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"SEABEES COULD BUILD ANOTHER ISLAND" -- ADMIRAL HALSEY

"The Japanese had two airfields on Iwo," Admiral William F. Halsey Jr. told Washington, D. C., newspapermen at a recent press conference. The island can accommodate three for U. S. forces -- "and, if necessary, the Seabees will build another island and put four or five airfields there."

Iwo's strategic value to the United States, he pointed out, is a base from which even medium bombers can strike Tokyo, and from which fighter planes can afford protection for such missions and protect B-29 Superfortresses on the flights to Japan.

Admiral Halsey indicated that he did not fully agree with some other experts that the Japanese army would have to be pursued and defeated on the Asiatic mainland, regardless of what happened to the Japanese home islands.

"If we have to destroy that army, then let's go in and destroy it," he said. "I think before that time, however, the Japs will be glad to save what they can out of the wreckage. But we -- not they -- shall dictate what they shall save and what they shan't save."

While the Admiral would not predict when the war would end, he said the knockout blow was in sight and warned against peace feelers by Japanese industrialists. It would be "the greatest crime in the history of our country," he said, if we fail to crush the Japs completely now when their positions are beginning to crumble.

SEABEES SMASH PARACHUTE ATTACK

A surprise parachute attack against a Navy Seabee camp in the Philippines several weeks ago provided further evidence of growing Japanese concern at the speed with which American Naval construction has been following the fleet and assault forces. A map found on the body of a Japanese officer disclosed that the Seabee camp area and equipment were among the primary targets marked for destruction.

The parachutists' assault, the first such attack ever directed against the Seabees, was a failure. Enemy airborne troops were met by a withering machine gun and small arms fire as they dropped in the middle of the construction men's camp and on an airfield the Seabees were building.

Lt. J. D. Piper, CEC, USNR, of Stillwater, Oklahoma, highest ranking officer in the camp at the time of the attack, took charge of the defense perimeter set up by the Seabees.

The Seabees held their line until reinforced by Army units. During the next 72 hours, the combined forces pocketed and disposed of 359 Japanese. Seabees casualties were confined to minor injuries.

On the "score board" the battalion has set up in its camp area, the Seabees now have painted four Japanese planes, knocked down since the battalion landed in the Philippines, and a neat row of Japanese flags suspended from tiny parachutes.

WIN SEVENTEEN BRONZE STARS IN GUAM ACTION

A Seabee battalion which was among the first ashore on Guam and was in the thick of the early action has been awarded seventeen Bronze Star Medals by Lt. Gen. H. M. Smith of the Marine Corps.

The medals were presented to:

Lt. Comdr. George J. Whelan, CEC, USNR, OinC of the battalion and shore party commander; Lt. Comdr. Brett W. Walker, CEC, USNR, for directing and training the shore party; Lester E. Bradley, MM2c, Audrey E. Bradley, MM1c, Ellsworth E. Archer, MM1c, Jack P. Burgess, crane operators who worked almost continuously for 72 hours while under enemy fire; Edwin C. Beamer, SF1c, Elmer Vaughn, CM2c, Cristofor Caballero, SF3c, Bud Gray, MM1c, **Earl E. Paph, MM3c, Stias A. Watts, MM1c, Audrey H. Brown, MM2c, and Robert J. Hensley, SF2c**, bulldozer operators who blazed trails to the front lines.

LOOK -- NO SLINGSHOT!

Raymond L. Armstrong, MM3c, captures Japs the hard way -- or the easy way -- depending on how you look at it. Armstrong happened by when a Jap darted from under cover of a large tarpaulin and headed for the high weeds. The Seabee grabbed a handful of rocks and gave chase, finally whipping a fast one past the fugitive's ear. The Jap stopped short, meekly surrendered and stripped to prove he wasn't concealing a howitzer -- while Armstrong stood by tossing rocks in the air and catching them.

GETTING THE JOB DONE

CBMU 555, one of those war-bypassed units which has fought and licked the monotony of being in a peace zone with a war on, has enough commendations to begin papering the walls in the Rec hall.

The unit's personnel handled extra-curricular assignments ranging from electrical and malaria control to stevedoring, ship repair and road repairs, and has earned 10 commendations from Naval officers, ship captains, a mayor and a Rotary club.

