

THE OORANG INDIANS

By Bob Braunwart, Bob Carroll & Joe Horrigan

GOING TO THE DOGS

"Let me tell you about my big publicity stunt," wrote Walter Lingo, owner and operator of the Oorang Kennels in a 1923 edition of *Oorang Comments*, his monthly magazine devoted to singing the praises of himself and his Airedales. "You know Jim Thorpe, don't you, the Sac and Fox Indian, the world's greatest athlete, who won the all-around championship at the Olympic Games in Sweden in 1912? Well, Thorpe is in our organization."

Lingo went on to explain that he had placed Thorpe in charge of an all-Indian football team that toured the country's leading cities for the express purpose of advertising Oorang Airedales. As far as Lingo was concerned, that was the only thing that really mattered -- how good Thorpe and company made his dogs look. Football was a game he never really cared for very much.

Ironically, Lingo's "stunt" produced the most colorful collection of athletes ever to step onto an NFL gridiron. In American sports lore, there never was, and surely never will be again, anything like the Oorangs, the first, the last, and the only all-Indian team ever to play in a major professional sports league.

Although Thorpe was given three full pages in *Oorang Comments*, very little was said about the performance of his team. It was just as well; they weren't very good, despite the presence of two future Hall of Famers and several other former All-Americans in their lineup. In the two years that they operated, they managed only four NFL victories. In fewer than half their league games could they score even a single touchdown. They lost games by horrendous scores, 41-0, 57-0, and 62-0! And yet, inevitably, they will be remembered long after more successful teams are forgotten.

To understand why they existed and why they played as they did, one must begin with Walter Lingo.

Never was a man so in love with a breed of dogs as was Walter Lingo with Airedales. In his magazine he explained. "About sixty years ago, the common man of Great Britain found it necessary to create a dog different from any in existence. The bird dog became lost in the bush when at stand, the hound was too noisy, and the retrievers lacked stamina. Therefore these folks secretly experimented by a series of cross-breeding old types, including the otter hound, the old English sheep dog, the black and tan terrier, and the bulldog. From this melting pot resulted the Airedale, so named because he was first produced by the people along the dale of the Aire river between England and Scotland. The new dog combined the good qualities of his ancestors without their faults. It was a super dog."

Not only were Airedales the Ultimate Dogs, but Lingo had the Ultimate Airedale in King Oorang, a dog he had produced by bringing in and breeding great Airedales from all over the world. King Oorang was "the greatest utility dog in the history of the world," according to *Field and Stream*. With the king as his kingpin, Lingo operated the famous Oorang Kennels out of the little town of LaRue in very rural Ohio.

The kennels were anything but a neighborhood dog pound. They were the "Airedale" of pet stores, a mail-order puppy factory that spread over acres of Lingo's land and

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employed countless trainers, night watchmen, kennelmen, cratemakers, hunters, and a whole kennelful of clerks who did nothing but keep records on the temperament, instincts, and "pluck" of the hundreds of Airedales being bred there. A prominent dog show writer of the period allowed that, after he had covered thousands of kennels all over the world, "nothing has been seen or imagined such as Walter Lingo's mail-order dog business."

Although America had gone slightly gaga over movie star Rin- Tin-Tin and German shepherds were the big item in dogdom, Lingo was certain that he could make the whole country Airedale- conscious with just a little more advertising. He was already spending \$2,000 a month for ads in a dozen or more leading magazines, but what he really needed was to lure thousands of people at a time into watching the Airedales perform.

Enter Jim Thorpe.

Next to Airedales -- although not a close "next" -- Walter Lingo loved Indians. He had grown up hearing Indian tales -- LaRue was the site of an old Wyandotte village -- and somehow he had convinced himself that a supernatural bond existed between Airedales and Indians. "I knew that my dogs could learn something from them that they could not acquire from the best white hunters."

The most famous Indian in the world was Jim Thorpe, the greatest athlete of his, and perhaps any other, time. Thorpe had endeared himself to Lingo by telling a nice dog story. When a local farmer accused Lingo of raising a pack of sheepkillers, Thorpe remembered that he once knew an Oorang Airedale that had saved a six-year-old girl from being trampled by a bull. The girl's name was Mabel, he recalled.

In 1921, Lingo invited Thorpe and his buddy Pete Calac to LaRue for a little hunting. In between dog stories -- Lingo had one for any occasion -- they decided on a novel way both to advertise Airedales and to employ Jim Thorpe, who, if the truth be known, was a little down on his luck just then. Lingo would purchase a franchise in the young National Football League, and Thorpe would run the team, which was to be composed exclusively of Indians. With the asking price of an NFL franchise at \$100 and the asking price for a superior Oorang male at \$150, Lingo's investment was actually quite modest. Of course, by the time Lingo's kennels joined the league at the June meeting of pro moguls, there was on the books a requirement of posting \$1,000 as a guarantee against playing collegians with college eligibility remaining or not showing up for a game or so forth. But such things were quite "negotiable" in the NFL's early years. With a potential drawing card like an all-Indian team, no one needed to concern himself too closely with trivia.

Lingo wanted the team to play out of little LaRue, but that was hard to justify as the little town had no football field. Admittedly, the team would perform almost exclusively on the road, where it could draw the biggest crowds and best advertise the dogs, but everyone agreed that it would be nice to keep the Indians at home once or twice to show off for the home folks.

Fifteen miles away was Marion, a comparative metropolis of 30,000, which had a suitable field. Additionally, Marion had just been "put on the map" as the hometown of the just then extremely popular President Warren G. Harding. Marion was booming. Riding the crest of Harding's popularity, it was industrializing, had plans for a 150-room hotel, and even had scheduled Al Jolson into the Chautauqua Auditorium. As a result of all these circumstances, the Indians will forever go down in most record books as representing Marion, Ohio.

Thorpe set about putting together his team. Indians came from all over to try out, many from Jim's old school, Carlisle. Some of them had not played in quite a while and were older than Thorpe, whose age ranged from thirty-four to fifty depending on what account

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you wanted to believe. Lingo said he was thirty- eight, and by Jim's own admission, "I was getting up toward forty and I couldn't breathe so good."

