

Earl Blaik, Army Mentor, Hides Talent

New Quarterback Subs for Galiffa

The sign on the door of West Point's athletic field spells in bold, black relief the words—KEEP OUT!

There is a certain anomalous feature in this sign through which Army keeps its grid technique strictly in the dark. It also means that herein is a secret weapon which is as hush-hush and jealously guarded as an A-bomb experiment.

It is of such a highly incendiary nature to one Earl Henry Blaik, coach of Army's redoubtable gridsters, that it is listed among the top-ranking military secrets at the institution.

But beyond the immediate military aspect lies the touching story of a father's dilemma. For the weapon which is being molded in silence is none other than Robert Blaik, son of the renowned mentor.

NEW QUARTERBACK

You'll be seeing young Blaik, second-string quarterback on the Cadet football team this year, as an understudy to the varsity "T"-handler, Arnold Galiffa.

However, you won't be reading much about him in the newspapers—not if Blaik, senior, can prevent it. And therein lies the crux of a personal problem that is gnawing at the insides of one of the sport's most successful emissaries.

SHARP DELEMMA

It is just like the big business executive who prays each night that his son will prove he has the stuff to replace him, but who cringes at the very thought that his personnel might accuse him of favoritism. "Red" Blaik finds himself impaled on the horns of a sharp dilemma.

So, as the first step of getting out of his predicament, he gave strict orders that all but the barest info should be let out of the Academy about his boy.

NO PUBLICITY

All conclusions lead up to the summary that Blaik has been acutely stricken with "Fatheritis." He's hoping with all his being that his son turns out to be the greatest quarterback in Cadet history. But he realizes that Robert might not come through and he doesn't want his son's chances jeopardized by the pressure that heavy publicity could put on an athlete.

As Blaik said to George Trevor, noted football writer, when approached for a story on his son, "I don't want you to write the story, George, it would break my heart." He might be guilty of over-dramatization but it is only because he cannot be a father first and a football coach second.

ATHLETIC HERO

Bobby went to high school in Highland Falls, N.Y., a bustling little community right outside the Academy gates. Then he put in a year at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. At Highland Falls, he was one of the schools big athletic heroes.

At quarterback, he passed, ran, called signals and caught passes. As a plebe at the Point, Bobby acquitted himself with exceptional skill on the football team.

Perhaps the elder Blaik is just waiting for Bobby to prove himself before he raises the curtain of mystery from around him. Many capable grid seers believe that day is just around the corner.

Army Song

Sung to the tune of the "Wearing of the Green," the Military Academy's famous song, "Benny Haven's, Oh," is a tribute by earlier classes of West Point to a man who, in his own way, softened the hard life that early students of the Point had to endure. Three things drew cadets to Benny's—food, drink and Benny's genial personality. In trouble numerous times with the authorities, Benny continued on his own merry way and has become one of the many legends found at the Point.

Lion Co-Captain . . . End Bob Hicks



Army's Coach Earl Blaik Makes Winning a Habit

By RAY KOEHLER

In December 1944 while American men in khaki faced the most formidable foe in all history, the West Point Cadets fought the most brilliant football game of their seventy-five seasons against the best pigskin galaxy the Naval Academy had ever produced.

Army's unbeaten "Black Knights" did it again. Only five years earlier football at West Point was in doldrums, the team having been pulverized in 1940 by practically every squad it contested. Today, Army is "the pride and joy of every heart in gray." The man credited with the resurrection is "metronomic drill-devil" Colonel Earl (Red) Blaik, head coach at West Point since January 1941.

IT'S NICE

"It is nice to have such backs as Doc Blanchard, Glenn Davis, Arnie Galiffa and Gil Stephenson and such linemen as Coulter, Green, Henry, Foldberg, etc," commented Stanley Woodward, "but it takes a real job of handling to keep a winning team on its toes through a long season, to bring it up to full playing form each week and to give it enough poise to stand prosperity."

Earl Henry Blaik was born in Detroit, Michigan, Feb. 15, 1897, son of William Douglas and Margaret Jane Blaik. Graduating with a B.A. degree from Miami University at Oxford, Ohio, during the first World War and entertaining thoughts of entering the war as an officer, Blaik secured an appointment to West Point. After completing the first two-year course in the academy's history, he was graduated in 1920.