They worked "far beyond working hours" after a storm and high tides had demolished docking facilities; built a combination school-recreation building-movie,

modernized a generating plant and built a sorely-needed road.

On one occasion Francis B. Conroy, SF2c, and Oresta L. Jordan, SF2c, were called on to make repairs to a ship which had fouled her screw on a hawser, damaged keep plate stud bolts. Conroy and Jordan made a welded strap steel keep plate from approximate dimensions and only verbal description. The repairs were "so well done," said the commendation, "that the ship will be able to operate without docking for at least another six months."

BOOMERANG

The next Jap pilot who comes snooping over an island in the Marianas may find himself playing tag with Jap flak fired from a Jap anti-aircraft gun.

The twin-mount, 25-millimeter gun was assembled from salvaged parts taken from a wrecked Jap gun emplacement by Seabees Joseph P. Cobus, MM3c, and John H. Franz, S1c. The shells will come from the stockpiles the enemy left on the island.

Meanwhile, Cobus and Franz, who have had previous training in the use of anti-aircraft weapons, have set up their little plaything in the Seabee camp and are instructing their mates in its intricacies.

IMPROVISED STOVES FEED 11,000 ON TINIAN

Food for 11,000 Japanese and Korean civilians on Tinian was plentiful but, to the chagrin of American authorities, there was no way of cooking it. The islanders had been using wood-burning stoves, and an acute shortage of firewood had left them without other means of preparing rice, their main staple.

A Seabee unit relieved the situation by providing 40 home-made oil burning stoves, enough for the entire community. Building the units, the construction men followed a model designed by CSF George N. Fairchild, of Greenwell Springs, Louisiana, who first pressed a diesel stove into service in New Zealand, later on Tarawa.

Fireboxes for the Tinian stoves were made of brick and concrete, the brick salvaged from the ruins of Tinian Town and reinforced by salvaged angle irons, welded into place. Improvised pots, formerly the end sections of oil drums, also were provided. Work was under the direction of CSF Russell Madigan of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

S HELP HIM

Truth is stranger than fiction agrees Lt. (jg) Jack A Russell, CEC, USNR, attached to a Seabee battalion now in the Philippines.

He landed behind assault troops on a Lingayen Gulf beachhead less than a mile from the town which served as his headquarters in 1936-37 while he was prospecting for gold in Luzon's "brush country" and, later that day, was reunited with

his former mining partner, Irving W. Hammond of Wareham, Massachusetts, who, by "amazing luck", had managed to live through the three years of Jap occupation.

Lt. Russell, who was an airstrip and heavy earth work expert in New Guinea shortly after Pearl Harbor and was commissioned in the field, chose the Seabees, he said, "because I saw what they were doing to New Guinea.

PAGE DIOGENES

For the information of Diogenes, who searched for years by lantern-light to find an honest man, Eugene J. Tranchell, F1c, has found him.

Tranchell's nomination is the Filipino laborer who worked all day without pay to see whether he'd like the job before signing up. The native worked beside Tranchell all day, reported the next morning:

"Work now," he said. "Sign up for job last night."

PLENTY OF ROOM

Three's a crowd? "Hell, no!" says Howard G. Coay, SF1c, Mariana-based Seabee, "especially if there's a Jap air raid on!

"Two other Seabees and I were working on a dragline crane bucket," he said, "when the bombs started falling. We crawled into the steel bucket and, although it was kinda crowded at first, by the time the Nips had finished unloading you could have got six other guys in there with us!

SHORT SUPPLY LINE

Warren B. Mertz, CSF, had tried for months to locate a machine metal breaker to eliminate improvising in the metal-bending department. He tried to order one and when that failed, attempted to find one on the base.

When his battalion landed in the Philippines, Ed Kurzband, M1c, found the answer--literally and figuratively. Near the beach was a Jap machine metal breaker, in first class condition. The Japs, for some reason, had taken the time to wrench off the name plate, but left the device in otherwise working condition.

SUPER SERVICE

In a single operation, the attack against the Japanese mainland which preceded the Iwo invasion, the Fifth Fleet used enough gasoline to run 30,700 automobiles for a full year and enough lubricating oil for one complete oil change for 466,000 automobiles.

Service Squadron Ten, which provided the gas and oil, also furnished:

Enough fuel oil to make a train of tank cars of 10,000 gallons each extending 238 miles.