Some writers have suggested that Thorpe filled out his roster with several palefaces; they've even gone so far as to say that on a rainy day some of the red skins ran faster than the redskins. There seems to be little basis for the charge. Although many of the Indians were not pure-blooded -- Thorpe himself was three-eighths Irish -- every identifiable team member has proved to have at least some Indian blood.

With such players as Sanooke, Red Fang, Downwind, War Eagle, Lone Wolf, Running Deer, and Eagle Feather representing the Cherokees, Chippewas, Winnebagos, Mohawks, and Mohicans, the Oorang Indians hit the warpath against the NFL.

Unfortunately, the warpath hit back. Had Sitting Bull's braves applied themselves in battle with the tenacity that Thorpe's team applied to its games, General Custer might be alive today. After the horrible 62-0 massacre at Akron, one newspaper headlined "JIM THORPE'S INDIANS LOAF."

That was part of it.

The team found it difficult to take their football seriously because the team owner was far more interested in the pregame and halftime activities than he was in the game itself. They gave exhibitions with Airedales at work trailing and treeing a live bear. One of the players, 195-pound Nikolas Lassa, called "Long- Time-Sleep" by his teammates because he was so hard to wake up in the morning, even wrestled the bear. There were fancy shooting exhibitions by Indian marksmen with Airedales retrieving the targets. There were Indian dances, fancy tomahawk work, knife and lariat throwing, all done by Indians. "The climax," explained Lingo, "was an exhibition of what the United States' loyal Indian scouts did during the war against Germany, with Oorang Airedale Red Cross dogs giving first aid in an armed encounter between scouts and huns in no man's land. Many of the Indians and dogs were veterans of the war -- the Oorangs up front."

After such a workout, Thorpe's players must have looked upon the game as purely a secondary matter.

Another reason for the team's lack of success, according to Ed Healey, the Chicago Bears' Hall of Fame tackle, was that Thorpe was not a good coach, especially where discipline was concerned. However, Healey insisted the players were tough. "I have a vivid recollection of how they used the `points.' By that I mean the elbows, knees, and feet in their blocking and tackling. They'd give you those bones and it hurt. They were tough S.O.B.'s, but good guys off the field."

Perhaps too good. Most of the stories told about the team focus on their off-the-field antics.

There was the time in Chicago when the bartender wanted to close up and the Indians tossed him into a telephone booth, turned it upside down, and drank until dawn. Then they went out and got slaughtered by the Chicago Bears.

There was the time in St. Louis when they left a bar late, only to find their trolley headed in the wrong direction. Using muscles they didn't always exert on the football field, they lifted the vehicle off its tracks and turned it around to face in the right direction. And there were the many times they put Nikolas Lassa up against touring carnival strongmen. After his experience with the bear, Long-Time-Sleep had little trouble staying the required distance to win the ten or twenty dollars that would allow the whole team to party all night.

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Leon Boutwell, a Chippewa quarterback, explained: "White people had this misconception about Indians. They thought they were all wild men, even though almost all of us had been to college and were generally more civilized than they were. Well, it was a dandy excuse to raise hell and get away with it when the mood struck us. Since we were Indians we could get away with things the whites couldn't. Don't think we didn't take advantage of it."

On occasion -- whether hung over or not -- the Indians could rouse themselves for a super play. Thorpe punted 75 yards in the air at Milwaukee and Joe Guyon ran an interception back 96 at Chicago. But the most spectacular play involving the team was made against them. It happened in 1923 in Chicago when Bear end and coach George Halas picked up a Thorpe fumble and mused down a muddy gridiron for 98 yards and a touchdown, a record that stood until 1972.

Through it all, Walter Lingo got what he'd paid for: a showcase for his dogs and for his Indians. Without a doubt, the colorful costumes and the colorful stories helped bring out the fans. And then there was Thorpe's still magic name (although Lingo kept billing him by his Indian name, "Bright Path"). Old Jim seldom played more than a half and often sat out the whole game. But every once in a while he could call up the old greatness and lead the team to an at least respectable performance. One news story put it this way: "... they looked like a real football team when Indian Jim was in Rarely has the presence of one player made so great a difference as when Thorpe went in. It seemed as if the team improved fully 50 percent. Their defense stiffened and they started carrying the ball down the field. Thorpe took it many times himself and showed he can forward pass."

After two years, Lingo gave up his team. The novelty was beginning to wear thin. Crowds in 1923 -- especially on the second trip to a city -- were smaller than the year before, and that was no way to sell Airedales. The publicity stunt had run its course.

The Indians scattered. Some went back to the reservation; reportedly Lassa gave up drinking, raised a family, stopped wrestling bears, and became a respected member of his community. Others went right on playing football for other teams. Thorpe played for four more years, Guyon and Calac for three.

Walter Lingo's kennels continued to prosper at LaRue (they were still going strong when he died in the mid-1960s), but fifteen miles away everything seemed to go sour for Marion all at once. The Indians were gone and so was Harding, dead after being disgraced by Teapot Dome. Both the team and the President had looked better on paper than in performance, although time has been kinder to the memory of the football team.

Although "the records tell you differently," wrote John Short in the Marion STAR, Harding's old paper, "the passing years have given them a powerful image." But they will be remembered, not for their record, but because "they came and gave the game incredible color at a time when it needed color badly."

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1922: THE FIRST SEASON

Jim Thorpe's first edition of the Oorang Indians had some outstanding players. Thorpe himself could still be as good as any when he played. Unfortunately, he confined himself to coaching on the sideline for the first half of the schedule. Joe Guyon, a future Hall of Famer, played brilliantly in the backfield all season. Particularly effective on defense, he made several tackles to save touchdowns and once returned a pass interception 80 yards for a score.

Pete Calac played well at either end or fullback. An authentic war hero, he'd suffered career threatening wounds in France but was back at the top of his game by 1922. Reggie Attache, Leon Boutwell, and Eagle Feather had good moments in the backfield,

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but the team was plagued with fumbles in nearly every game, an indication that Thorpe's easygoing coaching left much to be desired.

The line was only occasionally effective, despite some fair talent in Nick Lassa and Elmer Busch.

