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OFFICIAL 1983 FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

OTTAWA UNIVERSITY Football Magazine

A Publication of the Ottawa University Sports Information Office

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OTTAWA UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

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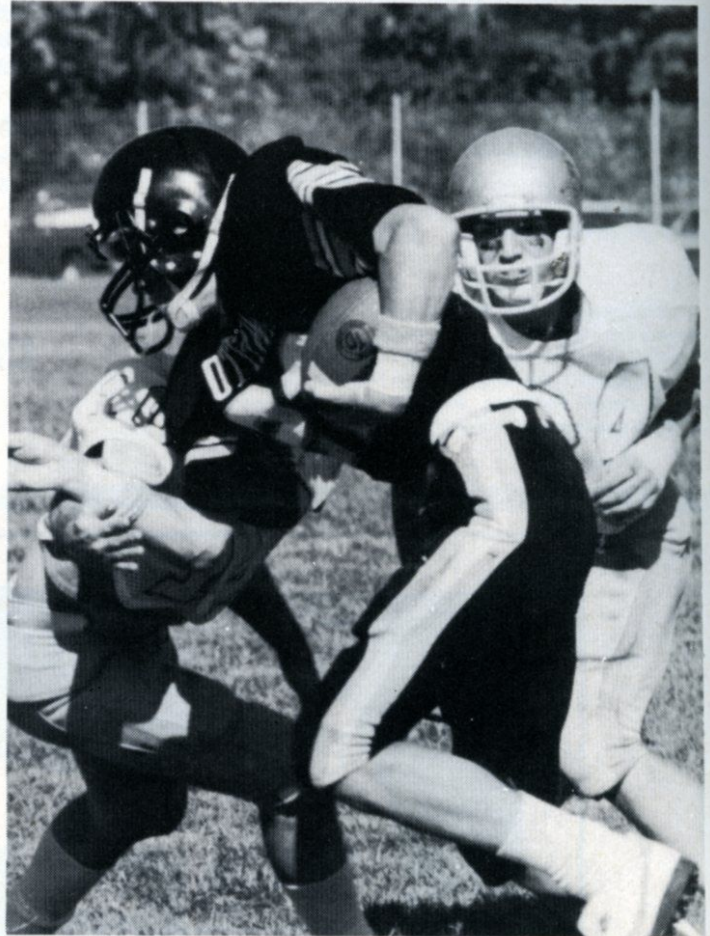
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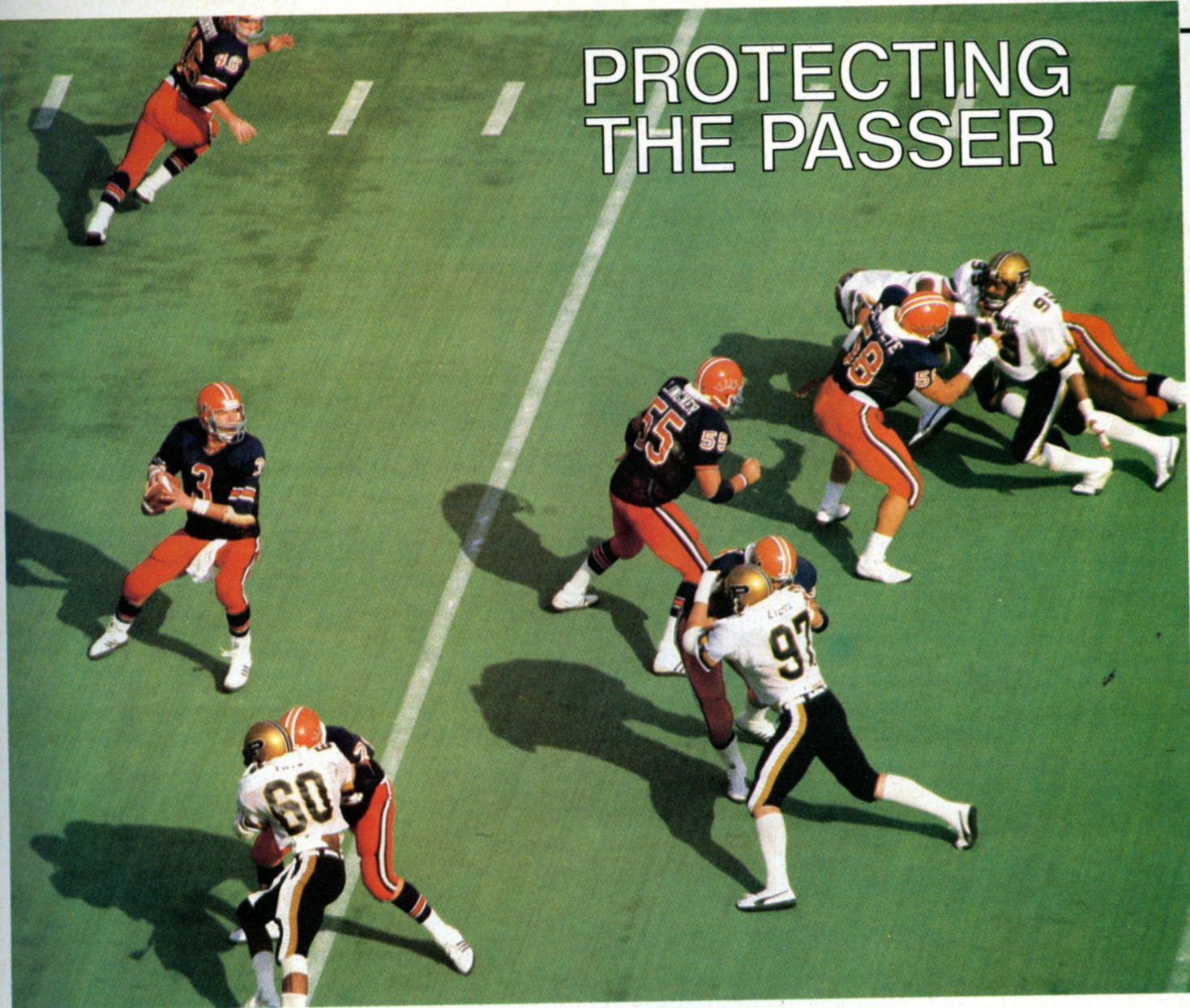
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PROTECTING THE PASSER



