

FRANK ("BUCK") O'NEILL AND SYRACUSE FOOTBALL TEAM DUG PITFALL FOR PITT FALL STYLES CHANGE IN MANY SPORTS, BUT NOT IN FOOTBALL

Modern Game Is Called Modern Because It Is Different From That of 1905, When Rules Were Changed—Old Stuff Still Popular

By ROBERT W. MAXWELL,
Sports Editor Evening Public Ledger.

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THEY say that football styles change every season, but you can't prove it this year. Nothing new or startling in the way of plays has been sprung, and it is doubtful if any will be between now and Thanksgiving day. The old stuff still is popular, and from what I have seen, the ancient, mass-covered plays which have been dangled off of regiment and cleaned and polished to say nothing of half-soled and heelied, are more effective than anything else. Glenn Warner has a couple of great ground-gaining plays which are new this year, but first saw the light of day when he was coaching the Indians in 1905.

Modern football is called modern because it is different from that of 1905 when the rules were changed. Forward passes with variations, many editions of the shooting play, the end zone and quick line changes from kick formation—in fact, everything we have seen before is being used to good effect. No since Frank Hinkey attempted to revolutionize the game with his dazzling lateral pass attack, which failed because it had never been tried on every play, has any one had the nerve to try something new.

Football is becoming standardised like baseball. Certain plays can be used at certain times, and it is up to the man calling the signals to make the selection. Nine times out of ten it's a man who has the ball on its own one-yard line, a line plunge is likely to carry over for a touchdown. It's just the same as a batter laying down a sacrifice bunt with a man on first.

In a close game, casual football is played, but when a team gets behind, it's time to go all out. Every man, every move, every play, every trick will be used. That, alas, resembles baseball when every man tries to knock the ball out of the park.

Five Fundamental Plays on the Gridiron

IN THE gridiron sport, we have five fundamental plays, and although disguised occasionally, they are used constantly. They are the punt, drop-kick, which also includes placement kicking, forward pass, end run and plays through the line. Every attack is built around those plays, because that's all there are. You read about teams which have fifty or sixty different signals, but that gets them nowhere. No beginner has ever used more than a dozen different plays in a big game, and the majority use but four or five.

I remember one championship game in which I officiated where only three plays were used by the winning team. They were a back-off tackle, an end run and forward pass. The quarterback was a good field general, discovered many a football team because they were practicing constantly instead of the real, old ground-gaining, dependable ones. One good trick play is enough for a team. If it succeeds, all well and good; if it fails, forget about it.

Occasionally a new formation fools the opponents, as was the case several years ago when Tom Shiebler introduced his famous shift at Yale. The line men lined up about a yard behind the center, and just before the ball was snapped, jumped into position and ran off the play before the other fellows knew what had happened.

THIS was new in the East, and therefore was successful for one season, but the play was old in the West. Dr. Williams used it at Minnesota and Stagg and Yost also had it at Chicago and Michigan. Those freak formations do big for a short time only.

Heisman Shift Made Famous by Georgia Tech

GEORGIA TECH made a brilliant record in the South with the famous Heisman shift, which is nothing more than the Minnesota play. The Binnion and backs shifted before the ball was put into play and nobody down South was able to work out a suitable defense. The result was that the Golden Tornado swept over everything and record scores were being up. Tech did not make a dozen touchdowns in the first half, the natives thought the team was in a slump. But a formation like that cannot last forever. Pitt solved it last year, but the Georgians had a weak team and the two were not conversed with the players. This year, with most of the regulars back from the war, great things were expected, but the famous formation did not come in one of the practice games and the chances are it will be discarded for good.

Tech played a small college called Clemson down in Atlanta and started out to run up a couple of hundred points. The shift was used, but much to the amazement of the coaches and spectators, the plays were broken up before they got under way. C. A. "Jiggs" Donahue, the old Washington and Lee quarterback, who is coaching Clemson, dug out a defense which stood the Georgians on their ears.

