A war on two battlefields

Montana State College's football team gave the ultimate sacrifice in World War II

The 1940 Montana State College football team.

Editor's note: In honor of Memorial Day, the Chronicle today and tomorrow will look at sacrifices made by southwest Montanans while serving their country across the world.

By JODI HAUSEN
Chronicle Staff Writer

It's been said many times that football is a game akin to war. The late comedian George Carlin described the sport played on a gridiron as "a ground acquisition game."

"You knock the crap out of 11 guys and take their land away from them," he said in a 1975 monologue.

Former New York Giant Frank Gifford also made the comparison. "Pro football is like nuclear warfare," he said. "There are no winners, only survivors."

But it may have been former Green Bay Packer coach Vince Lombardi who best described the similarities between the sport and the battlefield when he said, "But I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, his greatest fulfillment of all he holds dear, is the moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle — victorious."

And while those comparisons may not be far from the truth, there was not a collegiate football program in the nation that better illustrated that sentiment than the Montana State College Bobcats coached by Schubert R. Dyche between 1938 and 1941.

A Montana-shaped bronze plaque hangs on a golden wall in the entryway to Montana State University's (formerly Montana State College) Brick Breeden Fieldhouse. On it are emblazoned the names of 13 MSC football players who "made the supreme sacrifice in World War II," it says.

MSC's football program is thought to have suffered the greatest losses of any other program in the nation due to the war.

Montana's per capita death rate during World War II was exceeded only by that of New Mexico. And of the 13 million Americans who served in the war, 57,000 of them were Montanans.

MSC, all of whose male students were required to serve two years with ROTC, and its football team, were similarly affected.

Before America's involvement in World War II, MSC's enrollment was about 1,700. Within two years, however, student numbers dwindled to about half — many to military enlistments or larger universities that had specialized military-training programs.

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The plaque, representing every corner of Montana and one man from Idaho, says, "These men played on Montana State College football teams of 1940-1941, picked by Bill Stern, top sportscaster, as his all-American team of 1944." Legend has it that between 11 and 14 players lost their lives to the war. Others said the team's entire starting lineup died in the conflict.

What is certain is that by the end of the 1941 season, MSC had abandoned its football program "because of World War II." Official records kept in the school's archives note.

HISTORY IS A MYSTERY

Two months after the war ended in 1945, national sportscaster Tom Harmon told a celebratory nation about a darker side of war.

"To the best of my knowledge, no other school has lost its entire football team in this war," Harmon said, referring to MSC's Bobcats.

Though Harmon may have overstated the facts, it's apparent that more than a dozen players from teams going back more than a decade died as a result of the war.

But it isn't clear how many of MSC's active roster perished in the war, and it may never be.

MSU's archivist Kim Allen Scott, who has helped several historians attempt to research these veterans, said it has proven difficult to pin down who played on which teams.

A search through the university's special collections turned up only a single roster from that period, found in a game program from the 1941 season.

"This is a classic example of a story that has grown over the years but has been very difficult to verify," Scott said last week.

MSU Assistant Athletic Director Bill Lambert concurred, saying that college football was more informal in the 1940s, making it difficult to nail down who was on the team.

These days people are officially on the team or they're not, he said. But back then a call was put out for practices and people just showed up.

"It was more fluid," Lambert said.

World War II historian and author John D. Lukacs conducted extensive research on the pre-war Bobcat team.

He agreed with Lambert and Scott, saying in the period between the two world wars, if a MSC player had to go back to the family ranch to help with calving on game day, for example, he'd simply miss it and someone else would take his place.

ENLISTING FOR THE BATTLE

Though it wasn't until the 1941 football season had ended that Pearl Harbor forced the U.S. into the conflict, the country was already gearing up for it, Lukacs said last week.

And true to Bobcat intrepidness, MSC's footballers enlisted in droves. Largely from blue-collar families — ranchers, miners and farmers — the Bobcats were a plucky group "baptized under fire by playing football," Lukacs said in a 2001 episode of ESPN's "Outside the Lines."

"They knew how to make decisions on the run," he said.

So they made good and willing soldiers and many served on the front lines.

In the ESPN show, 1938 MSC halfback, Art Habel, actually demonstrated the fearlessness when he spoke of the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor.

"We were kind of in shock and we didn't know what we would do," he said about the surprise attack. "But we did know that we'd have to do something and it would change our way of life from then on."

Taking up the football-war metaphor, Lukacs, who consulted for the ESPN program, agreed.

"These guys knew there was a job to do," he said during an interview for the show. "There was a bigger game coming up and they wanted to be in it."

THE PRE-WAR BOBCATS

The loss of their strongest and most-experienced players to the war effort significantly affected an already besieged Bobcat football program.

At the start of the 1940 season, 33 men suited up for the Bobcat's first game against Western State University — a shutout win, 12-0.

But as the season progressed, the Bobcats suffered their own shutouts, the first against San Jose State with a score of 32-0 just three days after their successful season opener.

And as football season ebbed so too did their bench, which dwindled to 15 when the Bobcats closed it out with a 54-0 trouncing by Drake University.

Still, the Bobcats eked out a 4-4 record that year, according to the school's archives.

But by 1941, quarterback John Phelan was suiting up in combat fatigue, not football pads, and several other upperclassmen had also left the pastures of Montana for grimmer grounds.

For the notorious rivalry against University of Montana's Grizzlies, "36 scrappy Bobcats, keyed up to the point of desperation, will today take any risk to knock over the ... Grizzlies and cop the football championship they have fought for vainly since 1932," MSC's Louis True wrote in the Oct. 25, 1941, Cat-Griz Game Day program.

Of 44 games played between the two schools between 1897 and 1940, the Griz prevailed 30 times, the Bobcats nine.

Five games resulted in ties, the program says.

In his article, True described Coach Dyche's challenge that season: coaching an inexperienced team.

"Dyche received the bad news about inexperienced men early, in a series of jolts that became successively more painful," the story says. "Practically every mail brought him notice that another Bobcat had joined the nation's armed forces."

Despite his "sophomore-studded squad," Dyche's Bobcats at halftime went to the locker room with a 13-0 lead — the first team in almost a decade to even score against their archrivals.

In the second half, however, the Grizzlies "from behind a deep bench," according to the ESPN special, came back to score three touchdowns beating the downtrodden Bobcats 23-13.

The Bobcats did not win another game that season and finished it with another disheartening loss to Idaho, 39-0, only 15 days before bombs rained down on Pearl Harbor.

For the next season, it was the last college football game they'd ever play.

THE FALLEN BOBCATS


And in 1946, a rejuvenated Bobcat team comprised of 71 combat-toughened veterans was ready to roar back onto greener battlefields under coach Clyde Carpenter.

But it will be with "lumps in their throats," that Cat fans will cheer on the team that played for the "Golden Ghosts," The Washington Post's Frank Whitney wrote in 1945.

That team, emulating the camaraderie born of war, went on to win a conference championship and a chance to play in the school's first bowl game — the Harbor Bowl against University of New Mexico.

The game, played before 25,000 fans in San Diego on New Year's Day 1947, resulted in a 13-13 tie.

"We were from Montana, we went to the front lines," Bill Zupan, younger brother of Albert Zupan and the only pre-war letterman to suit up in 1946, told historian Lukacs. "(Other teams and players) got the front pages."

"Everybody was pretty much happy just to be playing football," remembered quarterback Gene Boudet, later Montana State's athletic director from 1958 to 1970, Lukacs wrote on his blog, johnlukacs.com/blog.

"It was a lot of fun after being at war," Bourdet had said.
EVERYBODY'S ALL-AMERICANS

No college football team was hit as hard with tragedy as the Montana State Golden Bobcats, according to a legend launched by WWII broadcasters.

by John O. Lukes - Photos of MSU athletes courtesy of John Lukes and MSU Archives

The late Charles "Max" Stark was some storyteller. The legendary Montana State athlete, a late 1930s and early 40s letterman in track, basketball and football, told tales of elbows rubbed with history, of delivering newspapers to Hollywood stars like Lana Turner and Mae West, handshakes with football legends Pop Warner and Amos Alonzo Stagg, and even of a summer job at Lockheed in California where he assembled an airplane for "a young female aviator named Earhart." Yes, that Earhart.

Yet the story Stark treasured most was the one about his teammates. The tragic tale of a football team, a star-crossed starting lineup, that went off to war and did not return. It's said to be one of the most extraordinary tragedies in sports history: 14 Montana State players spanning the classes of 1935 through 1944 were killed in World War II. Astonishingly, during the 1940 and 1941 seasons, all were full or part-time starters on the then-Montana State College varsity.

Famed sportscaster Bill Stern was the first to publicize the story when Stern named MSU's fallen heroes his "All-American Team" of 1944. By war's end, their names had been memorialized in newspapers across the country and read into the Congressional Record by legislators. Although attained through tragic circumstances, it was national attention that Montana State had never known.

What is now Montana State University can boast of football alums such as National Football League hall of famer Jan Stenerud and coaches Joe Tiller and Dennis Erickson, plus three post-war national championships, but the school enjoyed only seven winning seasons from 1918 through 1944. Back then, the average Bobcat team was more George Custer than Walter Camp, a Seventh Cavalry in shoulder pads battling deeper opponents in gridiron last stands.

The 1940-41 squads were no exception. At MSC, as with all land-grant institutions, ROTC was mandatory for male students through their sophomore year (a requirement that endured at Montana State until 1964) and the Bobcats suited up only 55 players in a season-opening
TRADITIONS

Lt. John Hall, right, of Bozeman, the skipper of a B-24 bomber, died in a crash over Halesworth, England, on May 29, 1944. Hall played end for the Bobcats.

A plaque still hangs in MSU's Brick Breeden Fieldhouse honoring soldiers killed in World War II who had played for the Bobcat football team before the war. From Glendive to Lonepine, the soldiers were from hometowns throughout Montana as well as Basalt, Idaho. Note: Orin Beller's name is misspelled and Al Zupan is omitted.