Besides being poorly coached and seldom inspired, the team was old, small, and slow -- a deadly combination. At least seven regular starters were 29 or older, with Tom St. Germaine an ancient 37. Germaine was the only regular lineman who weighed more than 205 pounds. News accounts often referred to the Indians' supposed speed, but -- except for Guyon -- the quickness existed more as a memory of earlier seasons.

Four former Carlisle captains -- Thorpe, Guyon, Calac, and Busch -- were on the team and the trainer was John Morrison, reportedly the first Carlisle captain.

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Sunday, Oct. 1, at Dayton, O. - Triangle Park

Oorang Indians (0-1-0)	0	0	0	0	-	0
Dayton Triangles	9	7	7	13	-	36

DA - Partlow 3 run (Hathaway PK)
DA - Safety
DA - O'Neill 25 run (Hathaway PK)
DA - Huffine 10 run (Hathaway PK)
DA - Huffine 4 run (Hathaway PK failed)
DA - Tidd 41 fumble recovery (Hathaway PK)

The Dayton Triangles had almost no trouble in opening their 1922 season with a one-sided win over the heavy but slow Indians. Jim Thorpe didn't play but it was unlikely his presence could have made any difference. The Indians showed very little offense; the *Dayton Journal* called their attempts "a joke." And, except for Joe Guyon who saved several touchdowns, the tribe had even less on defense.

Dayton took the opening kickoff and drove straight down the field for a touchdown. Before the first quarter ended, the Triangles added two more points on safety when they blocked Guyon's punt. For the rest of the game, the only question was how high the score might go.

The most unusual Dayton touchdown was the last. After Huffine had scored the next-to-last TD, the Indians kicked off to Dayton. Gus Redmond caught the ball, but instead of running with it, he punted it right back to the Indians. This completely confused the tribe. One Indian touched the ball, and then Dayton's Glenn Tibb scooped it up and ran 41 yards to the end zone.

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Sunday, Oct. 8, at Marion, O. - Lincoln Park (1,200)

Oorang Indians (1-1-0)	0	7	0	13	-	20
Columbus Panhandles	0	0	6	0	-	6

OO - Guyon 10 run (Guyon DK)
CO - E.Ruh 3 run (E.Ruh DK blocked)
OO - Eagle Feather 8 run (Guyon DK)
OO - Guyon 55 run (Guyon DK failed)

Joe Guyon's two touchdown runs -- one a 55-yard dash -- led the Indians to a 20-6 win over the hapless Columbus Panhandles at Marion. Eagle Feather's line plunges, the main feature of the Oorang attack, accounted for a third tribe TD. Pete Calac played a strong defensive game at end for the tribe.

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Columbus scored a touchdown in the third quarter on Emmett Ruh's plunge after a long pass and 35-yard dash by Wiper had moved them in close. With the score 7-6 at that point, the Indians broke through to block the extra point try.

On Wednesday, Oct. 11, at Marion, the Indians topped Bucyrus, an independent team, 20-6 in a non-NFL game.

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Sunday, Oct. 15, at Canton, O. - Lakeside

Oorang Indians (1-2-0)	0	0	0	0	-	0
Canton Bulldogs	0	0	14	0	-	14

CA - Sacksteder 60 punt return (Shaw PK)

CA - Robb 1 run (Shaw PK)

The Indians lost a bitterly fought game to the Canton Bulldogs by a misleading, 14-0, score. The contest wasn't actually that close, but the Bulldogs frittered away several scoring opportunities, particularly in the first half when Miller fumbled a couple of times.

Canton scored both its touchdowns in the third quarter. First, scatback Norb Sacksteder made a 60-yard, twisting punt return through most of the Oorangs for one score. A few moments later, the Bulldogs drove from midfield for another, with Harry Robb going over on a plunge.

Guyon played another excellent game for the Indians, but he had too little help. Thorpe disappointed the crowd by remaining on the bench.

On Sunday, October 22, at Indianapolis, the Indians earned \$2,000 and quite a bit of ill will in beating the Belmonts, an independent team, during a snow storm. According to the locals, the tribe had promised to keep some of their stars on the bench and take it easy on the home team. The final count of 33-0 indicated that the tribe went all out to run up the score.

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Sunday, Oct. 29, at Akron, O. - Elk's Field (3,000)

Oorang Indians (1-3-0)	0	0	0	0	-	0
Akron Pros	20	7	14	21	-	62

AK - Cramer 4 run (Sheeks DK failed)

AK - Cramer 6 run (Sheeks DK)

AK - King 2 run (Sheeks DK)

AK - King 50 pass interception (Sheeks DK)

AK - Daum 45 pass from King (Sheeks DK)

AK - King 1 run (Mills on pass from Sheeks)

AK - Mills 5 run (King DK)

AK - LeJeune 1 run (King DK)

AK - LeJeune 5 run (Sheeks DK)

Perhaps it was a new strategy. Perhaps the Indians thought they could tire the Akron players by letting them race unmolested up and down the field. Akron cooperated to the extent of scoring nine touchdowns and eight extra points, for a total of 62 points.

In the meantime, the Indians conserved their own energy so well that they avoided the goal line altogether. Nearly every time they found themselves in danger of doing something exhausting like gaining yardage, they contrived to drop the football and trick Akron into recovering. If the game had gone on for several more hours -- or days -- the Oorang boys would have been fresh for a rally.

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Those unaccustomed to the wily redskin ways, namely all in attendance, mistook the Oorangs' clever strategy for a shameful example of a team loafing.

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Sunday, Nov. 5, at Minneapolis, MN - Nicollet Park (4,000)

Oorang Indians (1-4-0)	0	6	0	0	-	6
Minneapolis Marines	0	0	7	6	-	13

OO - Guyon 6 run (Guyon DK failed)

MN - Norton 22 run (Irgens PK)

MN - Norton 19 run (Irgens PK)

Marty Norton led his Marines to a come-from-behind win at Minneapolis. Bad weather held the crowd to below expectations. The Indians took a 6-0 lead in the first half on a lucky break. On a long Oorang pass, Norton tried for an interception but the ball bounced off his hands and into the arms of Oorang's Stilwell Sanooke deep in Minneapolis territory. From there, Guyon and Eagle Feather smashed at the line until Guyon finally went over for the TD.