GOOD END

Of his aptitude in sports Willis MacDonald, Blaik's roommate at West Point said: "Blaik was a good end. He made Army's kicking game go because he got downfield fast under kicks. He was a deadly tackler and an unusually keen defensive player. As a football, basketball and baseball player he won Army's saber for the best athlete in his class."

Although not very proficient in all phases of mathematics, Blaik was graduated from the Academy in the first third of his class. Resigning from the Army with the rank of first lieutenant, Blaik went to the University of Wisconsin to teach the ends and backs for a few months under George Little, who had been Red Blaik's coach at Miami in 1916. The next year Blaik worked for several weeks at West Point with Biff Jones training more backs and ends. By 1929 Blaik's business had proved itself lucrative enough for him to devote more time to it.

In 1934, after serving as a part-time coach at West Point for seven years, he accepted a position as head coach at Dartmouth to rejuvenate a team whose only major victory the year before had been a victory over Penn State.

DARTMOUTH RECORD

By 1936 Blaik had produced a team that was almost invulnerable to scalplings. His record at Dartmouth reveals 45 wins, 15 losses and 4 ties. Blaik's men won the mythical Ivy League Hat in 1936 and '37 and tied Cornell for it in '38. The Indians, now "a precisioned rock-and-sock team," were once again on the warpath.

In Nov. 1940 Army suffered the most humiliating defeat in the history of Cadet football when Pennsylvania routed West Point by a 48-0 score. The new superintendent of the Academy, Major General Robert L. Eichelberger, aware of the anomalous situation present in the existence of a poor Army team when the country was in the process of setting up the largest and most powerful army of all time, asked Red Blaik to consider Army before signing another Dartmouth contract.

T-FORMATION

In 1942 when Notre Dame substituted the T-formation for its own Rockne system, Blaik was slated for gridiron laurels, although completely unaware of it at the time. (The "T" is an intricate system of cross-blocking and blind angle blocking on the secondary and when carried out correctly produces devastating effects.)

In order to set up the defenses against this new formation, Blaik labored over its peculiarities. The more he studied it, the more impressed he became with its potentialities. He finally scrapped the single-wing and became known as the master of the "T."

In three seasons, from 1944 through '46, Blaik led his teams—highlighted by the fabulous touchdown twins Blanchard and Davis—to twenty-five consecutive wins before tying with an opponent.

With Earl Blaik's promotion to colonel, the leaf was displaced by a new silver eagle on each shoulder, "but nary a chip on either." Tall and thin, he has a personality which rallies the friendship of all his players.

DYNAMO

Although a "human dynamo" on the gridiron, with his strict hours, pounding work, and meticulous timing, he also possesses a great deal of "Blaik the human" in realizing "that all work and no play makes Jack a dull football player."

In 1946 Blaik was voted coach of the year and this season he

Galiffa Aims for Sullivan Award As Outstanding U.S. Amateur

When Arnold Galiffa, Army's sterling "T" formation quarterback, is maneuvering the Cadet gridiron juggernaut, football mentor Earl Blaik is not the only Army coach chewing his nails in fear that the 22-year backfield star will go on the injured list.

Behind Blaik, Army coaches stand in file waiting with crossed fingers for Galiffa to take off one uniform and climb into another.

The 190-pound backfield star from Stan Musial's hometown, Donora, Pa., is adept at about everything he turns his lanky 6 foot, 2 inch frame to. In three years of Army athletics, Galiffa has won 11 major letters: three in baseball, where he plays first base and is one of Army's power hitters; three in basketball where as captain-elect he cavorts for points as a forward, and two in football where he handles the ball and throws touchdowns from the Black Knight's vaunted "T" formation.

Barring injury, Galiffa will add three more letters to his name this year, and in West Point's modern history, only one man, "Lighthorse" Harry Wilson, has won more letters at the Academy. Wilson was at Penn State first. Galiffa also won 11 letters at Donora High School.

And just for his own amusement, Galiffa likes to box, wrestle, swim and play squash

nated into a 47-7 victory for the Black Knights.