Enough food to feed a city the size of Columbus, Ohio, for thirty days.

Enough ammunition -- bombs, shells, torpedoes and cartridges -- to fill 480 freight cars and blow Tokyo off the map.

HE HAD WHAT IT TOOK

Visiting a village on one of the islands in the Palau group, CY Frank C. Stubbs of Delmar, New York, felt someone tap him on the shoulder.

"When I turned around," the Seabee said, "I almost fell over. Standing there was one of the native girls -- a real honey -- and not wearing very much either.....and the look she had in her eye was what I would politely describe as expectant!

"That was enough to scare me. Then I noticed someone else standing a little distance away. I could see right away that he was her boy friend and I didn't have to ask to know that he was jealous. Right there, I decided I'd seen everything that was to be seen in the village and started to make tracks.

"I'd walked only a little further," Stubbs said, "when I felt another tap. This time I shoved my feet into high gear before looking around. Sure enough, it was the same girl. And standing right behind her, and staring at me, was her boy friend!

"It looked as if I was in a spot. I figured I might as well face them and ask them what it was all about. Soon as I stopped, the man thrust himself between me and the girl. I was plenty worried, and then he spoke.

"Got cigar-ettes?' he asked."

DYNAMITE FOR BAIT

Sharks, attracted by dead fish killed by underwater blasting, are like money in the bank to some forward area Seabees. They shoot the sharks, remove the back bone, insert a steel rod, polish it up and sell it as a souvenir cane. Army fliers, commuting through the base, sometimes pay as high as \$75 for the product, according to Leonard Bledsoe, SF1c.

BEACHHEAD BARBER

The Seabees' perambulating "Barber Bill" is on the move again.

"Barber Bill" is William D. Rinehart, 42, SF2c, who has just packed up his sixth barber shop, his fifth this year, and is ready to hit a new beachhead, doubling at the job of barber while he fills his regular assignments with a pontoon detachment.

Two years ago, Bill locked up his barber shop in Sacramento, California, to enlist in the Seabees and since then has shorn GI heads on the assault beaches at Saipan, Tinian, Leyte, and Luzon, opening shop a few days after landing and usually operating free of charge.

Jockeying pontoons into position in rough surf, dodging Japanese mortar and sniper fire, and filling in as ship's cook now and then, makes barbering on the side a tough proposition, Bill says, but his services are appreciated.

"You'd be surprised how good a haircut can feel," he explains, "when the boys haven't had one in a long time."

QUALIFICATIONS FOR PRISONER, FIRST CLASS

"The last Jap we captured was a sight," Lt. Comdr. George J. Whelan, CEC, USNR, OinC of a battalion in the Marianas, told Don Donaghey, war correspondent for the Philadelphia "Bulletin." "He was running toward us waving a white flag, holding up a hunk of paper with something written on it, and taking off his pants, all in one motion. They know they gotta undress if they want to have dinner with us. We don't want any more of that hidden hand grenade funny business.

"When we got the slip of paper away from the Jap, we had an interpreter read it. It was a character reference for the Nip, outlining his reputation for peace and good order!"

JUST WOOD

The lumbermen of CBMUs 609, 610, 611, and 612 operating the logging camp and lumber mill in the Admiralty Islands, all are experienced loggers, but even they can't identify the various types of tropical lumber found in the area.

"We don't know what it is," says Thomas Cassidy, SF2c, of 612, a veteran Northwestern lumberman. "But it looks like wood, builds like wood--and we sure do have a lotta customers."

When the lumber crew aren't chipping steel out of trees, replacing teeth in shrapnel-torn circular saws or disposing of live bombs found in the underbrush,

they log and cut lumber to the sweet-sounding tune of 15,000 board feet a day with occasional record days of 16,000.

All the lumber goes into base maintenance and construction work.

FIVE TIMES AS MANY KILLED

Over five times as many Navy men have been killed in action during the present war as in all previous wars of the United States combined.

Statistics from the Office of Naval Records and Library in the Navy Department show that total Naval losses in all wars involving the United States, from the American Revolution through World War I, amounted to about 4,232 killed in action. In World War II, 22,481 men of the Navy alone, excluding the Coast Guard and Marine Corps, have been killed in action, the Navy casualty report of February 12 reveals.