In the second half, Norton, with the help of Irgens, changed the game around. Ripping off brilliant end runs, they moved the ball quickly down the field. Norton raced in for the touchdown from 22 yards out. Irgens' goal put Minneapolis in front.

Thorpe entered the game at this point, his first playing time of the season, but he could not rally his team. In the final period, Irgens' block of Thorpe allowed Norton to score the icing touchdown.

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Sunday, Nov. 12, at Chicago, IL - Cubs Park

Oorang Indians (1-5-0)	0	0	0	6	-	6
Chicago Bears	13	7	13	0	-	33

CB - J.Sternaman run (E.Sternaman PK)

CB - J.Sternaman 15 run (E.Sternaman PK failed)

CB - E.Sternaman run (Halas pass from Walquist)

CB - Halas fumble recovery (E.Sternaman DK failed)

CB - Pearce run (Halas pass from Walquist)

OO - Thorpe run (PAT failed)

After being pushed all over Cub Park for more than a half of football by the Bears, the Indians suddenly became a far better team when Jim Thorpe entered the game in the third quarter. Unfortunately, by the time he came in any chance of winning was far gone.

A good crowd attended the show despite an all day downpour that made play extremely sloppy. Players went skidding on their faces, missing tackles and fumbling the slimy ball.

Once Thorpe entered the game, the Oorangs' play improved 50 percent, according to news accounts. Thorpe carried quite often, passed occasionally, and finally forced his way into the end zone on three straight plunges from the ten. The *Herald-Examiner* observed: "Six Dakota braves in war regaila and paint did a little snake dance when Jim crossed the line."

According to reports, Thorpe received \$500 a week to run Walter Lingo's team. If true, that was double the salary Jim received when he joined the Canton Bulldogs in 1915. It would also make him the highest paid player in pro football during these years.

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Sunday, Nov. 19, at Milwaukee, WI - Athletic Park (7,500)

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Oorang Indians (1-6-0)	0	0	0	0	-	0
Milwaukee Badgers	6	0	7	0	-	13

MI - Robeson fumble (Copley PK failed)
MI - Robeson 50 pass from Purdy (Copley PK)

Bo McMillan, the All-America from little Centre, took the professional plunge with the Milwaukee Badgers. He brought the crowd to its feet several times with fine open field running and also did some accurate passing. Thorpe was nearly the whole of the Oorang offense.

However, the Badgers' Paul Robeson was the player of the game, scoring both Milwaukee touchdowns. In the first half he fell on Eagle Feather's fumble at the Oorang ten and rolled into the end zone to score. Then, in the third quarter, he took Purdy's 30-yard pass at the 20 and ran the rest of the way unmolested, making the final score 13-0.

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Sunday, Nov. 26, at Buffalo, NY - Baseball Park

Oorang Indians (2-6-0)	0	6	0	13	-	19
Buffalo All-Americans	7	0	0	0	-	7

BF - Gavin 25 run (Morrisey PK)
OO - Thorpe 2 run (Thorpe DK failed)
OO - Thorpe 20 run (Guyon pass from Thorpe)
OO - Guyon 30 pass from Thorpe (Thorpe DK failed)

Jim Thorpe proved that on occasion he could still be a great player by leading the Indians to a stunning, 19-7, upset of the Buffalo All-Americans. Jim entered the game after Buffalo had taken a first quarter lead on Buck Gavin's 25-yard touchdown run. He proceeded to electrify the crowd with his line plunging, long runs, and accurate passing.

Thorpe was directly responsible for all of his team's points. In the second quarter, he blasted across for the Indians' first touchdown to move them within a point of Buffalo.

After a scoreless third quarter, Thorpe broke away for a 20 yard TD jaunt to put the Indians in front early in the final period. The extra point was made on a Thorpe pass to Joe Guyon. Shortly after that, another Thorpe to Guyon pass was good for a 30-yards TD to ice the game.

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Thursday, Nov. 30, at Columbus, O. - Neil Park

Oorang Indians (3-6-0)	6	0	12	0	-	18
Columbus Panhandles	0	0	0	6	-	6

OO - Calac run (PAT failed)
OO - Guyon 80 pass interception (PAT failed)
OO - Calac 15 run (PAT failed)
CO - Snoots 1 run (PAT DK failed)

Jim Thorpe, Joe Guyon, and Pete Calac all played well as the Indians defeated the Panhandles at Columbus. Thorpe played only the first half but looked good on his few carries. Most of the rushing was handled by Guyon and Calac.

After taking a 6-0 lead in the first half, the Indians went ahead by two touchdowns in the third period on Guyon's 80-yard run after a pass interception.

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A few moments later, Calac used trickery to gain his second touchdown of the day. At the Columbus 15, the Indians' center made a bad pass. Calac picked it up and ran about 15 yards and when two Panhandles grabbed him he yelled, "Out of bounds! Out of bounds!" The would-be tacklers released him and he dashed the last five yards into the end zone.

On Sunday, December 3, the Indians somehow contrived to lose a game to the independent Durant All-Stars by the embarrassing score of 29-0.

The Indians closed their season on Saturday, December 9, with a strong showing against the Baltimore Pros at Venable Stadium before a crowd of 5,000. The Pros had former Penn State All-American Glenn Killinger in their lineup, and he scored the only touchdown in the 7-0 game on a short run. Thorpe did not play.

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1923: THE SECOND SEASON

The Indians took to the NFL trail again, but the team was even weaker than it had been the year before. Although Leon Boutwell, Nick Lassa, Eagle Feather, Joe Little Twig, and a few others had their moments, the Oorangs were really a three-man team, consisting of Thorpe, Guyon, and Calac. Yet the three were on the field together for only about one half of one game all season. Joe Guyon did not play until the eighth game. Calac was out for that one. Then, in the second half of the ninth game, Thorpe was knocked out for the remainder of the season with an injury.

