

55 for '66

Class of 1966

Class Agents

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DEPAUW TO HELL-WE HAVE THE BELL!

The Monon Bell game this year was a true classic. Wabash 42-DePauw 35! However, at the end of the first quarter things looked rather bleak as the score was DePauw 21-0. Their players high-fived their fans after each of the three touchdowns and seemed quite certain that the game was to be a blowout. DePauw came into the game with an 8-1 record and they were the conference champions and headed to the D3 playoffs. During the pre-game warmups, the demeanor of the DePauw players indicated that this game was just an inconvenience to them as they were headed to the playoffs the next week. But the Wabash coaches had a game plan and stuck with it for the stunning victory over the shocked Dannies!

THE GAME PLAN Coach Morel shared the game plan early in the week and was confident we would win the game. As he explained-DePauw is very good, they have an outstanding quarterback who can light up the scoreboard, they have a great offense that has scored a lot of points against the opposition, their defensive secondary leads the conference with sixteen interceptions, their middle guard on defense is the best in the league and teams run away from him. So, what will Wabash do? Wabash must control the clock to keep their quarterback off of the field and that will happen if we run the ball and pass only when there is an opportunity. We will double team their middle guard and run at him the whole game. Our offensive line is better than their defensive front and we will eventually tire them down. We must be patient, consistent, avoid mistakes and penalties and be confident in the game plan. Not a sexy plan for the fans, but one that will result in the Bell coming back to Crawfordsville.

THE FANS Knowing the Wabash game plan made it interesting to listen to our fans as they were not pleased with the play calling by the coaches. We were way too conservative, have the best quarterback in D3 but are not using his talents, will never catch up with this strategy to run the ball instead of passing-what in the Hell are our coaches thinking! However, the "armchair quarterbacks" had not studied all of DePauw's game films as had our coaches and, therefore, were not aware of some weaknesses that we could take advantage of over the course of four quarters. It turned out to be the perfect game plan as we outscored DePauw 42-14 in the final three quarters for one of the Bell games greatest comebacks and victories!



WABASH ALWAYS FIGHTS! DEPAUW NEVER QUILTS!

Our classmate John Lennes has written a wonderful analysis of the two mottoes for Wabash and DePauw and it follows:

While watching the Monon Bell game on TV in the pleasant company of a number of fellow alums, I was struck by the difference in tone of the public service announcements of the two warring institutions of higher learning.

Each school has a slogan or motto suggesting that it will be no pushover. But in important ways they are much different.

“Wabash Always Fights” is clear, unequivocal and defiant. It is affirmative. Maybe it does not always result in victory but it never accepts a skulking retreat or a half-hearted effort. We do not talk about capitulation; it does not occur. Defeat sometimes, perhaps; surrender, no. Never. This is in the bright tradition of that outstanding wordsmith of the modern English language, Winston Churchill, who said, among (many) other things:

“We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight in the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets. We shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.”

These are strong, single syllable “mistake not my meaning” Anglo-Saxon words (except for “surrender”, which is gallic and being disdained, anyway). The power and determination is unmistakeable, as I submit it also is in the phrase “Wabash Always Fights”.

At one of the TV breaks in the action, a DePauw spokesperson was featured in a promotional video which included what I believe I heard as their school motto, “DePauw Doesn’t Quit”. I have since been informed that the actual slogan is “DePauw Never Quits”, which is at least less passive (I am pretty sure that I heard “Doesn’t”; if this is incorrect, either my fading auditory capacity has intensified, a possibility, or the actual DePauw motto is insufficiently memorable to be accurately quoted by one of its own high ranking school officials, a sure sign that it falls short of being a slogan for the ages, one to live by. Either way, a clear distinction is obvious).

It is a fundamental facet of leadership that one should not spend time dwelling on the myriad of things that one does not intend to do, such as “quit”. Instead, one raises the banner of specific action and duty, as in “Always Fights”. “WAF” is a statement of a firm, clear course; “Doesn’t” or “Never” denotes a motto of avoidance. What if instead of plotting a course for the Promised Land, Moses had said, “Well, at least we’re not going to go back to Egypt”; that would be a good recipe for eternal wanderings in a hostile desert, not a path to glory.

And what if Churchill had said:

“We won’t quit if we see them land on the beaches. And if we don’t succeed there, we won’t quit in the landing fields”, etc. etc., “and if none of that works out, we won’t surrender, but maybe we can negotiate an acceptable armistice or something that ends this troublesome affair somewhere short of abject surrender”. Nothing very inspirational there; where’s my white flag? This would have been a disservice to the British people, and as the last remaining active bulwark against the onslaught of evil, to humanity as a whole.

Wabash Always Fights” charts a clear path of behavior and focus. It is not a statement of what, among many, other things we do **not** intend to do (Of all of the billions of earthly activities possible, how many do you propose to leave unaddressed today? Lots? Millions? Almost all of them? I thought so). Maybe the affirmative assertion does not always lead to victory, but it is a rejection not only of surrender but of acquiescence in a less than optimal outcome or performance, a negation of a “good enough” state of mind, or a target of acceptable or C-efforts.

“Always Fights” rejects any lesser effort. “Doesn’t Quit” or “Never Quits” accepts anything marginally less ignominious than simply rolling over and limply accepting failure. “Always Fights” rejects all lesser stances; “Never or Doesn’t Quit” accepts all that is marginally less dishonorable than outright unconditional surrender. This is not a subtle difference.

Here as in so many other ways the superiority of a Wabash education is manifest. We said it right, they would (or could) not.

Have a great Holiday Season and thank you to each of you for your loyalty and generosity to our Alma Mater. **Wabash Always Fights and Always Means Always!**

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