

HAPPY NEW FEAR



by 00038

Another year has passed and man, ever time conscious, has again marked the occasion. The year came to an end on January sixteenth in the annual festival known as the Super Bowl. A minor primordial celebration had taken place sixteen days earlier; despite its age, which retains for it a modicum of respect, it has, in the past six years, been relegated Saint John The Baptist event preparing the way for the event of true significance. Yes another year of dislocations, bloodletting, pulled ligaments, fractures, gruel, drool, stupor, sprains, strains, sweat and separations has come to its penultimate bone crunching finale. Unlike its barbaric predecessor, which was a fertility cult, the modern celebration commemorates something nearer the modern heart, violence. This particular form has so strong a hold upon us that it has been able to replace the traditional twelve month year; the six month year is here for at this juncture time is eclipsed until the football season begins again. (Canadian nationalists will be glad to know that, in line with Thanksgiving, we now celebrate our new years on a different day known as Grey Cup Day.)

Is football the most barbaric sport in the world, or is it a minor image of the American-adian way of life? Unfortunately from this vantage point the above statement appears tautological; that is it is both. In essence football is highly organized violence where the people who "hit" hardest and "hurt" the opposition win. Its precision and efficiency require the strict regimentation of men, the ability to be brutal and the will to literally walk over somebody else's bark to get to the

top. Competition, the territorial imperative, profit, pressure, pain, a microcosm of our capitalistic milieu. Perhaps one should say our military industrial milieu, for if football resembles anything it is the military, regimentation violence, the bomb, the suicide squad, the blitz, the draft training camp, field generals and so on. Plenty of material here for identification to the North American wettanschacing. Also it embodies within its form a synthesis for a major American schizophrenia; high organization yet room for the individual play.

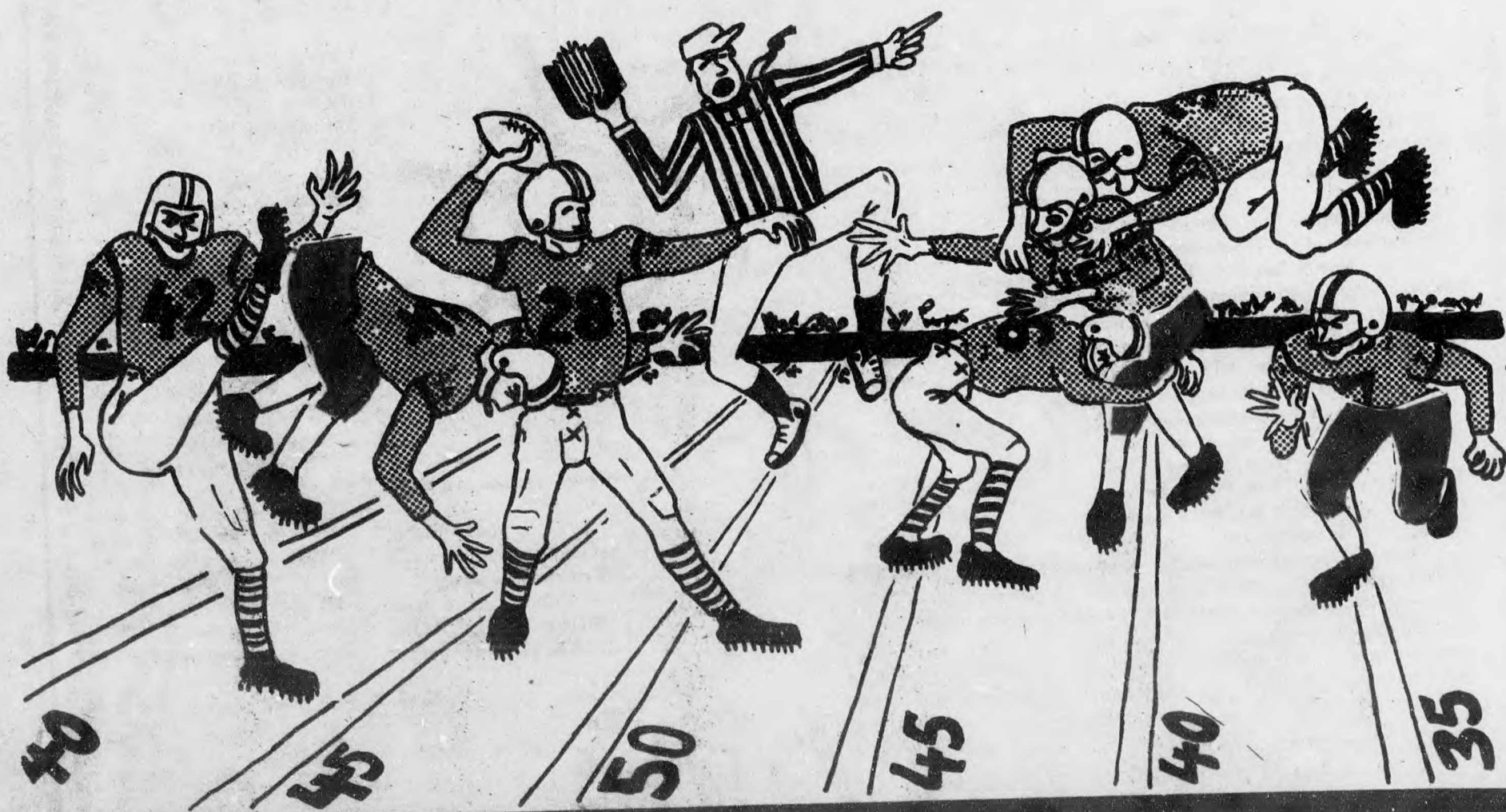
Half time shows and pre-game shows allow for the flaunting of all that is American and orgasms of patriotism. The players line up and the strains of the anthem fill the air; mortuary we who are about to die salute you. Old Glory is trooped out, always accompanied by a military colour guard. Girls with apple pie faces, mental virgins all, twirl and hop. Men with close cropped chair march up and down the field the strains of such relevant songs as The Notre Dame Marching Song. Considering the present state of America's youth these aberrations can only be described as nostalgic. While the young suffer (the public school-university grind as a major manifestation of the whole above mentioned phenomena) freak out, turn

on, and grow their hair long, mom and dad can comfort themselves on images of what was. High school, high school sis boom PAH! But then from the crowd a slight impatience, a polite applause, and then a scream for blood as the teams appear for the second half. Yes sir \$1500.00 per man to the winner half that to the loser; a great American game.

Football, the pagentry, the spectacle, oh the beautiful anticipation, the significance of an event, like V.J. day and 1776, the deification of hard hitting halfwits. All this from a game. From a game blasphemy!

Unfortunately for millions of Americans and Canadians this may be just the cry to describe an attack on football impartial and sports in general, which speaks volumes on the emptiness of modern American-adian life. Between the World Series, The Stanley Cup, and the Super Bowl a man can create a whole insulated, world of pseudo-significance around himself. He can fill his time with "stats", records, predictions measurements armchair quarterbacking and hero-worship. The media appear to be a willing accomplice in inducing this particular form of myopia by technologically enhancing (lets see that hit again in slow motion instant replay) and propegating the dream.

Now the Americans have two favourite devices of governments to keep at home trouble in the background; foreign military entanglements and the Circus. The former has been a dismal failure the latter, an unmitigated success. Future historians may well write of our epic; "John Doe watched hockey while America choked to death."



Layout and graphics by Mac Haynes