



Players run toward the western goal, off the left edge of the photograph, in a football match of ca. 1870-90.

Old Division Football

The Indigenous Mob Soccer Of Dartmouth College

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*The foot-ball sports, let those recount who must;
Name all the victories, and who "bit the dust."*
William A.C. Converse '57 (1858)¹

Introduction

Old Division Football² was a rough, soccer-like game³ that students at Dartmouth College began playing by the 1820s and continued to play until the 1880s, holding on to an annual contest derived from the game until 1948. While Old Division might have permitted a player to bat or “knock” the ball with the hand as well as to make a fair catch, it was distinctly a kicking game rather than a running game in the style of rugby or its descendant, the gridiron (American) football of today. Students codified a set of rules for the Dartmouth game by 1871, contributing something of an evolutionary dead-end to the Anglo-American family of football codes, a contribution that has remained unknown until now. If Dartmouth students ever considered playing a game against a team from another school, various explicit or assumed idiosyncracies in their game would have made such a meeting difficult: teams were unregulated in size, the kickoff was unidirectional and occurred from a particular non-central spot, and the field itself, although it measured a conventional 375 feet from goal to goal, was an astonishing 550 feet wide. The goals comprised the entire long sides of the field, and there were no goalkeepers.

Though the English rules of soccer and rugby were competing with, merging into, and diverging from local American games during the 1870s, Old Division did not seem to absorb much from them, and it almost certainly did not influence any of the prevailing codes of the period. Nor, importantly, did Dartmouth players switch to from their game to rugby when some inkling of that game came to Hanover during 1876. Instead, the Dartmouth game faded away gradually as students lost interest in it. Students allowed the rules to drop out altogether over time and eventually only a remnant of the Dartmouth

The title page photograph appeared in the article by Edwin J. Bartlett '72, “Mere Football,” *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 19, No. 1 (November 1926), 17, and is reprinted frequently.

¹ William A.C. Converse, “Parting Address,” in [Charles] Arms [Carleton], ed., “Class-Day Exercises of the Class of '57 in Dartmouth College, July 28th, 1857” (Northampton, Mass.: Arms, 1858), 49.

² The game is known as “Old Division Football,” though that name describes only one of several methods that students employed to divide themselves into teams for the Dartmouth game. Using the phrase “mob soccer” in the title to describe an early-nineteenth century game obviously is anachronistic, since “soccer” is the name of the game played by the Football Association, which did not form until 1863 in London.

³ Mark Bernstein in *Football: The Ivy League Origins of an American Obsession* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 23 n. 14, described the game as an “idiosyncratic hybrid of soccer and rugby,” which might explain how it looked but not where it came from.

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game remained, an annual free-form fight over a football. The last of these “Football Rushes” took place in 1948.

Inventing a set of rules for a local foot-ball game was the standard practice at boys’ schools of all kinds well into the latter half of the nineteenth century. From the Colonial period to the Civil War, Americans schoolboys played kicking games on town greens and in schoolyards.⁴ Homogeneous groups of young men who were undergoing periods of arbitrarily enforced idleness, such as college students, explorers,⁵ and soldiers (a 10th Vermont surgeon prescribed football for an alleged Civil War shirker)⁶ would play boys’ ball games as well.

One guide to college student customs of the 1850s indicated that kicking games already were well established, stating that “[f]or many years, the game of football has been the favorite amusement at some of the American colleges, during certain seasons of the year.”⁷ Each college had its traditional game following rules that were local and usually unwritten; in fact, students normally adopted as many as three different varieties of their local game over time, often playing more than one variety during a single year. First was the basic daily football itself, which the whole school played by dividing into teams by some simple system; second was the early-fall match between freshmen and sophomores, a game that originally could have obeyed the rules of ordinary football but whose basis in interclass rivalry caused it to develop a particular violence and encouraged students to continue it for decades beyond the fading of the daily game; and finally the “class rush,” eventually an annual fight that took the place of the freshman-sophomore match but lacked any rules barring handling the ball or kicking in the shins. Harvard, Yale, and other schools including Dartmouth followed this pattern.

Among the rules that Harvard upperclassmen enforced against freshmen during the eighteenth century was a ban on playing football in the College Yard, which implied that the school permitted football elsewhere. Upperclassmen required freshmen to supply footballs, bats, and balls in one 1741 set of rules.⁸ At some point, students began playing on the Delta, the triangular field that was the long-time home of student football in Cambridge and became the site of Memorial Hall after the Civil War. By the late 1820s, the annual freshman-sophomore match on the Delta was scheduled for the evening of the first Monday of the year and already was becoming a violent “football fight”⁹ known as

⁴ David Riesman and Reuel Denney, “Football in America: A Study in Culture Diffusion,” *American Quarterly* 3, Issue 4 (Winter 1951), 313.

⁵ “American Arctic Expedition,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* 4, No. 19 (December 1851), 20.

⁶ Lawrence W. Fielding, “War and Trifles: Sport in the Shadows of Civil War Army Life,” *Journal of Sport History* (1977), 155-156, citing Edwin M. Haynes, *A History of the 10th Regiment Vermont Volunteers* (Lewiston, Maine: The 10th Vermont Regiment Association, 1870), 26-27.

⁷ Benjamin Homer Hall, *A Collection of College Words and Customs* (1856 revised edition).

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Nathan Appleton, “Harvard College during the War of the Rebellion,” *New England Magazine* 4, no. 1 (March 1891), 10.

“Bloody Monday.”¹⁰ The authorities banned the annual fight during 1860,¹¹ but students kept on playing, sometimes without the ball. President Eliot ordered students to stop playing after he took office during 1869, but a smaller form of the game apparently survived, moving to Holmes Field by the mid-1870s,¹² and during 1876 Horace Scudder described what he called only a “mock foot-ball match”: “the point of the contest was in the opportunity which the better organized Sophomores had of making foot-balls of the Freshmen, who had not yet learned to tell friend from foe.”¹³ The contest faded from Harvard around 1917.¹⁴

Students at Yale also played football during the eighteenth century, as Charles Goodrich of the Yale class of 1797 wrote. The game probably was typical of contemporary college games elsewhere:

Foot-ball was our common sport, a[l]most every day in good weather and very often twice daily and I forget if more. We had three lines in front of the college buildings down to the road that crossed the Green by *two* meeting houses if I remember. Of the three lines the two outside were eight or ten rods apart. We would begin on the middle line and if the scholars were generally out on both sides, whenever the ball was driven over one of the outside lines, the party on that side were beaten, and the other party enjoyed the shouting. There was no delay of the game by choosing sides, the parties were divided by the buildings in which they severally roomed.¹⁵

Later rules permitted players to run with the ball, and by the early 1860s the Yale game, sometimes called “roughhouse football,”¹⁶ had changed to focus on running with the ball and trying to avoid being caught rather than simply kicking.¹⁷ As was typical, freshmen and sophomores were playing an annual match by the 1840s, a contest that

¹⁰ John T. Bethell, Richard M. Hunt, and Robert Shenton, *Harvard A to Z* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004), 111.

¹¹ PFRA [Professional Football Research Association] Research, “No Christian End! The Beginnings of Football in America,” at <http://www.footballresearch.com/articles/frpage.cfm?topic=c-to1870> (viewed 8 October 2005).

¹² Horace E. Scudder, “Harvard University,” *Scribners Monthly, an Illustrated Magazine for the People* 12, No. 3 (July 1876), 342.

¹³ Scudder.

¹⁴ Bethell, *et al.*

¹⁵ Anson Phelps Stokes, *Memorials of Eminent Yale Men: A Biographical Study of Student Life and University Influences during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, 2 vols. (New Haven, 1914), 1: 51-52; [and Edmund S. Morgan, *The Gentle Puritan: A Life of Ezra Stiles, 1727-1795* (New Haven, 1962), 367-368, 402-403] in Brooks Mather Kelley, *Yale: A History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1974), 106-107.

¹⁶ “Origin of Football and Its Derived Ball Games,” at <http://footballhistory0.tripod.com/> (viewed 8 October 2005).

¹⁷ Brooks Mather Kelley, 213, citing Stokes, Deming, and Blake. Kelley wrote on 510 n. 14 that the rule against football in the yard was repeated in the *Laws of Yale College* almost without change from at least 1774 through 1870.

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eventually became a scrapping “rush”¹⁸ and elicited a faculty ban, this one during 1857¹⁹ or 1860.²⁰ Because Yale College did not permit playing in the college yard, the game always took place on the New Haven Green, and the town also came to ban disturbances, including football, during the late 1850s. Students apparently moved the game elsewhere, and an 1862 description of an annual game had the sophomores accepting a freshman challenge: “And thus, with much noise and dispute, and great confounding of umpire, they continue for three, four, or five games, or until the evening chapel-bell calls to prayers.”²¹ The game was revived during 1870 and continued as a rush into the 1880s.²²

Other schools had similar games. At Princeton, students were playing “Ballown”²³ next to Nassau Hall²⁴ by 1820.²⁵ The game, as at other schools, permitted batting the ball with the fists.²⁶ Residents of East College played those of West College, members of the Whig Hall literary society played those of Clio Hall, or those with last names beginning with A through L played those whose names began with M through Z.²⁷ Students apparently were organizing intramural tournaments by the 1840s²⁸ and during the 1850s began playing against the adjacent Princeton Theological Seminary,²⁹ though after the Civil War, matches more often followed the typical pairing of classes in the college.³⁰ Brown University students played an interclass game that the school president banned during 1862 but that students later restarted.³¹ Amherst also had a ball game;³² Columbia students were playing football by 1824; and students at the University of Pennsylvania were playing local high school teams by the 1840s.³³ At Cornell University, which

¹⁸ Richard M. Hurd, “American College Athletics. II. Yale University,” *Outing* 13, No. 5 (February 1889), 404.

¹⁹ Kelley, 213, citing William L. Kingsley, ed., *Yale College, A Sketch of Its History* (New York, 1879), 1: 126; Hofstadter and Smith, *American Higher Education*, 1: 306-307.

²⁰ Walter Camp and Lorin F. Deland, *Football*, quoted in Riesman and Denney, 313.

²¹ Hurd, 408; “American Student Life,” *Continental Monthly* 2, No. 3 (September 1862), 271.

²² Hurd, 404, 408.

²³ “Origin of Football and Its Derived Ball Games.”

²⁴ Bernstein, 5.

²⁵ PFRA Research, “No Christian End!”

²⁶ “College Football: Its Beginnings,” *Bobcats-Tickets.com*, at http://www.bobcats-tickets.com/college_football_tickets.htm (viewed 8 October 2005).

²⁷ Alexander Leitch, *A Princeton Companion* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), available at <http://etc.princeton.edu/CampusWWW/Companion/football.html> (viewed 8 December 2004).

²⁸ Dave Litterer, “An Overview of American Soccer History,” The American Soccer History Archives, at http://www.livesportsaction.com/college_football_betting.html (viewed 8 October 2005).

²⁹ Mel Smith, “What’s in a Game of Early Football?,” *College Football Historical Society Newsletter* 15, No. 3 (May 2003), 13.

³⁰ Leitch.

³¹ Martha Mitchell, *Encyclopedia Brunoniana* (1993), available at http://www.brown.edu/Administration/News_Bureau/Databases/Encyclopedia/search.php?serial=F0200 (viewed 8 October 2005).

³² Litterer, “An Overview of American Soccer History.”

³³ Bernstein, 5.

opened in 1869, teams of between 20 and a whole class soon played a kicking game between goals about 250 yards apart. The ball started at the center of the field and the players rushed in to kick it, with the best three out of five goals winning. Interclass matches again were a favored form of the game.³⁴ During 1870, Cornell students even demonstrated their game to Thomas Hughes, author of the rugby-popularizing novel *Tom Brown's School Days*.³⁵ What distinguishes games of Cornell and the other schools is that students from one college did not normally play against those of others, and they certainly did not select a 'varsity team made up of the best players from every division within a university to send against a similar squad from another school.

The intramural nature of local football also distinguished it from boating and baseball, which had become venues for intercollegiate competition in the U.S. by 1852 and 1859, respectively. Boating benefited from simple rules, and baseball literally followed boating's example, as students began to hold baseball meets as part of the festivities surrounding existing regattas. The local inertia of schoolboy football, in contrast, kept it from being a natural choice for intercollegiate competition for several decades. The result was similar in Britain, where the codes of football rules were much better-developed but nonetheless did not initially lend themselves to inter-school play.

Dartmouth, too, had its own variety of football, a local kicking game played with a round ball by unlimited but usually equal undergraduate sides. Students played daily games and also held one or more annual freshman-sophomore matches. The elementary rules of the Dartmouth game did not require or demonstrate much evolution over time, and most of the rules would not have been out of place during the eighteenth century. During 1871, students codified the rules they were using at the moment and added a few more, creating a code that is reprinted at the end of this paper. Though Old Division did not last into the twentieth century, one vestige of the annual match lasted until 1948, after which students replaced it with a tug-of-war.

³⁴ G.H. Lohmes, "Athletics at Cornell," *Outing* 15, No. 6 (March 1890), 458.

³⁵ Lohmes on 452 noted that Hughes, who was an M.P., gave a boating talk, while Bernstein on 24 noted that the students demonstrated their game to a visiting M.P.

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A Reconstruction of Old Division Football

The Field of Play

Old Division had only one field of play, the Dartmouth Green.³⁶ Initially called the Common and later the Campus, the Green was a typical large rectangular New England town green, with a row of college buildings along one side and houses and shops around the others. Students played football across the Green in the narrow direction, making for extremely distant sidelines that gave vast amounts of room for flanking maneuvers.

Perhaps uniquely, the Green was the property of the college rather than the town and thus was not public property, though it gave the appearance of a civic space. The College began clearing the tall pines from the Green soon after the institution opened during 1770,³⁷ before the surrounding village of Hanover had developed. During 1771, a surveyor, probably Jonathan Freeman, laid out the central plot that the college trustees voted should be “opened for a Green.”³⁸ Laborers finished burning and removing the standing timber from the Green during 1772.³⁹

Several flaws in the field would have made games difficult during the 1770s. The Green was cluttered with tree stumps, and for several years leading up to 1820, the school apparently expected each class to remove one stump.⁴⁰ The playing field also was littered with cow patties, and Samuel Swift '00 later wrote:

The college common was not enclosed or in any way ornamented with trees or shrubbery but was used especially in the night for yarding all the village cows. Whoever undertook to cross the common, especially in the night, was liable to soil his boots.⁴¹

The field sloped downward slightly to the southeast corner, an area that was wetter than the rest of the Green.⁴² In addition, the town laid its Main Street across the Green by 1775, aligning it diagonally from southwest to northeast.⁴³ The college built several

³⁶ Robert Fletcher, “Hanover Scenes in Word Pictures Sixty Years Ago” Part 3, “Town Meetings and Travel,” *The Hanover Gazette* (22 March 1934), 1.

³⁷ Chase *History of Dartmouth College and the Town of Hanover, N.H. (to 1815)* (Brattleboro, Vt.: Vermont Printing Co., 1928), 225.

