

# The Varsity

TORONTO, December 16th, 1896.

## RUGBY FOOTBALL.

That nothing is more uncertain than the luck of a football team is becoming more and more verified as seasons come and go. This season was no exception to the rule.



CAPT. GLEESON.

Seven teams, Hamilton, T. A. C., R. M. C., Queen's, Kingston and Varsity declared their intention of competing for the cup, but it was soon found that, despite the rule of the Association regarding college players, but one team, Queen's, would represent Queen's College and Kingston.

Hamilton was probably the only team of which reliable information could be obtained. The men who had promised to don the Tiger uniform were men who in previous years had shown no small ability to play the game.

As usual, Manager Barker of the T.A.C. had a good team—on paper; these, with the four college teams, formed the union.

When it was found for certain that Kingston would amalgamate with Queen's, "knowing ones" predicted that Queen's and Hamilton would fight in the finals. Results show how greatly they erred. Queen's and Varsity had byes in the first round, but T.A.C. succeeded in easily defeating Hamilton, and R.M.C. won from Trinity by default.

The second round saw Queen's pitted against Varsity, and T.A.C. against R.M.C. Little interest was taken in the latter series, as T.A.C. were accounted easy winners, and, though they fell victims to over confidence in the first game, they redeemed themselves in the second, winning by a margin of 41 points. The first Inter-Collegiate game, played at Kingston, October 24th, was probably the hardest fought and most interesting game of the season. Both teams were in fine condition, though Varsity had rather an advantage in having played practice games with Hamilton and Ottawa. The result, 18 to 16 in favor of Varsity, is a good indication of the closeness of the play.

The following Saturday the largest crowd ever seen at Varsity assembled to witness what proved one of the finest exhibitions of Rugby ever given in Toronto. Curtis, Queen's old stand-by, was again on their half-back line, and high hopes were entertained by the visitors that the defeat of the previous Saturday would be wiped out by a glorious victory. In this they reckoned without their hosts, for Varsity won by 13 to 1, the score rather belieing the closeness of the game.

This left Varsity and T.A.C. to fight for the championship, and though the College street club was not without its admirers, Varsity's chances were considered very good.

The first game played at Rosedale, November 7th, was won by Varsity by a score of 43 to 6, though it must be admitted that T.A.C. played in very hard luck, having during the second half to contend with a strong gale of wind which had sprung up at the end of the first half.

This victory practically conceded the championship to Varsity, but the Athletic Club pluckily decided to play the remaining game. Their chances moreover appeared good, in view of the fact that Counsell had been so injured in the previous game that he was considered unfit to play.

The game was played Saturday, November 14th, before a small crowd of enthusiasts, and proved a most enjoyable one from a spectator's standpoint.

The Athletic Club started off well, soon had a considerable lead, and gave promise of winning the game, if not the round. Unfortunately for them, the appearance of Counsell to take the place of Burnside, who was disabled, put new heart into the College men, and after a hard struggle they won, 18 to 17.

The result of the Canadian Championship is but too well known. Varsity met Ottawa College, the winners of the Quebec Championship. In this game the men from the east showed the benefit of close training, and though lighter in every respect than our men, won quite easily by 12 to 8. The Varsity team took defeat gracefully and are determined to profit by their experience.

Turning to our engravings we have Captains Gleeson of Ottawa, Ross of Queen's, and Barr of Varsity. We regret exceedingly that an expected photograph of Capt. MacDougall, Varsity, did not arrive in time for the engraver, and our gallery is so far incomplete.

Capt. Gleeson, who is twenty-two years of age, was born at Ottawa, and educated in Ottawa College, where his splendid running and punting abilities soon brought him into prominence as a football player. For five successive seasons he has played centre half for the College, each year with greater brilliancy. Like all the others, he declares that this is his last year as a player, but VARSITY hopes that he will long continue in the game, for it is honest, gentlemanly players as Capt. Gleeson that tend to elevate the game and encourage its popularity.

Capt. Ross is known as a hard, steady player, who is capable of playing a losing as well as a winning game. He has played for several seasons with Queen's and was instrumental in winning them the championship in 1893-4.

Capt. "Biddy" Barr we all know is, like Capt. Ross, a hard, steady wing player who is always "on the ball." Against him halves have but little chance to shine.

As captain of Varsity he has been a great success, as indicated by the fact that during his captaincy Varsity has had two championships.

Of "Joe" MacDougall too much cannot be said as player or as general. Disabled early last fall (1895), he missed his chance of playing with Osgoode, and when Varsity were in a rather helpless condition he cast his lot with them. His ability was soon recognized, and to him was entrusted the management of the game in Kingston, where Varsity were only saved from doubt by his generalship. After Capt. Barr's accident he took complete



CAPT. A. F. BARR.