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE IN WORLD WAR II

ORAN F. BELLER VICTOR, MONTANA
NEWELL T. BERG BASALT, IDAHO
JOHN F. BURKE, JR. LIVINGSTON, MONTANA
DANA BRADFORD TOWNSEND, MONTANA
BERNARD CLUZEN LONEPINE, MONTANA
WILLIAM D. COEY DEER LODGE, MONTANA
ALTON ZEMPEL FORSYTH, MONTANA

KARL R. FYE BUTTE, MONTANA
JOHN C. HALL BOZEMAN, MONTANA
JOSEPH T. MCGEEVER ANACONDA, MONTANA
JOHN W. PHELAN BUTTE, MONTANA
RICHARD ROMAN, JR. BOZEMAN, MONTANA
WENDELL SCABAD GLENDIVE, MONTANA

"THESE MEN PLAYED ON MONTANA STATE COLLEGE FOOTBALL TEAMS OF 1940-41, PICKED BY BILL STERN, TOP SPORTSCASTER, AS HIS ALL AMERICA TEAM OF 1944."

Bill Zupan, left, of Helena and his best friend, Lt. Karl Fye of Butte. Zupan was said to be the only Golden Bobcat to survive the war. He died in 2008. Fye, also shown in bottom two photos, was killed in a firefight in Germany in 1945.
Two weeks later, Montana State and Drake, sometimes called the Golden Bobcats, faced off on Sept. 22, 1944. Montana State won 21-0, and the harvest—most players came from mining, ranching and farming families which depended on their sons’ labor—was bittersweet. Coach Schubert Dycie’s roster weekly. Games with teams like San Jose State and Drake, sometimes played with only 35 players, concluded disastrously. Stark recalled prior to his death in 2003. The Bobcats clawed their way to a 4-4 record, but with the winds of war swirling in Big Sky Country, it was difficult for the squad to focus on football, according to Bill Zupan. Zupan, a sophmore halfback that season who was the last surviving player from the Bobcats’ pre-war team until he died in 2008, cradled Stark’s figurative lateral—responsibility for the legacy of the Golden Bobcats. As Zupan told Stark, 50 years later, “I never forget the last time he saw his brother, a Montana State quarterback, wept in a fire­ side airplane accident claimed Bobcat end Lt. Dana Bradford on March 11, 1942, as well as halfbacks Lt. Wendell Zempel and Capt. Al Zupan—Bill Zupan’s older brother; a 1930s MFC star—on April 12 and Oct. 28, 1943, respectively. A commendation for Captain Jack Burke arrived in Tunisia in January 1944, but the author, Gen. Dwight D. Eisen­ hower, was unaware that the all-Rocky Mountain Conference tackle had died of unknown causes. Bobcat end Lt. John Hall, the hair­ skirted skipper of a B-24 bomber, died in a crash over Halesworth, England, on May 30, 1944. An all­conference guard, Marine Lt. Newell Berg was wounded in the Pacific atoll of Taraz in 1943 and personally decorated for bravery by Admiral Chester Nimitz. Berg was killed on Saipan on June 19, 1944. Tackle Capt. Joe McGee, a popular paratrooper in the 57th Parachute Regimental Combat Team, was killed by machine gun fire near Sospel, France, on Dec. 19, 1944. Max Stark, an agricultural education major, received a deferment and was thus able to fight in France when he was mortally wounded in machine gun fire near Sospel, France, on Oct. 10, 1944. His F4U Thunderbolt was shot down on Dec. 29, 1944 near Massa, Italy. Major Rick Roman, who played halfback in the late 1930s, was killed in France on Feb. 15, 1945. One month later, Lt. Karl Fye from Butte, who was Bill Zupan’s best friend, was killed in a fire­ fight in Germany. By early in the summer of 1945, center/Lt. Alton Zempel was the only starter from Bobcat pre-war teams that “had escaped the Reaper,” Zupan noted in a broadcast at the time. But Zempel was killed in a crash on July 7. To put Montana State’s loss into perspective, of the institutions whose football alumni fought in the war, West Point and Annapolis naturally incurred the most casualties. As for singular teams, only Georgia Tech’s 1939 squad, which lost nine players and one assistant coach, came close to rivaling Montana State’s supreme sacrifice. Notre Dame lost nine football alumni from its graduating classes of 1935 to 1945. Brigham Young, a rival that frequently appeared on the Bobcats’ pre-war schedules, lost one player to the war. “As students of Montana State College yells for their Golden Bobcat football team to roar on to victory when the school with a bronze plaque engraved with the names of the Golden Bobcats. After Zupan’s passing in 2008, the plaque, which hangs in the Bredem Fieldhouse, is the lone reminder of the players and their sacrifices. But Stern’s emotional words echo still, and upon hearing them one understands why this tale captured the hearts and imaginations of a nation: “On that Montana State team were no nationally famous football stars ... none of them very well known outside of Montana. They were just typical American boys.” And, though not in the traditional foot­ ball sense, they all were All-Americans. • John D. Lukacs is a writer and historian whose work has appeared in the New York Times, USA Today, World War II Magazine and on ESPN.com. His bestselling book, the true World War II adventure titled Escape From Dora: The Forgotten Story of the Most Daring Prison Break of the Pacific War, is available at bookstores nationwide. His website is jobdlukacs.com.
March 4, 2006

Mr. Ivan Doig
17277--15th Avenue NW
Shoreline, Washington 98177

Dear Ivan:

Marcella asked me if I could find a copy of the piece from the *New York American* for October 27, 1945, regarding the 1940 MSU football team. I do not believe that I ever saw the article itself.....just a reference to it. The piece is not now in the Library’s vertical-file collection, and that’s where I usually hid that kind of stuff away.

Evidently after I left the Library (1994), Bob Clark got into the topic with a retired military guy. The vertical file now has a bunch of material that he generated in 1999 about the incident. Bob was working to debunk the story, but some of the material that he copied out of Bozeman newspapers and the military files here might be helpful to you.

Hope that you and Carol are doing well. We thought about you frequently through the long, rainy winter as you set new records. We are getting a little snow today, but it has really been a snow-free, easy winter after about the 10th of January. I have made two trips to eastern Montana—-one at the end of January (Glendive, Wibaux, Jordan, Lewistown) and another in mid-February (Miles City)--and had dry roads all the way. I have another drive to Hysham and Forsyth in mid-March, so I hope that my good fortune holds.

I do hope that these copies are helpful.

Sincerely yours,
R. M. Clark  
Montana Historical Society  
P.O. Box 201201  
Helena, Montana 59620-1201  

Dear Mr. Clark:

I received your letter of 26 July 1999 this weekend. Thank you. I must admit I was very surprised and pleased by the extent of its contents. I really do appreciate your research on my behalf.

As I indicated in my email, the little data I had on the football team was dated and only recorded in my memory. I am sure we are speaking about the same team. No doubt it was Montana State and not a high school. It was something I just came across and not the focus of my thesis research. If I recall correctly, I saw it in 1983 or 1984 prior to my retirement from the Navy. I recently retired again, this time from federal civil service. So now I have time to research projects set aside. I will certainly share whatever information I develop.

I noticed in the football section of the Montana State University homepage for the Bozeman campus a reference to 11 members of the 1941 football team who died in the war. There is apparently a picture of the squad in a publication entitled: In the people’s interest: a centennial history of Montana State University written by Robert Rydell, Jeffrey Stafford, and Pierce Mullen. (LD 3508.R93 1992). It wasn’t clear to me that the names listed didn’t include additional members of the team, which would indicate that the entire team hadn’t died. The names mentioned were: Al Zupan, Orin Beller, Newell Berg, Dana Bradford, John Burke, Bernard Cluzen, William Coey, Karl Fye, John Hall, Joseph McGeever, John Phelan, Richard Roman, Wendell Scabad, and Alton Zempel. Beller, Coey, and Fye are not on the list you sent. Additionally, according to the newspaper articles you enclosed, Montana State had a sizeable football team in 1940. Clearly the whole team did not enter the service. Even if the eleven accounted for the senior class, which is not supported by the evidence, certainly Montana State did not lose their entire 1940 football team in the war. Perhaps all that will come of this effort is a correction of the “facts”.

In reviewing the newspaper articles, I noted that the coach was concerned by the loss of experienced players to the National Guard call-up. From one of my references I learned that the Guard was ordered into federal service by a joint resolution of Congress on 27 August 1940. The original call-up was for one year. This changed to the duration once war began. The induction began on 16 Sept...
1940. The reference also indicated that a total of 18 combat divisions were formed from the National Guard.

You mentioned that you had casualty lists for WWII. Do they indicate which service the person was in at the time of their death? And, is there any record of the date, place, and organization? I saw your notations on the ranks. My assumption is that other than Major Cluzen who joined the Marines, the others were in the Army or Army Air Corps. I thought it interesting the number who died in non-combat plane crashes. One wonders if this was during flight training.

I have enclosed a check to cover the cost of reproduction and postage, along with a little extra for your society. Thank you again for all your help.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Higgins II
R. M. Clark  
Montana Historical Society  
P.O. Box 201201  
Helena, Montana 59620-1201
While conducting research for my thesis, some years ago, I recall coming across some information concerning a high school football team in Montana who enlisted as a team during World War II. As I recall, they were all killed in action. I thought at the time that this would be worthy of a research paper.

Now that I am fully retired from Federal Service (24 military, 12 civil service), I have time to conduct the research. However, I seem to have misplaced my notes and need a place to start. Is there any chance the Montana Historical Society holds information on this football team? If not, can you direct me to another source? Additionally, my Grandparents homesteaded in Montana sometime prior to World War I. I can share the little knowledge I have on that adventure, if you have an interest.