³⁸ John King Lord, *A History of the Town of Hanover, New Hampshire* (Hanover, N.H.: The Dartmouth Press, 1928), 22.

³⁹ Chase, 230.

⁴⁰ Clyde Edward Dankert, “Dartmouth College and Dartmouth University” [typewritten MS] (1979), citing *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* (June 1937), 13.

⁴¹ Francis Lane Childs, “Town and Gown,” in Childs, ed., *Hanover, New Hampshire: A Bicentennial Book* (Hanover, N.H.: Town of Hanover, 1961), 265.

⁴² J.K. Lord (1928), 23

⁴³ Childs (1961), 267

structures on the Green as well, placing its first two principal buildings (1770-1771), near the southeast corner of the space.⁴⁴

The school's president and faculty frowned on games of all sorts, and president Eleazar Wheelock wrote during 1771:

In order that the channel of their diversions may be turned from that which is puerile, such as playing with balls, bowls, and other ways of diversion, as have been necessarily gone into by students in other places, for want of an opportunity to exercise themselves in that which is more useful, . . . it is earnestly recommended . . . that they turn the course of their diversions and exercises for their health, to the practice of some manual arts, or cultivation of gardens and other lands at the proper hours of leisure.⁴⁵

The college's first code of "Laws and Regulations" (1775)⁴⁶ did not mention games, however.

By the end of the eighteenth century, students found the Green sufficient for games of various types. The two largest buildings on the Green were demolished during 1789 and 1791, freeing up most of the full rectangle. By 1793, students were using their allotted leisure time⁴⁷ to play cricket.⁴⁸ By the 1820s, students also apparently reported that they were playing football on the Green,⁴⁹ and during 1824 the village officials explicitly authorized

the playing at ball or any game in which ball is used on the public common in front of Dartmouth College, set apart by the Trustees thereof among the purposes for a playground for their students.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ Dick Hoefnagel with Virginia L. Close, *Eleazar Wheelock and the Adventurous Founding of Dartmouth College* (Hanover, N.H.: Hanover Historical Society, 2002), 47.

⁴⁵ Eleazar Wheelock, quoted in Wilder Dwight Quint, *The Story of Dartmouth College* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1914), 246. Hoefnagel and Close on 25, 33, and 68 cite Wheelock's words in *A Continuation of the Narrative* (1771).

⁴⁶ Hoefnagel and Close, 74-75.

⁴⁷ John Ledyard, petition of the freshman and sophomore classes (November 1772), quoted in Hoefnagel and Close, 70.

⁴⁸ Kenneth C. Cramer, "Notes from the Special Collections: Anyone for Cricket?", *Dartmouth College Library Bulletin* (November 1992), available at http://www.dartmouth.edu/~library/Library_Bulletin/Nov1992/LB-N92-KCramer2.html (viewed 7 December 2004). A 1793 engraving delineated by Josiah Dunham '89 may be the earliest visual depiction of cricket in the U.S.

⁴⁹ Leon Burr Richardson, *History of Dartmouth College* (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth College Publications, 1932), I: 381, referring to the *Memorial of the Class of 1827* (1869). Edwin J. Bartlett, in "Mere Football," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 19, No. 1 (November 1926), 17, put the origin of the game during the 1830s. Albert Perkins Tibbets '07n in "Football at Dartmouth," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 7, No. 7 (May 1915), 259, concluded that the game probably began during the 1840s since he could find no earlier mention.

⁵⁰ J.K. Lord (1928), 23. The term "ball" may have referred to a bat-and-ball game by default, as distinguished from "foot-ball."

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During 1836, workers put rough granite posts around the Green and bolted up the iconic two-rail fence, having the immediate effect of ending vehicle travel across the Green and the incidental effect of clarifying the bounds of the football pitch. The college's football ground then measured about 375 feet between the goals and 550 feet between the sidelines. For comparison, the Cambridge Rules of football (1848) and their descendant Football Association Rules (1863) limited the pitch to 600 long by 300 feet wide, played in the long direction.⁵¹ The Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873), an American descendant of the F.A. rules, would require a ground of 400 by 250 feet.⁵²

Football on the Green was recognized as a popular game by the early 1820s.⁵³ Peter Thacher Washburn '35⁵⁴ and future college president Samuel Colcord Bartlett '36 played the game during the early 1830s. Bartlett wrote:

“Consequently all the college joined in it every fair day. And a very picturesque and exciting game they made it. Now in a long array, now in solid knots, now in scattering groups, and now sweeping like a cyclone, with its runners even more effective than its rushers.”⁵⁵

President Bartlett's son, Professor Edwin J. Bartlett '72, a student rulemaker for the Dartmouth game and later its historian, provided a similar picture during his time as a student (1868-1872):

Football was simplicity itself. You ran all over the campus, and when, as, and if you got a chance you kicked a round rubber ball to the east or to the west. You might run all the afternoon and not get your toe upon the ball, but you could not deny that you had had a fair chance, and the exercise was yours and could be valued by the number of hot rolls consumed at the evening meal.... It was glorious for exercise, and had enough excitement to make it highly interesting. It gave ample opportunity for competitions in speed, finesse, dodging, endurance, and occasional personal collision.⁵⁶

(Edwin Bartlett also would come to recommend that students take up the sport of soccer as an appetite-inducing daily game during 1912.⁵⁷)

Goals

The two goal zones of Old Division Football were easy to see and aim for, since they comprised the entirety of the long ends of the field.⁵⁸ The goals were thus about 22 times

⁵¹ Cambridge Rules (1848) and Football Association Rules (1863), in Tony Brown, “The Early Rules of Soccer” (2003), at <http://asktheref.com/html/article060500.htm> (viewed 1 December 2004).

⁵² Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

⁵³ Richardson I: 381, referencing the *Memorial of the Class of 1827* (1869).

⁵⁴ Peter T. Washburn, quoted in Richardson II: 493.

⁵⁵ Samuel Colcord Bartlett, “Early College Sports,” in John Henry Bartlett and John Pearl Gifford, *Dartmouth Athletics* (1893), 7.

⁵⁶ Edwin J. Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance: Pen and Camera Sketches of Hanover and the College Before the Centennial and After* (Hanover, N.H.: The Webster Press, 1922), 22.

⁵⁷ Edwin J. Bartlett, letter to the editor of *The Dartmouth* 34 (2 November 1912), 2.

⁵⁸ Edwin J. Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance*; Hill, ed., 267; Richardson II: 492.

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wider than the 25-foot dimension that the I.C.F. rules of 1873 eventually mandated.⁵⁹ Such wide goals were too large for any goalkeeper to defend and did not require any vertical posts to aid in determining when someone had scored through the air, as in English football. One team simply would try to kick the ball east into College Street, while the other would aim west toward Main Street.⁶⁰ A later account confirmed that the ball simply had to touch the ground outside the east or west fence of the Green to count as a goal.⁶¹

Foul Lines

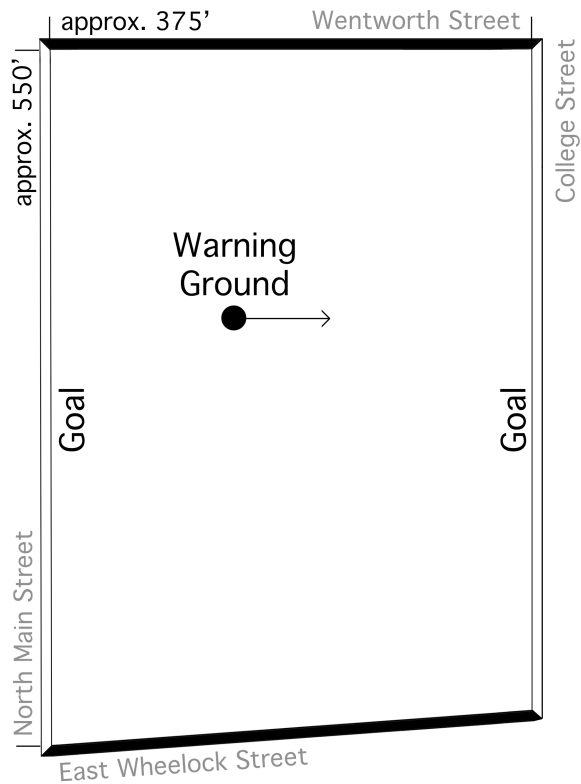
The Dartmouth Rules had no concept of the ball being “behind” the goal, as in the Cambridge and Football Association Rules.⁶² The narrow north and south sides of the Green were essentially the only sidelines.

Changes in Form over Time

Over its first sixty or more years, the only change in the bounds of Dartmouth’s pitch was a slight adjustment to its southern sideline. During 1873, the college permitted the village to realign Wheelock Street across the bottom of the Green, eliminating a jog at the College Street intersection.⁶³ The new alignment required the village to move the fence northward, leaving a sliver of the Green in the middle of the widened Wheelock Street; students hastily destroyed the fence before paying to rebuild it. This change from a regular rectangle made the eastern goal slightly narrower than the western goal, but it did not appear to have any effect on how students played football.

William Edward Cushman ’83 gave a “Campus Oration” on the subject of the Green, saying:

This Campus of nearly five acres, is



The Green from 1873 onward (author).

⁵⁹ Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

⁶⁰ F. William Andres and Ernest Roberts, “Wearers of the Green,” in Ralph Nading Hill, ed., *College on the Hill* (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth Publications, 1964), 267.

⁶¹ Tibbetts, 259.

⁶² Cambridge Rules (1848) and Football Association Rules (1863), in Tony Brown.

⁶³ Childs (1961), 267

one of the institutions of which we of Dartmouth can truly boast. We place it first in the list of College campi. We shall not be disputed, if we assert that by promoting [character and health], the Campus performs as important a function as any other single institution in the College course.⁶⁴

A national map company's 1884 map of Hanover likewise described the Green with the legend "Campus / Students' Playground."⁶⁵

The College removed the fence from around the Green during 1893.⁶⁶ Evidence of student disappointment at the removal of their football boundaries has not turned up, and it is not clear that the game required the fence at all, although it probably would have kept defenders from going out of bounds to return a disputed goal. Students ask the school to re-erect a short section of the fence as a place for conversation and singing, and the school initially placed a "Senior Fence" on the east side of the Green. Also during 1893, alumni built a new athletic park on farmland one block to the southeast of the Green. Students moved their intercollegiate contests to the new park, including both baseball and American Football. The move left the Green available for less-formal interclass games of baseball and Old Division Football.

The Ball

Using a round ball⁶⁷ rather than an ovoid ball was a natural choice for students, who had access to the standard inflated animal bladder in a round leather case.⁶⁸ Students switched to a ball of the same design with a rubber bladder during the early 1850s,⁶⁹ a change in technology that required players to reorient the field temporarily.

Charles Goodyear's 1838 process for vulcanizing rubber, which he patented during 1844 and then introduced into footballs around 1855,⁷⁰ revolutionized a variety of sports. The Goodyear process created tennis balls whose rubber cores made them bouncy enough to play on grass courts and, as football historian Mel Smith wrote, enabled players of indigenous football games along the East Coast to shift from a pure-power kicking game

⁶⁴ Cushman, 21

⁶⁵ Sanborn Map Co., Map of Hanover, N.H. (November 1884), map 1.

⁶⁶ Richardson, II: 681

⁶⁷ Edwin J. Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance*, 22.

⁶⁸ Bartlett and Gifford, 3.

⁶⁹ *Id.*, 4; Quint, *Story of Dartmouth*, 246-247. Quint's description of the shift to a rubber ball is easy to read as a statement that *all* football ended during 1850, though that is not what he meant.

⁷⁰ PFRA, "No Christian End!" The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities still owns a ball from this era that a schoolboy team used during 1863 games on Boston Common according to National Soccer Hall of Fame, "Charles Goodyear's Soccer Ball," at <http://www.soccerballworld.com/Oldestball.htm> (viewed 7 December 2004). Vulcanized rubber is not the same as the natural rubber or gutta percha, which was introduced into golf balls around the same time.

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to a kind of football that valued dribbling and finer control.⁷¹ Princeton students, for example, acquired the new ball during 1858 and saw dribbling take off,⁷² while the University of Toronto saw the ball make its mark during the early 1860s.⁷³ The U.S. college I.C.F. Rules (1873) specified that the challenging side supply a No. 6-sized ball that would be kept by the winner;⁷⁴ the No. 6 was a 30-inch round rubber-bladdered ball that the London Football Association also used.⁷⁵

Dartmouth players started using a rubber ball during the 1850s⁷⁶ and discovered that it would travel much farther than the old ball. The strongest players could even send it from the kickoff over the goal line and into the yard in front of Dartmouth Hall:

The modern rubber ball ... was found at first too light for the sturdy muscles of Lord and Bell and Johnson, who were able to land it at a single kick from the warning ground, westerly of the centre of the Common, quite over the eastern fence, and into the college yard.⁷⁷

In response, students began to play the game in the long direction, making the north and south sides of the Green into the new goals.⁷⁸ This reorientation lasted only a short time, however, and students were able to return to east-west play after the “champions consented to restrain themselves” on each kickoff, as John Henry Bartlett ’94 and John Pearl Gifford ’94 wrote – a rule that sounds implausible, but might have required only the initial kick to stay in bounds.

Older students required the freshmen to provide the ball for each interclass match, and the upperclassmen began to take pride in stealing the ball at end of each game in order to force the freshmen to buy a ball for the next match.⁷⁹ A senior wrote of his freshman year, 1853-1854:

According to the *mos majorum* we furnished footballs for the college, and occasionally, with a most praiseworthy philanthropy, we permitted our own *bodies* and *limbs* to be used as substitutes, in this way taking great *pains* to furnish amusement for the upper classes.⁸⁰

⁷¹ Smith, “The Audacity of Toronto,” *College Football Historical Society Newsletter* 16, No. 4 (August 2003), 20.

⁷² Smith, “What’s in a Game of Early Football?”, 13.

⁷³ Smith, “The Audacity of Toronto,” 19.

⁷⁴ Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

⁷⁵ Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

⁷⁶ Bartlett and Gifford, 3-4. The authors might be referring to Nathan Lord ’51, George ’51 or John Bell ’52, and Osgood Johnson ’52.

⁷⁷ Bartlett and Gifford, 4.

⁷⁸ *Id.*, 13.

⁷⁹ Richardson II: 492.

⁸⁰ Daniel A. Crosby, “Chronicles,” in [Charles] Arms [Carleton], ed., “Class-Day Exercises of the Class of ’57 in Dartmouth College, July 28th, 1857” (Northampton, Mass.: Arms, 1858), 30.

