that big New England interscholastic tournament at Boston Garden.

[Music]

OWEN: And there they go onto the train, this time the Bangor High School Rams marching down with a line formed on either side by the Bangor cheerleaders. And here goes Fred Barry grinning happily going down to catch up with the team and also Cy Perkins, and there they go. Ready to board the Kennebec and ready to head for Boston and the New England tournament. A lot of preliminaries involved here, but at last, it appears that they are definitely going aboard the train. And now we have the Bangor band down here getting ready to play again, completely surrounded by people, students and adults alike, waiting for this Maine Central train to pull out and head on its way to Boston, carrying the hopes of the entire Pine Tree State. Aboard the Bangor High School Rams Class L Champions for 1955, heading for Boston and their first game against Billington, Vermont tomorrow evening at 6:15. And there is the school song for Bangor High School.

[Music and singing]

OWEN: The spirit of Bangor High, everyone here, the cheerleaders and the band and then a round of applause. Almost time for that big moment when that train will pull out and Fred Barry and the boys will be heading down the line for Boston and for basketball. Now we are completely surrounded by a cheering section here. Perhaps I can move back just a bit here though the crowd. And everyone is waiting to get a final glimpse of the boys as they take their seats on the train. The diesel engine still running in the background there, 1:50 is the time that it leaves and in true railroad fashion 1:50, it will be, right to the second. A few informal cheers going up here in the background now. Then the conductor comes down here, goes over for a word with the men and the cab of the engine. A few last minute checks with the school official and before very long the motion will begin. The commotion goes on.

[Music]

OWEN: Now leaving the station, the 1:50 for Boston and aboard that train, the Bangor High School Rams heading for the New England Tournament. And the crowd cheers, the drums beating in the band there. And shortly we will get a glimpse of the team and Coach Red Barry and the other folks going along. There they are right now looking very happy, waving as they goodbye. A big grin from all concerned there, and a cheer from the crowd as they go. Car number 541, carrying the hopes of Maine to the New England tournament in Boston. Then I suspect the other people traveling on this particular train are going to get a big kick out of it too. There it goes, pulling out of the station now as the crowd starts to leave. Off to Boston and the best of luck to the Bangor High School Rams in the New England School boy basketball tournament at Boston Garden.

[Transcript ends]

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