by Jim Poore, Idaho Statesman

They tend to lurk in the shadows, faceless players who either open the offensive spigot for faster, smaller and more famous teammates or toil in frustration when things aren't clicking. In either case, most coaches feel offensive linemen tend to be praised too faintly when things go right or damned too loudly when they go wrong.

One West Coast football coach, whose passing game the last few years has been a trend-setter in college football, knows what every other coach in the nation knows—if the offensive line hasn't got it together on game day, nobody else will.

"We sure emphasize it. We tell the rest of the guys they would have to pay to get into the game if it weren't for the offensive line," he said. "It's the press that doesn't emphasize it."

Quarterbacks who don't appreciate their offensive linemen are bound to live in agony at times.

"A quarterback has got to make sure the

offensive line gets credit for any success he has," said one midwestern coach. "Those guys are the keys to his success, those are the guys that take all the punishment while the quarterback gets all the glory. If he doesn't appreciate them, that might affect them, make them ease up unconsciously. After he's been hit a couple of times, he'll learn to appreciate them."

Offensive linemen are just another in a long line of overlooked cogs in more complex issues. After all, who remembers the names of the men who held the horses for the James gang or the guys who sang backup for Elvis? But they were there. Maybe the names are shuffled while the stars remain static, but once the organization breaks down in mid-stream, even the biggest star—bank-robber, singer or college quarterback—is bound to have his act flounder.

That's why, with the passing game catching on everywhere, the pass-

blocking efficiencies of offensive linemen everywhere—from Division 1-A national contenders to the most struggling Division III team—are being polished and scrutinized more than ever and why a good offensive lineman is suddenly as prized as a game-breaking tailback.

Being an offensive lineman may not be the most glamorous position, but a lot of coaches think it's one of the most difficult positions in football.

"I've always felt the two hardest positions to play in football are the secondary and the offensive line," said one coach. "You've got more things to learn. You may have to block one play six different ways. Every time the quarterback comes to the line of scrimmage and sets you, you've got a split second to make your decision."

In the past, offensive linemen might come from anywhere—an overloaded fullback corps, the defensive line or wherever there were players who

continued

PROTECTING THE PASSER

continued

couldn't quite make it and yet were too big and strong to be sitting on the bench. That's changing.

"You have an ideal player in your mind, but very seldom do you get that ideal," said a coach from the Far West. "You want a good athlete, but you're looking for the physical qualities plus the subjective things. Speed, quickness and size are part of being a good athlete but you also want an outstanding competitor with a good attitude, a guy who can really self-evaluate, the kind of guy who can improve, improve, improve."

Knute Rockne may have looked for the

passes, fake passes. When an offensive coordinator comes up with something he thinks might work with the ball in the air, there has to be time for the quarterback and his receivers to interact. The offensive lineman has to be prepared to provide enough time so his quarterback can (a) have the time to set up and get the play off and (b) not have to worry about some 6-7, 280-pound defensive tackle chopping him in two every other down.

How is an offensive lineman supposed to go about doing this? It's not necessarily size that's the key, although many coaches fantasize about perfect sizes for the

knocks somebody 10 feet off the ball. Talented feet and the ability to deliver a blow make the defensive lineman start his charge all over again. Size is okay if you have it. But you can get by easier with pass blocking than you can running the football."

Other coaches want their offensive linemen to cast Mount Everest-type shadows.

"The offensive linemen in our league are really big," said a West Coast coach who's made several trips to the Rose Bowl in the past few years. "Physical size helps a lineman; he's bigger and harder to get around."

What would be a perfect offensive line?

The tackles might be 6-7, 265 pounds and the tight end 6-4, 235. For some leagues those sizes will be bigger, for others smaller.

But squat-like or sequoia-like, the feet come into play again.