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Supplying new balls was not only costly for freshmen⁸¹ but was demeaning, which was its main purpose. By the 1860s, freshmen were being “bawled-out” when they were slow in furnishing a ball,⁸² a spectacle that one alumnus described in his account of the early weeks of September, 1862. One day the sophomores ordered the freshmen to hand over money for a dozen new footballs, and then:

Two or three days later the “Sophomores” came on the campus and shouted, “Football! Football! Pende! (pay over) Fresh.” So we dribbled out a football, and as time led on, we gradually used them up in many bulldog sorts of games, with the bodies of sixty boys mixed together on the grass for an hour of brutality.⁸³

For the large annual freshman-sophomore game, which everyone expected to result in a fight or “rush” for the football, the upperclassmen bellowed a traditional chant of “Foot-ball, Freshie!”⁸⁴ Even local residents picked up the chant, according to one account of the 1874 game: “Thursday night, when the fatigues of the day were over, the annual cry of ‘Foot-ball, Freshie! O, Freshie, trout [sic] out a ball,’ was made by Sophomores and townies.”⁸⁵ At the match of the following year, one freshman related that “we were surprised – as it were terrified – by the sudden outburst of many voices; after attentively listening we were able to distinguish ‘F-o-o-t-b-a-l-l,’ ‘Rush, Rush,’ ‘Go in Freshie,’ and before we had time to calculate the consequences ... in we went.”⁸⁶ Wilder D. Quint ’87 described a freshman’s experience from his era similarly: “He heard a wail from out the gathering gloom / Of ‘football, Freshie; Oh, bring out your ball.’ / And, answering to that kindly caterwaul / He joined the shaky army of his class[.]”⁸⁷ George Williams Boutelle ’93 wrote of the 1889 match: “Who of us will ever forget those terrible cries of ‘Foot-ball Freshie’ piercing the cool evening air, sending the hot blood tingling through all our veins[?]”⁸⁸ In 1901, “‘Football Freshie’ was the challenge we heard on the opening night of our college life. Some of the wise ones had told us just how to win the rush.”⁸⁹

As a frequent public disturbance, the noise of hundreds of students yelling for a football became one of the main aspects of the game to come under regulation by faculty. Historian Leon Burr Richardson ’00, reviewing the minutes of faculty meetings, wrote that “[t]he inability of the upper classes to ‘cease from the loud and annoying cry for the

⁸¹ Prof. Edwin J. Bartlett, “Mere Football,” *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 19, No. 1 (November 1926), 18.

⁸² Edwin J. Bartlett, “Mere Football,” 18.

⁸³ James Alfred Spalding, [autobiography], excerpted in William Leland Holt, ed., “The College in the Sixties,” *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 32, No. 4 (January 1940), 41.

⁸⁴ “Editorial Notes,” *The Dartmouth* 4, no 9 (October 1870), 351.

⁸⁵ Walter Brown, “Chronicles,” *1878 Class Day Book* (1878), 27.

⁸⁶ John H. Card, “Chronicles,” *1879 Class Day Book* (1879), 31.

⁸⁷ Quint, “The Iron and the Gold” (1907), printed in “Dartmouth Night,” *Dartmouth Bi-Monthly* 3, No. 1 (October 1907), 26.

⁸⁸ George Williams Boutelle, “Address at the New Athletic Field,” *Class Day Book of 1893* (1893), 34.

⁸⁹ Alexander Rockwood Maynard, “Class history,” *Class Day Book of 1905* (1905), 27

football,' which the freshmen, by college tradition, were required to furnish, was highly disturbing to the cloistered quiet of the academic town."⁹⁰

The Number of Players and Their Sides

The number of players on an Old Division side was unlimited,⁹¹ with participants giving rhetorical examples of one, thirty,⁹² fifty,⁹³ sixty,⁹⁴ and a hundred or more players per side.⁹⁵ One historian of athletics described "the grand old game of foot-ball" as "the free, joyous, and exhilarating pursuit of the ball all over the Green by every student, according to the measure of his inclination and powers."⁹⁶ Because football was not "among the methods of modern warfare... any young man five feet in height, and who should have mastered the other requisites for admission to West Point, was capable of joining in"⁹⁷ according to Samuel Colcord Bartlett '36. Edwin Bartlett '72 emphasized the game's formal malleability: "[t]he game was played by two or by two hundred.... [S]ome dropped out, others dropped in."⁹⁸ One member of the class of 1876, comparing the game to rugby, wrote that the indigenous "[f]ootball was a more or less informal game in which an unlimited number of players took part. Intensive training was unknown."⁹⁹

The teams drew their players from among the undergraduates of Dartmouth College and the college's later Chandler Scientific School (1852, absorbed 1892), which meant that the maximum size of a team changed considerably over the years, especially as the institutions grew.¹⁰⁰ Between 1800 and 1815, the maximum side averaged about 75 men;¹⁰¹ by the 1840s, the maximum side was about 150;¹⁰² by 1895, the maximum side was around 175 men.¹⁰³ Numbers began to go up rapidly at the end of the century, with

⁹⁰ Richardson, II: 555.

⁹¹ Tibbetts, 259.

⁹² Spalding, 41.

⁹³ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Mere Football," 17.

⁹⁴ Spalding.

⁹⁵ Edwin J. Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance*; Hill, ed., 267.

⁹⁶ Bartlett and Gifford, 3.

⁹⁷ Samuel Colcord Bartlett, "Early College Sports," in Bartlett and Gifford, 7.

⁹⁸ Edwin J. Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance*, 22.

⁹⁹ Samuel Merrill, "The Class of 1876 Fifty Years After," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 18, No. 8 (June 1926), 694.

¹⁰⁰ Students of the adjoining land-grant school, New Hampshire College (1868-1892), also might have played, but their prohibition from some Dartmouth activities and differences in their daily schedule probably disfavored their playing; at any rate their enrollments were not as large as those of the College.

¹⁰¹ Richardson, I: 240

¹⁰² "The College and the Church," *New Englander and Yale Review* 11, no. 44 (November 1853), 603.

¹⁰³ "The University World: Dartmouth," *American University Magazine* 1, No. 4 (February 1895), 479.

maximum sides of 364 by 1899 and nearly 400 by 1900,¹⁰⁴ numbers that probably never played together but could have if they had wanted. The I.C.F. Rules (1873), in comparison, would adopt the decade-old F.A. limit of 20 players per side.¹⁰⁵

Old Division Football mandated a variety of methods of selecting sides over its existence, usually with more than one method available at any given time.¹⁰⁶

I. Old Division Football (Freshmen & Juniors vs. Sophomores & Seniors)

As a method of dividing into sides that was perceived to be old, the name of this type of match came to stand for the Dartmouth game as a whole.¹⁰⁷ To divide students into sides by the old division simply meant to separate them based on the classes to which they belonged, with even-numbered class years forming one team and odd-numbered years the other:

The traditional division necessarily called into the game every student in college, for the most common contests were played according to “Old Division” (later known as “Whole Division”), bringing seniors and sophomores against juniors and freshmen[.]¹⁰⁸

During 1874, the school paper reported an Old Division match: “Foot-ball is in order just at present. Forty-two Seniors and Sophs, in a series of games on the afternoon of the 7th, beat an equal number of Juniors and Freshmen very neatly three games in succession, thereby winning the match.”¹⁰⁹ The old division played up the friction between the classes, and Edwin Bartlett noted that students sometimes used other divisions in order “to avoid the excessive tension of the Old Division Football (often called Whole Division) game, which was Seniors and Sophomores vs. Juniors and Freshmen.”¹¹⁰ (Albert Perkins Tibbets ’07n wrote in 1915 that Old Division was “incorrectly called ‘Whole Division’ in the last years of the game.”¹¹¹)

The Old Division form of the Dartmouth game appears to have faded by 1890. Harlan Page, who entered during the fall of 1875 and remained through his freshman year, was still able to be especially active in the frequent Old Division Football matches,¹¹² and classmate Clifford H. Smith ’79 wrote home that “I roll at ten pins some, and kick foot ball most every day.”¹¹³ An engraving published in 1884 appeared to show a mass of

¹⁰⁴ “Fayerweather Hall, Dartmouth’s New Dormitory,” *Inter-State Journal* 2, No. 1 (November 1900). By 1926, in comparison, there were 2,015 undergraduates according to “College Enrollment Grows Beyond Desired Limits,” *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 19, No. 1 (November 1926), 40.

¹⁰⁵ Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

¹⁰⁶ Bartlett and Gifford, 3.

¹⁰⁷ Quint, for example, generalized in his *History of Dartmouth*, 246-247, that “[f]ootball of the ‘Old Division Football,’ free-for-all, ‘kick-as-kick-can’ style flourished for many years.”

¹⁰⁸ *Id.*

¹⁰⁹ “Dartmouth Items,” *The Dartmouth* 8, No. 9 (November 1874), 349.

¹¹⁰ Edwin J. Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance*, 15.

¹¹¹ Tibbets, 259.

¹¹² Necrology, Rev. Harlan Page, *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 23, No. 6 (April 1931), 422.

¹¹³ Clifford H. Smith ’79 to mother and sister (2 October 1875), quoted in Hill, ed., 225.

students playing the game.¹¹⁴ Yet according to a lament of 1886, interest in the daily game was fading, a victim of an interest in tennis:

To the door of lawn tennis we may lay the gradual degeneration of the good old game of football, which has so long been a feature at Dartmouth. Three years ago the Frater and social games were the chief sport of the cool, breezy fall days; but now, alas! the game has become no more than a cheap imitation of Rugby, kept alive not for itself, but for the convenient opportunity afforded for the meeting of Sophomores and Freshmen. Many of the rules have been forgotten, the good “kick[er]s” are dropping out each year, and in five years more the game will have passed entirely away, to be recalled only as a tradition by gray-haired men.¹¹⁵

Bartlett and Gifford, who arrived as freshmen in 1890, wrote that the game was played “till very lately.”¹¹⁶ As late as 1912, the newspaper described the “aimless kicking contests that crowd the campus”¹¹⁷ (probably not a reference to soccer, since Professor Bartlett was proposing that students begin playing soccer at the time), but no later reference has appeared.

II. *Social Friends vs. United Fraternity*

One late-nineteenth century writer on the Dartmouth game explained that “[a] second division was ‘between the two all-inclusive literary societies, ‘Social Friends’ and ‘United Fraters.’”¹¹⁸ These groups were the dominant student clubs before the 1840s, the Society of Social Friends (1783) and its offshoot the United Fraternity (1786). The groups competed for new inductees among the members of each entering class,¹¹⁹ and as early as 1790 they had to draw up joint rules to regulate their rivalrous selections. Their competition for members caused the school “extensive detriment,” and the College took over the selection process permanently during 1815 by assigning alternate names to a pool of potential members for each society to choose from. During 1825, the faculty eliminated any remaining choice and began to assign every freshman directly and automatically to one or the other society.¹²⁰ The groups obtained corporate charters from the New Hampshire Legislature during 1826 (UF) and 1827 (SF)¹²¹ and they remained rivals until the mid-nineteenth century.¹²²

By the 1860s, the groups’ main function seems to have been to manage their libraries, which together were larger than the library of the College and much more useful to

¹¹⁴ B.B. Vallentine, “Dartmouth College,” *The Manhattan* 3, No. 3 (March 1884), 200.

¹¹⁵ *Dartmouth Literary Monthly* (October 1886), reprinted in *Aegis* 1926 (1926), 486.

¹¹⁶ Bartlett and Gifford, 3.

¹¹⁷ Editor, *The Dartmouth* 34 (2 November 1912), 2

¹¹⁸ Bartlett and Gifford, 12.

¹¹⁹ Baxter Perry Smith, *The History of Dartmouth College* (Boston: 1878), 85.

¹²⁰ Harding, 36 citing John King Lord, *A History of Dartmouth College 1815-1901* (1913), 515.

¹²¹ Smith, 140

¹²² “Secret Societies,” *The Dartmouth* 1, No. 6 (June 1867), 226.

students.¹²³ Football, however, continued to depend on the College's automatic annual assignment of members to each society, a connection that Edwin Bartlett indicated in his description of the game during his student days (1868-1872):

The United Fraternity, known as Fraters, and the Social Friends were still active organizations, and all freshmen were assigned to one or the other by alphabetical alternation. Thus they kicked football upon the campus[.]¹²⁴

Bartlett also wrote that:

You ran all over the campus, and when, as, and if you got a chance you kicked a round rubber ball to the east or to the west.... You always knew in which direction to kick because you were bound to know whether you were a Frater or a Social.¹²⁵

By merging their by-then joint society library with the library of the college during 1874,¹²⁶ the societies left themselves with almost no reason to exist. Yet the College kept assigning incoming students to one or the other group, as Charles Merrill Hough '79 recalled:

During the whole of my course the Social Friends and the United Fraternity existed, so far as I knew or ever heard, solely for the purpose of forming a convenient division of the College into two approximately equal bodies of men who played football against each other. I became a "member" of the Social Friends (so far as I ever knew) by finding my name, with an "S" after it, posted on the Bulletin Board in front of the chapel during the first fortnight of my first Freshman term.¹²⁷

The Fraters vs. Socials division appeared frequently in descriptions of football, recurred as late as 1886.¹²⁸ It was also described as the typical alternative to Old Division.¹²⁹ The two societies would not disband officially until 1905.¹³⁰

III. New Hampshire vs. the World

Bartlett and Gifford '94s, describing the game before 1893, wrote that "[a]nother favorite division of later years put New Hampshire against the world, in which the New Hampshire boys were usually quite able to hold their own."¹³¹ Most accounts of the game do not mention this division. The number of New Hampshire students varied over time,

¹²³ Harding, 268, 42, 47, citing Society of Social Friends, *Constitution and Laws of the Social Friends, in Dartmouth College, amended and adopted Nov. 13, 1861* (Hanover: Dartmouth Press, 1862), 3, 9.

¹²⁴ Edwin J. Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance*, 15.

¹²⁵ *Id.*, 22. The formative English football codes also typically ignored uniforms, except for the red and blue flannel caps required by the 1857 Sheffield Rules as printed in Tony Brown.

¹²⁶ Smith 161, 182.

¹²⁷ Harding, 263-264, citing Charles M. Hough to M.D. Bisbee (9 November 1901).

¹²⁸ *Dartmouth Literary Monthly* (October 1886), reprinted in *Aegis 1926* (1926), 486.

¹²⁹ Tibbetts, 259; Eugene Olin Locke, "Football Was a Simple Matter in Those Days," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 22, No. 2 (December 1929), 115.

¹³⁰ *The Dartmouth* 24 (29 May 1903): 517; Quint, *History of Dartmouth*, 171.

¹³¹ Bartlett and Gifford, 3.

but never was more than a minority. During the fall of 1868, for example, New Hampshire students made up about forty percent of students.¹³² Among the 103 freshman of 1894-1895, some 28 were from New Hampshire.¹³³

IV. The Usual Game of Foot-Ball (Freshmen vs. Sophomores)

Students singled out a small number of their football meetings each year for special treatment: instead of the casual daily all-school football of the rest of the fall and spring, this game was just between the freshmen and sophomores. Such a match could erupt when the upperclassmen walked out of an Old Division match for just that purpose:

[I]mmediately after supper, would cries would be heard of 'Football, Freshie, continued until, under the tutelage of their Junior allies, the Freshmen produced the Ball; it was the old style rubber one, blown up with a key, and was put in play, *Whole Divisions* taking part. As daylight faded the cry would arise, 'Seniors and Juniors out!' and the contest remained with the two lower classes.¹³⁴

The game also came about when one side offered a formal challenge. Juniors editing the 1859 class *Aegis* wrote:

Our Freshmen brethren have, but recently, distinguished themselves for 'moral courage' in declining the kind invitation extended to them by the Sophomores, to allow their limbs to be used for football; and future sons of Dartmouth will, undoubtedly, soon listen to the traditionary romances of College life, with the same eager interest with which we now listen to Europe's days of valor; while our esteemed Professors will bless forever the decline of College chivalry.¹³⁵

During the fall of 1864, the freshmen experienced a few weeks of ordinary matches before

about the middle of the term the grand match game came off. Hughes was stationed on the left, and kept his position faithfully during the whole game, which lasted about fifteen minutes. Having been "triumphantly" defeated, we left the field, magnanimously cheering for the victors.¹³⁶

Because interclass tension created a natural affinity between freshmen and juniors, members of the junior class would train and advise the freshmen for their big match against the sophomores. During the fall of 1877, for example, the juniors and freshmen played a practice match in which the juniors won the first, third, and fifth of five games. "After this, 'whole-division' was called for, and '78 and '80 won three straight

¹³² Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance*, 12.