While Thorpe was healthy, nearly every newspaper report of an Indian game agreed that he was still a strong punter, passer and line-plunger but had lost the blazing speed that had made him a great player.

The Indians' dog show had made the rounds the year before. The crowds for most of the second appearances were generally down, although bad weather was sometimes as much a culprit as fan apathy.

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Sunday, Sept. 30, at Milwaukee, WI - Athletic Park (4,000)

Oorang Indians (0-1-0)	0	0	2	0	-	2
Milwaukee Badgers	0	0	13	0	-	13

MI - Winkelman 40 pass interception (Conzelman PK)
MI - Conzelman run (Conzelman PK failed)
OO - Safety

The Indians opened their second season with yet another loss, this one to the Badgers at Milwaukee before a good crowd. Although Pete Calac tore away for several good gains, the only Indian score came about when the Badgers' Jimmy Conzelman was spilled in his own end zone for a safety.

Thorpe delivered one great moment that brought the spectators to their feet. In the second half, from behind his own goal line, he boomed a punt that traveled 75 yards in the air.

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Sunday, Oct. 7, at Toledo, O. - Armory Park (5,000)

Oorang Indians (0-2-0)	0	0	0	0	-	0
Toledo Maroons	0	0	0	7	-	7

TO - Hill 3 run (Watson DK)

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In a slow but rough game at Toledo, the Indians went down to a 7-0 defeat. Although Pete Calac played well, Jim Thorpe did not, being thrown for several losses.

The game was scoreless for three quarters, but toward the end of the third period Hill and Watson finally got a drive going. In the first few minutes of the final quarter, Hill crashed over for the only touchdown of the afternoon.

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Sunday, Oct. 14, at Minneapolis, MN -Nicollet Park (4,000)

Oorang Indians (0-3-0)	0	0	0	0	-	0
Minneapolis Marines	0	10	7	6	-	23

MN - Sampson 4 run (Kaplan DK)
MN - FG Kaplan DK 35
MN - Tersch 25 fumble recovery (Kaplan DK)
MN - Kaplan pass from Irgens (Kaplan DK failed)

The Minneapolis Marines had little trouble in defeating the Indians at Nicollet Park. Using a strong aerial game, the Marines dominated play after a scoreless first quarter.

Kaplan's 25-yard run set up the first Marine touchdown. Later he booted a 35-yard field goal and scored a TD on a pass reception.

Thorpe played a good first half, missing a 55-yard field goal by inches. An injury forced him out in the second half, and he was replaced by his brother Jack.

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Sunday, Oct. 21, at Buffalo - Baseball Park

Oorang Indians (0-4-0)	0	0	0	0	-	0
Buffalo All-Americans	13	10	7	27	-	57

BU:TDs - Flavin 2, Holleran 2, Traynor 2, Martineau, Hughitt (all runs);
XPs: Morrissey 6 of 7, Hughitt 0 of 1; FG: Morrissey 30 yds.

At Buffalo, the All-Americans exploded for 57 points in one of the most one-sided slaughters ever on an NFL gridiron. Jim Thorpe played every minute of the game in a desperate

The outburst of eight touchdowns was all the more unexpected in that Buffalo had accomplished only one other TD all season.

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Sunday, Oct. 28, at Cleveland, OH - Dunn Field

Oorang Indians (0-5-0)	0	0	0	0	-	0
Cleveland Indians	0	7	7	13	-	27

CL - Roby 16 pass from Bahan (Roby DK)
CL - Tanner 10 pass from Roby (Tanner DK)
CL - Edler 25 run (Tanner DK failed)
CL - Wolf 7 run (Kyle DK)

Oorang's real Indians bowed to Cleveland's pale-faced version in a one-sided game. Tanner and Roby were outstanding for the home team, which used forward passes effectively.

News reports suggested that Thorpe was slipping badly, that his speed was gone and his tackles no longer sure. His field generalship, however, was still regarded as first rate.

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Sunday, Nov. 4, at Chicago, IL - Cubs Park (1,000)

Oorang Indians (0-6-0)	0	0	0	0 - 0
Chicago Bears	13	13	0	0 - 26

CB - Knop 5 run (E.Sternaman DK)
CB - Lanum 5 run (E.Sternaman DK failed)
CB - E.Sternaman 16 run (E.Sternaman DK)
CB - Halas 98 fumble recovery (E.Sternaman DK failed)

The Indians completed their sixth game without scoring a touchdown, as the Chicago Bears simply plowed around to suit themselves on a rain-soaked Cubs Park field and took an easy 26-0 victory. Only about 1,000 hardy fans braved the elements to watch the slaughter.

The most exciting play of the game gave the Bears their fourth touchdown. Coach George Halas nabbed an Indian fumble at the Bears' two and raced 98 yards down the field with Thorpe chasing him all the way. Halas' return would remain the NFL record for 49 years.

All the Bear scoring took place in the first half. For the second half they confined their efforts to holding the Indians in check.

* * * *

Sunday, Nov.11, at St.Louis, MO - Sportsman's Park (5,000)

Oorang Indians (0-7-0)	0	0	7	0 - 7
St. Louis All-Stars	7	7	0	0 - 14

SL - Casey run (King DK)
SL - Casey run (King DK)
OO - Arrowhead pass from Thorpe (Little Twig on pass)

At Sportsman's Park, the St. Louis All-Stars gained their first victory over an NFL opponent at the expense of the Indians before 5,000 fans. In the second half, Thorpe made a desperate attempt to bring his team back by forward passes. One Thorpe aerial gave the Indians their first touchdown of the 1923 season.

Al Casey scored a pair of St. Louis touchdowns in the first half to build up a 14-0 lead at the half.

* * * *

Sunday, Nov. 18, at Canton, O. - Lakeside Park (5,000)

Oorang Indians (0-8-0)	0	0	0	0 - 0
Canton Bulldogs	7	6	21	7 - 41

CA - Elliott 3 run (Henry DK)
CA - Jones 3 run (Henry DK failed)
CA - Lyman 40 pass from Smith (Henry DK)
CA - Jones 6 run (Henry DK)
CA - Chamberlin 13 pass (Henry DK)
CA - Hendrian 9 run (Henry DK)
Canton's champion Bulldogs gave a rude welcome to some old favorites. Despite the presence of Thorpe and -- for the first time in 1923 -- Joe Guyon, the Indians were trampled 41-0. Pete Calac missed the game, and he was sorely needed.

