

SPORTS AND PASTIMES



HERE is one thing about the football season that is good in its way and bad in another sense. The good part of the business is that football is such a lively, devil-may-care game that nobody would have staying power enough to stay with it if the season were much longer. The bad part of it comes in on behalf of the public, who want more of it and can't have it. The game called after the school where Thomas Hughes made a world wide reputation is not a gentle one by any means. It trains one to receive hard knocks without grumbling; it trains one to hold a rising temper in submission and it also trains one to know that all is not beer and skittles in this world, even when the game is supposed to be for fun. But there is one great advantage about Rugby football; it makes men—solid, sturdy, self-reliant men, who are usually the last people in the world to get into trouble, but when once in—well, they take the advice of Polonius, and somehow or other about ninety per cent. of them come out with credit. To most Canadians the prophet's "two or three berries on the top of the uppermost bough" means lacrosse in a sporting sense; but to the old countryman who leavens everything he comes across with a little leaven of that Anglo-Saxon spirit that never knows when it is licked, football is the acme of their sporting ambition, and in the Province of Quebec football has never been seen in half the glory that it wears at present. The only pity is that the season is too short.

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For some half dozen years Ottawa College has been posing as the champion Rugby team of Canada. This was their claim, but when they ran counter to the Ontario Union and could not have everything their own way the claim did not amount to the proverbial row of shucks. Instead of smiling, like Shakespeare's villain, they just claimed and claimed and managed to do quite a little of the scare act; but it had no great effect when once there was a possibility of the Montreal club meeting them. They claimed championships on the score of not having been beaten; they did not take into consideration the fact that under the circumstances they did not give a chance to other clubs to beat them. The friends of the club who did not exactly know the real state of affairs, naturally thought that the club was invincible, and like the George, who eventually believed his own fabrications about leading the Guards at Waterloo, they actually believed in their own ideas of invulnerability. It was a sad day for Ottawa. The Montrealers must be iconoclastic, for they knocked from under the clay feet of the idol and then polished up the upper part of the brass with an exceeding great burnish that took pretty nearly all the heart out of the Collegians. There is one great difference in the teams. The Anglo-Saxon end, as I said before, don't know when they are being licked; the Collegians seem to have considerably more sense; they know when they are hurt and they quit accordingly. Ottawa College has been accustomed to play a winning game and they have not been the most gentle of players at that; they have been used to have things very much their own way, and a good way to stop an opponent with a closed hand when it should have been open, and the mouth and ear gouge, was not entirely unknown to them. When they ran across a fifteen that did not mind little things like these, they changed their minds, wavered a little, and as soon as they wavered they got the worst of it. Ottawa College plays a magnificently fast game. They are good football players, but they have not the heart apparently. In a winning game they would be superb; in a losing game they are practically

useless. This was evident to any football player who watched the match on Saturday. They don't like to be hurt and after being hurt once they seem rather inclined to stay away from chances. Byron says:—

"But after being fired at once or twice
The ear becomes more Irish and less nice."

The Collegians don't seem to be Irish to any great extent, for after being stood on their head a couple of times, they religiously stayed away from dangerous tackling. Nerve, strength and pluck are the particular requirements for a Rugby player—particularly the last named, and Ottawa seemed on Saturday slightly deficient in it.

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The match, however, was one of the best ever played in this province, and anybody who knows anything about football and who was there, must have enjoyed himself thoroughly. Both back divisions were splendid, the star on the Ottawa side being Plunkett, who played a magnificent game. They were quick, too, but not quick enough for the overlapping wings of the Montreal end who swarmed in on every pass back. The passing of the Ottawa's backs was phenomenal in the first ten minutes of the game, and during that time it looked as if the Collegians would easily do up the Quebec champions. It was remarkably quick and decisive work, and Ottawa had scored two points before the other people actually knew that they were playing, but this discovery was made later, and instead of the showy, brilliant game started by Ottawa, the others put up a solid and practically impenetrable defence, which was almost immediately changed to the most aggressive kind of an attack. Then it was that the rush of the Montreal forwards and the alacrity of their wings were shown to the best advantage. That forward line of the Montreal team is a great one, and the betting is that they could wedge through anything that plays football. The long throwing back and the punting of the Collegians did not count, for the wings with the stripes grabbed them before they could call on the celebrated Jacobino Robinsino, and as the tackling was most effective the back division of Ottawa, with the exception of Plunkett, were so surprised that they were practically useless. They had been used to the heel-out game where the halves had no more work to do than punt, but they were surprised when the Montreal rushers broke through the scrimmage and carried most everything before them, and the wings wheeled in and nipped in the bud what would otherwise have been a star run or a long punt. Early in the game it was made very plain that to win the College would have to play a very different sort of game. Let the back division alone, but strengthen the forward line and put speed and decisiveness into the wings. To use the words of Private Mulvaney, an infusion of "bowils" would not be misappropriate, especially if the learner could be taught that the fact of being stood on his head once or twice should not throw him out the game.

