



## Is Most Exacting Of All Football Games

Rugby Player of '80's in B. C. Writes of Place  
of English Pigskin Game in Athletic World  
and Influence of Sport in Comity of Nations—  
Origin Recounted.

By JOHN J. HONEYMAN.

THE game of rugby, immortalized for all time in that enthralling schoolboy's book, "Tom Brown's Schooldays," originated in the English public school of Rugby. As described therein, it appears to have been a fierce and fearsome game in which pretty nearly the whole school took part, the combined mob of boys being a seething, struggling mass of heads, arms and legs, more frequently squirming on the ground than standing erect; and from those days to our own times it has constantly and steadily developed from a slow and chaotic, though extremely strenuous romp, to the acme of perfection in speed and combined play, which, while emphasizing the beauty of combination, nevertheless allows full scope for the individualism and self-reliance of every participant.

Amongst all the followers of the pigskin it is acknowledged, although in certain quarters somewhat grudgingly, to be the speediest form of football, and owing to its extremeness of action when properly played, it is more exacting on the lung power of the players, and therefore more strenuous than any other form of football. For this reason some boys don't quite like it. It is essentially British in origin and is known and admired by Anglo-Saxon stock all over the world. Moreover the Celt and Teuton recognize its charm and already take part in international contests for supremacy in the game. Amongst strenuous games it is, moreover, in British Columbia at least, entirely immune from that taint of professionalism which mars most other games and spoils clean sport.

### FREEMASONRY IN SPORT.

British Columbians are therefore to be congratulated on the fact that a game of this kind with its traditions behind it and all that they stand for, has already been firmly established in our midst and this for more reasons than one.

It is now generally acknowledged the world over that friendly rivalry in sport between communities and nations, besides greatly adding to the joy of life, fosters a friendly understanding and mutual appreciation among the best elements of various nations. All mankind admires a good all-round sport. Thanks to modern transportation facilities, and to the fact that owing to this the world of today is infinitely smaller than it was a century ago, international competition in sporting events has become the vogue, there being a cordial freemasonry between sportsmen regardless of race. Surely this spirit is to be encouraged and is a factor in the realization of the brotherhood of man. Yet if such is the case, the rules governing sport must be universal, otherwise it is impossible to participate.

### CANADA OUT IN COLD.

In surveying the world of sport where international contests are participated in, we find that such is the case. Yachting, rowing, baseball, lacrosse, golf, tennis, cricket, rifle-shooting and athletic events are all branches of sport for international competition because the rules governing same are clean cut and common to all. But in the realm of rugby football, that finest and most strenuous of games for the development of young manhood physically and spiritually, it seems pathetic that while the greater portion of the civilized world participates in international contests the United States and Canada should be left out in the cold.

To substantiate this statement I need only mention England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Germany, France, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, West Indies and India as players of the game; Canada, a nation within the Empire, and the United States are ignorant of its beauties, due to the fact that a game they sometimes call rugby football, which is a misnomer and has nothing to do with rugby, was originated in these countries, which nobody else plays nor desires to learn. And to make matters worse Canada which, in those early days, in matters of sport, appears to have been a secret admirer of its elder brother Sam, framed its game of football on the lines of Sam's but with just sufficient difference to make it essentially Canadian, thus making it impossible then and now for the two nations of the North American continent to compete in friendly rivalry.

### UNIVERSITY GAMES.

To account for the origin of these games appears to be somewhat difficult, unless it be that in those early days segregation from the rest of the world was quite material and they were thrown very much on their own resources. Then as civilization developed and universities were established, the university authorities of

both countries naturally fostered and encouraged the prevalent sports, and if there is one thing to demonstrate the fact that men are creatures of habit it is that they are still doing so.

These are essentially university games and are beginning to have their traditions. Yet the pity of it! For the students brought up in such environment one has nothing but whole-hearted admiration. They are loyal to their colleges and their traditions. They are possessed of an esprit de corps without which no university can be a success. Yet it appears to me there is food for thought with the learned authorities who guide their destinies.

### AMERICAN ATTITUDE.

The Stanford boys, as fine a crowd of young sportsmen as one would wish to see, entered with zest on the rugby game after witnessing an exhibition match between the "All-Black" New Zealanders and Vancouver, and have played annual fixtures with B.C. more or less ever since, yet it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to do so because the university authorities frown on the game because it did not originate in America.

Is tennis or golf or many other fine sports in which the American public delight to compete with other nations for supremacy of American origin, and are these boys to be eternally barred from participation in international contests in rugby simply because the university authorities are pig-headed? And what applies to the United States regarding this matter, I am sorry to think, appears to be equally applicable to Canadian universities. We hear a lot these days of "Canadian Nationalism." If we are in earnest why should our young manhood be lacking in ambition to learn and to excel in what is generally regarded by the world at large as the most strenuous of all games—rugby?