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Wally Halas

Wally Halas, founder and managing director of Always Play Fair LLC, has spent more than 30 years in the education and athletic fields. One could say it's in his genes. A native of Fairfield, Connecticut, Halas hails from a noted coaching family. His father was a scout for the Chicago Bears for 25 years, his grandfather was Knute Rockne's backfield coach for Notre Dame and his granduncle was the famed founder, coach, president and owner of the Chicago Bears, George "Papa Bear" Halas.

Considered one of the finest basketball players in New England history, Halas starred on the hardwood at Clark. He was a four-year starter, earning All-New England and team MVP honors in each of his last three seasons. He received the Bob Cousy Award as New England's outstanding college basketball player under 6-feet tall. Halas also played baseball and soccer for Clark. He graduated with a degree in Government and soon followed that with a Masters in Public Administration with a concentration in educational administration.

Coaching was the natural next step for Halas. He spent 16 years as a college basketball head coach, the first 13 at Clark University in Worcester, MA, the next three at Columbia University. Halas' teams won 251 games and lost only 163, a percentage of .606.

He led Clark to 10 consecutive NCAA tournament berths – the Cougars won 20 or more games in eight of those seasons – resulting in five NCAA regional championships and two appearances in the Division III national championship game. He was elected New England Coach of the Year five times. His years recruiting at Columbia were marked by his players earning twice as many first team all-Ivy selections as Princeton, Penn and Yale! Wally is a member of the inaugural classes of both the Clark University Athletic Hall of Fame and the New England Basketball Hall of Fame.

After leaving Columbia, Wally went on to another type of coaching – coaching scholar-athletes from around the world. In his position as Commissioner of the Scholar-Athlete Games, Halas developed, organized, and administered this biennial \$3.2 million event involving over 7,000 participants from 186 countries and all 50 states. The Games, administered in 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001 and 2003 were created to promote understanding, acceptance and friendship among future young leaders of the world through experiences in sport, the arts and education. The Games have also been administered overseas in Australia, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Israel.

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Halas' 30 years of athletic and educational administration give him one of the keenest evaluation "eyes" in the United States. He has an uncanny ability to match high school athletes with the college program at which s/he would excel. He has helped place scholar-athletes at Amherst, Brown, Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Middlebury, Penn, Princeton, Trinity, Tufts, Wesleyan, Williams, Yale and more.

Halas is enthusiastic about all facets of sports except one; he is saddened by the demise of sportsmanship. One day he was watching a football game and a public service announcement came on with a message from Smokey Bear. Halas says, "A light bulb went off in my head. Why couldn't there be a national symbol for sportsmanship? Why not have a fun, appealing mascot that could take a stand on issues of fair play and good character development?" Packy PlayFair was born in Halas' mind. As a respected member of the sports community, Halas met with the leaders at major sports organizations, colleges, and elementary schools. He spoke with leading experts on child development, sports psychology, and parenting. The response was overwhelmingly positive.

Packy is fun, cool, appealing and a simple way to bring sportsmanship back to the basics and teach kids how to play fair and have fun!

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