Approximately 1,356 men were killed in action in all early Naval battles and later minor engagements of the United States, including the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, and the Battle of Vera Cruz in 1914.

During the United States Civil War, deaths in Naval battles reached a total of 2,177. Eighteen Navy men died in action during the Spanish-American War, with 259 lost on the USS MAINE preceding the war.

Only 422 Navy officers and men were killed in action during World War I.

BIG MAIL

A 35-foot message believed the longest letter ever delivered to a Seabee, was turned over to Smitty Reeves by his battalion postmaster. Printed on a roll of monotype paper, the letter carried greetings from 84 friends.

BETTER THAN THE REAL THING

When his forge was deadlined by a lack of coal, B. A. Tomaszewski, M2c, Guam-based Seabee blacksmith, improvised an oil-burning substitute from salvage and scrapped materials.

The furnace was built of abandoned Jap valves, a section of bullet-pierced six-inch steel pipe, miscellaneous copper tubing, reinforcing steel, an old H pile section and fire brick and was so constructed that the shape of the hearth could be varied to fit the piece being worked.

The fuel "tank" is an ordinary household 10-quart bucket which holds enough diesel oil to keep the furnace in operation for four hours. The fuel is fed through a quarter-inch copper tube to a compressed air jet where the two combine to blow a hot blast of fire through a six-inch steel pipe to the work table.

The battalion reports that Tomaszewski's furnace has proved superior to the standard blacksmith forge in many ways since it can handle **anything from** heavy bending jobs, such as straightening large roter teeth, to light jobs of heating for annealing or tempering of rock drill bit ends.

A CURTSEY FOR CIAMPI

A carbine is good and so's a bazooka, but for bringing out politeness in a Jap, R. T. Ciampi, Flc, will take the common tire tool.

Ciampi, on duty in the Marianas, bounced his truck along a jungle road, spied a stray Jap and took him prisoner by simply brandishing the tire tool. The Jap bowed deeply.

Enroute to camp, a tire on Ciampi's truck blew out. He handed the tire tool to the gracious captive and conveyed the general idea. The Jap bowed again, made quick repairs, went into a series of bows -- and clambered back aboard the truck.

NAVY MEN OVERSEAS TO SEE "FIFTY TOP FILMS"

Besides regular showings of current films, Navy men overseas this year will see the fifty best productions of other years, selected as a result of a poll among the men themselves.

Pictures to be reshown, based on the list of requests, will include such films as "Mr. Deeds Goes To Town," "Roberta," "San Francisco," "The Awful Truth," "Old Chicago," "Union Pacific," "Barbary Coast," "You Can't Take it With You," "Alexander's Ragtime Band," "Road to Singapore," "It Happened One Night," "Top Hat," "Sally, Irene and Mary," "Boom Town," "One Hundred Men and a Girl," "Stage Coach," "Gunga Din," "Waikiki Wedding," "Destry Rides Again," and "Hurricane."

Although the men voted against war movies with false heroics, they rated films with authentic war themes such as "Wing and a Prayer," and "Memphis Belle" among the best liked.

Men who answered the questionnaire also volunteered their preferences in movie stars, listing Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Abbott and Costello, Spencer Tracy and Bette Davis among their favorites.

SMALL WORLD DEPARTMENT

CBM Francis L. O'Rourke, has done lots of traveling. His present trip, he hopes, will return him to one place in particular--Japan.

O'Rourke, a structural steel worker, was at the Mexican border, in World War I, in Siberia with the AEF, and later in the Philippines and Japan. His current trip with the Seabees, his third visit to Hawaii, gave him an opportunity to renew acquaintance with Lieut. Gen. Robert C. Richardson, U. S. Army, for whom O'Rourke served as an orderly in 1921 in the Philippines.

BEAT REQUEST

Given five days to erect two 40' x 100' huts, Seabees of a battalion at Guam teamed up to complete the job in three. At the time the request was received only rough grading had been completed. Concrete was batched by truck from a batching plant on another job and involved 150 cubic yards and 288 man-hours for mixing and placing. Steel erection required 580 man-hours.

INEXPERIENCED BUT OBSERVANT

The boys in the Pacific are telling about the battalion which got an order for 60 baby cribs for a native hospital. In less than a week the cribs were on the line.

