

Football Season of '09

The practice in Rugby was a little late in starting this year, although the first game was scheduled for a week earlier than last year. About the 18th of September the first move was made towards getting the candidates for the Senior team back to work, with the result that by a week later, some fifteen or twenty men were working hard under the temporary captaincy of Alex. McKenzie, the half-back, and with G. W. Ross as manager, pro tem.

It was about the 25th of September before Captain Burnside arrived home from England, and announced that the doctor had absolutely forbidden him to play on account of a severe injury which he had sustained to his back while taking forty foot dives at Brighton Beach. Jack Meredith, who had been elected manager, has already resigned, and so a meeting of the Rugby Club was called to get matters straightened out. Then it was that McKenzie and Ross were asked to hold their positions, and both accepted. Now that those who were to have had charge of the men for the season had been selected, everything went along with more vim, and the old Varsity spirit characterized the practices. By the end of the first week in October, 40 or 50 men were out each afternoon, and the candidates for positions on the various teams were both numerous and excellent.

The Argonauts and Tigers wanted to measure swords with the Varsity fifteen early in the season, but the management deemed it advisable not to play any team before the first scheduled game, which was with McGill on October 7th. The story of our great victory has now been relegated to the annals of ancient history.

Varsity has always been peculiarly unfortunate at having men incapacitated at the beginning of the season, and this year has been no exception. Just a week before the McGill game, Captain McKenzie was injured. There was a game between the 1st and 2nd teams that morning, and, during a tandem play with "Jimmy" Gray, Alex. McKenzie sustained an injury to his collar bone, which was severe enough to keep him out of the game with McGill.

He was never absent from practice, however, although in the McGill game he was forced to hand over the team to the old veteran, "Biddy" Barr.

Then, again, "Reg." McArthur, who was showing up particularly well at half, had his thumb broken, not at Rugby, however, but during a lacrosse match. "Percy" Brown, too, had his name added to the list of unfortunates, but his injury fortunately proved slight, and he was well enough to play a splendid game against McGill.

For the benefit of those readers of College Topics who are not familiar with the first team, we reprint the names of those who played and acted as substitutes on the Senior team in the match against McGill: Full Back, Beal; Half-Backs, Brown, Darling, J. Biggs; Quarter, P. Biggs; Scrimmage, J. J. Gibson, Mullin, Malloch; Inside Wings, Telford, Meredith; Outside Wings, McCollum, Armstrong; Middle Wings, Montzambert, Russel; Flying Wing, Barr; Substitutes, Ansel, Douglas, O. K. Gibson, Fleck, McLennan, Revel, Gander, M. Telford.

We also append a short account of each player, from accurate information obtained:

A. W. McKenzie, '02 Arts, has not been able to play in a game this year, but was showing up just as well as ever in practice, which is saying about all there is to be said. Last season "Alec" established his reputation as one of the best half-backs in the country. He kicks and catches perfectly, and his tackling is one of the very best. In addition, McKenzie makes an excellent captain, and keeps the men well in hand. It is to be greatly hoped that he will soon be better, so that he can get into the game again. Varsity needs him on the half-back line.

N. R. Beal, '00 Arts, is playing the position of full back on the Senior team for the second season. In 1897 Beal did such splendid work on the champion Intermediate and Junior teams that he was given an opportunity to show what he could do on a Senior team, and last season played an almost faultless game with the Intercollegiate Champions. Though somewhat light, Beal is a good tackler, runner and kicker, and what is perhaps his best quality is that he is a very steady player in what is a most difficult position.

E. P. Brown, '00 Arts, played half-back with McGill, and those who saw him say that he showed up better there than ever before, playing a remarkably steady game. Brown is an Old Upper Canada College man, and played on the Championship Intermediate team in 1897, and acted as captain of the same team last year. Generally, Brown's work is excellent at half, but at times he seems to get off color. This year he is playing a better and steadier game than he has ever played before.

C. W. Darling is studying music, and incidentally playing half-back. This was not the position which he played last year on the Senior team, for he formed

with Temple Blackwood the pair of fastest and most effective outside wings Varsity has had in years. But on Saturday against McGill Darling played the position of centre-half excellently, and his long, well-placed punts were beyond a doubt the feature of the game. Darling is also an Upper Canada man, and learned the game there.

George Biggs, '03 Arts, is a brother of Percy Biggs, the quarter-back. Biggs was captain of Harbord last year, and obtained his promotion to the Senior team on his merits. He practiced faithfully, and showed decidedly that he was a reliable catch and kick, a good runner, and, for his size, an admirable tackler. With practice, and in a year or so, Biggs ought to make a splendid half-back. He is the second lightest man on the team. Beal beats him out for first place by about three pounds.