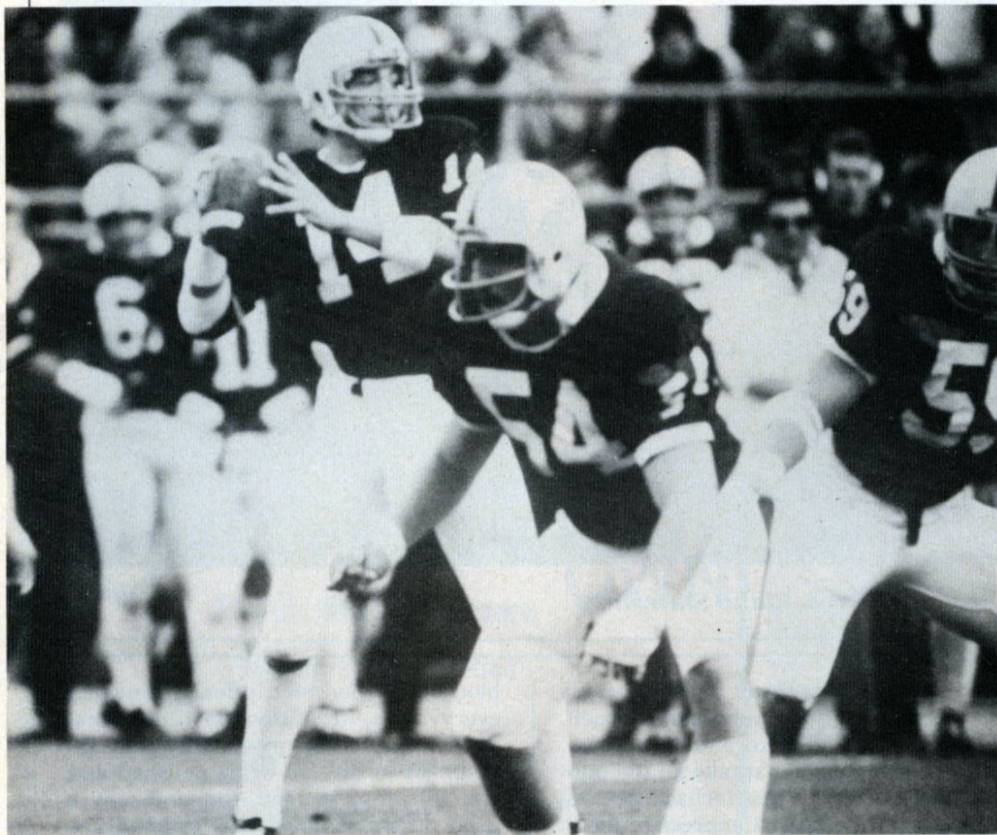
"You've got to have good feet," the West Coast coach said. "It's almost like chicken fighting; you're putting your hands on a guy trying to keep him away from your body. The defensive linemen are so big and strong these days, it's incredible."

A typical play for an offensive lineman might go like this.

The play is called in the huddle. As the lineman leaves the huddle for the line of scrimmage he's automatically thinking about what his job is on that particular play. Once he's at the line, the lineman has to recognize what defense the other team is in and who he's lined up against. Just when he thinks he's got everything in order, the quarterback might call an audible—changing the play if he sees a defense the called play won't work against—and the whole thought process has to start over again. The linemen have to talk to each other, asking for help or volunteering it in case the other team stunts. Once the ball is snapped and the quarterback drops back or sprints to either side to throw the ball, the offensive lineman has to stay with the player he's assigned to block until the last possible second.

All of this takes place in a matter of seconds and if anybody along the line can't maintain his block for the time needed to get the pass off, then the whole process is scuttled. When that happens, the quarterback is either sacked or he starts scrambling, trying to throw on the run. That's when the offensive lineman's errors are broadcast to the crowd. When the pass is successful, the eyes have been following the ball, long having left the area where the offensive linemen are just finishing their struggle to keep some gigantic defensive lineman from getting to the quarterback.

continued



An offensive lineman has to have good feet when he's blocking so he can stay in front of the passer.

same qualities. So, what's the difference between today and the days when Ronald Reagan used to toil in anonymity on the offensive line at Eureka College in Illinois?

There are lots of differences. The plays—especially the passing plays—are getting more complicated all the time. Bigger, stronger, quicker and more sophisticated defensive players have dictated that the offense evolve as well.

An offensive lineman has to learn all his run assignments plus how to block for a myriad of passing plays—screens, drop-backs, sprintouts, short passes, long

guards, tackles and centers that would have them wearing size 60 coats and size 32 pants. There are some awfully good offensive linemen in the 6-2, 235-pound range who can block 6-5, 260-pound defensive linemen with the ease of a tug managing the Queen Mary.

"The key is the feet. An offensive lineman has to have good feet so that when he's pass blocking he can stay in front of the guy," said one coach from the Northwest who installed a passing offense that turned his team from last to first in the space of one season. "In a passing situation, you don't have to have a guy who

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PROTECTING THE PASSER

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Those passing plays that captivate the crowd while the offensive linemen struggle in the trenches against the defense are varied. Some teams run a strictly dropback passing offense where the quarterback takes the snap and retreats directly behind the center. Others run play-action schemes where the quarterback fakes to a runner going into the line and rolls to the right or left to look for receivers running their patterns. Then again, there's passing off the option.

The assignments for various passing attacks differ.

Dropback: When the play calls for the quarterback to take the snap and retreat behind the center, staying in the protective pocket set up by his teammates, an offensive lineman must stay under control. The block is aggressive, but the lineman can't overextend himself and let the defensive player slip inside his block. In blocking for a dropback passing situation, the lineman has to block from the inside out. The feet should be parallel and the shoulders square. The second the ball is snapped, the offensive lineman should deliver a good blow to the chest of the defensive player and keep the arms extended within the width of the shoulders. Several years ago, the rules on holding were changed to allow offensive linemen to use their hands if they keep them within the width of the shoulders. Still, oftentimes that's not enough for eager defensive linemen who can't wait to crash the party. If an offensive lineman can't maintain absolute control of his opponent, he tries to run him outside of where the quarterback is setting up to pass. In dropback situations, an offensive



Quarterbacks who don't appreciate their offensive linemen may not get to deliver many passes this easily.

linemen must be like a bodyguard for a famous movie star—he's got to keep himself between the fans and the star, no matter what the cost.