¹³³ "The University World: Dartmouth," *American University Magazine* 1, No. 4 (February 1895), 481.

¹³⁴ Locke, 115.

¹³⁵ *Aegis 1859* (ca. 1858), reprinted in *Aegis 1926* (1926), 485.

¹³⁶ F.C. Hathaway, "Chronicles," in "Exercises of Class Day at Dartmouth College, July 21, 1868" (Claremont, N.H.: 1868), 17.

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games.”¹³⁷ Quint ’87 also wrote of a junior coaching a freshman by encouraging him to get in the game.¹³⁸

The sophomore class, though often smaller than the freshman class, typically won the Usual Game through superior teamwork and experience. The sophomores beat the freshmen in just four minutes during the fall of 1871, for example, and then they challenged the juniors, who refused to play.¹³⁹ During the fall of 1873, *The Dartmouth* reported that “[t]he customary games of foot-ball have been played. The superior skill and discipline of the Sophomores was attended with a victory after a sharp contest.”¹⁴⁰ The following year, “[t]he usual game of Foot Ball, between the Sophomores and Freshmen” was not much of a spectacle, as ’77 won two straight games — the first lasting less than one minute, the second six minutes.”¹⁴¹ After losing the Usual Game of 1874, the freshmen resolved to get to know each other in order to fare better in future games.¹⁴² During 1879, the sophomores seem to have been uncharacteristically weak and declined some freshman challenges, as a freshmen boasted later: “the two games that ’82 refused to play us during Freshman fall and spring, only deprived us of scoring two more victories.”¹⁴³ That 1883 class beat the freshmen below them as sophomores, “the requisite three out of five being won in a little less than half an hour.”¹⁴⁴ This game at Dartmouth was known as “the usual game at foot ball”¹⁴⁵ or simply “the usual game”¹⁴⁶ by the middle of the nineteenth century, a name it retained for decades.

The Usual Game outlasted the other forms of Old Division. Such annual matches were typical collegiate activities, and here as elsewhere they were prone to devolving into fights for possession of the ball, or “rushes.” Because the match involved the two classes with the most heated rivalry, each Usual Game tended to become a hands-on fight for the ball and eventually lost any pretense of even starting as a football contest. As the Usual Game became a scheduled rush, its the name was transformed to “the usual football rush”¹⁴⁷ and then simply “the Football Rush,” an event that lasted until 1948.

¹³⁷ “Dartmouth Items,” *The Dartmouth* 3, No. 1 (6 September 1877), 11.

¹³⁸ Quint, “The Iron and the Gold,” 26-27.

¹³⁹ *Class Day Book 1874* (1874), 26.

¹⁴⁰ “Dartmouth Items,” *The Dartmouth* 7, No. 7 (September 1873), 297.

¹⁴¹ *The Dartmouth* (September 1874), reprinted in *Aegis 1926* (1926), 486.

¹⁴² Walter Brown, 28.

¹⁴³ Cushman, “Campus Oration,” in *Exercises of Class Day at Dartmouth College, Tuesday, June 26, 1883* (Hanover, N.H.: Class of 1883, 1883), 21.

¹⁴⁴ William White Niles, “Chronicles” in *Exercises... 1883*, 28. Niles presumably means three games won in a single half-hour, not three games of a half-hour each.

¹⁴⁵ Joseph V. Chase, “Chronicles,” *1860 Class Day Book* (1860), 21.

¹⁴⁶ *Id.* (“we received a challenge from the Sophomores to play the usual game at foot ball”).

¹⁴⁷ John Roland Spring, “Chronicles of the Class of ’98,” *Class Day 1898* (1898), 31.

The Players' Equipment

It was faculty rather than students who regulated the players' boots. The goal was to prevent students from adding spikes or other dangerous features, which was a significant problem. For example, Samuel Bartlett '36 wrote about the game during 1832-1833:

And it had its kickers, too. I remember one of them, a senior when I was a freshman, and the stupendous boots he had made on purpose, with sole fully a half inch thick. I can seem to see him as he stood once on the extreme edge of a dense, surging mass of strugglers, the foot-ball far out of sight in the centre, but the boots going like a horizontal trip-hammer all the same; and in the sequel my belligerent classmate did not leave his room for some days after, and with a slight hitch in his gait.¹⁴⁸

Eden Burroughs Foster '37 was a football enthusiast, his biographer wrote, until the moment when

he was effectually stopped by the barbarity of a fellow-student, who deliberately had his boots prepared with iron soles, and then, on the foot-ball ground, kicked Mr. Foster with all his might upon the shin. The leg was nearly broken by the blow, and Mr. Foster was scarcely able to get to his room. He suffered from the injury for weeks, and was never able to play foot-ball again.¹⁴⁹

The faculty banned football around 1869¹⁵⁰ because of the expense of supplying new balls, a cost that fell to freshmen¹⁵¹ and because of the game's violence: "[f]or a year the faculty in its inscrutable wisdom debarred this highly useful game because of abuses, as they thought, in the manner of playing it."¹⁵² Edwin Bartlett's account of the ban does not indicate that students actually intended the spikes on their boots to harm others rather than simply to puncture the ball, however. In order to persuade the faculty to allow the game again, students proposed to eliminate all pointed instruments from the toes of their boots,¹⁵³ and President Smith agreed to furnish each new ball. When the faculty lifted their ban on the game around 1870,¹⁵⁴ students continued playing under a more stringent set of rules than had existed previously.¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁸ Samuel Colcord Bartlett, "Early College Sports," in Bartlett and Gifford, 7-8. Bartlett wrote that his unnamed schoolmate in the class of 1833 became an elector from Vermont who helped win Lincoln's nomination.

¹⁴⁹ Addison P. Foster, *Four Pastorates: Glimpses of the Life and Thoughts of Eden B. Foster, D.D.* (Lowell, Mass.: Elliott, 1883), quoted in Richardson II: 493-494.

¹⁵⁰ Edwin J. Bartlett wrote in "Mere Football" at 18 that the ban came in 1868 but also stated that it lasted only a year and returned during 1870.

¹⁵¹ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Mere Football," 18.

¹⁵² Edwin J. Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance*, 22.

¹⁵³ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Mere Football," 18.

¹⁵⁴ Edwin J. Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance*, 23. Richardson II: 555 indicates that the ban was lifted during the year following 1868, i.e. as late as 1870.

¹⁵⁵ Bartlett and Gifford, 7.

English football evidently dealt with a similar problem, as F.A. Rule 13 (1863) provided that “[n]o player shall be allowed to wear projecting nails, iron plates, or gutta percha on the soles or heels of his boots.”¹⁵⁶ The equivalent American I.F. Rule 11 (1873) likewise stated that “[n]o player shall wear spikes or iron plates upon his shoes.”¹⁵⁷

The Referee

Accounts of the Dartmouth game are almost universally free of any mention of umpires. Faculty did have to intervene occasionally, as James Alfred Spalding ’66 wrote in his description of the arrival of freshmen in 1862:

All through our college years football was played in the same incredible fashion, so that professors would intervene and pull us apart; and once the President himself came to the aid of the “under dog.”¹⁵⁸

During the annual rush of 1887, President Samuel Colcord Bartlett, a football veteran, dragged Paul Carson ’91 out of the fray, as one student wrote facetiously:

While watching the rare sport he was so overcome by the scenes and recollections of his earlier years that,¹⁵⁹ putting aside for a time his customary dignity, he entered into the contest with a vim and enthusiasm which only a practiced adept could manifest. ‘Kit’ Carson was inadvertently dragged from the *melée*, a performance ‘Kit’ repeated the next year, when he pulled out a classmate with much exertion and profanity, to the infinite delight of sundry Freshmen witnesses.¹⁶⁰

Thus it was with unrealistic hopefulness that the students’ code of 1871 stated:

Rule 1. Five umpires, one from each class in the Academical, and one from the Scientific Department, shall be elected annually by the college. The senior umpire present shall settle all disputes which arise concerning the game.¹⁶¹

The newspaper listed the names of the first umpires elected under Rule 1 when the rule was announced,¹⁶² but the paper noted when reprinting the rules three years later that

¹⁵⁶ Football Association Rules (1863), in Tony Brown.

¹⁵⁷ Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

¹⁵⁸ Spalding, 41.

¹⁵⁹ Marshall O. Edson, “Chronicles,” *Exercises of Class Day at Dartmouth College* (1891), 19.

¹⁶⁰ *Id.*, 20.

¹⁶¹ “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 364.

¹⁶² “After adoption of the rules the following gentlemen were elected umpires for the current college year. From the Senior Class, C[harles] R[ansom] Miller; Junior, E[llis] J[ohn] Underhill; Sophomore, O[scar] M[ack] Metcalf; Freshman, W[ilbur] H[oward] Powers; Scientific Department, G[renville] A[rnold] Miller.” “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 365. G.A. Miller ’72 was a senior.

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succeeding students had not followed (only) Rule 1.¹⁶³ (Umpires also were needed for the rule on fouls, so students might have ignored the foul rule as well.)

Creating a system of elected umpires was conventional, and the I.F. Rules of 1873, presumably borrowing from the F.A., similarly required the team captains to choose one judge from each college as well as one referee,¹⁶⁴ a person to whom the partisan judges would “refer” their disputes. Later writers noted that the I.F. rules’ reliance on appointed judges was naïve, since it merely caused all the tough decisions to go to the referee.¹⁶⁵

After the turn of the century, Dartmouth’s new uniformed society for the enforcement of traditions, Palaeopitus, became something close to a corps of referees for the usual freshman-sophomore Football Rush and would continue to police it until 1948.

The Duration of the Match

Old Division Football flourished during the fall,¹⁶⁶ but students also played it during the spring. Whenever they played, it was during school terms, so students did not require any rule on time limits – they simply played when they did not have to be at meals, recitations, chapel, or in their rooms, studying. During the decades prior to the elective system, most of the students in a particular class year would have the same schedule, and all would have at least the noon hour free. The class of 1827 played the Dartmouth game during their noon recreation hour, according to later reminiscences.¹⁶⁷ Samuel Hopkins Willey ’45, lumping football in with all kinds of exercise, wrote that he and his fellow students “played [base]ball, and kicked football on the common, and went swimming in the river, and took long walks – sometimes ten or fifteen miles on Saturdays.”¹⁶⁸ By 1849, the college laws stated that studies ended at noon and started at 2 p.m. Only during that midday period did the school rules not require students to remain indoors and “abstain from all loud conversation, singing, playing on musical instruments, and from all other noise which may cause interruption.”¹⁶⁹

A graduate of 1866 recalled that “[d]inner came at noon and generally, about two in the afternoon, we played football. After that, we recited and had the rest of the afternoon

¹⁶³ “FOOT BALL RULES.—At the request of many we publish the following rules which were adopted in the autumn of ’71, and, with the exception of Rule I, have been observed ever since.” “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 8, No. 7 (September 1874), 264, reprinted in *Aegis 1926* (1926), 485.

¹⁶⁴ Rule 10, Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

¹⁶⁵ PFRA Research, “No Christian End!”

¹⁶⁶ Bartlett and Gifford, 13.

¹⁶⁷ Richardson I: 381, referring to the *Memorial of the Class of 1827* (1869).

¹⁶⁸ Samuel Hopkins Willey, “Dartmouth 1840-1845, A Reminiscence” (Hanover: Dartmouth College Library Archives Department, 1955), 12.

¹⁶⁹ “The Laws of Dartmouth College” (1849), 6-7, in Alan T. Gaylord, “‘This Passion for Books’: Sanborn and the College in 1850,” *Dartmouth College Library Bulletin* (April 1994), available at http://www.dartmouth.edu/~library/Library_Bulletin/Apr1994/Gaylord.html (viewed 8 October 2005).

and evening to ourselves.”¹⁷⁰ A graduate of four years later reported that games took place during the half hour between noon and dinner each day, as well as on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons.¹⁷¹ “The game could be played half an hour or all the afternoon;... It was especially adapted to the half-hour between 12 when recitations closed and 12:30 when the dinner bell rang,”¹⁷² according to Edwin Bartlett ’72. Academic regulations of the late 1870s reinforced the grant of free time between noon and 2 p.m., adding additional free time after 2 p.m. following public speaking on Wednesdays, as well as on Saturday afternoons.¹⁷³ Since scoring a goal counted as winning the game, and a match comprised several games of varying lengths, time was not a crucial factor in Old Division Football.

The Start and Restart of Play

The Start of Play

Players started the game with a kickoff, consistent with the rules of Cambridge (1848) and Sheffield (1857).¹⁷⁴ But the form of the Old Division kickoff was different: it was both unidirectional and sited idiosyncratically.

Kicking the ball to start a match of the Dartmouth game was called “warning the ball,” and every “warn” (kickoff) was performed by the western team, kicking eastward toward the row of college buildings lining that side of the Green.¹⁷⁵ Perhaps because a strong place-kick threatened to send any especially bouncy ball over the fence to an easy victory, the “warning ground” was not located in the center of the pitch as football rules typically required¹⁷⁶ but was sited at a spot nearer the northwest corner of the Green.¹⁷⁷ The site was marked by a bare patch of earth that represented second base each spring in the school’s official baseball diamond, making the site about ninety feet from the nearest football sidelines and roughly 250 feet from the distant eastern goal. (Dartmouth students were playing baseball by the 1830s and formed an intercollegiate Baseball Club in 1862,¹⁷⁸ adopting the northwest portion of the Green as their official baseball ground and later adding a backstop and bleachers.) Using the permanent second base as a marker

¹⁷⁰ Spalding, 42.

¹⁷¹ Edwin J. Bartlett, “Mere Football,” 18.

¹⁷² Edwin J. Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance*, 22.

¹⁷³ “Laws of Dartmouth College” (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth College, 1877), 6.

¹⁷⁴ Cambridge Rules (1848) and Sheffield Rules (1857), in Tony Brown.

¹⁷⁵ *The Dartmouth* (September 1874), reprinted in *Aegis 1926* (1926), 485. An 1862 account of Yale football on the New Haven Green noted that “[t]here is a dead silence as an active Freshman, retiring to gain an impetus, rushes on; a general rush as the ball is *warned*[.]” “American Student Life,” *Continental Monthly* 2, No. 3 (September 1862), 271 (emphasis original).