Best regards,
Edward J. Higgins II
Commander, USN (Ret.)
Dear Commander Higgins:

Following up on the E-Mail exchange, I am enclosing the item which, I believe, Brian Shovers had indicated to you as a possible source, or, anyway, indication, of the story you recall about an entire starting eleven of a Montana high school football team enlisting en masse and all being killed in action in WWII.

The closest thing we have to such a thing is the enclosed copied page from a mass market paperback reference work apparently entitled World War II Super Facts. The Library does not have the work itself; I'm sure this is something a patron sent in to us at some time, and we put it in a ready reference file under "Football." But it is close enough to what you are remembering that it's hard not to believe it is referring to the same thing. It's just that in your memory, or perhaps in the source you originally saw, it had become neater and simpler and better (all from the same high school team, all enlisting together, all killed in action).

You see that the list we have is different. The book says just "Montana State", which in 1940 & 41 could be either of two main colleges in the Montana university system, but does say college, not high school. The patron, whomever that was, has annotated it, however, to indicate it should be Montana State College, in Bozeman.

That, at least, is correct. Much else about the list is ambiguous, uncertain, sloppy, or just inaccurate. The piece claims the "entire 1940-41 eleven-man football team" was lost. This, taken with the positions assigned the names, implies that this was the starting eleven in a particular year. No college team would have only eleven players total, of course. However, even the starting eleven notion is not true. I have also enclosed prints from microfilm of the Bozeman, Montana newspaper that give the starting lineups for the Montana State College team for a game in the fall of 1940, and another for a game in the fall of 1941, and provide some other information on the players. Neither of the starting lineups match at all closely with the list in the reference book. Unfortunately, in our collection of school yearbooks for the state college, we do not have either 1941 nor 1942. By 1944, when we do have a yearbook, it appears the college is not playing football at all. But note that two of the players mentioned on the list, Dana Bradford and Bernard Cluzen, are mentioned in the September, 1940 newspaper as already gone to the military, while only four of the eleven on the list are on the 1940 roster as given in the newspaper, and all these are gone from the 1941 starting lineup, where only one appears, the mysterious Zempel (see below)--and he at a very different position.

What one has to suspect is that, if there are some kernals of truth in this claim, it might be that, at some time between the late 1930's and whenever the school suspended the football program for the duration, certainly by 1944, all of these young men did play football for Montana State College, and, at some time during the war,
all were killed. That would certainly be possible, and sad enough, though not, I would think, unique to this school.

I did try to compare the list against three lists of WWII casualties from Montana that we have, and have annotated the results onto the same page as the annotations of the unknown patron who apparently tried to unravel this mess before. The comparison produced a few corrections in spelling, and found two on the list not listed on any of our available Montana casualty lists, one, Berg, presumably because he was from Idaho, and the other "Zempel," whom the unknown patron lists as from Forsyth, and whose last name appears on the 1941 roster, but at left tackle, not quarterback, and who does not appear on any of three casualty compilations we have. One notes that, of the rest, all did die during the war, although only two were officially "killed in action." Also that all were officers, suggesting that probably all or most of them were in the ROTC program at the college.

Note that the unknown patron also writes in a list that is almost the same but not quite that he attributes to Bill "Stearns". I think he means "Stern's," and I wonder if this might not be the first published source. I recall from childhood having one or two paperbacks full of sports trivia under the authorship/editorship of Bill Stern, who was a famous radio sports announcer if I remember correctly, and the books were full of stuff such as this. He especially liked the heroic, patriotic, and sentimental. So perhaps that was the initial published appearance of this list, although one still wouldn't know the original source. One suspects a PR man or Old Alum from Montana State or a journalist from Bozeman is involved in here somewhere. Perhaps some such sent in the list and claim to Stern, the way one could for Believe it or Not or still can for Reader's Digest. And perhaps Mr. Stern didn't have submissions checked on as thoroughly as he should.

Anyway, quite a few things are wrong. It could be checked out, I think, with some effort and time, if and even when each of these players played for Montana State College, and probably possible to get their names straight. Depending on which list one is trying to check out, of course. I am assuming that Stern's list preceded that of this other reference, in part because the entry in Facts is so sloppy and sketchy. It is clear, however, from my small effort, that for neither of the lists were all the players on one starting lineup, or even on the team in the same year, and it is not even certain that all died in the Second World War. It would probably be unique had all eleven players from some school's starting lineup for a particular year been killed. But I doubt that Montana State College's football program was the only college football program that contributed at least eleven dead young men to WWII. What about the football programs of the military academies, for instance? So the bogus claim that these were all from the same year's team and perhaps the same starting lineup was critical to gaining attention, and publication, and provides a motive for a little improvement on the facts.

If you wish to pursue this, perhaps you could consult a good-sized public library if you have one nearby, and see if you can locate copies of Stern's books. The most
likely to have the football story in it is called *Famous Football Stories*, and was published in 1950 by Doubleday. If you could locate that list and then send me a copy, I would do some further checking. You might also be able to check if Stern indicates any source for the information. I would like to straighten this out for our reference files as well, as it is likely to resurface sometime. On the other hand, if you discover that you really did see some other list and story, and rediscover the source of that, I'd be interested in knowing that, too.

Meanwhile, I hope this is helpful to you, and seems at least worth the $1 I must ask you to remit for the copying when you have the chance. Thank you.

Sincerely,

R. M. Clark
Society Librarian
from Ideas notebook (p. paperclipped):

Dave Walter came across in Mont. His Soc n' paper files in summer '82:

NY Journal-American, Oct. 27, 1945--story of Mont. St. U football team,
all of whom died in the war WWII.
TO  Mr. Ivan Doig  DATE  September 30, 1991

17021 Tenth Avenue N.W.

Seattle, Washington  98177

Dear Ivan:

Enclosed please find the only piece that I can locate concerning the MSU football team of 1940-41. I suspect that one of the annuals immediately following the war was dedicated to these guys, but our run has a serious gap in it during the late 1940s/early 1950s, so I can't tell that for sure. I also know that I have seen newspaper articles about this (something in addition to the Ripley's item), but I must have those in some obscure file for safe keeping.

A couple of other possibilities are that Wayne might be able to ask Marge Foot if she has any citations in her TRIBUNE index to such articles. If so, we could run the copies here. And I suspect that the MSU alumni magazine has done something with this subject. The MHS Library is above collecting this periodical evidently--seeing it as perverse advertising, no doubt--but a call to the alumni office there might be helpful.

Finally, I remember promising in the distant past to get a copy of the Groff article to you when it came out. I suspect that Carolyn Cunningham has overwhelmed you with complimentary copies by now, but I need to make good on my promise or I can't sleep nights.

Our best to Carol. Haven't seen either Karen or Jerry since they trundled off into the mountains on their llama expedition. Bet they both spit by now. Hell, Jerry always did! Take care.

Sincerely yours,

Dave Walter, Reference
Monitors
Name given to bulletins released by the Operational Intelligence Center of SHAEF that included what was known about the German defenses opposing the D-Day landings.

Montagu, Ewen
British Navy commander. He was part of Naval Intelligence along with Ian Fleming. Montagu authored the plan for using a corpse to fool the Germans into believing that an invasion of the Balkans rather than Sicily was imminent.

Movie Portrayal:
The Man Who Never Was (1956), by Clifton Webb (based on the book authored by Ewen Montagu)

Montana State College - Bozeman
The only American college to lose its entire 1940-1941 eleven-man football team in World War II.

Dana Bradford - end* killed in plane crash
John Hall, Jr. - end killed in plane crash
Albert Zupan - center* killed in plane crash
John Burke - tackle* killed in Italy
Newell Burke - tackle killed in New Guinea
Bernard Cluzen - guard* killed in South Pacific
Joseph McGeever - guard* killed in Germany
Wendell Scabed - backfield killed in action
John Phelan - backfield* killed in action
Alton Zempel - quarterback* killed in plane crash
Rich Roman - backfield killed in Germany

Monte Cassino
Italian monastery bombed on February 15, 1944, as a result of one of the most controversial decisions of the war. The Benedictine Monastery was defended by German General von Senger und Etterlin, who was a lay member of the Benedictine Order. The Germans were not actually in the monastery, but British General Freyberg ordered it bombed anyway because of its strategic location. The Germans then moved into the rubble, which made it even more difficult to get them out since ruins are more easily defended than intact buildings. The only part of the Abbey that remained undamaged was the cell where St. Benedict had lived, died, and was buried. A heavy caliber artillery shell had landed a foot away from the tomb but did not explode.

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DMF 1949 = Montana Dept., Military Affairs. List of Montanans killed or missing in action 1946 - 1947. Dept. Montana List, June 1946. DMF list has "killed or missing in action." - War Dept. List has "Dead and Missing."

Orin Beller - Army - Gallatin Co. on DMF list. Not on 1946 list. DMF gives Gallatin as his county. His annotated Stern list gives Victor as his home. MSU Football Team -

Newell Berg - Annotated Sterns gives him from Basalt, Idaho, but is on DMF, 1949 list as a Marine, from Musselshell Co. Not on 1946 list from Musselshell.

Dana Bradford - not in DMF list. Lt. Serial # 0-403649. Died non-Battle, Broadwater County. Annotated as Townsend.


Apparently a plaque at the caring of the NSU football booster club commemorates the WWII football dead - need name of event in college. No indication of date of plaque. Accurate indicates Bud Stern picked it up as early as late 1944.
The Bobcats have gone through an unusually hard pre-season training session, but are ready to get into the three-game schedule that starts today.

As a result, Duche is hoping that this condition will offset some of the possible Westerh conditions that can use. The Bobcats's lineup shows that Bob Hallett, left guard, balances the scales at the line for the second game, and that there will be continuity at the line. But a lack of team spirit led to the resignation of the Rocky Mountain Conference.

Although National Football-physical examinations turned two players, Robert Marinos, 180 pounds, and Robert Mikaelson, 170 pounds, both men are sophomores and Bobcats are forced to use them as new men this year and as men who had a week ahead. Their tentative starting lineup has four returning players, but experienced backs, but every new man in the line is a sophomores. The lineup he selected last night are the weighted in their squad and except the exception of 180-pound Art Lorre, veteran rover.