The Canton *Daily News* focused on the Indians' problem: "Jim Thorpe and Joe Guyon were the Indian team, and although these two famous stars put every ounce of energy

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into the game, they could not bring victory to the team of real Americans. The other nine players on the Indian team were practically useless. They know little about football, and showed it on every play.

"Thorpe's best days are over ... but he can still play football. He is still a good punter, can pass and hit the line as hard as ever. But his speed is gone, and he is no longer the dashing Indian who once ran from one side of the field to the other, and back again, finally outrunning his opponents. Without a good line, and someone in addition to Guyon for interference, Thorpe could not display his real form."

* * * *

Sunday, Nov. 25, at Columbus, O. - Neil Park

Oorang Indians (0-9-0)	3	0	0	0 - 3
Columbus Tigers	13	14	0	0 - 27

CO - Rapp 70 pass from Winters (Tebell PK)

OO - FG Thorpe DK 47

CO - Sonnenberg 2 run (Tebell PK failed)

CO - Tebell 45 pass from Goebel (Tebell PK)

CO - Tebell pass from Winters (Tebell PK)

The Columbus Tigers, the revitalized successors to the famous Panhandles, used a long-range passing attack to send the Indians down to their ninth straight defeat. The game's most spectacular play was a 70-yard TD pass reception by the Tigers' "Goldie" Rapp, 60 yards of which were made on a broken field run.

Before the game was out of reach, Thorpe hit a 47-yard dropkick for a field goal. Then, in the final quarter, Jim suffered a sprained ankle with ligament damage, an injury that ended his play for both the day and the season.

On Thursday, Nov. 29, the Indians played at home for the first time in 1923 and also tasted victory for the first time with a 31-0 win over the Marion Athletics. Unfortunately, a Thanksgiving Day win over the local A.C. at Lincoln Park, added nothing to the Indians' NFL record.

* * * *

Sunday, Dec. 2, at Chicago, IL - Comiskey Park (1,200)

Oorang Indians (0-10-0)	6	0	0	13 - 19
Chicago Cardinals	7	12	3	0 - 22

CC - Folz 2 run (Folz DK)

OO - Arrowhead 15 pass from McLemore (McLemore kick failed)

CC - R. Horween 3 run (Kick failed)

CC - Koehler 20 run (Kick failed)

CC - FG A. Horween DK 35

OO - Buffalo 26 fumble recovery (McLemore kick)

OO - Guyon 96 pass interception (McLemore kick failed)

The badly crippled Chicago Cardinals survived a last quarter rally by the Indians to hand them their tenth straight loss. The Cards' Paddy Driscoll was out with appendicitis and several other regulars were sidelined nursing assorted hurts. The Indians, though missing Thorpe, played the best game of the year.

The Cardinals entered the fourth quarter leading 22-6, but the Indians made it close with the help of some breaks. When an Emmet McLemore punt bounced off a Cardinal's leg, Buffalo picked up the ball and scooted 26 yards to a touchdown. A few moments later, Guyon stepped in front of a Chicago pass and took the interception back 96 yards for a touchdown.

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* * * *

Sunday, Dec. 9, at Louisville, Ky. - Kentucky Fair Grounds

Oorang Indians (1-10-0)	?	?	?	?	-	19
Louisville Brecks	0	0	0	0	-	0

OO - McLemore pass from Guyon (Kick failed)
 OO - Guyon 5 run (Kick failed)
 OO - Calac run (McLemore pass from Guyon)

On what was described as "the muddiest gridiron that ever served as a playing field this year," the Indians closed their season and their existence with their only 1923 NFL victory. Their victims were the Louisville Brecks, certainly one of the weakest teams ever on an NFL gridiron. Thorpe, still nursing his injured ankle, was on the sideline, in uniform but not in pads. Because of the injury, Jim was unable to compete in the kicking contest that took place before the game.

Despite the conditions, a good crowd showed up to watch the Indians' show.

As the game reached its conclusion, fog shrouded the field, making it difficult for the fans to see the players. In one sense, it was a fitting exit for the colorful Oorangs as they disappeared forever into the mists of time.

OORANG INDIANS 1922

3-6-0 .333 11th (tie) NFL - 5-8-0 .384 All Games
 Coach: Jim Thorpe Owner: Walter Lingo

DAY	DATE	AT	OPPONENT	OO-OP	R	FIELD	ATT
Sun	O- 1	A	Dayton Triangles	0-36	L	Triangle Park	n/a
Sun	O- 8	H	Columbus Panhandles .	20- 6	W	Lincoln Park	1,200
Wed	O-11	H	*Bucyrus	20- 6	-	Lincoln Park	n/a
Sun	O-15	A	Canton Bulldogs	0-14	L	Lakeside Park	n/a
Sun	O-22	A	*Indianapolis Belmonts	33- 0	-		n/a
Sun	O-29	A	Akron Pros	0-62	L	Elks Park	3,000
Sun	N- 5	A	Minneapolis Marines .	6-13	L	Nicollet Park	4,000
Sun	N-12	A	Chicago Bears	6-33	L	Cubs Park	n/a
Sun	N-19	A	Milwaukee Badgers ...	0-13	L	Athletic Park	7,500
Sun	N-26	A	Buffalo All-Americans	19- 7	W	Baseball Park	n/a
Thu	N-30	A	Columbus Panhandles .	18- 6	W	Neil Park	n/a
Fri	D- 1	A	Louisville Brecks ...	Cancelled			-
Sun	D- 3	A	*Durant (MI) All-Stars	0-29	-		n/a
Sat	D- 9	A	*Baltimore Pros	0- 7	-	Venable Stad	5,000