P. Biggs, '02 Arts, is again filling his old position of quarter-back. Last year he played outside wing part of the season, but in the final game with Ottawa City he was moved to his present position, and has conclusively shown that he is one of the best in the game. Biggs excels at bucking, but also passes well. His tackling, too, is very effective. He is not a very sure catch, but kicks well.

J. W. Malloch is in his old position of side scrimmage again, after a couple of years' absence. Malloch is so well-known in Rugby that it is scarcely necessary to say anything about him. He played in the famous '95 team, and is a great source of strength to the present five, because, in addition to being very heavy, he knows the game perfectly and is a hard, effective worker.

S. A. Mullin, '02 Arts, is playing centre scrimmage this year. "Archie" made his reputation in this position with the victorious freshmen in the Mulock Cup Series, and has already shown himself to be a first-class centre scrimmage. He gets the ball out clean and very quickly. Moreover, Mullin is a good runner and tackler. He played with the Junior and Intermediate Tigers before coming to Varsity, and learnt his game there.

J. J. Gibson, '00 Arts, was outside scrimmage last year, and although somewhat light for scrimmage, makes up in speed and hard playing what he lacks in weight. Gibson is a most effective player. He is fast and a good tackler. With McGill he broke through their scrimmage time and again, and stole the ball from their quarter-back. Gibson twisted his back slightly in the McGill game, and was consequently prevented from practicing last week.

W. R. Meredith, '00 Arts, is playing inside wing for the second season, and playing it well. Meredith is heavier and stronger than ever this year. He was, hitherto, considered a good defence player, but not very aggressive. However, in the McGill game Meredith showed conclusively that he could play a strong, aggressive game, if he wanted to. In common with the majority of the wings he is not a good catch or kick, and needs practice in tackling.

R. Telford, '00 Arts, has played middle wing on the Championship Intermediate teams of the past two seasons, but on account of his increased weight and strength he was intrusted with the position of inside wing on Saturday, and showed up well. He always holds his man, and also plays an aggressive, effective game, but does not kick or catch well. He is, however, tackling better this year, and when he gets this down will be a far stronger player.

R. A. Armstrong, '00 Arts, is also an Intermediate man of last year. He played on the Champion Junior team two years ago, and consequently has risen gradually to the present position, which he occupies so well on the first team. "Gussie" has grown much heavier since last year, and is playing a better game. He catches and kicks well, follows up fast, and holds his man to the end; but is not a very good tackler. However, with practice, he ought to remedy this fault. With McGill he had a difficult man, Trihey, to deal with, but Armstrong gave him a little more than he wanted.

J. A. McCollum, '01 Medicals, is the other outside wing. Jack has passed through the same stages as Armstrong in his metamorphosis towards becoming a first team player. The match with McGill was his first Senior game, and he surprised his friends. McCollum has the style of a half-back in his catching and kicking. He, however, follows up very fast, too fast, many think, because he gets off-side more than is necessary. McCollum is a very hard, plucky player, and earned his position on the team by faithful work. If he can improve in tackling, he will make a most effective wing.

T. A. Russel was on the Champion Intermediate team last year, and played his first Senior game Saturday against McGill. Middle wing is his position, and was last year. Russel is very strong and fairly heavy. He holds his man well and plays a most aggressive game. He does not kick, catch or tackle very well, but will doubtless improve greatly with practice. Considering the little Rugby he has played, compared with the other men on the team, he plays remarkably well, and with his speed and weight should make a first-class middle wing.

N. H. Montzambert, '00 Meds., is the other middle wing, and he has played that position on the Intermediate teams of the past two seasons. Montzambert is a good all-round man, a splendid defence man, but not as aggressive a player as he might be. He is doing better in this respect this year, however, and showed

up well with McGill. In common with most of the other middle wings, he cannot catch or kick very well, and is not a very good tackler.

A. F. Barr, Wycliffe, last, but not least, is in his old position of flying-wing. "Biddy" is so well-known to Varsity men, and Rugby men throughout the country, that anything we can say would be ancient history. Suffice it to say that he is playing his old, aggressive game "in the same old way." In the absence of Alec. McKenzie, Barr captained the team against McGill and kept the men well in hand.

NOTES.

Captain Alec. McKenzie will be ready to play with Queen's.

It seems like old times to have "Biddy" Barr and John Malloch back again. They are both playing their steady, effective game, as of old.

33-6 is a big score; but Varsity deserved it, not because of their strength, but of their opponents' weakness.

Big Alec. McKenzie may not be in the game for a week or so yet. His injury to his knee was more serious and lasting than was expected. We hope he will be well soon.