Galiffa could be a success in professional football, baseball or basketball after he graduates but he isn't interested in a pro career. After graduation from the Academy, he expects to marry a hometown girl and continue his Army career either in the Infantry or Aviation.

But until he has that commission and Uncle Sam officially takes control of what he does and where he goes, West Point coaches are taking pretty good care of Arnold Galiffa, most valuable player of (name your sport).

Army Machines Pile Up Wins

Two losses in 40 games covering five seasons of football—that's the record of the Army gridiron machine the Nittany Lions meet this afternoon.

Riding the power and speed of All-Americans "Doc" Blanchard and Glenn Davis, the Cadets swept to 25 victories in a row, and won 27 while only tying one from 1944 to '46 inclusive.

In 1947, the Knights had a "bad" season—they won five, lost two and tied two,—but last year, they came back to sweep through eight straight opponents before a courageous Navy eleven held them to a 21-21 tie in that "anything can happen" season finale.

NATIONAL CHAMPS

During that Davis-Blanchard era, the Cadet were the mythical National champions of collegiate football three years in a row. Last year, despite their no-loss record, they wound up fifth in the nation, and this year, with 16 lettermen returning, the Cadets are out to garner Eastern honors if not the national title.

Army has always been tough opposition on the gridiron. The Cadets have chalked up a total of 349 wins in 502 games since they started playing football on the Hudson. They've lost only 117 tilts, and tied 36 for a percentage mark of .695.

During those 59 years, Army has recorded seven undefeated seasons, the clean slates coming in 1914, 1915, 1922, 1944, 1945, 1946 and 1948.

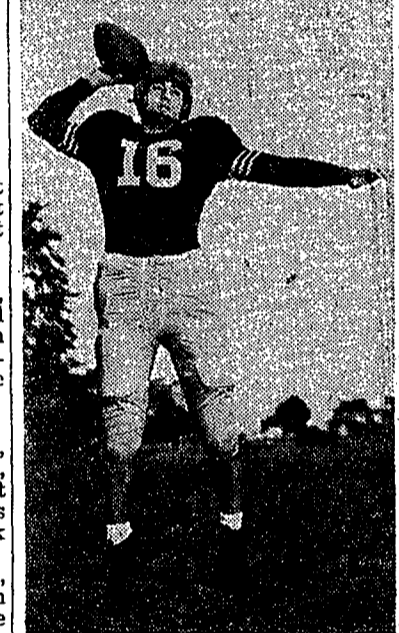
WORST YEARS

Two of Army's worst years were 1939 and 1940, when under the coaching of W. H. Wood, the Cadets dropped a total of 11 games, tying three, while winning only four.

That slump resulted in the acquisition of Earl "Red" Blaik for coaching duties at the Academy, and Blaik answered the challenge by winning five, losing three and tying one in his first season.

Since 1941, the calculating Blaik has racked up 58 wins, 10 losses and six ties at the helm of the Black, Gold and Grey.

Getting back to last year, the Cadets piled up a total of 294 points as against the opposition's 89. And already this season they've scored 47 markers against one opponent's 7. It looks like the Army mule is headed for another big season.



and tennis. To top it all off, he excels in about everything he tries.

That's the main reason a shudder shakes Army's Michie Stadium every time Mr. Galiffa goes down under a hard tackle, or throws a heavy block. But Blaik worries more than anyone.

Coach Blaik is counting heavily on Galiffa this season to carry the Army to Eastern football supremacy, and if the Army makes it, much of the credit will have to go to the Donora speedster. This is Galiffa's third and last season with the Cadets and he has never been more ready for stardom. Last season, he was on Grantland Rice's All-American third team, and this year he is a strong candidate for the Sullivan Award, annually handed to the outstanding amateur athlete in the United States.

Galiffa does little running from Army's offensive formations, but his passes have been a thorn in the flesh for Cadet opponents since he broke into the lineup. In last week's Army encounter with Davidson College, Galiffa threw three touchdown passes, and sparked the drive that culmi-

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has the satisfaction of seeing his son Robert performing before him among his great eleven-Mule team.

Blaik's record at West Point:				Won	Lost	Tie
1941	5	3	0	9	0	1
1942	6	3	0	5	2	2
1943	7	2	1	8	0	1
1944	9	0	0	7	1	1
1945	9	0	0			