The probable starting lineups:

West State: Quarterback — Edwards; Left End — Linen; Left Tackle — Mason; Center — Ford; Right Tackle — Graham; Right End — Harmon; Fullback — Galan; Halfback — Jackson; Three-Quarterbacks — Bobcats; Halfbacks — Morgan, White; Backs — Bobcats; Quarterbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Three-Quarterbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Halfbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Three-Quarterbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Halfbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Three-Quarterbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Halfbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Three-Quarterbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Halfbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Three-Quarterbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Halfbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Three-Quarterbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Halfbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Three-Quarterbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Halfbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Three-Quarterbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Halfbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; Three-Quarterbacks — Bobcats; Backs — Bobcats; 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weakness is the lack of reserves.

"In my starting lineup are four sophomores who played on our 1940 freshman team. My line is light, averaging a little less than 180 pounds, and the backfield will average about 167. If the weather continues like they tell me it has been here in Montana for the last ten days then a scoreless tie would not surprise me. It will be a close and hard fought game."

Western State practiced signals and kicking on the R. O. T. C. field at the college for more than an hour Friday afternoon. The line appears to be somewhat lighter than that of the Bobcats while the backfield has the appearance of averaging about 175 pounds to the man, with Lundberg, the fullback, weighing close to 190.

The starting lineups were announced by the coaches as follows:

MONT. ST. POS. WEST. ST.
Nelson, LE Gates
Zempel, LT Hatch
Ahliquist, LG Toplass
Lovera, C Martin
Knall, RG Zeiger
Dougan, RT Jones
Wallis, RE Boner
Anderson, QB Stegeman
Leary, LHB Neelan
Davis, RHB Creswell
Milodragovich, FB Lundberg

Average weight of line: Western State, 180; Montana State, 185. Average weight of backfield: Western State, 167; Montana State, 165.

The officials will be: Mike Henry, Washington State, referee; C. S. Hicks, Kansas university, umpire; head linesman, "Cubs" Daylis, University of Montana; and timekeeper, George Davenport, Bozeman.

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The Standings

(By the Associated Press)

Won  Lost  Pct.

American League

New York 101  51  64

B.Y.U. COUGAR

Three Scoring Drives in First Half
Give State University 20 to 7
Victory at Provo

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A 63-yard drive, much of it in air, produced the first Montana touchdown in the opening period with Leaphart going over from the 2.

Only moments later, early in the second quarter, the Grizzlies march 84 yards in three plays, with a payoff on Bill Scott's pass to Junior Swarthout, who raced unmolested yards to the goal.

Leaphart intercepted Bob Orr's pass in midfield, racing to the Brigham Young 17, to set up the third Montana touchdown, also in the second quarter. An offside penalty on耦gus' aided in the trip and Tyvand raced nine yards around right end for the score.

Eso Naranch place-kicked two points after touchdown.

John Reagan, who replaced his place-kicked the ball through the uprights after the other touchdown but a 15-yard penalty nullified it after he tried again from the 18 and was no good.

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Original Image Text:

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Little or No Summer Softness
Apparent So Scrimmage Starts Earlier

Condition, which counts so much in early season football, shows why hopes for a Bobcat victory over Western State this afternoon are strong in the quarter for every day.

Usually Coach Schubert Dychet works with his team during the early fall training period. This year he has not surprised anyone, instead, he has pushed the team through scrimmage almost to the point where it may be in condition for the first game or two in September. The Bobcats have had no injuries of any consequence and a much stronger team than expected.

Feared that the unexpected might happen, Dychet let up a little to get the men in shape and today may keep them off the field at Western State enters early enough to work out a workout.

Gaining confidence every day, Dychet has about picked his lineup for the Western State game. From this point, the Bobcats have been a distinct advantage. By this, it is meant to say that this is the first game of the season.

Beginning with the first game of the season, Dychet will have a good starting team, and it is expected that he will have no trouble in getting a good team together.

The Bobcats are a powerful team, and Dychet has been known to say that they are one of the strongest teams in the country.

The Western State game is the season opener, and Dychet will have a good starting team, and it is expected that he will have no trouble in getting a good team together.

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### BELLER Orin F.

**NAME** BELLER Orin F.  
**SURNAME**  
**FIRST NAME** Orin  
**MIDDLE INITIAL** F.  
**SERVICE SERIAL NO.** 39817762  
**BRANCH OF SERVICE** Army

**HOME ADDRESS**  
**STREET AND NUMBER** 905 South Third  
**TOWN** Bozeman  
**STATE** Montana

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**MEANS OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE** Enlistment Commission  
**DATE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE** Apr. 29, 1943  
**TYPE OF DISCHARGE**

**NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST EMPLOYER**  
Mrs. Claud Beller--Mother  
Box 73, Salmon, Idaho

**NAME AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN**  
High School at Klien, Montana  
Mrs. J. H. Berg, Mother  
Basalt, Idaho

---

**NAME**  
**SURNAME**  
**FIRST NAME**  
**MIDDLE INITIAL**  
**SERVICE SERIAL NO.**  
**BRANCH OF SERVICE**

**HOME ADDRESS**  
**STREET AND NUMBER**  
**TOWN**  
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**NAME AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN**  
High School at Klien, Montana  
Mrs. J. H. Berg, Mother  
Basalt, Idaho
### Form 1-44

**NAME:**
- Burke John H.
- Burke John H.

**SURNAME:**
- Burke
- BURKE

**FIRST NAME:**
- John
- H.

**MIDDLE INITIAL:**
- H.

**SERVICE SERIAL NO.:**
- 983 13 751
- 19055521

**BRANCH OF SERVICE:**
- Navy
- Army

**HOME ADDRESS:**
- 1826 Porter Avenue, Butte, Montana
- Blackstone Apts., Helena, Montana

**STREET AND NUMBER:**
- 1826 Porter Avenue
- Blackstone Apts.

**TOWN:**
- Butte
- Helena

**STATE:**
- Montana
- Montana

**RACE:**
- White

**U. S. CITIZEN?**
- Yes

**REGISTERED:**
- Yes

**SEL. SER. ORDER NO.:**
- 1328
- 1234

**FOREIGN SERVICE WORLD WAR II:**
- Yes

**NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST EMPLOYER:**
- Anaconda Copper Mining Co., Butte, Montana
- A. C. M.

**NAME AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN:**
- Dorothy Burke (wife)
- Mrs. Agnes B. Burke (Mother)

**PLACE OF BIRTH:**
- Butte, Montana, June 10, 1918
- Helena, Montana, June 6, 1917

**DATE OF BIRTH:**
- June 10, 1918
- June 6, 1917

**MEANS OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE:**
- Date of Entry into Service

**DATE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE:**
- March 21, 1945
- Dec. 10, 1941

**TYPE OF DISCHARGE:**
- Honorable

**REMARKS:**
- See reverse side for remarks

---

**NAME:**
- Burke John H.

**SURNAME:**
- Burke

**FIRST NAME:**
- John

**MIDDLE INITIAL:**
- H.

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**DATE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE:**
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Note: The form includes various fields and information about the individual's personal and service details, such as race, citizenship, service dates, and next of kin. The form is designed to capture comprehensive information for record-keeping purposes.
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**NAME** Cluzen Bernard S.  
**SURNAME** Cluzen | **FIRST NAME** Bernard | **MIDDLE INITIAL** S.  
**SERVICE SERIAL NO.** 5100670 | **BRANCH OF SERVICE** Navy  
**HOME ADDRESS** Tuscor, Montana  
**STREET AND NUMBER** Tuscor  
**TOWN** Tuscor  
**STATE** Montana  
**RACE** WHITE  
**U.S. CITIZEN?** YES  
**REGISTERED** NO  
**SEL. SER. ORDER NO.** NO  
**FOREIGN SERVICE WORLD WAR II** NO  
**MARRITAL STATUS** SINGEL  
**NO. OF DEPENDENTS** 2  
**PLACE OF BIRTH** Lonepine, Montana  
**DATE OF BIRTH** June 16, 1917  
**MEANS OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE** INDUCTION  
**ENLISTMENT COMMISSION** NO  
**DATE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE** July 1, 1941  
**TYPE OF DISCHARGE** Honorable  
**CAUSE OF SEPARATION** I.E., C.O.D., MINORITY, C. OF S.  
**PLACE OF SEPARATION** Lonepine, Montana  
**DATE OF SEPARATION** Mar. 23, 1942  
**COM. TERM(HSMC)** U.S. Navy Casualty  
**NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST EMPLOYER** Alfred Cluzen, Father Lonepine, Montana  
**SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR REMARKS**
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<p>| MONT. AGO FORM 1-44 | THURBER'S, HELENA | SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR REMARKS |</p>
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Monitors
Name given to bulletins released by the Operational Intelligence Center of SHAEF that included what was known about the German defenses opposing the D-Day landings.

Montagu, Ewen
British Navy commander. He was part of Naval Intelligence along with Ian Fleming. Montagu authored the plan for using a corpse to fool the Germans into believing that an invasion of the Balkans rather than Sicily was imminent.

MOVIE PORTRAYAL:
The Man Who Never Was (1956), by Clifton Webb (based on the book authored by Ewen Montagu)

Montana State College - Bozeman
The only American college to lose its entire 1940-1941 eleven-man football team in World War II.