¹⁷⁶ Cambridge Rules (1848), in Tony Brown.

¹⁷⁷ Bartlett and Gifford, 4.

¹⁷⁸ Andres and Roberts in Hill, ed., 267; Richardson, II: 494.

assured teams that the ball would be warned from the same spot for each game and from year to year. After each goal, the teams switched sides.¹⁷⁹

The rules of 1871 confirm the location for the “warning ground” and the unidirectional nature of the kickoff:

Rule 2. The ball shall be warned from the second base of the college grounds and towards the buildings. No warn shall be valid until both parties are ready.

Rule 3. Until the ball is kicked the warning party shall stand behind the ball and their opponents in front; the latter at a distance of at least two rods. These positions, and the warn as well, shall be changed each game.¹⁸⁰

The 1873 I.C.F. rules likewise required that “[i]n starting the ball it shall be fairly kicked, not ‘babied,’ from a point 150 feet in front of the starter's goal.¹⁸¹ The requirement that the sides switch after each goal was typical and appears in the Cambridge Rules and Football Association Rules.¹⁸²

Charging during the Warn

Dartmouth’s 1871 rules gave the receiving team a minimum distance from the kickoff of at least two rods¹⁸³ or 33 feet, while the Uppingham School gave the kicker a distance of six paces¹⁸⁴ and the Football Association ten yards.¹⁸⁵ The Sheffield Rules were unusual among the various English rules in that they permitted charging.¹⁸⁶

The Restart of Play

The Dartmouth rules had no provision for a throw-in after a foul as other codes required.¹⁸⁷ Under Dartmouth’s 1871 rules at least, it was an umpire who was to restart play:

Rule 6. In case of a foul the ball shall be tossed up by the umpire at the place where the foul occurs, unless it be within two rods of either fence, in which case the ball shall be brought directly in a distance of two rods before umpiring.¹⁸⁸

Robert Fletcher, writing of his early years as the Dean of the Thayer School beginning in 1871,¹⁸⁹ described a way of starting the game that seems close to this tossup:

¹⁷⁹ Tibbetts, 259.

¹⁸⁰ “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 364.

¹⁸¹ Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

¹⁸² Cambridge Rules (1848) and Football Association Rules (1863), in Tony Brown.

¹⁸³ “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 364.

¹⁸⁴ Uppingham School Rules (1862), in Tony Brown.

¹⁸⁵ Football Association Rules (1863), in Tony Brown.

¹⁸⁶ Sheffield Rules (1857) and Football Association Rules (1863) in Tony Brown.

¹⁸⁷ Sheffield Rules (1857), Uppingham School Rules (1862), Football Association Rules (1863), in Tony Brown.

¹⁸⁸ “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 364.

[F]or playing the game, the two groups arrayed on opposite sides of the campus; a referee tossed the ball in the middle, and the scrimmage which followed determined which side would win the ball. There was no official in charge of athletics.¹⁹⁰

Harvard's pre-Civil-War rules apparently permitted restarting the game after a fair catch or a kick out of bounds by the use of a maneuver called a "fair lick."¹⁹¹ The 1873 I.C.F. rules, on the other hand, stated that committing a foul required that "the player so offending shall throw the ball perpendicularly into the air to a height of at least 12 feet and the ball shall not be in play until it has touched the ground."¹⁹²

The Ball in and out of Play

The ball seems to have been in play at almost all times during an Old Division match, since very few occurrences were capable of halting play if the ball was still on the Green. The ball was out of bounds when it left either of the sides of the pitch and entered one of the streets surrounding the Green. The 1871 rules described the treatment of the foul ball:

Rule 5. It shall be considered foul... when it passes the fence at the north or south end of the common, or at either corner, or when knocked past the east or west fence.¹⁹³

The object of the game, of course, was to kick the ball past the east or west fence, so the Rule 5 prohibition against "knocking" the ball past the goals apparently prohibited using the hands to score. For comparison, the Cambridge rules also forbade the scoring of a goal if the ball was "thrown, knocked on, or carried,"¹⁹⁴ the Uppingham School (1862) barred goals achieved by throwing,¹⁹⁵ and the Football Association Rules (1863) also banned goals that were "thrown, knocked on, or carried."¹⁹⁶

The Method of Scoring

Old Division Football made no fundamental distinction between goals, points, match scores or in some cases even seasonal records – a single goal simply won the game, and it was time to start another game, with several games comprising a single match. The 1871 rules explained how to achieve a victory in simple terms:

¹⁸⁹ Fletcher became the first Dean of the Thayer School in 1871 according to the *General Catalog of Dartmouth College* (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth College, 1911), 138.

¹⁹⁰ Fletcher, 1.

¹⁹¹ Hall, citing *Harvardiana* IV, 22.

¹⁹² Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, "No Christian End!" For the foul of running with the ball, the site of the tossup was the site of the foul; for an out-of-bounds foul, the player had to toss the ball up from a spot fifteen paces in.

¹⁹³ "Editorial Department," *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 364.

¹⁹⁴ Cambridge Rules (1848), in Tony Brown.

¹⁹⁵ Uppingham School Rules (1862), in Tony Brown.

¹⁹⁶ Football Association Rules (1863), in Tony Brown.

Rule 7. The game shall be won when the ball is kicked past the east or west fence.¹⁹⁷

The simplicity of the text also was inconsistent with the Cambridge Rules, which counted the majority of goals as winning the match.¹⁹⁸ The 1873 American intercollegiate rules also were more complex, since they required six goals to win the game, or the highest number when the game was called.¹⁹⁹

The Usual Game was the form of the Dartmouth game in which students paid the most attention to a single match with a single overall score, even if they still described it in terms of “games” won or lost. By 1880, the format of the annual match was set at the best three out of five games,²⁰⁰ effectively creating a single game in which each goal counted as one point and the first team to three points was declared the winner. Because the games had no set time limits, the amount of time a team took to win each particular game became one of the main statistics used in describing Old Division.

Fouls and Misconduct

Running with the Ball

The main method of moving the ball was with the feet. Bartlett and Gifford in *Dartmouth Athletics* noted that the two purposes of any new rules were to prevent violence and restrict ball-movement to the feet.²⁰¹ Tibbets stated that students avoided running with the ball simply because running did not pay.²⁰² Later commentators distinguished the Dartmouth game from rugby by noting that the Dartmouth game was played with the feet only.²⁰³ The 1871 rules also banned catching and carrying.

In North America, Princeton’s Ballown game²⁰⁴ and the kicking game at the University of Toronto (1850s-1870s) both apparently relied on batting the ball with the hands, though that method of movement became less important with the advent of the leather-cased rubber ball during the late 1850s, a change that enabled dribbling.²⁰⁵ After American games felt the influence of the F.A., however, the Intercollegiate Rules (1873) barred throwing or carrying the ball²⁰⁶ while still permitting other types of handling.

Use of the Hands

¹⁹⁷ “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 365.

¹⁹⁸ Cambridge Rules (1848), in Tony Brown.

¹⁹⁹ Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

²⁰⁰ Niles, 28.

²⁰¹ Bartlett and Gifford, 4.

²⁰² Tibbets, 259.

²⁰³ Richardson, II: 492.

²⁰⁴ Smith, “What’s in a Game of Early Football?”, 13. Bernstein spells it “Balldown” on 5.

²⁰⁵ Smith, “The Audacity of Toronto,” 19.

²⁰⁶ Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

Although “knocking” the ball across the goal or carrying the ball was a foul, the rules did not ban other uses of the hands. Players might have been able move the ball by knocking or swatting it. The ball also might have been too heavy to move effectively with the hands. One of the probable authors of the 1871 rules, Edwin Bartlett, indicated that in some cases the game allowed a player to balance the ball on his open hand, or to toss it up to be received on the palm (his *own* palm, Bartlett implied).²⁰⁷

Whether the Dartmouth rules allowed a player to make a fair catch is not certain. Eugene Locke ’70 wrote that if a player caught the ball in the air, he could place it on the ground and warn it again.²⁰⁸ Tibbetts, writing in 1915, also noted that a fair catch was available:

The one rule that was observed, and that had the most influence on the style of play, was that a fair catch entitled a man to a place kick without interference. If one of the defending side caught the ball before it hit the ground beyond the fence, he was allowed to bring it two rods inside the fence and to have a place kick. As the round ball could best be kicked from the ground each player tried for a fair catch.²⁰⁹

Yet the 1871 rules stated unequivocally:

RULE 5. It shall be considered foul when the ball is caught on the bound, or fly, or picked from the ground[.]²¹⁰

In England, the fair catch was widespread during the formative decades of soccer. The Cambridge Rules (1848) permitted a player to catch the ball on the fly and then kick it;²¹¹ the Sheffield Rules (1857) permitted a fair catch in the air, to be marked on the ground and sent off with a free kick, and also permitted the pushing or hitting of the ball with the hand;²¹² the Uppingham School Rules (1862) allowed a player to use his hands to stop the ball and place it before his feet;²¹³ and the Football Association permitted a fair catch, though it banned running with or throwing the ball once it was caught.²¹⁴

The Off-Sides Rule

There is no evidence that Old Division Football had anything like the concept of an offensive player being unfairly ahead of the ball. Defenders receiving the warn were required to be east of the warning ground,²¹⁵ but nothing required them to contact the ball

²⁰⁷ Edwin J. Bartlett, “Mere Football,” 17.

²⁰⁸ Locke, 115.

²⁰⁹ Tibbetts, 259.

²¹⁰ “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 364.

²¹¹ Cambridge Rules (1848), in Tony Brown; PFRA Research, “Dribble, Hack, and Split: The Origins of Soccer and Rugby,” available at <http://www.footballresearch.com/articles/frpage.cfm?topic=b-to1800> (viewed 8 October 2005).

²¹² Cambridge Rules (1848), in Tony Brown.

²¹³ Uppingham School Rules (1862), in Tony Brown.

²¹⁴ Tony Brown.

²¹⁵ “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 364.

before the offensive side was permitted to do so. Tibbetts wrote that “[a]t the ‘warn’ the ball was kicked from the middle of the Campus toward the east fence, and as there were no off-side rules practically all of both teams were ahead of the man who kicked off.”²¹⁶

Sheffield likewise lacked an off-sides rule, and players who were called “kick-throughs” apparently made a practice of standing around the opponent’s goal, awaiting a long pass.²¹⁷ In contrast, the Cambridge Rules of 1848 made the important development of including an off-sides rule.²¹⁸ The concept would be essential to all later major rules, including those of the Uppingham School (1862) and the Football Association (1863), which stated:

If the ball has passed a player and has come from the direction of his own goal, he may not touch it till the other side have kicked it, unless there are more than three of the other side before him. No player is allowed to loiter between the ball and the adversaries' goal.²¹⁹

The American I.C.F. rules of 1873 only approximated this rule: “Until the ball is kicked no player on either side shall be in advance of a line parallel to the line of his goal and distant from it 150 feet.”²²⁰

Hacking, Pushing, and Holding

Kicking an opponent’s shins (“hacking”) or generally fighting with him seems to have been a highlight of the Dartmouth game. A national dictionary of college words of the 1850s listed “to shin” as a verb describing the act of kicking a person in the shins, performed as “one of the means which the Sophomores adopt to torment the Freshmen, especially when playing at football,” and gave an 1846 example from Yale.²²¹ A Dartmouth freshman wrote in 1846:

We have rare sport here at foot ball. Generally there are about 100 out at a time (daily) on the perfectly level common of six acres. Two classes kick against the other two. And such rushes you never saw. It is the rule to push over every opponent you are able & sometimes small folks stand a small chance in the crowd. The excitement is so great, at times, that they do everything but knock down. Blows are frequently given & the Fr[eshmen] have the insolent audacity to kick the Seniors when they dispute and shove each other.²²²

After experiencing this violence, some students did not dare play again. Peter Thacher Washburn ’35 recorded in his diary that he entered the game only twice during his four

²¹⁶ Tibbetts, 259.

²¹⁷ Cambridge Rules (1848), in Tony Brown.

²¹⁸ PFRA Research,

²¹⁹ Cambridge Rules (1848), in Tony Brown.

²²⁰ Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

²²¹ Hall.

²²² Member of the Class of 1850 (1846), quoted in Richardson II: 493.

years, and he “got well kicked for his pains.”²²³ Samuel Bartlett’s son Edwin wrote “[m]y father, who entered Dartmouth in 1832, had his nose broken by some one’s casual elbow” while playing football.²²⁴ Everett Boynton ’45 wrote some thirty years after graduating:

And now I cross the common, famous for football in the olden times before gymnasiums provided for muscular development. What fierce, sanguinary, raiment-rending contests we did have! To this day I bear the marks of one desperate battle, on the most prominent part of my face.²²⁵

The violence was a concern to faculty and prompted regulation.²²⁶ The 1871 code states:

RULE 4. No player shall kick, trip, strike, or hold another for any cause during the game.²²⁷

Contrast the concern for tripping in the English rules, which did not agree on what to ban: Cambridge (1848) did not bar hacking but prohibited holding; Sheffield (1857) permitted pushing but not holding or hacking; Uppingham barred hacking but not pushing or holding; the Football Association allowed none of the various tactics.²²⁸ The I.C.F. stated that “[n]o tripping shall be allowed, nor shall any player use his hands to hold or push an adversary.”²²⁹

²²³ Peter T. Washburn, quoted in Richardson II: 493.

²²⁴ Edwin J. Bartlett, “Mere Football,” 17.

²²⁵ Everett W. Boynton to President Asa Dodge Smith (ca. 1875), quoted in Richardson II: 493.

²²⁶ Bartlett and Gifford, 4.

²²⁷ “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 364.

²²⁸ Cambridge Rules (1848), Sheffield Rules (1857), Football Association Rules (1863), in Tony Brown.

²²⁹ Intercollegiate Football Rules (1873) in PFRA, “No Christian End!”

Changes in the Dartmouth Game, 1886-1948

Students played Old Division Football less frequently during the 1880s, a decline later blamed on the arrival of rugby.²³⁰ This explanation makes sense insofar as rugby was yet another distraction, along with elective classes, the generally increased civilization of the College, and a variety of other sports. Larger enrollments and some reduction in inter-class rivalries also may have had an effect. Students did not simply switch allegiances from the old football code to the new rugby code, however. Rugby was a small-team running game meant for careful rehearsal and suited to intercollegiate play, and Dartmouth students played rugby and its descendant American football for several years²³¹ alongside Old Division and its descendant the Usual Game, just as Old Division had coexisted with other intercollegiate sports such as boating and baseball.

The Arrival of the Football Association Rules (1863) in the U.S.

Not until 1863 did the members of the Football Association join together in London and codify a kicking game that a significant number of other clubs could agree to play. Those rules came across the Atlantic, where students at several colleges picked them up. They might have influenced Dartmouth's 1871 code, if only by giving students the idea of writing down their rules.