Instead of plugging seven men on the line of scrimmage, Donahue used only two. The others stood back, shifted with the Tech players and were able to mass their strength against Georgia's strong side. After a few plays had been snuffed, the Tornado shivered down to a gentle napkin and the first half ended a scoreless tie.

In the second half Tech forgot all about the shift, played the regular formation and won easily.

ALL OF which proves that regulation football is best in the long run. Freak formations might be successful for a time and give the players lots of confidence, but as soon as they fail, the entire team goes up in the air and the nose results in a rout. Yale, Harvard, Princeton, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and the other big teams are not experimenting with new stuff. The old game is good enough for them.

Buck O'Neill Latest Miracle Man

THE latest miracle man to step into the spotlight is Frank ("Buck") O'Neill, coach of the Syracuse University football team. It was his eleven that triumphed over Pittsburgh, administering the first defeat sustained by the Panther since the fall of 1914. Syracuse made it a job of it, winning by such a large score and outplaying her opponents by such a wide margin that there was no room for doubt. It was a decisive victory.

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The Syracuse coach is of the silent, quiet, unobtrusive type who seldom speaks unless he knows what he is talking about. He is a deep thinker and a close student of football. Before accepting the position as head coach at Syracuse he was a member of the board of strategy at Colgate and did not lose a game in ten years. He would watch the Syracuse team play a couple of games and then go to Hamilton and map out an offense and defense which always were successful.

He finally was prevailed upon to take charge of the Orange eleven despite the fact he could devote only part of his time to the work. Buck is in the insurance business in New York and gets to Syracuse only two or three times a week. His plans are carried out, however, by his two assistants, Bill Horn, the line coach, and Clark Mechan, who works with the backfield. He is fortunate in having two such capable men to carry out his orders.

O'Neill believes in simple football. Seldom does he try any complicated plays, but sticks to the old-time line plunge, end run and occasional forward pass. He has some strong formations for those plays which account for their effectiveness.

After the Pittsburgh triumph some one called O'Neill's attention to the fact that only four different plays were used, and wanted to know if he was saying his good stuff for the Colgate game.

WE ARE holding nothing back at this time," replied the coach. "We had no tricks or anything else to use against Pitt. The team today used only the four plays I taught them."

Can you imagine anybody going up against a team like Pitt with only four plays?