Dana Bradford - end
John Hall, Jr. - end
Albert Zupin - center
John Burke - tackle
Newell Burke - tackle (Brock)
Bernard Cluzen - guard
Joseph McGuire - guard
Wendell Scabed - backfield
John Phelan - backfield
Alton Zempel - quarterback
Rich Roman - backfield

Monte Cassino
Italian monastery bombed on February 15, 1944, as a result of one of the most controversial decisions of the war. The Benedictine Monastery was defended by German General von Senger und Etterlin, who was a lay member of the Benedictine Order. The Germans were not actually in the monastery, but British General Freyberg ordered it bombed anyway because of its strategic location. The Germans then moved into the rubble, which made it even more difficult to get them out since ruins are more easily defended than intact buildings. The only part of the Abbey that remained undamaged was the cell where St. Benedict had lived, died, and was buried. A heavy caliber artillery shell had landed a foot away from the tomb but did not explode.

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IN THE PEOPLE’S INTEREST

A Centennial History of Montana State University

Robert Rydell • Jeffrey Safford • Pierce Mullen

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Gatton Field Court

BOZEMAN (3/6/72)—Gatton Field, Montana State University’s football stadium for 40 years, has disappeared from campus. First to go were the temporary bleachers. Then the cement and steel grandstand was torn down. . . . Any day now equipment will be moved onto the old playing field and work will begin on a new health and physical education center. 1

Today, at the university’s centennial, all that physically remains of four decades of sporting memories, some of them absolutely remarkable, is Gatton Field Court, composed of the original brick-arched gateway and a more recently constructed monument, all situated about fifty yards east of where the main grandstand formerly stood. The two plaques bolted onto the monument warrant inspection. One is dedicated not only to “that host of athletes who participated here over the years,” but very specifically to the memory of MSC and MSU athletes “who gave their lives for their country” in World War II and beyond. Poignant are the memories associated with those losses. Perhaps one stands out especially—the loss during World War II of thirteen members of the MSC football teams of 1940 and 1941: Orin Beller, Newell Berg, Dana Bradford, John Burke, Bernard Cluzen, William Coey, Karl Fye, John Hall, Joseph McGeever, John Phelan, Richard Roman, Wendell Scabad, and Alton Zempel. The extent of this loss was traumatic beyond the norm, and received national attention when several of the nation’s top sportscasters picked it up, including Bill Stern who made these MSC athletes his “All-American Football Team of 1944.”

The second plaque is dedicated to the old field’s namesake, Cyrus J. Gatton, outstanding athlete at MSC between 1913 and 1916, and much-bemedaled member of the army air corps during World War I. “Si” Gatton was born in Iowa in 1894 and came with his family to Bozeman in 1908. A star athlete at Gallatin County High School (he held the state high jump record for many years, and as a halfback led his team to the state football championship in 1912), he entered MSC in the fall of 1913 and quickly established himself in four sports—football, baseball, basketball, and track. In three of these sports he served as captain. In 1916 Gatton transferred to the University of Wisconsin, and then volunteered for the army when the United States entered the war in April 1917. Subsequently, he was trained in the air corps and flew over two dozen combat missions with the Eleventh Aero Squadron. The last, his twenty-sixth, he might have avoided, as he was officially still out on a leave. But he volunteered—“anxious to get back into the game” was how his fellow pilots recalled his mood—and hastening to catch up to his squadron, was pounced upon by three German planes and shot down just one week before the armistice of November 11, 1918. Back in Bozeman his distraught classmates proposed that the athletic field at MSC be named Gatton Field in “memory of an athlete, who, when he gave, gave all to his school, and in memory of a man who gave his life for his country.” 2

Gatton Field, 1971, with Romney Gym in the background

1. MSU sports news release, by Ken Nicholson, 6 March 1972, 79026/43, “Gatton Field and Memorial Gate” file, MSUA.
2. “Gatton Field at MSC Named in Memory of One of College’s Greatest Athletes,” Bozeman Daily Chronicle, 13 March 1949. See also “Gatton Field and Memorial Gate” file, 79026/43, MSUA.

Gatton Field Court
SQUAD OF 34 BOBCATS PREP FOR HOME OPENING AGAINST WESTERN STATE NEXT WEEK

By SID FEDER

Beloise, 22-Year-Old Fighter, Less Than 2 Years Experience, Outpoints Veteran Garcia

York, Sept. 12.—(P) — Steve Beloise, 22-year-old Bronx boxer with two years' ring experience, surprised everyone by putting in a shot at the middleweight championship today by outpointing the veteran Cesario in ten rounds at Madison Garden. Beloise weighted Garcia 157 1/4 lbs., and the fight was ruled a victory, achieved through a left hand and some fancy in-tactics, Beloise gets a Nov. 13 engagement with Ken Overholzer as champion in Los Angeles.

The fireworks expected were two knockouts specialists and the crowd of alternately cheered and hooted action went from high gear throughout the proceedings and contributed to a gross gate.

Of Beloise's unorthodox left hook was on Garcia's right eye in the ninth and handed a gap at the end. Just to make things worse, the veteran ex-champion, who claims on the title, over a year ago, cut Steve's left eye during the closing moments of the fight.

PENDLETON ROUNPUP STARTS

Pendleton, Ore., Sept. 12.—(P) — Whooping. Redmen dancing in full war regalia and top-ranking cowboys from Canada to Texas brought the old West vividly back to life for 10,000 goggle-eyed spectators at the Pendleton roundup today.

With a squad of 34 players on hand, the Bobcats will be the curtain raiser for one of the most strenuous schedules the Bobcats have played. On November 27, the Bobcats will be in Des Moines, Iowa, where they will play Drake University. At home October 8, the Bobcats meet North Dakota State at Butte October 19, they play their traditional rivals the Montana State University Grizzlies. Other games on the schedule are with Greeley State at Bozeman October 26, and at Golden, Colo., November 2, and Idaho Southern at Pocatello November 31.

When Coach Dyche counted noses at the opening of official practice this week he found several Bobcat mainstays missing. Among these are Danz Bradford, 175-pounder and from Townsend who made a name for himself on the Bobcat line last season. Bradford is in the army aviation service. Conrad LaSalle of Lewistown, outstanding tackle on last year's team, is unable to return and the same is true of Bernard Cluzet of Lonepine, guard.

Still expected to show up are Joe McGeever of Anaconda, tackle; Harvey Nelson of Northfield, Minn., halfback; and Ben McKee of Billings, guard.

On the bright side of the Bobcat outlook for this season are the return of a number of veterans who sparkled last year. Among these are Art Lovern of Butte, center; Ray Dudley of Great Falls, and Newell Berry of Fairfield, guards; Jack Burke of Livingston, tackle; Leonard Scharp of Butte, and Addie Campbell of....


**Pendleton Roundup Starts**

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**ELIMINATED BY EPSIE PRINTER IN OHIO GOLF TOURNAMENT**

—(P)—

Wehrle immediately confronted Bob Hay as soon as he landed.

But the day’s big one was Wehrle’s defeat of Bob Hay in the morning; 6 and 5 for Wehrle over 32-year-old George Dawson, and Chapman over Metropolitan champion Johnny Burke in the afternoon.

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Others reporting for practice are:
- Centers—George Ahlquist, Lambert; Marvin Markeson, Plentywood; Bruce Akins, Shelby; Guards—James Kral, Lewiston; Russell Leland, Belt; Robert Olson, Great Falls; Art Guelston, Glendive; Richard Jarvis, Butte.
- Tackles—Boyd Bohlin, Bozeman; Art Dougan, Butte; Francis Ramstad, Poplar; William Kelso, Manhattan; Ed Arnold, Rexford. Ends—Keith Clawson, Whitehall; Allen Nelson, Wolf Point. Backs—Olin Beller, Victor; Frank Brown, St. Paul, Minn.; George Sutich, Great Falls; Jim Monforton, Bozeman; Russell Nuckolls, Bozeman; Robert Mikelson, Eureka; Clifford Vaughn, Whitehall; Don Wold, Missoula; Joe Wilcox, Stevensville.
**Conference Grid Title Involved in Bobcats**

**MONTANA STATE PLAYING FINAL HOME CONTEST**

Injured M. S. C. Players Back In Action and Prospects Favorable for Holy-Contested Game

Final workouts in the Bobcat camp last night revealed several new plays with which coach Dyche hopes to defeat Greeley State college here this afternoon at 2:00 o'clock in the second conference game of the season. The Cats have snapped through drills and are bolstered by the return of Add Farrell, ace ballfield grizzler, after a three-week vacation.

Coach John Hancock brought twenty-eight men here by special bus yesterday afternoon. They worked out on the field indicating woe of the power that they will throw against the Bobcats in an attempt to raise their conference rating and move one more step toward the Rocky Mountain conference championship. He has a half dozen veterans that form the backbone of the squad and of these six, four were selected last year to all conference positions. Horace Brearly, 200-pound all-conference fullback, will start the game today, coach Hancock said, as will Don Comley, all-conference tackle.

The Cats are in good shape to give the Bears a fight with the exception of Jack Burke who is nursing an injured knee. Burke has been working out and will probably see action tomorrow but it is doubtful whether he will play the entire contest. Leonard Stone is back in uniform after suffering an infected leg. He is scheduled to play today.

Dyche named the following men to start the game: left end, Leonard Sharman, an elongated player who has improved a great deal since the beginning of the season; left tackle Joe McGee, performing for the first time in three weeks; center; Donnie Berg, a chunky, good-natured guard, rated a starting berth, and, as usual, Art Thompson, the right guard. Tommy Dyche, who for three years has fought side by side with Jack Burke at guard will wind up his career on Gatten field this afternoon. Dyche is a capable, fast-marching man rated by Dyche as one of the best guards he has ever had. Burke, in spite of his injured knee will start the game tomorrow in his final appearance before Bobcat fans. For three years Burke has worked on the field and his experience and weight coupled with an aggressive nature which means out the opponent's plays gives Burke the bid for conference honors when he are handed out.