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The teams that were engaged in this memorable match were as follows:—Montreal—Miller, Taylor, Campbell, Claxton, Fairbanks, Baird, Jamieson, Mitchell, Fry, Reford, James, Black, Bell, Campbell and Higginson.

Ottawa College—Belanger, Cormier, Plunkett, Clark, Gaudet, Troy, Murphy, Vincent, McDougall, J. McDougall, Trudeau, McCarthy, Charron, Guillette, Masson.

The referee was Mr. J. Arnton, jr., and he is a good one if somewhat lenient on the off-side rule. The judges of touch were Messrs. Walker, McDougall, Paton and McKenzie.

The Ottawaites started off with a rush that looked bad for Montreal. But before long it could only be counted as a flash in the pan. Twice was Montreal's full back forced to rouge and the score was two to nothing in favour of the College. It seemed as if the visitors were going to have everything their own way; but the Montreal end had scarcely woke up yet; they were taking in Ottawa's

game, and as soon as they got an inkling of it, the stripes started in with such a rush that the Ottawa men could not handle it, and before they knew well where they were Montreal had got four points from a touch down. It was an easy try for goal, too, but Bell was not equal to the occasion. It was just here that the College did not actually funk, but they made it plain from their style of play that they were beaten. They had not been accustomed to have anybody lead them and they were discouraged. After some scrimmaging and some most effective dribbling on the Montreal side, Baird kicked the ball over the goal line and Fry touched down. Campbell tried for a goal but was unsuccessful. Another rush from Montreal and Belanger had to rouge. Nine to two in favour of Montreal.

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Luck, too, seemed to be wanting on the Ottawa side, for just when half time was called the visitors were about to have a very good chance from a free kick almost in the Montreal goal line. When, after the usual rest, the Montrealers had the wind in their front and a slanting sun in their eyes, something more than usual was looked for from the half backs. They did their work well, but the scrimmage line hardly gave them a chance to show up. It was hard work to overcome a lead of nine to two. Ottawa started in to overcome it, as brilliantly as they began in the commencement of the first half, but somehow or other they faded away. Cormier, who is a splendid half back, had been making things lively for the Montrealers during the first half, but when he was accidentally stood on his head at the beginning of the second he was no longer dangerous. Plunkett seemed to be made of different stuff, and he supported the back division of Ottawa like a Trojan, although at the very beginning of the game he was the most seriously injured man on the field. A rush of the Montreal forwards resulted in a hard scrimmage near the Ottawa goal line. Belanger's return was captured nicely and the oval sent back; it was touch in goal, and the score stood ten to two. It was the College's turn to score next and they did it in admirable shape. The Ottawa forwards got on a real rush, broke through the Montreal line, carried the ball with them, got within a few feet of the Montreal line, where there was an old-time maul. A scrim followed; the ball got over the line; Montreal had to rouge and Ottawa chalked up another point. Another set of hard scrimmages and a brilliant run of Campbell's resulted in a try, which Montreal's big half back converted into a goal. Montreal, 16; Ottawa, 3. At this stage of the game Ottawa made a tremendous attempt to catch up and they played splendid football. They counted up a safety and a couple of rouges in less time than it takes to write about it and there was the end. Ottawa had seven points and Montreal's last rush carried the ball over, giving Ottawa just time to rouge. When the whistle blew it was 17-7, and the redoubtable Collegians were beaten. The report of the match published in the *Ottawa Free Press* is refreshingly absurd. It speaks of the foul play of the Montrealers. I wonder if the writer knew there was a man on the Ottawa team by the name of Troy?

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On Saturday last the friends of association football watched with interest the match between the Detroit and Scots teams. There were two matches played in this international series and Canada got somewhat the worst of it, in so far that Canada was defeated. On the 31st ult. the Scots went to the City of the Straits and were beaten by three goals to nothing. On Saturday, the 7th inst., the return match was played, and although the Scots won, they did not win hard enough to even matters up, let alone turn the tables, as it was the aggregate number of goals which counted. In Detroit the score was three goals to nothing in favour of Detroit. At Rosedale it was one goal to nothing in favour of the Scots, which left the international match stand two to one in favour of Detroit.

R.O.X.