Sprintout: Here the linemen can be more aggressive in their blocking schemes. While there are always variations on how a lineman blocks different plays, the stan-

dard procedure on a sprintout is to fire out in a manner not unlike a running play. The lineman must maintain the contact, especially on the side of the center where the play is developing, because the quarterback is going to be going down the line of scrimmage. Penetration by a defensive lineman can easily kill the play so the offensive linemen must be aware of where the quarterback is at all times.

Screen Pass: On this play, the offensive lineman gives the defensive player a hit, holds for one count, and then lets the player slip by him in what appears to be a clear avenue to the quarterback. The lineman then gets out as wide as possible in the direction of the screen where he helps block for the receiver.

Teams that rely strictly on a dropback attack put the most pressure on offensive linemen.

"If you're a pure dropback team, that allows the defense to lay its ears back and come after you," said one midwestern coach. "The quarterback sets back there in the pocket and you've got to protect him for a certain amount of time. When the defensive line starts to mix up things with stunts, it's tough on the offensive linemen. They've got to switch off. If a team moves the quarterback around, it makes it tougher on the defensive lineman because they don't know where the guy is going to be."



The combination of quick feet and the ability to deliver a blow is considered a key to effective pass blocking.

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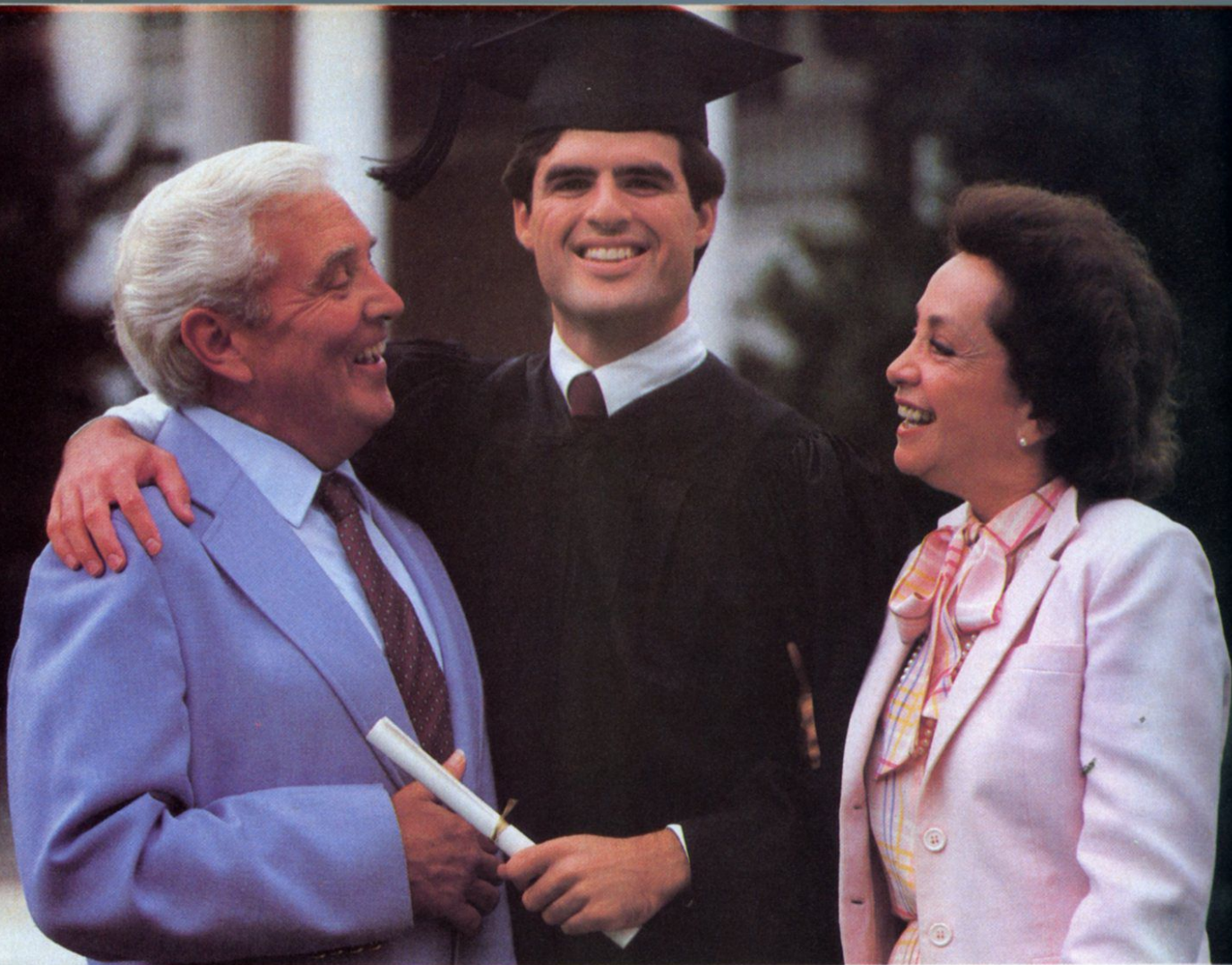
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THE INNOVATORS

by Jack Clary



"No one ever invented anything!" In those five simple words, spoken more than a half century ago when intercollegiate football was swinging along to the tune of the single and double wing formations, and the Notre Dame "Box" or shift, Jess Harper dismissed all of the claims made by some of college football's most hallowed names as to who really did what to establish the basic tools for what has become the American game of football.

continued

"Pop" Warner introduced the single and double wing formations.