"You can tell the father of a good-sized family designed that job," purred the senior surgeon when he viewed the product.

The craftsman, it developed later, was a 20-year-old carpenter who doesn't even have a girl friend!

SAIL BOATING POPULAR ON SAIPAN

On once-embattled Saipan, a serviceman's yacht club now flourishes. A Seabee, Golden E. McLeod, PhM3c, of Hopewell, Virginia, is secretary-treasurer.

The club, which has twenty members, sponsors races on a regular schedule, but it's up to entrants to provide their own boats.

McLeod built his from a Jap airplane auxiliary gas tank. A couple of bed sheets have been turned into a serviceable if homely sail.

Two other Seabees, Donald E. Brown, PhM1c, of Wichita, Kansas, and Frank L. Wheeler, SK2c, of Jacksonville, Florida, also built a sailboat in about three weeks of spare time work. They used scrap plywood and, again, a couple of bed sheets.

DON'T BUY SCARCE ITEMS FOR CIVILIANS

Seabees may not purchase scarce civilian items at Ship's Service Stores and mail or ship them home, a new Navy order specifies.

Items listed as scarce include alarm clocks, cigarettes, cigarette lighters, coffee makers, electric shavers, electric irons, fountain pens, hunting knives, mechanical pencils, pocket knives, radios, razor blades, and watches.

OKLAHOMA BOMBER COMMAND

"Patches", a Marianas-based B-29, is practically an Oklahoma institution, particularly after Seabee Charles E. Williams, Bkr3c, did the curvaceous art work on the nose of the Superfortress. Skipper of the Superfortress is Capt. William E. Cruce, who lived but two blocks from Williams in Oklahoma City. Bombardier of "Patches," 2nd Lieut. James O. Funk, is from Tulsa, one of the ground crew, Sergt. Joseph R. Matthews, is from Durant, Oklahoma---and along came the Seabee photographer to take the picture---Emory O. Orton, Pholc, of Pawnee, Oklahoma.

BUT WHO LIKES WARM BEER?

Michael E. Lane, CMM, was discoursing on the Jap mortar barrage off Lingayen gulf which drove his pontoon crew to shore or to cover.

With Lane E. Allen, S1c, and Hubert E. Gossage, Cox, Lane sought shelter in a tool compartment made from a pontoon. All night the three huddled there while mortar fragments rattled over head on the decks.

"But," mused Lane philosophically, "it wasn't as bad as Tinian.

"There we went through one of those barrages and when morning came, we found we d been hiding all night behind three cases of American beer!"

NAVY WARNS ON LOOSE TALK

With an increasing number of servicemen who have returned from foreign duty giving information to reporters and other interviewers, BuPers again calls attention to regulations on the subject.

Officers and enlisted personnel, particularly those returning from theaters of war, are not permitted to participate in press conferences or radio programs or to talk with reporters except after consultation with, and clearance by, a Navy Public Relations officer.

BUSINESS IS RUSHING

Units of a stevedore battalion had such a busy time with enemy planes at Leyte, they had to help the armed guard man the anti-aircraft guns while units from another battalion did the cargo handling.

The Seabees turned out for 144 air raid alerts, helped knock down four of 15 attacking planes which had penetrated American interceptor screens protecting the cargo ships.

HANDLE 500,000 PERSONAL CABLE MESSAGES

More than half a million personal cable messages have been sent to and from overseas personnel of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard since the establishment a year ago of the Navy's personal cable service.

Known as EFM (Expeditionary Force Message) and SCM (Sender's Composition Message) Service, this new communications service has enabled families in this country to reach by cable all overseas land-based personnel and some mobile land-based units. The EFM Service now includes 237 fixed texts, any three of which may be combined into one sixty-cent message.

Statistics show that men overseas have sent ten times as many messages to the United States as civilians at home have sent overseas.

ODDS AND ENDS

The Congressional Medal of Honor has been awarded posthumously to Lieut. David R. Kingsley, of Portland, Ore., who gave his parachute harness to a wounded tailgunner and then rode the crippled ship down its death plunge..... Navy war bond purchases have reached the billion-dollar mark.... Lt. Comdr. Albert O. Vorse, Jr., USN, a Hellcat pilot, landed his crippled plane in the ocean at 175 miles an hour after blasting a Jap ship and suffered only a scratched knee.