Corry Dogterom has the whistle bid for right end, today. Although only a sophomore he has earned a position on the varsity and placed...
Dyché named the following men to start the game: left end, Leonard Sharrow, an elgant player who has improved a great deal since the beginning of the season; left tackle, Joe McGeever, performing for the last three years; right end, Colton Field, named to fill the void left by the retirement of Bertie; center, Art Lovers, who has had his. In at the guard position is Jack Burke, who is nursing an injured knee. Burke has been working out and is scheduled to start. If he does not start, it is doubtful whether he will play the entire contest. Leonard Sharrow is back in uniform after suffering a head injury. He is scheduled to play today.

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eleven men, no more, no less. Walter Camp invented the scrimmage method of putting the ball in play, the orderly possession of the ball. He invented "team signals," guard interference on end runs, as well as half back and cut back on end runs. He invented the slogan: "Watch the Ball," which immeasurably improved the charging, precision and general play of the line. It was Walter Camp who invented the long snap from center directly to the punter, the tackle formation and the cross-checking on the line.

In 1881, Princeton played Yale. The Princeton captain, Francis Loney, decided not to kick the ball, but to hold the ball indefinitely, in order to force the game to end in a draw, which it did. In another game, Yale tried the same block-game tactics. These tactics disgusted the spectators. Walter Camp decided to remedy this evil, so he started the feature of "Four Downs and Ten Yards to Go" which became the set rule of modern football. And Walter Camp also was the first to originate the scores for touchdowns and field goals. It was also Walter Camp who invented the idea of the first All-American football team to honor the best players of the land at the end of every gridiron campaign.

To the end of his days, Walter Camp worked for football, for he died while attending a session of the Rules Committee, planning new and better ways to improve our great American game.

FIRST QUARTER

Grime Epic

This is the story of a football team that created one of the grimmest chapters in sports history.

In the gridiron season of 1940, the Golden Bobcats of Montana State College were quite an outfit. On that Montana team were no nationally-famous football stars but just eleven husky kids from the West, none of them very well known outside of Montana. Typical American boys, they were held in affectionate esteem by the people of their respective communities. Let's see how they lined up in the football season of 1940—

**Tackles:** John Burke and Newell Berg.

**Guards:** Bernard Cluzen and Joseph McGeever.

**Center:** Alton Zempel.

**At End:** Dana Bradford and John Hall, Jr.

**In the Backfield:** Albert Zupan, Wendell Scabad, John Phelan and Rick Roman.

Those were the eleven Bobcat football heroes of the little-known agricultural school, back in the football season of 1940-41.

Then came the war, and all the eleven players promptly at their country's call went from grid-stripes to service-stripes.

Well, a lot of other football players from other college teams deserted the gridiron and went to war. But in the case of the eleven players from Montana State College a strange and grim story began to take shape, a fatal cycle of death!

It began just three months after Pearl Harbor. The first player to lose his life was Dana Bradford, the end. He died in a plane crash. Soon after, his teammate, John
Hall, Jr. who also played end was killed in a bomber crash over England.

Next, news came that Albert Zupan, the third member of that Montana State College team met death in a plane crash. Three of the Golden Bobcats dead, and only eight remained. The Reaper's line-up mounted rapidly after that.

Tackle John Burke lost his life in the Italian invasion. Across the world, his teammate, tackle Newell Berg died on a bloody New Guinea shore! Five Golden Bobcats dead, and now, only six remained. The Grim Reaper was not yet done. Guard Bernard Cluzen perished in the South Pacific; and his teammate, guard Joseph McGeever, fell on a bloody battlefield in Germany. And now, only four Golden Bobcats were left!

The fatal cycle was drawing to its grim end. Death struck at the backfield of that Montana State College football team. Back Wendell Scabad - died of battle injuries; his teammate, John Phelan was killed in action; Rick Roman who played football at their side, lost his life in Germany. Ten players of that Montana State College football team were dead now, and only one remained - the star, Alton Zempel. He alone had escaped the Reaper. But his fate, too, was sealed.

On July 7, 1945, with peace in sight, Alton Zempel was killed in a plane crash.

So ended the gallant saga of the Montana State team of 1940-41. Eleven players on a college football team, all eleven players answered their country's call, and all eleven, one by one, made the supreme sacrifice. The only college in America to have its entire football team killed in World War II.

Years ago, at Brown University, the Iron Men of football once held forth. You remember the Iron Men, they were that hardy little band who went through the entire 1926 football season unbeaten, and without a substitution until the final minutes of the last game. They played sixty consecutive minutes to beat a strong Yale team by 7-0. The same eleven men followed it up the next Saturday, licking Dartmouth 10-0. Finally, Brown played Harvard, and was holding a comfortable lead of fourteen points, so the coach decided to make some substitutions. (He had noticed some unhappiness on the part of the players who warmed the bench game after game as the eleven Iron Men stayed in for the entire sixty minutes.) So, with but three minutes left to play, the coach ended the amazing endurance record of the Iron Men, and sent in ten substitutes. It had been a long, long time since any second-stringer had had the opportunity of seeing action. As the coach signalled for them to go out on the field, one started walking towards the clubhouse. The surprised coach shouted: "Where are you going? I thought I told you to go into the game?"

The substitute grinned: "Excuse me for forgetting the right direction, coach - it's so long since I last went on a ballfield. And by the way - are you still allowed four downs in the game as they play it today?"

The coach laughed and realized that he should have given his substitutes more of a chance, especially when they celebrated their release from the bench by pushing over another touchdown in the last minute.

Ever hear of ten men on a football eleven? Strangely forgetful of his arithmetic was coach Harvey Harmon, of Rutgers who once sent in five substitutes and withdrew six players from a game. So, for several minutes of play, Rutgers' ten-man "eleven" faced Lehigh's eleven-man eleven, yet in spite of their numerical weakness, Rutgers won the game, 20-6.

There are stories that grow out of a football background that aren't quite football stories but that belong to pigskin lore as well as any gridiron classic. This is such a tale. It concerns a lad named Bill Eadie.

Bill came from Evanston, Illinois. He grew up in the
‘M’ — as in Montana State

Thanks to recent efforts, one of the area’s beloved landmarks remains a symbol of time and place

To some people, the “M” is a symbol of Montana State. To others, it’s a hiking destination. In actuality, it’s both: the university owns the “M” itself, but leases the land on which it sits in the Bridger Mountains from the U.S. Forest Service.

Regardless of the associations it conjures, the “M,” which is at about 7,000 feet on the west side of Bozeman’s Mount Baldy, has a long history with the community.

The idea for the “M” emerged in the fall of 1915 when members of the class of 1918, who were then sophomores, decided they wanted to create a monument to the school. The plan the students outlined earned them a vacation from class, and about 60 students made the trip to Mount Baldy, That effort, which the late Torlief Aasheim, former director of the Montana Cooperative Extension Service and a member of the class of 1937, helped spearhead, brought in nearly $100,000.

“I remember distinctly the days when (MSU students) carried 50 pound sacks of lime and 10 gallon cans of water up the hill,” Aasheim recalled in a letter to alumni appealing for donations.

Aasheim, who died in December at age 93, said he took pride in the “M” when he was a student and worked to make it the same for current students. “The ‘M’ needs help these days to bring it back to a state where we can be proud of it, the way it is maintained, and the way it looks,” he wrote.

The late Torlief Aasheim spearheaded recent efforts to renovate the “M.”

according to the 1918 Montanan yearbook. The class used rocks to fill in the “M” that day and returned on another day to wash the new letter, finishing it in the spring of 1916.

Editors of the class’s 1918 yearbook called the monument symbolic of several things: “May the ‘M’ stand long as a symbol of our loyalty to Montana State and a reminder of what a united class can accomplish.”

Over the years, university service groups such as Spurs and Fangs and athletic teams have helped maintain the “M,” often repainting it and collecting trash from the trails leading up to it.

Many volunteers from the community also have devoted themselves to the monument’s maintenance. In the late ‘90s, university employees, alumni and other interested individuals formed a group to work on a major restoration of the landmark.

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The money Aasheim and others raised went toward replacing fallen rock and renovating and rehabilitating the trails up to the “M.” In addition, the parking area was redesigned and paved.

Aasheim considered the “M” important not only to the university, but also to the Bozeman community.

“The ‘M’ has served, for many years, as a point of special interest and a landmark for Bozeman, the Gallatin Valley, many other Montanans and the Alumni of Montana State University,” he wrote in 2001.

MSU research scientist Stuart Jennings, who was also involved with the renovation of the “M,” identified it as a signature of the area. “For a lot of people who pass through here, the ‘M’ symbolizes MSU and Bozeman,” he said.

—ANNE PETTINGER
Robinson made mark on UW

Baseball pioneer played football in Seattle in '39

BY DAN RALEY

Jackie Robinson played in Seattle just once, but he had a football in his hands rather than a baseball. The only color line he was concerned with that day was a purple-shirted University of Washington defensive front.

On Oct. 7, 1939, Robinson gathered in a perfectly spiraling punt from Dean McAdams at the east end of Husky Stadium, a ball kicked high enough to allow the coverage to properly surround him.

With a half-dozen players closing in, this exquisite athlete for UCLA leaped to his left, away from the sideline. It was all a clever, baiting play. It was all a solitaire, comporting Robinson's solitary, competitive visit to the Northwest. Three of UCLA's four backfield starters were black, a diverse situation not repeated anywhere else among the nation's leading college programs and classes. Publicized before each game, Robinson had covered 63 yards in a tackle on the Bruins' first black to appear in a game in the college or the NFL. Robinson had suited up for them in previous seasons.

There was someone wanted to get Robinson, with his 9.8-second speed in the 100-yard dash intimdating everyone trying to keep pace, was a concern to the UW football team's game plan, was conceded solely for him.

The Huskies' Marx was ordered to shadow No. 28 on every play. For the most part, this worked. Still, the Huskies had no choice but to kick to him and hold their breath each time.