INNOVATORS

continued

And in so doing, Harper also dismissed himself, because as coach of Notre Dame back in the teens, he was given credit for developing the forward pass after successfully utilizing it with Knute Rockne and Gus Dorais.

Harper probably was being a bit harsh on such football pioneers as Amos Alonzo Stagg, Walter Camp, Percy Haughton, Glenn (Pop) Warner, Bob Zuppke, Rockne, and such later innovators as Wallace Wade and Clark Shaughnessy. This group, more than any other, really developed the tactics and techniques which we see every weekend on gridirons around the nation . . . and they did most of it when there were only 46 states in the Union and the Wright Brothers' idea of flying was still a concept whose time had not yet come.

It really is a bit startling to discover that so much of what we take for granted in this sport had its genesis among so few of the game's great immortals, most of whom were born more than a century

ago. Some might consider this the first symptom of a sport gone moribund, but that really isn't the case. After all, there is only so much you can do with eleven men on each side, playing on a field that has distinct boundaries and under rules which are most precise as to how the game will be played.

It is what one does under those constraints that matters, and those old masters, once they divorced the sport from the rugby game, found all sorts of wonderful maneuvers that helped to develop football's current popularity. Each fall millions of people fill stadiums all over the country to watch . . . and wonder . . . and cheer. And while they're cheering, perhaps they—and today's coaches, as well—could spare an extra hip-hip-hooray for the following football innovators.

Amos Alonzo Stagg was part of our great-grandparents' past, but American college football would be extinct without him, and that includes today's game in which both teams are using the T-for-



Walter Camp introduced the use of signals to begin a play.

mation. Stagg invented it—and he did it nearly a century ago—in 1888—when rules changes brought linemen and backs closer together. Six years later his quarterbacks were taking direct snaps from the center as they do today.

Even before he established those T-formation mechanics, Stagg had installed the end-around play in 1891 while coaching at Springfield YMCA in Massachusetts (now Springfield College). Before the turn of the century, his offense included a delayed buck (1899) from the T-formation, allowing the QB to fake first to one back, then hand the ball to another. In 1903, his University of Chicago teams, led by quarterback Walter Eckersall, had a deadly quarterback keeper play, much like that used in the split-T of two decades ago and certainly the father of the keepers of today's Wishbone and Veer formations.

Stagg also was the first to establish the passing game as an integral part of an offense, following its legalization in 1906. His Chicago teams that year had a most sophisticated attack, including a replica of today's play-action sequences where a quarterback will first fake a run, then drop back and pass. That team also used the sprint-out pass, crossing patterns, the use of a single flanker, or split end, and the use of double flankers as are seen in the pro-set formations. Many of these

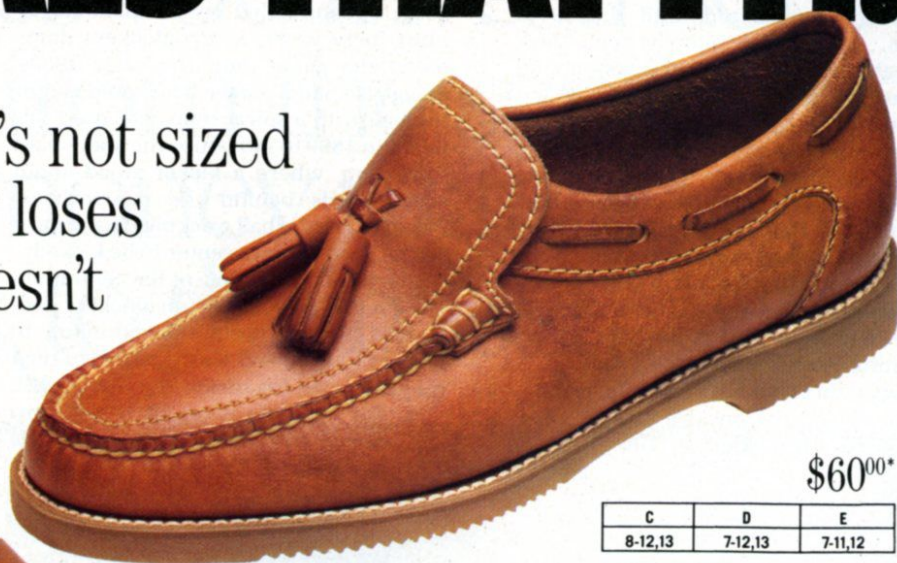
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Stanford's Clark Shaughnessy perfected the T-formation.