The Football Association's code, descendants of which eventually gave rise to global soccer, initially called for 25 players per side, a field of 110 meters by 70 meters, a goal 24 feet wide, and the movement of the ball by all parts of the body, including by batting or holding with the hands. Only carrying or throwing were not allowed. The first team to score 6 points won.²³² Students at Rutgers University adopted the F.A. rules, either wholesale²³³ or with adaptations, playing with teams of 25 that allowed both batting and the use of Sheffield-style kick-throughs loitering near the goals. Rutgers players challenged students at Princeton to a set of matches, and on the common in New Brunswick, N.J.²³⁴ on November 6, 1869,²³⁵ the teams played what appears to have been

²³⁰ Tibbetts, 259. Tibbetts relied for evidence on a temporary lull in the Usual Game, which in fact continued for decades; Old Division, however, did seem to fade around this time.

²³¹ Rugby was not necessarily a competitor to a local game. Many local games in U.K. public schools survived in the face of similar pressures. For example, though students at Eton today play the globally-popular rugby and Association Football, they also participate in the indigenous Field Game and the Wall Game. Eton is of course a public (preparatory) school and older than any college in the U.S., factors that allow it to keep playing well-cemented indigenous games.

²³² Litterer, "An Overview of American Soccer History."

²³³ *Id.*

²³⁴ *Id.*

²³⁵ *The [Rutgers] Targum* (November 1869), quoted in [Rutgers] *Scarlet Knights Football*, "History: The First Intercollegiate Game," at http://www.scarletknights.com/football/history/first_game.htm (viewed 7 December 2004). The date of the game is given as November 7 in PFRA Research, "No Christian End!"

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the first inter-university soccer game²³⁶ in the world (Oxford would not play Cambridge until 1872, using the F.A. rules).²³⁷ Rutgers won the match six games to four. The second meeting took place at Princeton on November 13 under Princeton's rules, which students apparently had published in 1867.²³⁸ Princeton's code, which also have been described as a variant of the F.A. rules, allowed fifteen games in a match and let a player make a free kick if he caught the ball in the air.²³⁹ The home team won this second match eight games to none.²⁴⁰ Students at Princeton formed their own Football Association and adopted another official set of rules within two years of the Rutgers match,²⁴¹ presumably also F.A.-based.

One influence on the general impulse to start football competitions between schools actually was boating,²⁴² which had been the subject of the first intercollegiate sports meeting of any kind in the U.S.²⁴³ in 1852. That event saw two boat clubs of Yale (1843) and one club of Harvard (1844) meet on Lake Winnepesaukee, N.H. Dartmouth students established several boat clubs around 1856²⁴⁴ and had five clubs by 1862, first entering intercollegiate competition four years later.²⁴⁵ Meanwhile, Amherst and Williams played the first intercollegiate baseball game in 1859, and the sport of baseball became part of the annual Harvard-Yale regatta in 1864.²⁴⁶

Yale students picked up the association game as those at Rutgers and Princeton had,²⁴⁷ and during October of 1873, the captain of the Yale team invited four schools to play soccer against his in an Intercollegiate Football Association. Harvard did not join,²⁴⁸ but Princeton, Columbia, and Rutgers sent representatives to join Yale in New York that fall and draw up a uniform set of rules based on the F.A. rules of 1863. The IFA rules described sides of 20 players each, a field of 400 feet x 250 feet, a goal of 25 feet in width, a minimum of six goals to win, and a rule awarding one point for sending the ball past the goal posts. The rules prohibited carrying the ball. In the first game played under the new rules, Yale beat Princeton. The Yale team later met the visiting Eton Players in New Haven, playing the first Anglo-American soccer match (2-1 Yale, presumably using

²³⁶ PFRA Research, "No Christian End!" The third game of the challenge series was cancelled.

²³⁷ PFRA Research, "Dribble, Hack, and Split."

²³⁸ PFRA Research, "No Christian End!"

²³⁹ Thad Hartmann, "Football is Not Quite the Same after 135 Years," *The Daily Princetonian* (15 September 2004).

²⁴⁰ *The [Rutgers] Targum*.

²⁴¹ PFRA Research, "No Christian End!"

²⁴² Guy Lewis, "The Beginning of Organized Collegiate Sport," *American Quarterly* 22, Issue 2, Part 1 (Summer 1970), 228.

²⁴³ *Id.*, 224.

²⁴⁴ Bartlett and Gifford, 5.

²⁴⁵ *Id.*, 6.

²⁴⁶ Lewis, 228.

²⁴⁷ Hurd, 408.

²⁴⁸ Vicky C. Hallett, "Let's Play Odd Ball," *FM* (16 November 2000), available at http://www.thecrimson.com/fmarchives/fm_11_16_2000/article9K.html (viewed 8 October 2005).

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concessionary rules). Soccer took off in the U.S. over the next decade, becoming big enough that players in Newark, N.J. formed a (non-collegiate) American Football Association in 1884.²⁴⁹

Caught up in interclass boating enthusiasm,²⁵⁰ Dartmouth students did not pay much attention to soccer. News of a football match reached Dartmouth by 1872,²⁵¹ but students in Hanover did not join the Association Football movement. In 1874, some students did offer an apparently untried hybrid proposal that each class supply a football XII to play under Old Division rules:

Foot-ball has been exciting considerable interest of late,—shins and the ball being kicked indiscriminately. Why not select a dozen men from each of the classes, and give us some foot-ball matches, as well as boat races.²⁵²

Soccer did not last long as a college sport in the U.S., generally fading from colleges during the early 1880s. Interest remained in eastern cities, however, with regional and national soccer leagues forming during the 1890s and early 1900s, some of them including professional teams. Semi-professional teams in New England created the Southern New England Football league in 1914,²⁵³ as the game began to emerge again at colleges; Dartmouth students started playing soccer during 1914.²⁵⁴

The Arrival of Rugby Football at Dartmouth (1876)

Rugby football, which English players codified as early as 1846 in the oldest known football code,²⁵⁵ was popularized in the U.S. at least through *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857) and *The Book of Rugby School, Its History, and Its Daily Life* (1856), reviews of which appeared in U.S. magazines during 1857.²⁵⁶ U.S. college students acquired copies of the rugby rules²⁵⁷ and began imitating the practices of the schoolboy character Tom Brown.²⁵⁸ When the decision of the London Football Association to bar running with the ball in its code of 1863²⁵⁹ created the decisive split from rugby, representatives of clubs that preferred the running game walked out of the meeting. Now two competing codes

²⁴⁹ David A. Litterer, "The History of Professional Soccer in New England" ([n.d.]), at <http://www.sover.net/~spectrum/NewEngland.html> (viewed 9 December 2004).

²⁵⁰ "Dartmouth Items," *The Dartmouth* 8, No. 7 (September 1874), 265.

²⁵¹ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Mere Football," 18.

²⁵² "Dartmouth Items," *The Dartmouth* 8, No. 8 (October 1874), 307.

²⁵³ Litterer, "An Overview of American Soccer History."

²⁵⁴ Andres and Roberts, in Hill, ed., 286.

²⁵⁵ PFRA Research, "Dribble, Hack, and Split."

²⁵⁶ Review of *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857) and *The Book of Rugby School, its History, and its Daily Life* (1856) from *The Quarterly Review*, as reprinted in *Littell's Living Age* 55, No. 706 (5 December 1857), 577-591.

²⁵⁷ David Riesman and Reuel Denney, "Football in America: A Study in Culture Diffusion," *American Quarterly* 3, Issue 4 (Winter 1951), 314.

²⁵⁸ Lewis, 226.

²⁵⁹ Riesman and Denney, 312.

existed, each of which would become popular around the world. In 1866, Beadle & Company of New York published sets of rules for both Association Football (soccer) and the “handling game” (rugby),²⁶⁰ and individual American colleges would adapt first the former and then the latter during the 1860s and 1870s. The creation in Britain of the Rugby Union in 1871 solidified the rules of the running game.²⁶¹

McGill University of Montreal is the source of American football. *The Dartmouth* reprinted a notice presaging the first rugby football match in the U.S.²⁶² during the spring of 1874:

McGill University, Montreal, proposes to engage in a foot-ball match with Harvard about the first of May, and afterwards to (kick) with the rest of the New England colleges. – *Vidette*.²⁶³

Teams from McGill and Harvard played each other at rugby in Cambridge on May 15, 1874. McGill brought the oval ball and the rules of the game, and those rules became the direct ancestor of the rules of American Football. (The teams’ match of the previous day did not influence American Football: it used a modified version of Harvard’s own unsophisticated round-ball kicking game, a game that might have been based on Harvard’s interclass contests²⁶⁴ or the grammar-school²⁶⁵ “Boston Game” played by the Oneida Football Club on Boston Common from 1862 to 1865.²⁶⁶) *The Dartmouth* reported the results of both McGill-Harvard matches:

In the recent football matches between Harvard and McGill University, the former was victorious. The first match was played according to the rules in use at Harvard; the second according to the Canadian rules. In the first match Harvard won three straight games in about twenty minutes, and in the second they did not get away with the Harvard Eleven.²⁶⁷

Whatever their skill with their own game, Harvard players quickly recognized the merits of rugby and adopted it exclusively. They played Yale in 1875²⁶⁸ under rugby rules with concessionary modifications²⁶⁹ that allowed fifteen on a side²⁷⁰ and encouraged both goals and tries (i.e. touchdowns).²⁷¹ The Yale players, taking up the message that Harvard had received from McGill, switched to rugby and dropped their

²⁶⁰ Litterer, “An Overview of American Soccer History.”

²⁶¹ Riesman and Denney, 313.

²⁶² PFRA Research, “No Christian End!”

²⁶³ “College World,” *The Dartmouth* 8, No. 4 (April 1874), 192.

²⁶⁴ PFRA Research, “No Christian End!”

²⁶⁵ Litterer, “An Overview of American Soccer History.”

²⁶⁶ “Origin of Football and Its Derived Ball Games.”

²⁶⁷ “College World,” *The Dartmouth* 8, No. 4 (April 1874), 192.

²⁶⁸ PFRA Research, “No Christian End!”

²⁶⁹ Kelley, *Yale: A History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1974), 301.

²⁷⁰ Hurd, 408.

²⁷¹ Litterer, “The History of Professional Soccer in New England.” The game was the first rugby game between U.S. colleges and is called the first intercollegiate football game.

I.F.A. soccer rules. A couple of Princeton students watching the first game of college football between U.S. teams also liked rugby and took it back to New Jersey,²⁷² convincing students at a mass meeting there to adopt rugby instead of the existing soccer-style rules.²⁷³

Although Dartmouth students declined a challenge from Tufts College during 1875,²⁷⁴ they too took some inspiration from the Harvard-Yale game.²⁷⁵ Rugby activists John E. Ingham '77,²⁷⁶ Chalmers W. Stevens '77, Lewis Parkhurst '78,²⁷⁷ and others set up a single set of rugby-style goalposts on the east side of the Green during 1876. No one owned an oval ball, so the rugby experimenters had to make do with a traditional round ball of Old Division. Most students merely used the goal to hone their kicking skills for the Dartmouth game, and the goalposts lasted less than a year.²⁷⁸

Meanwhile, the rest of the intercollegiate world was adopting rugby. Students representing Columbia, Harvard, Princeton, and Yale met on November 23, 1876 to form another Intercollegiate Football Association, adopting a rugby code with some modifications. Wesleyan, Stevens, and Penn soon joined the league.²⁷⁹ Soccer was definitely dead, although Yale would hang on to eleven-man sides for non-league matches for a few years.²⁸⁰

On April 25, 1878, Dartmouth's student paper published the "scrummage" or rugby rules of the Intercollegiate Football Association²⁸¹ and agreed with the proposal that Dartmouth students learn the game and join the league, noting that a movement already was afoot to select class elevens for "the English game of football."²⁸² By May 2, the paper was commenting that no one could interpret the I.F.A. rules.²⁸³ Students erected two pairs of goal posts the proper distance apart on the east and west sides of the Green,²⁸⁴ placing them at the south end of the field despite its slope at that spot.²⁸⁵ (The

²⁷² PFRA Research, "No Christian End!"

²⁷³ Leitch. Jotham Potter '77 and Earl Dodge '79 were the students.

²⁷⁴ Richardson II: 564.

²⁷⁵ Horace G. Pender '97 and Raymond M. McPartlin '20, *Athletics at Dartmouth* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Athletic Council, 1923), 89.

²⁷⁶ Stevens, an astronomer, went to Argentina where he killed by lightning at breakfast in 1884 according to David Shribman and Jack DeGange, *Dartmouth College Football: Green Fields of Autumn* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2004), 11.

²⁷⁷ Parkhurst was a champion racewalker and later became an influential trustee and donor of the school's administration building.

²⁷⁸ Pender and McPartlin, 89.

²⁷⁹ Litterer, "An Overview of American Soccer History."

²⁸⁰ Hurd, 408.

²⁸¹ Pender and McPartlin, citing *The Dartmouth* (25 April 1878).

²⁸² Excerpt from *The Dartmouth* issues of September 1878 to June 1879, in E.G. Kimball '81, "Notes from the Seventies," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 27, No. 7 (April 1935), 71.

²⁸³ Pender and McPartlin, 89-90.

²⁸⁴ Excerpt from *The Dartmouth* in Kimball.

²⁸⁵ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Mere Football," 22.

players might have tried to keep the game out of the way of Old Division, which emphasized the north part of the Green.) Students also bought a proper oval²⁸⁶ ball of rubber,²⁸⁷ and on May 16, 1878, two rugby sides known as the Blues and the Reds met on the Green to play Dartmouth's first game of rugby.²⁸⁸ The rugby rules would remain an alien and confusing regime, however, until someone who had actually played the game came to Hanover.

Just as new sports typically arrived at Oxford and Cambridge in the minds of public schoolboys who had played them at the schools where they were popularized, rugby came to Dartmouth with four graduates of the Phillips Andover preparatory school during the fall of 1878.²⁸⁹ The four students raised interest in the game, and during 1879 students formed class elevens²⁹⁰ before three of the new players withdrew from college prior to their sophomore year.²⁹¹ The fall of 1879 marks a turning point in the overlapping histories of Old Division and rugby: though the freshmen seem to have declined to play the Usual Game against the sophomores (they "never came to the scratch"), a rugby side representing the freshmen beat the sophomores by scoring one goal and two touchdowns to nothing.²⁹²

The arrival in 1880 of the enthusiastic Clarence "Cap" Howland '84, who had learned rugby at Williston Seminary, reinvigorated interest in the game and led students to form Dartmouth's first all-university ('varsity) eleven that fall.²⁹³ Samuel Worcester Robertson '83 wrote that the first football squad was mostly sophomores and juniors.²⁹⁴ The club bought football suits from Princeton²⁹⁵ and in 1881 had a team photo taken on the steps of the gym, Bissell Hall (since demolished).²⁹⁶ The faculty was reluctant to give the rugby team permission to travel, denying requests on November 8, 1880 (fourteen players to Andover) and September 14, 1881 (Cambridge).²⁹⁷

²⁸⁶ Excerpt from *The Dartmouth* in Kimball.

²⁸⁷ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Mere Football," 18.

²⁸⁸ Pender and McPartlin, 89.

²⁸⁹ *Id.*

²⁹⁰ Richardson II: 640.