Before a somewhat sparsely Husky Stadium crowd of 15,017 — the second-lowest UW home turnout that season — Robinson had a 27-yard kick-off return. The first chance he got his hands on the ball. Later in the opening quarter, he ran for 20 and 2 yards on a pair of scrimmage plays, and ran a punt back 24 yards. In the second period, he lost a yard trying to sweep left end, had a 17-yard punt return and collected 43 yards on the aforementioned tripled triangle. He handled the ball just three more times, all in the third quarter, losing 10 yards on a lateral pass, breaking free for his 63-yard punt return and picking up 6 yards or a final punt return before lateralizing the ball to a teammate.

Robinson, who injured his right ankle before the week against TCU came up limping again after his long run against the Huskies. He sat out the fourth quarter, but had done enough damage already.

Two days later, a gray-haired Robinson returned to Seattle to participate in World's Fair activities specifically making himself available for United Church of Christ ceremonies tied to the eradication of the racial overtones surrounding Robinson's pioneering role in bringing about social change. He recently had been inducted into baseball's Hall of Fame just three years from meeting an early death.

Quizzed about his visit in '39, Robinson described the UW/CSC contest as "all mud and slosh," not membering it as a close encounter, i.e., primarily a kicking game.

"That's about all you could do," said Seattle. 

Know better. With Jack Robinson, anything was possible any time.

Dan Raley can be reached at 206-448-8884 or dralley@seattletimes.com.

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For Boise State, Winning Respect Is the Real Trick

By PETE THAMEL

GLENDALE, Ariz., Jan. 2 — After scoring the winning 2-point conversion on a Statue of Liberty play and proposing to his girlfriend on national television, Boise State tailback Ian Johnson could have completed the storybook night by saying he was going to Disneyland.

Johnson, however, offered a more fitting destination for where he will soon be celebrating the Broncos’ pulsating 43-42 overtime victory over Oklahoma on Monday night in the Fiesta Bowl.

“In a couple of days, I'll be back plumbing,” Johnson said of his part-time job in Boise State.

Breaking into college football’s top echelon takes a lot of adjustment of age-old perceptions. And a blue-collar guy like Johnson, who makes $9.25 an hour working for DeBest Plumbing, may have provided the perfect moment to help Boise State join college football aristocracy.

The significance of Boise State’s victory may ultimately be judged by where the Broncos are ranked at the start of next season.

Boise State (13-0), the Western Athletic Conference champion, has gone 58-7 over the past five seasons. But for some reason, it is snubbed every preseason by pollsters and has to grind its way into the top of the rankings. The Broncos entered the game ranked No. 8, two spots higher than Oklahoma.

“Whether it happens or not, we’ll see,” Johnson, a sophomore, said. “But we definitely feel like, hey, now we can start a little bit higher. You can’t argue with 13-0.”

By midafternoon Tuesday, Karl Benson, the WAC commissioner, said he was already fighting the perception that Boise State needed to resort to trickery to beat Oklahoma. Benson said that an ESPN pundit was perpetuating that notion, which Benson found infuriating.

Boise State did use three trick plays, one at the end of regulation and two in overtime, to clinch its unforgettable victory. But Benson noted that the Broncos did not use chicanery to take a 28-10 lead over the Sooners, the Big 12 champion, in the third quarter. Benson added that running trick plays is one thing, and executing them is another.

“People are already saying that it’s a fluke,” Benson said in a telephone interview. “They executed those plays to Continued on Page C14
perfection, not against Sacramento State on Sept. 1, but against Oklahoma on Jan. 1. Say what you want, but that takes talent. It doesn’t take luck, it takes talent.”

Benson conceded one reality that he and his league are constantly fighting.

“They are being highly skewered against teams like Boise,” he said.

There is strong evidence to support Benson’s claim. Boise State has won the past five WAC titles and gone 39-1 in league play over that span. Yet only in one of those seasons has it earned enough respect from the pollsters to start the season in the top 25. That came in 2005 after the Broncos had an undefeated regular season in 2004.

Boise State will lose six senior starters on offense and defense, including the star quarterback Jared Zabransky. But it does return four of five starters from a strong offensive line, and Johnson will enter the year as a favorite to win the Heisman Trophy after leading the nation in touchdown passes (25).

“The thing about Boise State is that year in and year out we play at a high level and our record is good,” Broncos Coach Chris Petersen said.

“Maybe they’ll see us play with an Oklahoma and give us some more respect out of the gate?”

Many of the Broncos seemed to prefer keeping their status as perennial underdogs has become part of the ethos of the program.

“Boise State is Boise State because people doubt us,” the junior offensive lineman Jeff Cavender said. “We’re a group of guys that got overlooked that it did not. Being underappreciated underdogs has become part of the ethos of the program.

“Boise State is Boise State because people doubt us,” the junior offensive lineman Jeff Cavender said. “We’re a group of guys that got overlooked by the Pac-10, Big 12 and Big Ten. We get the cold shoulder, we have the doubters, and that’s why we play with that chip on our shoulders. That’s what makes us special.”

But no one could doubt that this game will long be remembered as one that closed the gap between college football’s bluebloods and upstarts. Boise State played in this game only after football expanded its postseason to grant more access to teams from outside the Bowl Championship Series conference.

“I think it will even the playing field a little bit more and shut up the people who’ve been doubting us.”

Boise State safety Marty Tadman said.

“I think this game will prove that we’re not just from the WAC. We proved it that we can beat big-time teams.”

Florida Coach Urban Meyer said his wife, Shelley, kept elbowing him to stay awake, and said she called it the “greatest football game she ever saw.”

“It was Meyer’s Utah team that first crashed the B.C.S. two years ago and closed the gap between larger and smaller colleges by blowing out Pittsburgh.”

“I think that the separation of B.C.S. and non-B.C.S., I think that era is over,” Meyer said. “I think it is harder for some of the smaller conference schools to make it, but the B.C.S. committee and the whole process has made it easier access, which is the right thing to do.”
These books give football fans another reason to stay on the couch, says Boomer Esiason.

When Pride Still Mattered
By David Maraniss
Simon & Schuster, 1999

This is the life story of the game’s biggest name: Vince Lombardi. The book tells you about who Lombardi was as a coach, as a man, and about all that he brought to the table—what I’ll call the virtues of football. That last is, to me, the great thing. Yes, the game is in itself exciting, exhilarating, filled with passion and desire, and all the drives in human life. But at the end of the day it’s something else, too: it’s the great character-building sport, a teacher of discipline and cooperation. Lombardi embodied those values. The book covers his career from its beginnings to the days in the 1960s when this son of an Italian butcher had become the most celebrated coach of the most celebrated team in football. That team was, of course, the Green Bay Packers, whose great years and character Mr. Maraniss captures beautifully.

Inside the Helmet
By Peter King
Simon & Schuster, 1993

The author, a writer for Sports Illustrated, decided to immerse himself in the lives of 10 NFL players, yours truly included. He set out to explore the game from the inside—to see what it requires of every team member, every position, and the psychological and physical elements involved. How does the player do what he does, how does he feel doing it, how does he think? What are the problems, the solutions? To find out, Peter King spent a week essentially living with each player as he prepared for a game, going to meetings with him, asking questions. Mr. King didn’t just talk to players (among them some of the greatest of my era, including Bruce Smith and Barry Sanders), he also interviewed coaches known for their expertise on various positions. The result is a terrific treat for lovers of the game.

Remember This Titan
By Bill R. Yoast, with Steve Sullivan
Taylor, 2005

This is a football story charged with racial tension and drama. Bill Yoast was the coach of the Titans at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Va., in 1972, an era when pressures for affirmative action were already making themselves felt. Despite a long and successful history as head coach, Mr. Yoast was told to step down—his job was being given to a black coach, and he would work as an assistant. This put both the coaches and players in a dicey position, agitated and brooding over the racial resentments that had been brought to the surface. Of course, things didn’t end there (as you’ll know if you saw the 2000 movie “Remember the Titans”). This moving saga reveals how players and their coaches, functioning as a team, manage in the end to overcome their mistrust and animosity. The book speaks to the strengths of football, and it does so eloquently.

Semi-Tough
By Dan Jenkins
Atheneum, 1972

The first thing to know about Dan Jenkins’s book is that it’s better than the 1977 movie. And it’s cer­tainly more detailed. Set in the 1970s, the action revolves around the New York Gi­ants—in particular, two players fresh from Texas who come to be in the big city. They find plenty of wild parties, drinking and...
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Semi-Tough
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Atheneum, 1972
The first thing to know about Dan Jenkins's book is that it's better than the 1977 movie. And it's certainly more detailed. Set in the 1970s, the action revolves around the New York Giants—in particular, two players fresh from Texas who've come to the big city. They find plenty of wild parties, drinking and boundless opportunity for sex. I wish I could say it was like that when I played—I just don't remember things quite that way. Some of these memories of mad abandon, of football players on the loose, may have been fed by wishful thinking. And Mr. Jenkins's novel, it has to be said, is sometimes given to tastelessness that's neither amusing nor interesting. Still, nothing changes the fact that this hilarious satire is, on the whole, a very good read.

North Dallas Forty
By Peter Gent
Morrow, 1973
This book touches on the darker side of football, about the game's human costs: the shattered knees and broken bodies, all the painkillers required for a player to get out of bed in the morning. A barely disguised account of his own pro-football career with the Dallas Cowboys, Peter Gent's book touches on some of the same notes found in "Semi-Tough." The difference is that there's not much light comedy in "North Dallas Forty," a story about an ambitious player, a tight end, whose pain and endurance go unrewarded in a game run by vultures and users. No Vince Lombardis here. A powerful story, powerfully told.

Mr. Esiason, an NFL quarterback from 1984 to 1997, is a commentator on CBS's pregame show "The NFL Today" and president of the Boomer Esiason Foundation, a cystic fibrosis charity.
Super Bowl's Precursors Have Colorful History

By JOE LAPOINTE

DETROIT, Jan. 30 — The program for the first championship game of what has become an N.F.L. title game included an advertisement for a Stewart-Warner movie camera. Next to a picture of the camera, were the words, "You saw the film of your every game by filming each play."