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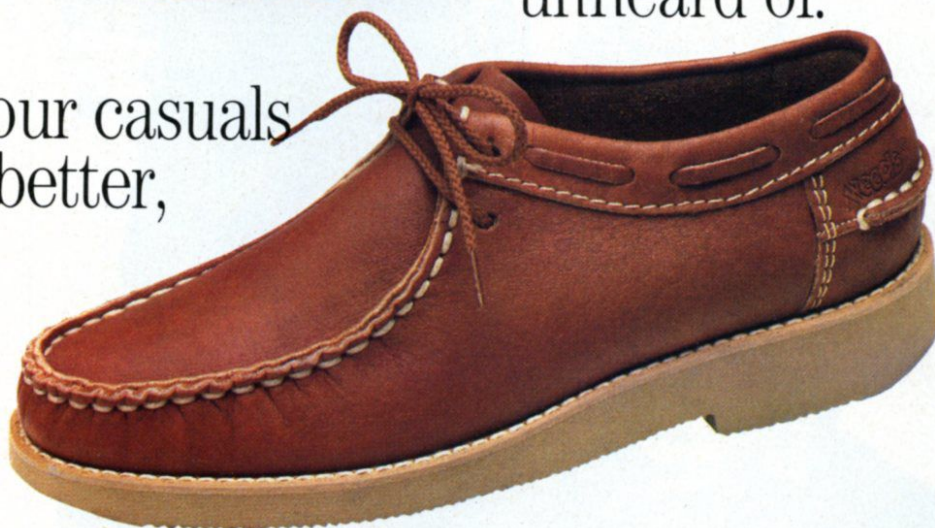


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INNOVATORS

continued

were not popularized until the 1940s when, as we shall shortly see, Clark Shaughnessy revived Stagg's system and spruced it up.

However, a quarter-century after establishing the basic patterns for a passing attack—an offense that Harper helped to popularize while he had Rockne and Dorais at Notre Dame—Stagg tossed in the use of men in motion or “pedingers,” as he called them, after the player on his Chicago team who became the first to peel off and run to either side of the field, before sprinting downfield to catch a pass.

Stagg didn't stop with the T-formation. He developed the onside kick in 1894, then used a placekick for field goals in

1897, a feature that lay dormant for almost forty years, as dropkickers dominated the game until the early 1930s. Stagg also had a player who could center the ball with a spiral snap, and used this talent in 1899 to introduce the short punt formation, where a kicker stood about seven yards behind the quarterback. Prior to this, the ball was rolled backward on the ground from center to be kicked.

Shortly after the turn of the century, in 1904, he developed the first blocking sled, padded his goal posts to avoid injury to players in 1906 and was the first to turn his players out for spring practice in 1914.

In that same era were **Walter Camp** and **Percy Haughton**. The former is

touted as the father of American football, but his most significant contribution was introducing, in 1882, the use of signals to begin a play. Haughton, like Stagg, was not wedded to the mass-power play system that Camp had popularized, and most believe that Haughton's greatest single achievement was wresting control of the Rules Committee from Camp in 1910 and helping to unleash the forward pass. The forward pass opened up the game and made it more appealing.

At the same time, the rules stipulated that the ball must be thrown five yards right or left, and five yards back of the spot where it was put into play. If the play was unsuccessful, a team was tagged with a 15-yard penalty. Haughton helped to change those rules with the addition of an extra, or fourth, down in which to make a first down. This meant added protection for the passer and the receiver (who could be hit while the ball was in flight) and, of course, no restrictions on passing distances.

Haughton, who was also Harvard's coach during this time, is credited with first using defensive signals, and, in 1904, with developing the trap play.

The wingback formations—single and double—were **Pop Warner's** creations and they dominated college football from their inception in 1908-1910 until the early 1940s when the T-formation came into vogue. And they're not dead yet since many teams use them as “shotgun” alignments on obvious third down passing situations.

The single wing, with one back flanked outside the end, was basically a power formation, utilizing a tailback who stood seven yards behind center to handle the ball. In its pure form, two tackles were set side-by-side and the heart of the offense ran through them. Warner popularized it when Jim Thorpe was his tailback at Carlisle and regularly beat up on the East's larger schools. Though power was its hallmark, Warner's agile mind instilled plenty of speed and deception, with reverses and passes as integral parts of his single wing offense.

When he went to Stanford in the 1920s, he used the double wing, flanking both halfbacks outside the ends. This offense was built on a hard-running fullback as the lone setback, abetted by a series of double and even triple reverses. When Warner brought his Stanford team to Yankee Stadium in 1928, he dazzled coaches and media alike with a devastating offense built on these principles, and soon the double wing had its circle of disciples.

Warner's creative genius has left other legacies. One is the body block, which he developed in 1906 as an adjunct to the

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INNOVATORS

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Since 1972 Jack Clary has been a full-time freelance writer specializing in sports. Before '72 he spent 15 years as a sportswriter-columnist for the A.P., the *New York World Telegraph & Sun* and the *Boston Herald Traveler*. Clary has written eight books on football, including a collaboration with Paul Brown on Brown's autobiography.

shoulder block; another was the use of protective pads, which he fashioned by molding soaked pieces of fabric into the various body contours, then coating them with varnish to assume durability.

Despite **Jess Harper's** disavowal, he put the passing game on a popular plane when his Notre Dame team, with Rockne and Dorais, defeated Army in 1914. They popped the eyes of the eastern press with their well-executed passing game, a facet of play little seen in the East at that time. Harper was also the first coach to instruct his passer to throw the ball away if he couldn't find an open receiver (1915) and popularized the "shift" principle that became Rockne's hallmark—and hence the rival to Warner's formations—for the next 15 years.