²⁹¹ Pender and McPartlin, 91.

²⁹² Rice, "Chronicles," in *1882 Class Book* [Class Day] (1882), 27.

²⁹³ Pender and McPartlin. The varsity distinction, while not as relevant as the distinction used to select an all-Oxford team to represent the various colleges, had more meaning at Dartmouth in 1881 than it does today. For example, the best-established sport to that point, baseball, was played by nine teams in Hanover from which the "university nine" could draw its members. Each class in the College and each of its associated colleges (the Chandler Scientific School and the agricultural New Hampshire College) had a class nine that fed each school's all-school nine.

²⁹⁴ *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 23, No. 6 (April 1931) 421. The players' class years were 1882 and 1883.

²⁹⁵ Pender and McPartlin, 91.

²⁹⁶ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Mere Football," 19. Future trustee C.F. Mathewson '82 was among the twelve men depicted.

²⁹⁷ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Mere Football," 18.

When the faculty granted a half-holiday²⁹⁸ for a home game on November 16, 1881 against Amherst, a team made mostly of Howland's original XI beat the visitors on the Green in Dartmouth's first intercollegiate football match.²⁹⁹ Player Charles Weston Oakes '83 wrote home about his part:

This has been quite an exciting week for Dartmouth. We played a game of foot-ball Wednesday with Amherst, it was the first game we ever played. We beat them one touchdown to nothing. Surprising everyone.

I 'spect I was the hero of the occasion. I made the touchdown and several good runs, and at the end of the game the boys rode me around the campus on their shoulders.

Everyone was nearly crazy during the game. The Professors ran around, clapped their hands, shouted, jumped up and down and fairly went mad. One Professor was overheard to say ... when I was running the ball, "Go it, Charley! Run right through them, that's good, dodge that man, Charley, do run it in! Hurrah! Hurrah!"

One of the Amherst players complimented me on my playing and said I³⁰⁰ could play as well as Camp of Yale. Camp is the best player in the country.³⁰¹

With a touchdown counting as one point, the score was 1-0 Dartmouth. The second game took place in the snow at Hampden Park in Springfield, Mass., on Thanksgiving and was a defensive struggle that ended in a draw.³⁰²

The Dartmouth rugby team continued to learn the game and to attempt to travel. Students requested during the fall of 1882 to be allowed to practice on the Green until 3 pm,³⁰³ but the faculty replied that they would allow this privilege for only one sport, either football or baseball. Later the faculty allowed William White Niles '83 to make a statement to them about rugby, and the faculty finally allowed the team to travel to out of town games,³⁰⁴ granting permission for a game against Yale to be paired with a Hanover meeting. Neither game occurred.

On October 30, 1882, the faculty allowed the team plan a Harvard match and let students out of their afternoon recess so the team could play McGill in Hanover.³⁰⁵ Even though McGill had been the initial filter through which rugby had reached American schools during 1875, by 1882 the rules of the I.F.A. differed significantly from those McGill was using. Dartmouth and McGill had to work out concessionary rules when they played on the Green, compromising at thirteen players instead of McGill's normal fifteen. McGill also apparently got permission to put the ball in play using some unique method, a concession that did not prevent Dartmouth from winning. The Harvard game

²⁹⁸ *Id.*, 19.

²⁹⁹ Pender and McPartlin, 92. Bernstein reported on 23 that Dartmouth lost to Amherst in this first game.

³⁰⁰ Charles W. Oakes '83, letter home, quoted in Andres and Roberts, in Hill, ed., 271.

³⁰¹ *Id.*, 272.

³⁰² Pender and McPartlin, 92.

³⁰³ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Mere Football," 18.

³⁰⁴ Richardson II: 640.

³⁰⁵ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Mere Football," 19.

of 1882 at Cambridge, however, was a loss for Dartmouth at 53-0,³⁰⁶ causing the student paper to complain of the team that “[w]ith one slight failing they are all we could wish. That failing is that they cannot play Rugby any to speak of.”³⁰⁷ During 1884, “[t]he entire team was a group of husky youths. They ate together at a Conant Hall training table, the chief articles of diet being roast beef rare three times a day, and for dinner two mugs of Bass's Ale from a keg kept in the cellar of the building.”³⁰⁸ (Conant hall is now Hallgarten.) Yale came to Hanover with an eleven in 1884, and “[t]he visitors romped and frolicked over the Green without intentionally mutilating any of our men, and ran up a marvelous score in touchdowns and goals.”³⁰⁹

Though Dartmouth did not field a team³¹⁰ during the 1885-1886 year,³¹¹ and though the team it fielded during 1886 lost on consecutive days to Andover, MIT, and Harvard,³¹² students built up enough interest in rugby³¹³ to make the game permanent in Hanover. As the scrimmage replaced the scrum, the 1882 “series of downs” rule³¹⁴ and its consequent yard lines prevented the ball-hogging that resulted from the scrimmage, gridiron football³¹⁵ had diverged thoroughly from rugby. That divergence gave students room to take up the latest English version of rugby during the twentieth century, as the Dartmouth Rugby Football Club formed in 1953³¹⁶ and the Dartmouth Women’s Rugby Club in 1978.³¹⁷

The Survival of the Usual Game as the Usual Rush

The symbolic annual football match between sophomores and freshmen was a different story from standard Old Division, which was not heard from much after 1886. Students attached bragging rights and even dress privileges to this heated and highly anticipated contest. During the early 1870s, the paper continued to call the annual match “[t]he customary games of foot-ball”³¹⁸ or “[t]he usual games of Foot Ball,”³¹⁹ though by this time the match already was devolving into a rush. Eventually the game lost all pretense of football and the ball, a mere trophy, no longer needed to be a round football.

³⁰⁶ Pender and McPartlin, 93.

³⁰⁷ *The Dartmouth* (1882), quoted in Richardson II: 641.

³⁰⁸ Pender and McPartlin, 95-96.

³⁰⁹ Edwin J. Bartlett, “Mere Football,” 20.

³¹⁰ *Id.*

³¹¹ Pender and McPartlin, 97.

³¹² Richardson II: 641.

³¹³ *Id.*, 640.

³¹⁴ Mel Smith, “What’s in a Game of Early Football?”, 11.

³¹⁵ Hallett.

³¹⁶ Andres and Roberts, in Hill, ed., 287.

³¹⁷ “Origins of the DWRC,” at <http://www.dartmouth.edu/%7Edwrc/history/origins.html> (viewed 3 December 2005).

³¹⁸ “Dartmouth Items,” *The Dartmouth* 7, No. 7 (September 1873), 297.

³¹⁹ “Dartmouth Items,” *The Dartmouth* 8, No. 7 (September 1874), 265.

A “rush” was a collegiate fight, usually between classes, and was liable to erupt during any gathering when students were in high emotion. The two symbolic objects over which Dartmouth students most often held rushes during the latter part of the nineteenth century were the cane and the football. As spontaneity departed over the years, the fight over each object became a highly-organized annual event. One member of the class of 1866 named the three elements in the smorgasbord of violent activities available to him: cane rushes, football rushes, and (Old Division) football itself.³²⁰

Every ordinary game of football at Dartmouth ran the risk of degenerating into a fight over the ball, and the games thus “were sometimes made the occasions for rushes,”³²¹ as Richardson wrote. Particularly in the fall, when interclass tension was highest, the upperclassmen playing in the game would walk off the pitch in order to leave the freshmen to go against the sophomores in a tense struggle. The mood of the mob invariably would shift at some unplanned moment, as the players stopped trying to kick a goal and started struggling with their opponents to grab, deflate, or run away with the football. This potential of the ball to shift instantly from a piece of game equipment into a trophy made sense in part because the ball was a symbol of freshman subjugation. One freshman wrote facetiously of the fall of 1864, “[d]uring the first few weeks we all distinguished ourselves by eighteen unsuccessful attempts to carry off the foot-ball” before the annual match occurred.³²² The following year, the sophomores had to hold a

class “conference” with the Professor of mathematics, on the subject of foot-ball rushes, and the “inconveniences” attending them. After a prolonged session, and numerous adjournments, it was unanimously resolved that “rushes,” during study hours, were deleterious; that all disturbances, during recitations, were “*wrong*,” and all declared their “*present* intention,” not to disturb the recitation except in cases of extreme excitement.”³²³

An entry in a memorial book written by a sophomore around 1867 read:

We rushed the football Tuesday night and then gave it back to them; then the next night we had an old-fashioned rush, cut the ball, and I got it out, and had it between my legs for some ten minutes, while a dozen groups were fighting to find it; at last I dropped it to the ground and put my foot on it. As I couldn’t get away with it, and the Freshmen were watching me, I sneaked it to Drew and started off, the Freshmen following in and rushing me while Drew went another way. Some followed him, though, and after they had searched me, we followed Drew and found a lot searching him up in front of Wentworth Hall, in the mud. We all went in, and Chandler Parker got it. The Freshmen felt “riled,” [t]hey had gone in rough and some of them got hurt, struck, slung, choked, etc., for not rushing fair! Folsom slung one a rod or so; Wilson choked Clay, a Junior,

³²⁰ Dr. James Alfred Spaulding ’66, “The College in the Sixties,” ed. Dr. William Leland Holt, *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 32, No. 4 (January 1940), 42.

³²¹ Richardson II: 555.

³²² Hathaway, 17.

³²³ *Id.*, 19.

till he was senseless, put his fist in Mike Rogers' face, and Drew about killed Brewer for choking him.³²⁴

These rushes usually started as proper football games, however predictable may have been their falling apart. Eugene Locke '70 reminisced about football matches during the same period:

The outstanding contests were the ones during the first evenings of freshman fall, on account of the 'rushing' between Sophs. and Freshies ... Soon, in the scramble, some Sophomore would fall on the ball, cut a hole and deflate it, and try to carry it off, which of course was resisted by the Freshmen, and a scrimmage for possession of the ball would result, which sometimes lasted for hours! I remember one occasion when a dozen 'rushes' were going on in different places, while the ball was safely stowed away in the bosom of a flannel shirt of a freshman who was prone in the ditch which at that time ran along the street in front of Wentworth Hall!³²⁵

Bartlett '72 agreed that the rush was a spontaneous event within a football match:

[A match] began after supper in the gloaming which soon faded into darkness. Without referee or timekeeper the round rubber ball was for a short time kicked about the field with increasing excitement and incipient fights. Then suddenly the ball disappeared. It was under some one's shirt in a deflated condition. Dazed groups rushed hither and yon. The next day bits of the much-divided ball were triumphantly but guardedly shown to the losers and were held as precious trophies for a while – such a little while.³²⁶

Bartlett still was able to differentiate the regular Old Division game from the Football Rush, reminiscing that a standard round rubber ball left nothing to be desired for football games "and for class rushes."³²⁷ Around the time the daily game faded during the 1880s, however, the Usual Game of Foot-ball between the freshmen and sophomores lost all pretence of being a football game. The 1886 account quoted above, for example, complained that football was by then "kept alive not for itself, but for the convenient opportunity afforded for the meeting of Sophomores and Freshmen," and that the rules also were fading away.³²⁸ The game became remarkably like Shrovetide football in

³²⁴ Unnamed member of class of 1870, entry in memorial book, quoted by Locke, 116. Locke apparently added editorial information that has been removed here: "we followed Drew (afterward U.S. Senator) ... Folsom (afterward State superintendent of Schools for N.H.) slung one a rod or so ... Drew about killed Brewer (who afterwards did such good work in Cuba and died there)."

³²⁵ Locke, 115.

³²⁶ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Dartmouth as it was 60 Year Ago," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 22, No. 2 (December 1929), 104.

³²⁷ Edwin J. Bartlett, "Mere Football," 18. Some equate the class rush too easily with the early American kicking games, such as Lewis, 229, or Bernstein, who mentions Yale rushes as a precursor of the unrelated gridiron football at 5.

³²⁸ *Dartmouth Literary Monthly* (October 1886), reprinted in *Aegis 1926* (1926), 486.

England, a long-standing annual fight between two conflicting polities that strive for hours to move an object in space by almost any means.³²⁹

The Usual Game and especially the Football Rush that it became created a large class of potential spectators among the upperclassmen and town residents.³³⁰ In his poem about an early-1880s freshman who heard the call of football for an annual match, Wilder D. Quint wrote:

And, answering to that kindly caterwaul
He joined the shaky army of his class,
An atom in a squirming, smothering mass,
Once, tossed aside by physics' natural rule,
He heard a bearded Junior's: 'in, you fool!
And venturing to ask the reason why,
'It's Dartmouth spirit, boy; get in, or die.'"³³¹

Quint himself had been tossed aside during the rush of 1883 and had heard the bearded and cowboy-like junior Richard Hovey '85 say in a rich voice "[u]p, boy, and at them.," Quint wrote later.³³² Apparently the same rush affected Charles Alexander Eastman (Ohiyesa) '87, who wrote that the event took place after supper on the day of the first meeting of the freshman class and that he mistakenly "held up" a professor instead of a sophomore. The Boston daily papers made much of his error, Eastman recalled.³³³

Students traditionalized and regimented the Football Rush as it became divorced from its origins in a kicking game. No longer a spontaneous event, it gained an official date and time: the evening³³⁴ after the freshmen held their first class meeting of the year,³³⁵ as Eastman and others noted. During the meeting of 1888, the freshmen voted to take on the sophomores and "[t]he regulation 'rushes' followed, in which, it is needless to say, '92 covered herself with glory."³³⁶ Freshman victories were unusual but became less so as

³²⁹ On the village green in Sedgefield, for example, the parish clerk supplies a ball for the match of farmers vs. tradesmen, with the winner the first to kick the ball into the goal and then back on the field, according to "Sedgefield Village History," at <http://www.sedgefieldvillage.co.uk/history.html> (viewed 8 October 2005). In the town of Ashbourne, the Up'ards and Down'ards battle to move a large cork-filled ball through town by almost any means between the goals, which are three miles apart, according to Learn English, at <http://www.learnenglish.de> (viewed 8 October 2005).

³³⁰ Walter Brown, 27.

³³¹ Quint, "The Iron and the Gold."

³³² Quint, "Richard Hovey in College," *Dartmouth Magazine* 19 (May 1905), 294, quoted in Macdonald, *Hovey*, 26.

³³³ Charles A. Eastman, *From the Deep Woods To Civilization* (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1977, reprint of 1916 edition), 67.

³³⁴ Card, 31.

³³⁵ Penfield Mower, "Chronicles," in *1904 Class Book* (1904), 9.

³³⁶ Don C. Bliss, "Chronicles," in *Exercises of Class Day at Dartmouth College* (1892), 27.

