

ARMY AND NAVY FOOTBALL

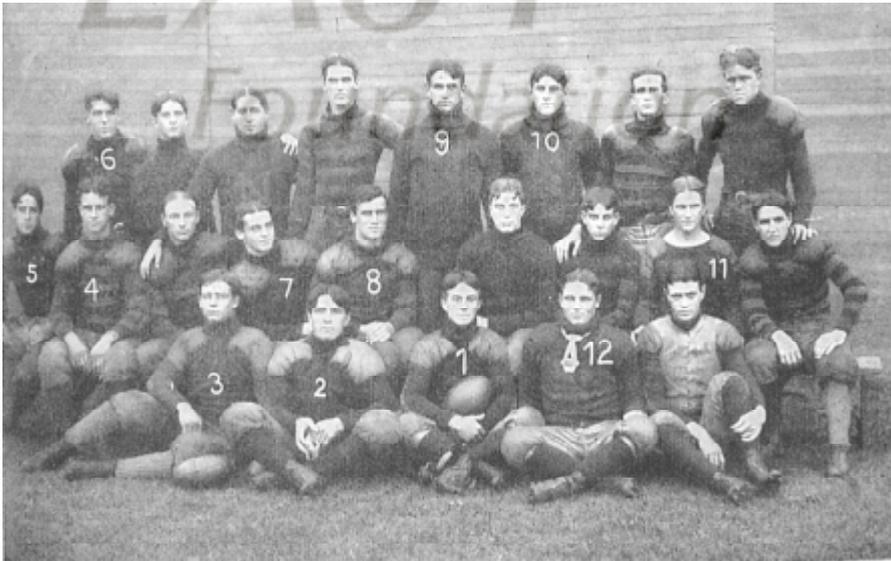
THE TRUE SPIRIT OF PLAY

By Harmon S. Graves

FOOTBALL is unquestionably the representative American college game. It has been wholly developed by college men, and they have naturally furnished its highest exponents. It is so widespread that practically every college and preparatory school in the country sends out a regularly organized team, and every institution which harbors an eleven takes pride in the men who compose it. The manly qualities which are necessary to the building up of a successful player call forth the best class of college men, and the wholesome attributes which the game itself promotes are shown in the splendid examples of mental and physical manhood to be found among football men. This is true only if the game is played in the proper spirit; how great, then, should be the solicitude lest the game lose aught, of its standing? It is doubtless, true that, college men as a whole seek to keep the game

in its present high position, yet oftentimes effort is sadly misdirected. It is a serious and pertinent question, even with all that is being done, whether or not college men are really preserving to the utmost the true spirit in football, without which football must retrograde.

The greatest drawback to the wholesome conduct of the game is lack of the amateur spirit in players and managers. Good material and advantageous surroundings will not bring out the best results unless a true spirit of sport is the foundation. This spirit has been variously defined, and most teams pretend to accept its guidance, but too often it is mere pretense, and the quality of the playing and the character of the players deteriorates. The true spirit in football is absolute integrity and fairness in players and playing, and the dash and determination which can be built on that basis. As to players, it means strict ob-



1. Fowler, Capt., l.½b. 2. Adams, r.t. 3. Whitlock, c. 4. Long, ¼b. 5. Read, l.end 6. Nichols, r.end
7. Smith, f.b. 8. Williams, l.t. 9. Belknap, r.g. 10. Fremont, l.g. 11. Munley, sub.f.b. 12. Laud, r.½b.

ANNAPOLIS FOOTBALL SQUAD, 1900.

servance of the spirit as well as the letter of the amateur rules and rules of eligibility. As to playing, it means absolute fairness in the plays used and the way they are put into execution; and as to dash and determination, it means head-work combined with wholesome, fearless effort which pushes aside all obstacles and so-called hard luck. Such is the spirit on fields where the rules of the amateur are lived up to and the game is played for the sport's sake. This is what football must mean to keep its place as the greatest of college sports.

Examples of the bad effects of a perverted spirit have been numerous. One team spends most of its time worrying as to whether a certain man will be allowed to play, when it is patent that he is ineligible; while another bemoans its hard luck because a player is behind in his studies, or because some other perfectly justifiable restriction is placed on the men or their time for practice. All such complaints and the stretching of rules to cover certain cases are born of the wrong spirit and harmfully affect the game.