Knute Rockne admitted that he was never an innovator, but he was a master salesman for the sport, as well as for his own system, which had its roots in Harper's and Stagg's methods. Rockne also wrote—and rewrote—coaching books which helped to inject his personality and enthusiasm into the game, particularly his ability to depart from the usual. The game became better when others followed these dictums.

Bob Zuppke, along with Warner, was perhaps Rockne's foremost coaching rival. Zuppke's Illinois teams became pioneers in the passing game, as he was the first to drop back his offensive guards as pass blockers (1920). He developed the



Jess Harper's Notre Dame teams demonstrated the effectiveness of a well-executed passing game.

"flea-flicker pass" in 1925. In that year's game vs. Penn, a pass went from a would-be punter to the right end, who then took a few steps forward to draw the tacklers, and then tossed the ball back to Red Grange. Grange picked up a screen of blockers and ran for a TD.

Zuppke, who came directly from Oak Park High School, Illinois, to the University of Illinois as a head coach, also introduced the huddle for calling signals and utilized his guards as linebackers to defend against passes (1920). He was constantly improving on the various spread pass formations and claims to have been the first to use the screen pass. Few dispute the claim that he popularized it at Illinois in the 1920s.

George Halas, coach of the Chicago Bears, revived the T in the 1930s and called **Clark Shaughnessy**, then coaching at the University of Chicago, to help him perfect the system. Shaughnessy studied the various aspects of putting men in motion, and when he became Stanford's head coach in 1940, took the system and had an unbeaten season, including a victory over Nebraska in the

Rose Bowl.

Shaughnessy was a moody genius who forever tinkered with offenses, but his greatest flair was in developing the little wrinkles—using men in motion and the slotting of receivers to open a defense and better utilize a running offense.

From his success at Stanford came the revolution of the T-formation in college football, though the key to Shaughnessy's early success was the ball-handling wizardry of QB Frank Albert, whose slickness mesmerized defenses and enabled such talented runners as Hugh Gallerneau, Pete Kmetovic and Norm Standlee to romp, and also to gain himself extra time to execute Shaughnessy's myriad passing formations.

An excellent coach for years at Alabama and Duke, **Wallace Wade** revolutionized the protective equipment by introducing lighter, yet better-fitting pads which added speed and greater safety for his players. He also was the first coach to equip his backs with low-cut shoes, when he ordered a pair made in 1925 for his great Alabama running back Johnny Mack Brown, later a great Western movie star.



Percy Haughton was instrumental in opening up the game with the forward pass.

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HIDDEN NICKNAME QUIZ

R	V	N	A	O	S	W	Q	S	J	E	I	N	G	S	L	F	U	E	S	N
P	C	T	A	O	I	X	P	I	O	X	A	I	B	W	S	C	O	E	L	S
M	A	R	L	F	G	R	I	Z	Z	L	I	E	S	I	O	A	Y	R	Q	I
O	R	O	I	B	N	D	W	M	R	O	V	Z	C	L	H	E	X	K	M	S
A	D	U	O	M	E	A	N	G	R	E	E	N	S	D	K	O	N	E	E	L
W	I	N	N	V	S	X	M	A	E	P	I	R	J	C	B	K	A	N	F	O
V	N	F	S	X	G	O	T	G	H	Y	A	I	U	A	I	J	A	L	K	J
S	A	L	U	K	I	S	N	A	K	E	S	B	O	T	N	C	M	Y	I	P
O	L	T	H	R	E	S	L	T	B	Z	C	O	Y	S	I	A	R	D	E	N
T	N	W	P	L	R	O	U	O	I	M	O	S	N	R	E	L	Y	U	O	F
M	D	G	G	A	F	N	K	R	R	D	L	U	R	A	G	O	C	C	L	U
L	S	A	G	E	H	B	H	S	O	F	E	U	D	X	N	O	G	K	B	T
G	E	U	P	T	S	T	E	T	U	D	H	R	S	M	L	U	D	S	R	M
I	O	R	S	N	S	A	J	W	O	L	V	E	R	I	N	E	S	S	E	T
C	S	O	O	N	E	R	S	D	K	S	T	F	L	Q	E	C	R	M	A	B
U	F	S	E	R	Q	H	C	S	A	H	C	H	A	B	L	E	C	I	G	K
Q	I	R	R	G	R	E	E	N	W	A	V	E	Y	L	R	T	N	W	U	C
B	T	P	I	O	N	E	E	R	S	P	S	B	L	D	C	U	R	L	Y	L
A	N	M	I	Q	E	L	B	O	B	C	A	T	S	G	N	O	I	O	Z	F
Z	A	E	R	D	I	S	B	D	O	E	P	R	E	T	R	I	N	N	R	A
E	N	G	I	N	E	E	R	S	F	S	F	O	Q	X	N	C	C	S	S	V

(Word maze solution can be found on page 77)

Match these schools with their nicknames, then find the nicknames in the word maze.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1. Alabama | Cougars |
| 2. Tulane | Mean Green |
| 3. Southern Illinois | Wolverines |
| 4. Florida | Bruins |
| 5. North Carolina | Engineers |
| 6. Ohio State | Bobcats |
| 7. Oklahoma | Pioneers |
| 8. Lewis & Clark Col. | Sooners |
| 9. Oregon | Buckeyes |
| 10. Penn State | Tar Heels |
| 11. Miami (FL) | Grizzlies |
| 12. Michigan | Bisons |
| 13. Baylor | Falcons |
| 14. North Texas St. | Hurricanes |
| 15. Houston | Lions |
| 16. Stanford | Gators |
| 17. Boston College | Salukis |
| 18. Northwestern | Green Wave |
| 19. Bowling Green | Wildcats |
| 20. Colorado | Eagles |
| 21. Montana | Cardinal |
| 22. S.W. Texas St. | Crimson Tide |
| 23. Florida Tech | Ducks |
| 24. UCLA | Bears |