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entering classes grew larger. The freshmen won, among other matches, those of 1893, 1895, 1898, 1900, 1902, 1906, 1910, 1916, 1918, 1926, 1929, 1934, and 1946.³³⁷

The growth of American football actually helped to structure to the Football Rush. Organizers adopted the readily-available oval football, which was made for carrying. At its first class meeting, the freshmen would elect a football captain who typically served as their leader both during the rush and for the American football team that would represent the freshman class. Eastman '87 was selected such a captain;³³⁸ "Dave" Austin '04 was elected the captain "for the football rush" during the fall of 1900.³³⁹ The job of starting and stopping the rush had to be filled by someone who had access to footballs, such as the manager of the College's football team: in 1898, "Willis Hodgkins, the football manager, carrying a football under his arm, was rushed off the campus before the ambitious Freshmen could be made to understand that he was a Senior & a dignitary."³⁴⁰

The growth in gridiron football likely prompted students to shift the name of "the usual game of foot-ball" to "the usual football *rush*" in order to avoid confusion, and the event became simply "the football rush." Entering classes would play both games: although "the usual football rush" did not interest the sophomores much during 1895, and they lost, their American football team did manage to defeat the freshmen on the gridiron of Alumni Oval.³⁴¹ Similarly during 1896, the lower two classes held both the usual rush (which the sophomores won³⁴²) and a gridiron football game (freshmen 18, sophomores 6).³⁴³ Freshman Douglas VanderHoof '01 likewise reported seeing both an American

³³⁷ Remond Earl Maben, "Chronicles of the Class of Ninety-Seven," in *Class Day Exercises Dartmouth College* (1897) 10; John Roland Spring, "Chronicles of the Class of '98," in *Class Day 1898* (1898), 31; William Carroll Hill, "Chronicles," in *Book of the Class of Nineteen Hundred Two* (1902), 26; Mower; Crawford Morrison Bishop, "Class History," in *Class Day 1906* (1906), 26; Fred Leon Reed, "1909 Class History," in *Class Day 1909* (1909), 29; *Class Day 1914* (1914), 13; Joan Oberthaler, "King of the Ring: Gus Sonnenberg: Lawyer, Football Star, Heavyweight Wrestling Champion of the World," *Marquette Monthly* (October 2000), available at www.mmnow.com/mm_archive_folder/00/0010/back_then.html (viewed 8 October 2005); Clifford B. Orr '22n to family, 19 September 1918, in Edward Connery Lathem and David M. Shribman, eds., *Miraculously Built in Our Hearts: A Dartmouth Reader* (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth College, distributed by University Press of New England, 1999), 92-93; "The Undergraduate Chair," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 19, No. 1 (November 1926), 49; Letter from member of Class of 1943, edited by Herbert F. West '22, "A Freshman Writes Home," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 33, No. 1 (October 1940), 21; [Pennsylvania State University] *Collegian Digest* (13 November 1934), available at http://www.libraries.psu.edu/historicalcollegian/pdfs/1934_11_13.pdf (viewed 8 October 2005); Forrester Maphis and John S. Hatfield, eds., *Aegis 1950* (1950), 123.

³³⁸ Eastman, 67.

³³⁹ Mower, 8.

³⁴⁰ William Carroll Hill, 26.

³⁴¹ Spring.

³⁴² Mower, 9.

³⁴³ *Aegis 1899* (1897), 173; Leonard Wason Tuttle, "Chronicles," *Book of the Class of 1900* (1900), 40.

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football game (10-6, sophomores) and the usual Football Rush.³⁴⁴ During 1901, the sophomores won the Football Rush but tied the freshmen in gridiron football.³⁴⁵

The Football Rush owed some its survival to the advent of Palaeopitus, a student government body that alumni established in 1900 largely for the purpose of preserving traditions. The secret group began to operate publicly in 1902³⁴⁶ and soon enforced rules for the hazing of freshmen, including taking over the management and scorekeeping for the annual freshman-sophomore Football Rush.

As College enrollments grew, Palaeopitus had to modify the rules of the rush accommodate the growing teams. While freshman James Harrison Cavanaugh '14³⁴⁷ won the 1910 rush by crossing the Green in the traditional narrow direction, carrying the football to College Hall,³⁴⁸ Palaeopitus soon switched the direction of play. By 1918, the contest ran the longer distance from north to south, requiring the freshmen to cross the narrow north side of the Green and reach Webster Hall. Clifford Burrowes Orr '22n described the 1918 match:

And then tonight the great annual rush came off. The Freshmen were lined up on one side of the campus, with the Sophomores on the other. Then Paleopitus (11 picked Seniors who practically run all non-academical activities), dressed in their white flannels and white sweaters and bearing lighted torches, marched down the center of the campus to the steps of Webster Hall, where they took their stand. A whitewashed football was kicked off, and with wild Indian-like yells, the whole six-hundred of us piled on top of it, and pushed, fought, kicked, bit, tore, punched, and yelled our way the length of the campus, and gave the ball, entirely deflated, into the hands of the waiting Paleopitus. It took almost forty-five minutes of frantic struggling, merciless trampling, and unprecedented howling, but for the first time in *seven* years, the Freshmen won the rush, and the battle was over!³⁴⁹

Another Palaeopitus innovation was addition of multiple footballs to the rush. By 1926, the freshmen and sophomores were fighting over not one but three whitewashed footballs, a number that did not prevent the freshmen from winning in 20 minutes.³⁵⁰ In 1934, the school's official admissions booklet mentioned "the day when the entering

³⁴⁴ Douglas VanderHoof '01 (7 November 1897), in "As the Century Turned," reprinted in Francis Brown, ed., *A Dartmouth Reader* (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth Publications, 1969), 84.

³⁴⁵ Maynard. The sophomores won eleven-man football during 1906 (12-6) according to *Aegis 1910* (ca. 1908), 302-303; other lineups listed 17 sophomores to the freshman team's 18, as during 1907 (24-0 sophomores), according to *Aegis 1909* (ca. 1907), 228; and 1909 (6-0 freshmen), as noted in *Aegis 1911* (ca. 1909), 221.

³⁴⁶ Leavens and Lord, 222, paraphrasing *The Dartmouth* (3 October 1903).

³⁴⁷ *Register of Living Alumni of Dartmouth College and the Associated Schools* lists Cavanaugh in the class of 1915; the *Aegis* article mentioning him described the class of 1914; he may have graduated late or the article may have described a sophomore loss.

³⁴⁸ "The Class of 1914," *Aegis 1914* (1913), 77.

³⁴⁹ Orr. Students wore specially-bought disposable clothing for the event.

³⁵⁰ "The Undergraduate Chair," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 19, No. 1 (November 1926), 49.

class masses on the College green for the traditional freshman-sophomore rush.”³⁵¹ By 1936, Palaeopitus conditioned the privilege of removing the obligatory beanie while in the Nugget Theater.³⁵² (Palaeopitus had come up with the mandatory beanie in 1911³⁵³ to replace the prohibition on carrying a cane, since canes had lost their cachet.³⁵⁴) In 1939, the Football Rush involved five footballs,³⁵⁵ and one victorious freshman wrote:

The rush had hardly got started when three of the five footballs were resting peacefully on the far side of the field. One more went over before the rush ended, and following the massacre several group fights resulted in the further humility of the Class of '42.³⁵⁶

By the Second World War, the idea of welcoming new students by effectively inviting them to rumble with a rival gang seemed unwise. President Ernest Martin Hopkins and officials at the Dick’s House infirmary requested a halt, and in 1949 the Undergraduate Council voted to substitute a tug-of-war for “the ancient football rush” (or “the barbarous Freshman-Sophomore Rush”).³⁵⁷ The *Aegis* editor wrote “[c]ertainly few wept over the fall of a tradition which required a corps of medics on the sidelines to pick up the wounded and extract whistles from the throats of conscientious referees.”³⁵⁸ Though interclass tug-of-war teams had been around since at least the 1880s,³⁵⁹ the new tug-of-war was at first anything but conventional. To permit hundreds to pull at once, planners used several ropes, passing each one through a hole in the side of a log. The idea was that the log would mark the progress of the match and afterward would bear the numerals of the winning class.³⁶⁰ The log flew dangerously toward the hundreds of men pulling on the winning side when the losers succumbed suddenly,³⁶¹ and a standard tug-of-war rope replaced the log in subsequent years.³⁶² Apparently during the 1970s³⁶³ students lost interest in the tug-of-war as well, dropping the last remnant of more than a century of Old Division Football on the Green.

³⁵¹ Dartmouth College, “A Description of Dartmouth College,” *Dartmouth College Bulletin* 7 (third series), No. 5 (December 1941), 62.

³⁵² *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, 29, No. 1 (October 1936), 25

³⁵³ Donald C. Bennink ’15, “Lookin’ Back,” *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* 32, no.1 (October 1939), 55.

³⁵⁴ Some students, mainly those in senior societies, still carry a cane at Commencement.

³⁵⁵ West, ed.

³⁵⁶ *Id.*

³⁵⁷ *Aegis 1950* (1950), 7.

³⁵⁸ *Id.*

³⁵⁹ Edson.

³⁶⁰ Maphis, “Men of Dartmouth...,” *Aegis 1950* (1950), 9.

³⁶¹ Fritz Hier related this even during a panel discussion of Dartmouth traditions in the 1995 Senior Symposium (“Lest the Old Traditions Fail: An Examination of Tradition in American Life). The log went flying and injured several people.

³⁶² *Aegis 1957* (1957), 17 shows the annual event as a conventional tug of war.

³⁶³ The annual tug-of-war took place in 1973 according to *Aegis 1974* (1974), 13, but annuals from the following year and thereafter fail to depict it.

The 1871 Football Rules

The Bartlett Committee (1870)

The faculty banned football during 1868³⁶⁴ as part of a series of crackdowns on hazing and violence of all kinds. One student wrote during 1868:

Last night, April 3d, there was a ball out, and Frank Johnson '70, Chandler, run it off before their eyes. They followed him and tried to rush the Walker House where he roomed. It was an exciting rush. Fifteen of us stood in the door way and held the whole Freshman Class at bay while four or five went in, locked the door and kept them out of the windows, while the Seniors, in the second story windows, by leaning out and taking their hands hauled them up. Soon Prof. Sanborn came down and got us to stand back from the door, and then we rushed, for fun, at the gate and held that. Then Prexy came down and made us disperse, but we kept the ball! It was a rough time, in a small yard, with a picket fence. Folsom and Page '71 would have fought, if Page had done it. Drew put Brewer '71 over on the fence with his whole weight on the pickets, slung Sam Page '71 in the middle of the street, head first. Woodbury slung Bates '71 down with one arm; Pike took Mike Rogers, '71 in the face with his elbow, to make him let go of Brockway, tore Thompson's '71 coat off; Smith blacked Page's eye. **** Next morning the Freshmen hissed Johnson when he came in Chapel, and we cheered him. Prexy got "riley" and gave us a talking to about it, and about last night, and totally forbid rushing! Well, we are willing; '71 hasn't got a ball yet.³⁶⁵

A larger cane rush followed on April 9, 1869, and the faculty took it upon themselves to permit the freshmen to carry canes. The sophomores forced another cane rush on April 10, and the school reacted by rustivating nearly half of the men in the two lower classes. The disciplinary action also banned other forms of hazing, including football.³⁶⁶

Students formed a committee to return the game during the fall of 1870, placing a second-generation football player and future professor Edwin J. Bartlett '72 in the chairmanship. He wrote later of the 1870-1871 school year:

In my junior year I was one of a committee sent by the College to ask the President please couldn't we play the game again if we would be good; and he, after taking counsel, said yes.³⁶⁷

The faculty lifted their ban during the fall of 1870,³⁶⁸ allowing the game to return as a "foot-ball experiment."³⁶⁹ Students had to follow an "understanding" that Bartlett had

³⁶⁴ Richardson II: 555.

³⁶⁵ Locke, 116.

³⁶⁶ "Editorial Department," *The Dartmouth* 4, No. 9 (October 1870), 351, citing *New Hampshire Patriot* (28 September 1870).

³⁶⁷ Edwin J. Bartlett, *A Dartmouth Book of Remembrance*, 22-23.

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reached with President Smith that banned pointed instruments from their toes and allowed the president to supply the balls rather than the freshmen,³⁷⁰ since the task had become a form of hazing and created public disturbances. The experiment succeeded, and during the term “[t]here were no rushes or rows to speak of; the games were fairly conducted; and we see no reason to doubt that the difficulties attending foot-ball in previous years, have now been so far obviated that it can go on in future without any squabbling,” according to *The Dartmouth*.³⁷¹ The paper commented that “[t]he startling cries of ‘foot-ball, Freshie,’ no longer greet our ear[.]”³⁷²

By the fall of 1871, students had reduced the rules of the Dartmouth game to a formal code.³⁷³ The student newspaper *The Dartmouth* printed its seven tenets that term with an introduction:

The necessity of definite rules to govern our foot-ball contests has been a subject of frequent comment. To supply the deficiency in this respect, the following rules were prepared by a committee appointed for the purpose and adopted by the College. That they may be on record and accessible to all, it is judged proper to give them insertion here.³⁷⁴

The most notable element of the rules is what they lacked: any capability of supporting an intercollegiate match. Though students proposed playing an intramural version of the Dartmouth game with eleven-man class sides in 1874,³⁷⁵ probably in imitation of rugby, the idea did not catch hold. Meanwhile, the codes that other schools were using, even where they required pairs of matches under differing rules or the creation of “concessionary” rules, were limited of necessity to representative sides of 25 or fewer men. Those rules derived from imported soccer, and during 1873, representatives of students at Yale, Columbia, Princeton, and Rutgers agreed on the first intercollegiate soccer rules in the U.S.³⁷⁶

³⁶⁸ *Id.*, 23. Richardson II: 555 indicates that the ban was lifted during the year following 1868, which could be as late as the spring of 1870.

³⁶⁹ “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 1 (January 1871), 33.

³⁷⁰ Edwin J. Bartlett, “Mere Football,” 18.

³⁷¹ “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 1 (January 1871), 33.

³⁷² “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 4, No. 9 (October 1870), 351, citing *New Hampshire Patriot* (28 September 1870).

³⁷³ The rules appeared in “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 364-365 and were reprinted with Roman numerals in “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 8, No. 7 (September 1874), 264.

³⁷⁴ “Editorial Department,” *The Dartmouth* 5, No. 9 (October 1871), 365.

³⁷⁵ “Dartmouth Items,” *The Dartmouth* 8, No. 8 (October 1874), 307.

³⁷⁶ PFRA Research, “No Christian End!”

The Dartmouth Football Rules (1871)

Rule 1. Five umpires, one from each class in the Academical, and one from the Scientific Department, shall be elected annually by the college. The senior umpire present shall settle all disputes which arise concerning the game.

Rule 2. The ball shall be warned from the second base of the college grounds and towards the buildings. No warn shall be valid until both parties are ready.

Rule 3. Until the ball is kicked the warning party shall stand behind the ball and their opponents in front; the latter at a distance of at least two rods. These positions, and the warn as well, shall be changed each game.

Rule 4. No player shall kick, trip, strike, or hold another for any cause during the game.

Rule 5. It shall be considered foul when the ball is caught on the bound, or fly, or picked from the ground; when it passes the fence at the north or south end of the common, or at either corner, or when knocked past the east or west fence.

Rule 6. In case of a foul the ball shall be tossed up by the umpire at the place where the foul occurs, unless it be within two rods of either fence, in which case the ball shall be brought directly in a distance of two rods before umpiring.

Rule 7. The game shall be won when the ball is kicked past the east or west fence.