Mellen is playing a good, steady game with the Juniors at half-back. He catches, kicks and runs well.

Brown is considered to be playing better ball this year than ever before. Proctor Burwash is called the "dead spit," of "Lock." Varsity's quondam famous centre scrimmage. Proctor walks and looks like him in many ways.

Fleck, of last year's Rough Rider's Intermediate team, has been practicing quarter-back with Varsity this year. He is doing well, and ought to make a good man.

The half-back division of the Senior team is composed of entirely new men, with the exception of Darling, perhaps, who played in that position once or twice last year. Brown and Biggs are new men; yet these three fell into their places with commendable quickness in the game with McGill, worked well together, and showed that they formed really a first-class reliable half-back line. Their kicking, catching, tackling and general defence work is far above the average. So faultless was their work with McGill, that Beal, the full-back, did not touch the ball, except before and after the game.

At quarter-back Varsity has the same man as last year, but P. Biggs is showing up much better this year. His passing out has improved.

It is in the scrimmage, however, that the great improvement is seen, and it is the general opinion that Varsity has not had such a strong trio for some years. The average weight is about 179 pounds, and Gibson and Mullin are also very fast. The latter heels the ball out beautifully, and has perfect support from Malloch and Gibson on the sides. The latter has a splendid faculty of breaking through the opposing scrimmage and stealing the ball.

Telford and Meredith are both good inside wings, and McCollum and Armstrong strong and fast outsiders, while Russel, Montzambert and Barr can hold their own in the middle.

As a whole, the team is strong, but weak in tackling and catching. However, it is hoped that assiduous practice will remedy these defects, and that Varsity will again have a strong enough fifteen to capture the championship.

The team this year is not as fast as that of last, but it is heavier, especially on the line.

THE JUNIOR TEAM.

Manager McGregor has been working hard to get the third team in shape, and deserves great credit for the work he has done. As is well-known, it is most difficult to find new men and then get them into some. Some think the third team of very minor importance, but this is entirely wrong, because they are the stuff that future Senior teams are made of. In evidence of this we have the fact that six of the Senior team that represented Varsity against McGill at one time played on the Juniors, namely: Beal, Brown, McCollum, Armstrong, Montzambert and Barr.

This year there have been a great many candidates for positions on the team, and the freshmen have done particularly well in giving such a large representation. The following first year men have turned out: M. McDougal, J. Foy, H. McGee, A. Laing, A. McDougal, C. Little, H. Chown, J. Maden, P. Burwash, Hill, A. Martin, Nelles, Loudon, J. G. Gibson, D. Forbes, Clark, Campbell, Livingstone and Jack Mason. In addition, the following old players have turned out again: Stratton, E. Patterson, H. Sinclair, Symington, T. Kerr, N. Shenstone, F. McDermott, W. Brodie, Thorne and Richardson, '02.

"Ernie" Patterson, of Tennis fame, was elected Captain last Wednesday, and will play centre-half. The team should do well under him.

The third team is always an enigma till near the end of the season, but from the amount of good material at hand, it would seem that the prospects were bright. Next Saturday, however, will help to solve the mystery, for the Juniors play their first game then. We wish them luck. Their game with U.C.C. can hardly be taken as a criterion of the team, because the College boys have had weeks of practice, and the thirds had not played together at all before.

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UPPER CANADA COLLEGE

A week ago Thursday as many of the College boys as could get away went down to Varsity to see the College play the Varsity junior team. It was a good game from the start to the finish, and a hard fight in which our boys showed up well. The Varsity team played hard, and it was only by close careful work on the part of the College team that they were prevented from scoring.

The game started about 5 o'clock, and Captain Boyd agreed to play two 20-minute halves. Colby had the kick and sent the ball scoting into the home team's territory, and after a great deal of stubborn play Martin succeeded in getting over for a try. The next was a pretty play by Morrison, who converted the goal, making the score 6-0 in favor of College.

This completed the scoring for the first half, but shortly before half-time was called, McGee of Varsity had his collar-bone broken, and had to retire.

In the second half the play was very even, and the game was always in doubt. The ball traveled from one end of the field to the other, and each team stubbornly contested every inch. But "Ned" Boyd's rushes were not very easy to stop, and he was responsible for a great deal of the gained ground.

College appears to have a very fair half-back line with "Bert" Morrison at centre and Reynolds and Waterous on the sides. What they need is combination work. This will doubtless come in time. The scrimmage worked well, and needless to say "Ned" Boyd behind them played a hard, effective game, and also captained the team well.

The College wing line is by no means heavy, but it certainly is fast, and makes up in speed what it lacks in weight. Martin showed up particularly well, and appears to be a very fast man.

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