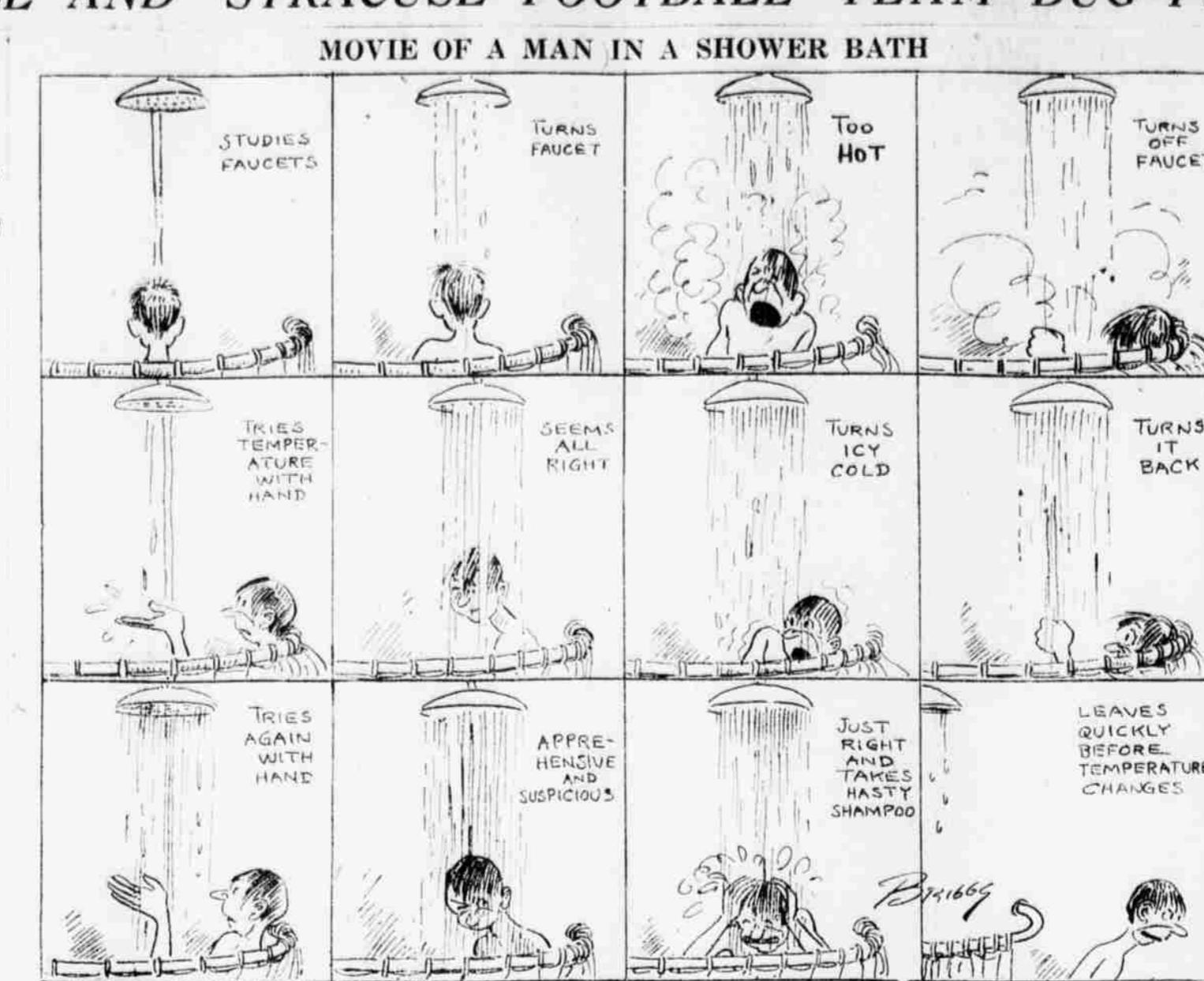
Penn One of Best in Country

BOB FOLWELL, at Penn, is doing wonderful work this year, and is developing one of the best teams in the country. Thus far the Red and Blue has crushed all opposition and should have easy sailing until the Dartmouth game. According to the head coach, the next two battles, against Lafayette and Penn State, will not be hard ones.

"I never saw a team like Penn," said Folwell the other day. "There is a noticeable improvement in every game, and if we keep it up, we will be almost perfect in the next couple of weeks. The men know the game, and it's an easy thing to coach them. I'm not predicting anything, but we should win all of our games."

"Just look over our line-up, Heinie and Ray Miller and Bud Hopper are three of the best ends in the country, and you can't find better tackles than Lew Little and Maynard. There also are four very good guards, Frank, Jim Nealon, Deifer and Thomas, and Bud Wray is about as brainy a center as you could find anywhere. Bert Bell is a wonderful field general and a good man carrying the ball, and Bruner, Light, Deir, McNeil, Pearce and Straus all are pretty good backfield men. The team stacks up like a mighty strong aggregation, and I know we will have a successful season."

WHEN Folwell believes a thing, he has such a magnetic personality that he makes another believe it, too. All he has to do is tell a fool what he can do, and the fool will do it.



LEAGUE IN FULL SWING THIS WEEK

All Elevens in Grind for Gimbel Grid Cup Have Games Scheduled

CENTRAL AT FRANKFORD

By PAUL PREP

All of the elevens entered in the campaign for the Ellis A. Gimbel trophy, emblematic of the Intercollegiate League championship, are now well acquainted with and let it go tight. The young trick plays have ruined many a football team because they were practiced constantly instead of the real, old ground-gaining, dependable ones. One good trick play is enough for a team. If it succeeds, all well and good; if it fails, forget about it.

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