ANSWERS:

1. Crimson Tide; 2. Green Wave; 3. Salukis; 4. Gators; 5. Tar Heels; 6. Buckeyes; 7. Sooners; 8. Pioneers; 9. Ducks; 10. Lions; 11. Hurricanes; 12. Wolverines; 13. Bears; 14. Mean Green; 15. Cougars; 16. Cardinal; 17. Eagles; 18. Wildcats; 19. Falcons; 20. Bisons; 21. Grizzlies; 22. Bobcats; 23. Engineers; 24. Bruins

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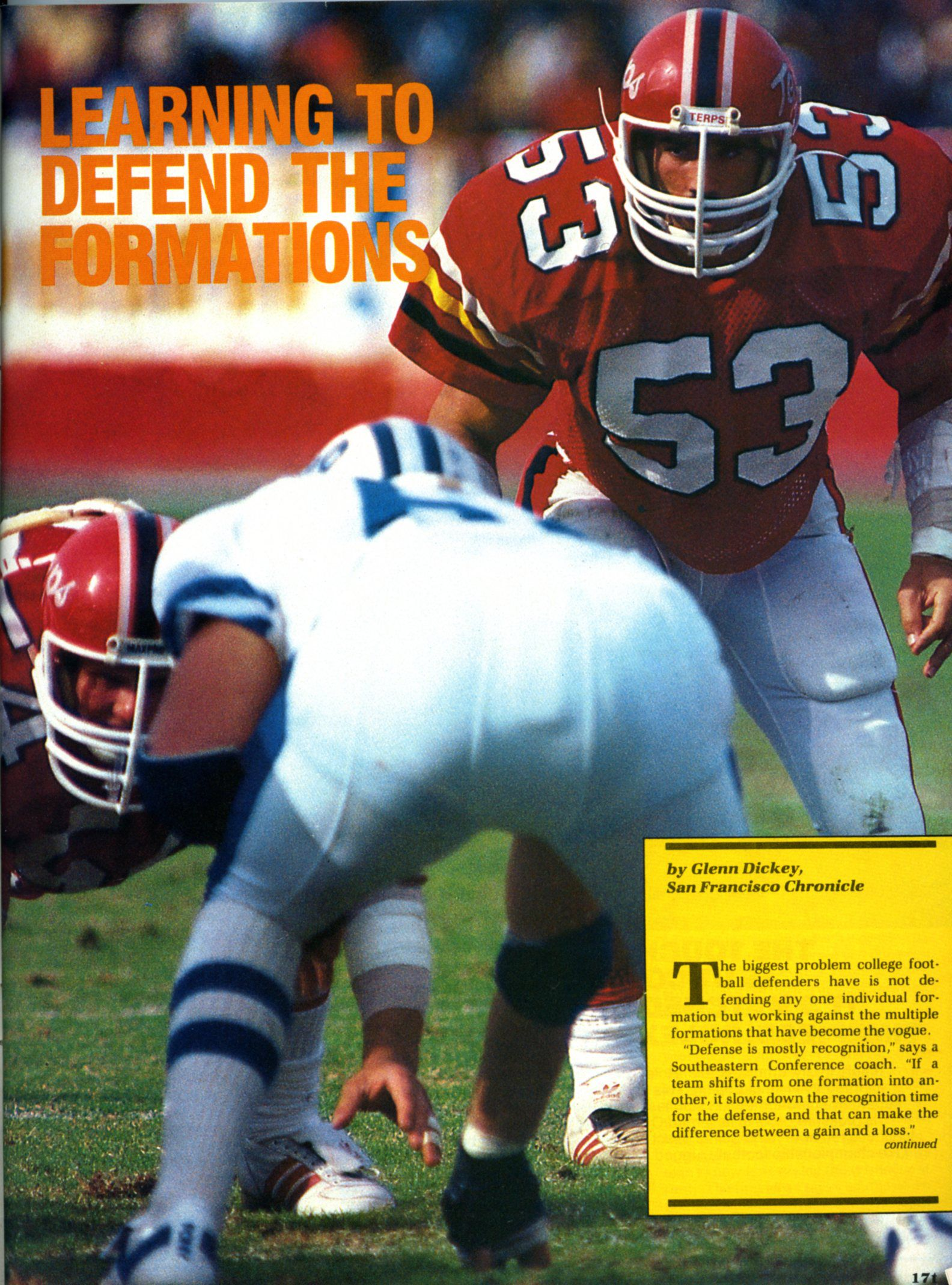
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LEARNING TO DEFEND THE FORMATIONS



by Glenn Dickey,
San Francisco Chronicle

The biggest problem college football defenders have is not defending any one individual formation but working against the multiple formations that have become the vogue.

"Defense is mostly recognition," says a Southeastern Conference coach. "If a team shifts from one formation into another, it slows down the recognition time for the defense, and that can make the difference between a gain and a loss."

continued