* = Non-NFL game

Roster (25)	POS	YR	HGT	WGT	AG	SCHOOL	GM/ST
Attache, Reggie	WF	1		185		Sherman Indian.	7/ 7
Big Bear	T	1	6-4	215		Carlisle	1/ 1
Bobadash, E.	E	1				none	1/ 0
Boutwell, Leon "Lo" .	B	1	5-7	155	29	Carlisle	8/ 8
Broker, Fred	T	1	5-9	175	29	Carlisle	1/ 0
Busch, Elmer	GC	1	5-10	200	32	Carlisle	9/ 9
Calac, Pete	EF#	3	5-10	195	29	Carl.;WVa Wesl.	9/ 9
Deer Slayer, Dick ...	E	1					2/ 1
Downwind, Xavier ...	ET	1	6-0	180	29	Carlisle	3/ 1
Eagle Feather	FBT	1		220		Carlisle	7/ 7
Guyon, Joe	#WBF	3	5-10	195	29	Carl.; Ga.Tech.	9/ 9
Hill, Bob	G	1	5-10	190	31	Haskell	6/ 6
Lassa,Nick	TGE	1	5-10	205	25	Carl.; Haskell.	9/ 9
Little Twig, Joe ...	ET	1	5-11	180	29	Carlisle	2/ 2
Lone Wolf, Ted	GTW	1	6-2	212		Carlisle	5/ 4

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PASS REC.	COMPLETE GAMES					INCOMPLETE				
	GM	NO	YDS	AVG	TD	GM	NO	YD	TD	
Calac	3	4	81	20.3	0	6	2	35	0	
Sanooke	3	1	20	20.0	0	6	1	23	0	
Guyon	3	-	-	-	-	6	5	113	1	
Eagle Feather	2	-	-	-	-	6	1	30	0	

PUNTING	COMPLETE			INCOMPLETE			INTERCEPTS NO	
	GM	NO	AVG	GM	NO	AVG	-----	---
Guyon ...	2	14	37.2	7	3	5.0	Guyon	3
							Busch	1
							Lassa	1
Oorang	2	14	37.2	7				
Opponents	2	6	44.8	7	-	-		

PASSING	COMPLETE GAMES							INCOMPLETE						
	GM	ATT	COM	PCT	YDS	AvgG	TD	IN	GM	AT	CM	YD	TD	IN
Guyon ..	3	15	5	33.3	101	6.73	0	4	6	2	2	53	0	-
Thorpe .	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	7	7	148	1	-
Oor.Tot.	3	15	5	33.3	101	6.73	0	4	6	-	-	-	1	-
Opp.	3	28	14	50.0	289	10.32	1	3	6	-	-	-	1	-

OORANG INDIANS 1923

1-10-0 .091 18th NFL - 2-10-0 .167 All Games

Coach: Jim Thorpe Owner: Walter Lingo

DAY	DATE	AT	OPPONENT	OO-OP	R	FIELD	ATT
Sun	S-30	A	Milwaukee Badgers ...	2-13	L	Athletic Park	4,000
Sun	O- 7	A	Toledo Maroons	0- 7	L	Armory Park	5,000
Sun	O-14	A	Minneapolis Maroons .	0-23	L	Nicollet Park	4,000
Sun	O-21	A	Buffalo All-Americans	0-57	L	Baseball Park	n/a
Sun	O-28	A	Cleveland Indians ...	0-27	L	Dunn Field	n/a
Sun	N- 4	A	Chicago Bears	0-26	L	Cubs Park	1,000
Sun	N-11	A	St. Louis All-Stars .	7-14	L	Sportsman's Pk	5,000
Sun	N-18	A	Canton Bulldogs	0-41	L	Lakeside Park	5,000
Sun	N-25	A	Columbus Tigers	3-27	L	Neil Park	n/a
Thu	N-29	H	*Marion A.C.	31- 0	-	Lincoln Park	n/a
Sun	D- 2	A	Chicago Cardinals ...	19-22	L	Comiskey Park	1,200
Sun	D- 9	A	Louisville Brecks ...	19- 0	W	Ky.Fair Grnds	n/a

* = Non-NFL game

Roster (25)	POS	YR	HGT	WGT	AG	SCHOOL	GM/GS
Arrowhead	E	1				Miami (O.)	4/ 3
Barrel, Napoleon .	CB	1		195	38	Carlisle	7/ 5
Big Bear	TE	2	6-4	215		Carlisle	5/ 4
Black Bear, Peter .	E	1				none	1/ 1
Boutwell, Leon"Lo"BWF		2	5-7	155	30	Carlisle	6/ 4
Buffalo, Ted	TEG	1			23	Haskell	9/ 6
Calac, Pete ...	FWET#	4	5-10	195	30	Carl.; WVa Wesl..	10/ 9
Eagle Feather	F	2		220		Carlisle	10/ 6
Gray Horse	WG	1				.....	2/ 1
Guyon, Joe	#W	4	5-10	195	30	Carlisle; Ga.Tech	4/ 4
a-Jolley, Al	T	2	6-2	200	23	Mar'ta;Tulsa;KanSt	3/ 3
Lassa,Nick	CGT	2	5-10	205	26	Carlisle; Haskell	11/11
Lingrel, Ray	W	1	6-2	190		none	6/ 6
Little Twig, Joe .	ET	2	5-11	180	30	Carlisle	11/10
Lone Wolf, Ted	G	2	6-2	212		Carlisle	4/ 4
McLemore, Emmett ..	B	1	5-8	165	26	Carlisle	9/ 8
Nason, Ed	T	2				1/ 1
Newashe, Bill	T	1			33	Carlisle	5/ 5