A Merchant Mariner, aboard the repatriation liner Gripsholm had come out of a German prison camp wearing: A Polish private's cap, a Belgian officer's coat, English army pants, a Russian blouse and some Dutch shoes.....

The story of a psychological trick played on the Japs by Admiral Halsey is being told in Washington...the Admiral, in January of 1943, predicted that America's enemies would be completely defeated that year. Comdr. Harold E. Stassen, his flag secretary, reveals that bluff worked--that the "Japs didn't attack for six months, giving us that time to build up our strength.

Lieut. Col. Harry L. Torgerson, former New York University grid star and professional hockey player, never gives up.....forced to resign from the Marines because of ill health, he plans to join the Chinese army.....

A proposal that members of the armed forces be granted a five per cent increase in pay for each year after their first year of overseas service has been made in Congress...that would be in addition to the 20 per cent overseas pay.....

WELL INSURED

Only one man of the 1057 officers and enlisted men of the 35th Special Naval Construction Battalion does not carry either National Service or World War I U.S. Government Life Insurance. The battalion feels that it can claim 100 per cent participation despite the lone exception. He is an enlisted man who because he has no living relative within the acceptable beneficiary group, is not eligible to buy government insurance.

Of the 1056 policy holders in the 35th Special, only 31 have less than the maximum \$10,000 policy.

SHORT SPORT SHOTS

DON'T FENCE 'EM IN...Baseball fans who feared the cancellation of the national pastime in 1945 can relax....Major league representatives, after series of conferences with War Agency officials, certain game can continue even under restrictions of War Manpower Commission and Office of Defense Transportation.....In line with latter's request to cut travel by 25%, leagues agreed to cancel 1945 All-Star game scheduled for Fenway Park in Boston; eliminate the World Series if war conditions necessitate such action; re-examine schedules to make other transportation savings....Baseball will not be the only sport restricted by ODT's ruling; plans underway to set up overall "home field" policy for all athletic teams, professional and amateur....Cross country trips by Western and Southwestern basketball teams to play each other in Madison Square Garden and major football games like Notre Dame meeting Army or Navy in Yankee Stadium will be eliminated since no team could be considered "home" team.

FIGHTING SEABEE...Bobby Wiggins of the 43rd Battalion, recent winner of Navy's Central Pacific Area junior welterweight boxing title, touring forward areas with Lt. Bill Dickey's All-Stars....Bobby has won 25 of 29 bouts since arriving overseas and copped title by out-slugging Ray Avant of Fleet Navy....It will hardly be a "pleasure" trip for the Seabee since he'll probably cross gloves with Freddy Apostoli, former world's middleweight champ and Georgie Abrams, another ex-middleweight titleholder, other fighting members of troupe.

HELPS WAR EFFORT, TOO...Harry Wills, the former heavyweight boxing challenger, will start his annual 31-day fast on March 1.....One of Harlem's wealthiest Negroes, Harry weighs about 260 pounds each year when he begins his fast and trims down to about 230.....He abstains from food entirely during month; says it "burns the impurities out of my body....."

DISA AND DATA...Pennsylvania quintet, which won Eastern Intercollegiate championship earlier in week, scored "basketball's upset of year" by handing Army its first defeat since March, 1943.....Cadets had run up winning streak of 27 straight, one in 1943, 15 last year and 11 this season....Despite reports to contrary, ban on horse racing will remain until "conditions" change, according to War Mobilization Office spokesman.....Lt. Al Blozis, world champion shot putter and tackle for NY Giants pro football team, reported missing in action in France.....Maj. Billy Southworth, Jr., son of St. Louis Cards' manager, killed when B-29 he was piloting crashed in Flushing Bay, New York.....Little Willie Pep, Army-bound, successfully defended his featherweight title by out-boxing Phil Terranova in 15-rounder.....His third defense of title, Willie also registered his 86th victory in 87 professional starts.....Lt. Paul Brown, football officer at Great Lakes NTC and former football coach of Ohio State U, signed five-year contract to coach Cleveland pro team in All-America Conference.....Lt. Brown will be succeeded at Ohio State by Carroll C. Widdoes, who led Buckeyes to Big Ten championship last year.