West Point and Annapolis are the best exponents of what true football spirit can accomplish. To them are due the thanks of all friends of college sport, for they have furnished an excellent example for the colleges. There is no discussion, no flinching at either academy, and the quality of football is the best, even though it is produced under restrictions and difficulties far more serious than any encountered at a college. It is the spirit with which the cadets play that enables them to surmount obstacles, and place teams on the field which are an honor to their institution and worthy opponents for any team.

Cadets come from every State, and, as a rule, especially at Annapolis, are younger than college men. They have generally prepared at high schools, where football is played very little if at all, and therefore start with more need for practice and careful personal coaching than any college squad. At West Point the cadets return from camp to barracks on September 1, and within the following week the call for football candidates is made. Throughout September and October (during October a game is played

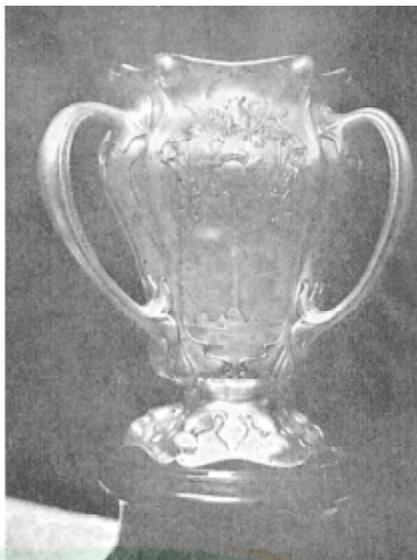
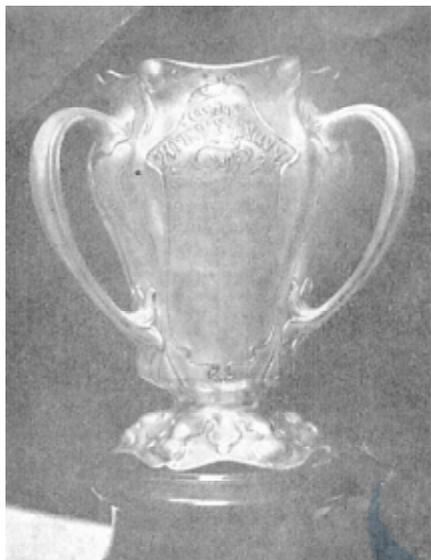
with a visiting team every Saturday and occasionally on Wednesday) the hours, or rather the minutes, the squad can gather for practice are a short half hour before *reveille* (and *reveille* is at six o'clock A.M.); for twenty minutes before two, directly after dinner, and between half-past six and seven, after supper, which can only be utilized for going through signals in the gymnasium. The four Saturday afternoons in September are the only opportunities for practice in football clothes before the first game is played. During October Wednesday afternoons, from twenty minutes after four until dark are available, but this time is never more than an hour, and as the season advances less. Beginning with November, until the end of the season, the team can practise each day after half-past four, and this gives the first chance for anything like consecutive practice, even though the actual playing time is cut down to a few minutes, as it grows dark about five o'clock.

At Annapolis the situation is similar, though the hours are slightly different. There the team practises from six to six forty in the evening, except on Wednesdays and Saturdays, on a field dimly lighted by six arc lamps; if the ball is kicked higher than these lights it disappears entirely from view. West Point in 1893 tried surrounding the entire field with similar lights, but the idea was abandoned because the chance for injury was largely increased, and inaccuracy in sight and movement was promoted.

At both academies these hours for football are all that can be had; it is simply out of the question for a cadet to be excused from any duty. The number of cadets at each institution is about four hundred, and it is often impossible to get men heavy enough for the line positions. They are obliged to keep regular hours, and are usually in good condition, but by the first of October any properly trained college team is in fully as good condition, and as the season advances the more constant practice gives college teams an advantage in this respect. Yet the teams representing West Point and Annapolis have played such quality of football as to always compare favorable with the big universities.



WELL TACKLED!



THE ARMY AND NAVY CADET FOOTBALL CUP.



ORIE FOWLER
CAPTAIN ANNAPOLIS TEAM, 1900.



WALTER D. SMITH,
CAPTAIN WEST POINT TEAM, 1800, 1900.