If only someone had. That historic game on Dec. 18, 1932, a 49-0 victory for the Chicago Bears over the Portsmouth Spartans in not the Super Bowl. But it did decide the championship of the N.F.L., as well Sunday's far more lavish Super Bowl XL between the Seattle Seahawks and the Pittsburgh Steelers.

The 1932 game led to rules changes, as did other championship games that followed. These days it is fashionable to think of all pre-Super Bowl history as beginning with the 1934 title game between the Baltimore Colts and the New York Giants, because of a lack of fan support.

Like this season's Super Bowl at Ford Field in Detroit, the 1932 play-off game was played indoors in a large Northern city with cold weather outside. But if movies of that hastily arranged game existed, the Pro Football Hall of Fame and N.F.L. Films would love to see them.

"I doubt if one was made," said Joe Horrigan, vice president for communications and exhibits at the Pro Football Hall of Fame. He noted that the light would have been poor inside Chicago Stadium, making it tough to use a movie camera.

The clash between the Bears and the Spartans was added after the regular season ended with the teams tied for first place. When a snowstorm made Wrigley Field unplayable, the game was moved indoors.

A circus had just left Chicago Stadium in December 1932. Players said afterward that the stadium floor was still covered with dirt and that the scent of the elephants lingered. Bronko Nagurski, Mule Wilson and Ox Emerson did battle on a field that was widely described as being about 80 yards long.

Portsmouth unsuccessfully argued that Chicago's winning play, a touchdown pass from Nagurski to Grange, was illegal because Nagurski was not 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage when he threw.

The rule was changed the next season, making a forward pass legal from anywhere behind the line of scrimmage. Hash marks, which were used in the playoffs, were moved to the sidelines so close to the walls that the formation became permanent fixtures. Moreover, the idea of a championship game caught on, and one was officially scheduled for 1933.

"For the first 13 years of the league, there was no championship game," said Bob Carroll, executive director of the Professional Football Researchers Association, which has 500 members. "People say, 'Why didn't they think of it?'

Weather has not been a factor in the title game since the Super Bowl format was introduced as neutral sites in either warm-weather locales or neutral stadiums. In 1948, the Chicago Cardinals, who shuttled in and out to relay the game, defeated the Eagles because of a lack of fan support.

After losing to the Green Bay Packers, 21-4, the Redskins continued moving south, to Washington. They won the title their first season, 28-21, over the Bears. Three years later, in 1948, Chicago routed Washington, 73-6.

The 1945 game, in which the Cleveland Rams beat Washington, 15-14, resulted in more major changes for the postwar era. Cleveland's victory was aided by a safety; a pass by Washington quarterback Sammy Baugh from his end zone hit the crossbar of the goal posts, which was at the goal line at that time.

The rule was later changed, so that such an occurrence would no longer be a safety. The champion Rams made Los Angeles after that game, allowing the innovative Browns to take over in Cleveland in the new All-America Football Conference that formed in 1946.

Remnants of the A.A.F.C. merged with the N.F.L. in 1950, with Cleveland immediately winning the title over the Rams. The Browns then reached the title game six times in the next seven seasons. They lost to the Rams, 73-0, in 1951, then twice to Detroit before beating the Lions in the 1954 title game and the Rams in 1955.

The Browns lost again to the Lions in 1957.

"The Browns-Lions series strikes me as important," said Horrigan, the Hall of Fame. "It established Otto Graham and Bobby Layne. Graham was the Cleveland quarterback; Layne was Detroit's quarterback.

"They were such a contrast in style and personality," Horrigan said. "Oto was a skilled, polished player. Layne was a field general and a swaggering Texan. Their rivalry added a mystique and helped the growth of a league still finding its feet.

The Browns were pioneers in football tactics. Films of the 1933 championship at Briggs Stadium in Detroit show chuck Chuck Noll, who shuttled in and out to relay the game, long snape the ball to Browns Coach Paul Brown.

The 1938 overtime game at Yankee Stadium seemed to accelerate the national consciousness about the sport, but there were two little remembered quirks about it, according to Michael MacCam­bridge, the author of "America's Game: The Epic Story of How Pro Football Captured a Nation.

"That epic contest was not sold out," he said. "There were unsold seats in Yankee Stadium." Ernie Accorsi, the current general man­ager of the Giants, said he had heard that tickets were available that morning but sold out before kickoff. A crowd of 44,185 was announced.

Until then, Accorsi said, the pro title game was relatively less important. "It wasn't the World Se­ries," he said. "It wasn't the Rose Bowl, either."

Although many fans remember seeing Alan Ameche score the Colts' winning touchdown on television in 1953, few recall that NBC lost the picture for two of the last four plays, MacCambridge said.

They might not have seen the fin­ish if an NBC employee had not run on the field to delay play while technicians looked for an un­plugged cable. In the next few years, television became tightly connected to football. The birth of the American Football League led to the Super Bowl - shown on two networks - in the 1966 season and that year's merger agreement between the two leagues.

For Sunday's 48th Super Bowl, dozens of cameras will document the players' movements. But what if officials had moving-picture re­view in 1932 to replay that contro­versial touchdown pass from Nagurski to Grange?

Perhaps, someday the evidence will turn up in a yard sale or in the attic of an old house. Coaches often say in football that you don't really know what happened until you've seen the film.

Steve Van Buren (15) scored the Eagles' 7-0 victory over the Chicago Cardinals in the 1948 title game.

In what may have been considered piling on, the Bears beat the Redskins, 73-0, in the 1940 title game.
The Boy, the Bears And the Cherished Memories

From Halas to the Four Horsemen, a Family Lives Football

By BILL ANDERSON

Seven weeks ago, as I do every Sunday morning, I shuffled through this newspaper in my kitchen in Darien, Conn. This time, the sports section stopped me. I was in it.

There was a photo collage on the front page showing some of the forefathers of the National Football League. George Halas, the owner and coach of the Chicago Bears, was pictured riding the shoulders of his players after the 1940 N.F.L. championship game. There were 13 joyous faces surrounding Halas, and mine was the youngest.

I was 10 and the unofficial mascot of the Bears. I wore No. 5, and I was probably the only person in uniform who did not play in the record 73-0 rout of the Washington Redskins. My father, Hunk Anderson, coached the line for Halas and called the defensive signals.

He and Halas never called one for me, though, despite the urging of the players. I was there on the sideline in shoulder pads and my leather helmet. It fit like a glove. I remember some players telling Halas, "Let me do that one again, and doing it with defense. My father would have loved this team, or any whose greatest strength is its toughness. After Dad died in 1978, Red Smith wrote this about him in The Times: "Hunk Anderson was the toughest nice guy or the nicest tough guy I ever knew." It was a fitting epitaph.

My father was born in 1898 near Calumet, Mich., the copper country on the Upper Peninsula. He played football on a cobblestone road, using a pig's bladder for a ball, or so he would say. One of his high school team-mates came over to his house that night. Rockne showed him film of the game he had missed.

It was a hectic arrangement, but the instruction got through to his players. My father's linemen formed the Seven Mules, who blocked for the fabled Four Horsemen of Notre Dame.

Hunk Anderson was a player, and the coach.

Chicago Bears players hoisted Coach George Halas on their shoulders after winning the 1940 N.F.L. title. A young Bill Anderson is at right.

Knute Rockne, right, gave Hunk Anderson a chalk talk in 1931. Anderson coached the line that blocked for the Four Horsemen.

The games were the rewards for me. My father would let me tag along at training camp, where I roomed with the players. The Bears had two practices a day for a month, and I joined in the workouts. I'd go to the skull sessions at night and sit for hours watching film, going through game plans.

These were serious men, with college degrees and better-paying jobs out of season, but they had fun, too. Sid Luckman and George McAfee would take a gang of us to the local fair in Rensselaer, Ind., and they would throw darts or knock down milk bottles and win all the prizes within 20 minutes. The carnies chased us out.

McAfee, a Hall of Fame halfback, was my hero. I wore his number and watched him with awe. I went to Duke because he had gone there. But I was worthless as a football player. I was a 156-pound halfback and they needed a defensive end, and I was run over continually. I switched to track and had four great years, and it was not an issue with Dad.

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I just laughed about the notion, but I thought that if I could have gone in, nobody would have bothered me. The Redskins couldn’t make a block or a tackle, and the Bears looked invincible. We kicked so many field goals that night, played for Halas on Sunday and came home that night. Rockne showed him film of the game he had missed.

It was a hectic arrangement, but the instruction got through to his players. My father’s women formed the Seven Mules, who blocked for the fabled Four Horsemen of Notre Dame.

Hunk Anderson was a player, and the coach who invented the blitz.

He knew his coaching. He invented the blitz— the red dog, it was called then— and from his background in engineering and his small size, he knew how to use leverage on body block, understanding that the bigger players’ weight could bring them down. He must have also been the only guard in football who kept all his teeth. I would ask him how he did it, with no face mask to protect him, and he said he never closed his eyes.

After Rockne died in a plane crash in 1931, Dad succeeded him as the coach at Notre Dame. In 1940, after a year as the line coach of the Detroit Lions, he joined Halas on the Bears’ sideline. They won four N.F.L. championships in the 1940’s, and it was not an issue with Dad.

As a player, he would throw dirt, gouge eyes, bruise arms and legs. But he was a dear and loving grandfather, and all he asked was that you loved what you did and worked hard at it.

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As a player, he would throw dirt, gouge eyes, bruise arms and legs. But he was a dear and loving grandfather, and all he asked was that you loved what you did and worked hard at it.

He died of emphysema at age 79; in many of my photographs of him, he has a cigarette in his hand on the sideline. But I still see him in my grandson, Austin, who has a habit of chewing his hand on the sideline at Darien High. I never did it, and neither did my four sons. But Dad did.

Another grandson, William, is 7 and plays football. My son told him to play the two long-field touchdown runs. He would have fit right in with the 1940 Bears.