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Pappio, Joe	E	1	5-10	170	19	Haskell	1/	1
Pierce	F	1				Carlisle	1/	1
Powell, Stancil	...	G	1	5-10	185	32	Carlisle	8/	7
Red Fang	.....	G	2				none	.....	1/	1
Running Deer, David		E	2				Haskell	.....	3/	2
Thorpe, Jack	...	GCTW	1	6-0	210	24	Carlisle	.....	8/	6
Thorpe, Jim	.....	#	3	6-1	200	36	Carlisle	.....	9/	9
Welmas, Woodchuck	..	E	1	5-7	180	30	Carlisle	.....	3/	3

a = from Dayton

= tailback

Roster (25)		POS	GM/GS	ML	TO	MN	BF	CL	CB	SL	CA	CO	CC	LO
Arrowhead	.....	E	4/ 3	-	-	-	-	E	-	E	-	E	e	-
Barrel, Napoleon	....	CB	7/ 5	-	-	-	C	c	-	B	C	c	C	C
Big Bear	.....	TE	5/ 4	T	T	T	-	e	T	-	-	-	-	-
Black Bear, Peter	....	E	1/ 1	-	-	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boutwell, Leon "Lo"	..	BWF	6/ 4	-	-	-	-	b	-	b	B	B	B	B
Buffalo, Ted	.....	TEG	9/ 6	G	E	-	E	T	T	T	t	e	e	-
Calac, Pete	.....	FWET#	10/ 9	Eb	E	B	B	B	E	B	-	B	t	T
Eagle Feather	.....	F	10/ 6	B	B	b	b	b	B	B	-	b	B	B
Gray Horse	.....	WG	2/ 1	-	-	-	-	b	-	G	-	-	-	-
Guyon, Joe	.....	#W	4/ 4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B	B	B	B
a-Jolley, Al	.....	T	3/ 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	T	T	T	-
Lassa, Nick	.....	CGT	11/11	C	C	C	T	C	C	C	G	C	G	G
Lingrel, Ray	.....	W	6/ 6	B	B	B	B	B	B	-	-	-	-	-
Little Twig, Joe	....	ET	11/10	T	T	T	te	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Lone Wolf, Ted	.....	G	4/ 4	G	G	-	G	-	G	-	-	-	-	-
McLemore, Emmett	.....	B	9/ 8	B	B	B	B	B	B	-	-	b	B	B
Nason, Ed	.....	T	1/ 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	T
Newashe, Bill	.....	T	5/ 5	-	-	-	-	T	-	T	T	T	T	-
Pappio, Joe	.....	E	1/ 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	E
Pierce	.....	F	1/ 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B	-	-	-
Powell, Stancil	.....	G	8/ 7	-	G	G	G	G	-	G	-	G	c	G
Red Fang	.....	G	1/ 1	-	-	G	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Running Deer, David	...	E	3/ 2	-	-	E	-	-	e	-	E	-	-	-
Thorpe, Jack	.....	GCTW	8/ 6	-	c	g	T	G	-	G	G	G	G	-
Thorpe, Jim	.....	#	9/ 9	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	-	-
Welmas, Woodchuck	....	E	3/ 3	E	-	-	E	-	-	-	-	-	E	-

a = from Dayton

1923 OORANG INDIANS STATISTICS - Courtesy of David Neft

SCORING	TD	XP	XA	FG	PTS
Arrowhead	...	2	0	0	12
Guyon	2	0	0	12
McLemore	1	1	4	8
Buffalo	1	0	0	6
Calac	1	0	0	6
Thorpe, Jim	..	0	0	0	1-8
Little Twig	..	0	1*	1	1
Oorang Totals		6	2	6	1 50s
Opponents		37	26	37	3 257

* = 1 on pass; s = 1 safety

RUSHING	GM	COMPLETE GAMES				INCOMPLETE				
		ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	GM	AT	YD	TD	
Thorpe, Jim	..	1	7	20	2.9	0	8	8	34	0
Guyon	1	6	9	1.5	0	3	1	5	1
Calac	-	-	-	-	-	10	2	12	0
Lingrel	-	-	-	-	-	6	2	5	0
Oorang Totals		1	13	29	2.2	0	10	-	-	1
Opponents		1	54	293	5.4	4	10	-	-	22

COMPLETE GAMES

INCOMPLETE

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PASS REC.	GM	NO	YDS	AVG	TD	GM	NO	YD	TD
Guyon	1	4	66	16.5	0	3	-	-	-
Thorpe, Jim .	1	1	11	11.0	0	8	-	-	-
Pierce	1	1	5	5.0	0	-	-	-	-
McLemore	-	-	-	-	-	9	4	76	1
Calac	-	-	-	-	-	10	3	55	0
Welmas	-	-	-	-	-	4	2	35	0
Arrowhead ...	-	-	-	-	-	4	2	29	2
Little Twig .	1	-	-	-	-	10	1	15	0

PUNTING	GM	COMPLETE			INCOMPLETE			INTERCEPTS	NO
		NO	AVG	GM	NO	AVG	NO		
Thorpe, Jim	1	9	31.8	8	8	31.8		Boutwell .	1
Oorang	1	9	31.8	10	-	-		Guyon	1
Opponents	1	4	35.0	10	-	-		Thorpe, Jim	1

PASSING	GM	COMPLETE GAMES				YDS	AvgG	INCOMPLETE						
		ATT	COM	PCT	TD			IN	GM	AT	CM	YD	TD	IN
Thorpe, Jim	2	35	14	40.0	188	5.37	1	4	7	8	6	95	0	2
Guyon	1	4	2	50.0	16	4.00	0	0	3	2	2	51	1	-
McLemore ..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	1	1	15	1	-
Oorang Tot.	2	39	16	41.0	204	5.23	1	4	9	-	-	-	2	-
Opponents	2	30	13	43.3	234	7.80	2	2	9	-	-	-	8	-

TRIBES

Arrowhead	Chippewa
Reggie Attache	Mission
Napoleon Barrel	Chippewa
Leon Boutwell	Chippewa
Ted Buffalo	Chippewa
Elmer Busch	Pomo
Pete Calac	Mission
Xavier Downwind	Chippewa
Eagle Feather	Mohican
Gray Horse	Chippewa
Joe Guyon	Chippewa
Bob Hill	Mohawk
Al Jolley	Wyandotte
Joe Little Twig	Mohawk
Long Time Sleep (Nikolas Lassa)	Cherokee*
Newashe	Sac & Fox
Stancil Powell	Cherokee
Red Fox (Emmett McLemore)	Cherokee
Stilwell Sanooke	Cherokee
Tom St. Germaine	Chippewa
Jack Thorpe	Sac & Fox
Jim Thorpe	Sac & Fox
Baptiste Thunder	Chippewa
Bill Winneshek	Winebago

In some sources listed as Flathead or Blackfoot