IN THE SPOTLIGHT OF SPORTS

This Indian the Athletic Marvel of the Age

Redskin Youth From Oklahoma Had No Knowledge of Athletics When He Entered Carlisle, Is Now Wonder of the Athletic World

BY JIM NASIUM

ONCE in awhile, across the vista of the passing years, a dying race startles those who are measuring it for its shroud by giving a kick that crabs the entire funeral proceedings. As if in objection to the obituary being written before the demise is complete, "Lo, the poor Indian," has chosen the most vitally active pursuit in the life of his paleface traducer in which to demonstrate that he is yet very much a live one. The red blood of his fathers, who, years agone, buried the war hatchet and watched with dimming eyes the plow point of civilization desecrating his hunting grounds, while his people slowly vanished from the face of the earth, still courses through the veins of the scattered remnants of the race and occasionally so asserts itself in the most warlike of the peaceful pursuits of the paleface that it compels the descendent of the conquerors of his fathers to take the count.

For years we have been accustomed to looking to the Carlisle Indian School for a football team that could extend to the limit the classiest elevens of the larger universities of the paleface, and we have seldom been disappointed. The names of Frank Hudson, Bemus Pierce, Houser, Mount Pleasant and other sons of the prairies, are emblazoned on the football tablet of fame in equal prominence with those of Poe, Heffelfinger, Coy and their paleface brethren, while Redskins like Socalexis, "Chief" Bender and Myers have flashed athwart the baseball horizon, leaving a trail of paleface scalps in their wake.

The football season of 1911 has brought out prominently in the public eye another of these athletic marvels of a dying race, and the greatest of them all. This newest Indian marvel, who is just now the wonder of the athletic world and of professional trainers throughout the length and breadth of the United States, who without exception declare him to be the greatest all-round athletic marvel the world has ever seen, is Jim Thorpe, a Redskin of the Sac and Fox tribe from Oklahoma.

Wonder In Three Years

Just three years ago, Jim Thorpe came to the Carlisle Indian School from Prague, Oklahoma, with no knowledge of letters except that obtained at a reservation day school, and absolutely nothing in his mind or limbs to indicate to observers that he was any different from the many other Indians who were enrolled that year. On that day, three short years, ago, Jim Thorpe was jiuset a simple and unsophisticated Indian, that was all He wasn't even Jim Thorpe then; that name was hung onto him at the Carlisle Institute because it sounded less like the batting order at a scalping bee than his original cognomen did.

Today Jim Thorpe is the wonder of the athletic world, and while at the time of his entrance into the Carlisle institution he had absolutely no knowledge whatever of athletics, in the three years that have intervened Thorpe has accomplished a marvelous variety of athletic feats on the football and baseball field, on the basketball floor, the track, the athletic field and in every branch of sports known, that the world of college trainers has been astonished by his achievements and are a unit in declaring that the athletic world will probably never again see his equal.

Twenty-five Eastern college coaches say that Thorpe is the best half-back the football game has ever developed, in addition to which his physical prowess has conquered so many fields of athletic activity that he has ranked himself among world champions in no less than ten branches of sport, and in a dozen more lines of athletic endeavor he has won laurels any one of which would turn the head of the average paleface college boy. Thorpe has approached world's records in so many lines of athletics that physical trainers are at a loss to account for his feats of strength and endurance.

At Best in Football

It is probably on the football field that this remarkable Indian is seen at his best, while whirling, twisting, dodging and dashing through a broken field of opposing players who are powerless to stop this dusky flash, and it is worth five times the price of admission to any game to see Thorpe sprint down the field on one run through an opposing team, one moment bewildering his opponents with panther-like leaps, and the next crashing his way through a mass of would-be tackles with the ferocity of an enraged bull. His spectacular runs and sensational kicking have been features of every game he has played in this season, while in the Indians' big game of the year, that against Harvard, on November 11, it was Thorpe's individual brilliancy that sent the Crimson down to defeat by the score of eighteen to fifteen. In this game Thorpe, though playing with a game leg that had to be bandaged tightly previous to the game, kicked four field goals out of four attempts, one of which was sent over the bar from the forty-eight yard line and all of the from difficult angles, in addition to which it was Thorpe's sensational end running that carried the ball down to the point where these goals were made possible, and it was Thorpe's spectacular runs that were instrumental in the Indians scoring their lone touchdown. Of the eighteen points scored by the Indians against Harvard, the unerring toe of this Indian marvel accounted for thirteen, while his ability in evading the Harvard tacklers was the potent factor in the scoring of the other five.

Thorpe's Records

Thorpe is not only also a great basketball player, at which game he fills the centre position with truly remarkable skill, but he is a baseball pitcher of great talent, and also covers any of the infield or outfield positions with as much credit as a professional player. He can put the 16-pound shot 43 feet, has a mark of 23 feet in the broad jump, and has done the hundred yards in 10 seconds his school record being 10 1-5 seconds. He has done 6 feet 1 inch at the high jump, 15 4-5 seconds over the high hurdles, while he negotiates the 220 yard hurdles in 26 seconds. He is an expert lacrosse player, a skillful tennis player and a star at indoor football, handball and hockey, besides being a crack shot with both rifle and shotgun. If there is anything else in the line of athletics or sports that this Indian has failed to shine at, it is only because it has never been brought to his attention, that's all.

Thorpe is just twenty-two years of age, is six feet tall, and weighs about 178 pounds in condition, which means all the time, because he is always in condition. He was born that way. He first attracted the attention of the world of college athletics during his second year at the Carlisle school, which means his second year's experience in athletics, when in a dual meet between Carlisle and Syracuse University, Thorpe amazed the officials by capturing first place in both the high and low hurdles, defeated Thor, the great shot-putter, and took first in that event, grabbed first place in both high and broad jump, and took second in the hammer throw. In the same year, at the Pennsylvania intercollegiate meet at Harrisburg, Pa., Thorpe won the high jump with a jump of six feet, and captured first place in the broad jump, hammer throw, and high and low hurdles. A week or two later, in the Middle Atlantic Athletic Association meet, held at Philadelphia, Thorpe also grabbed off first place in the five events mentioned above in competition with the best college athletic stars of the east.

By this time the college athletic world was simply laying back and gazing in open-mouthed astonishment at this new Redskin marvel, while expert physical trainers looked at his spare limbs and just shook their heads and wondered where he kept it all. In the fall of his second year Carlisle Thorpe was a substitute on the football team, and the next year broke into the game as a regular player at half-back and scored the touchdown that tied Penn. It was in this Penn game that he found himself and first began to astonish the football world as he had astonished the world of college athletics.

Following this he failed to return from his summer vacation and missed a term at the Carlisle institution, but this fall he returned and renewed his conquest of the paleface on the football field in such whirlwind fashion that he has compelled the college football experts to acknowledge this wild Indian to be the best half-back the game has ever known. Thorpe's whole ambition in life now is to gain a place on the Olympic team, which ambition will no doubt be gratified, anl if any old nation in the wide universe can dig up anything that can smother this redskin marvel in the all-round events all past records will be kicked into the middle of the Mediterranian Sea, that's all.

Most Indifferent of Athletes

Thorpe is probably the most indifferent athlete we have ever had. He makes no special preparations for his efforts, and simply meanders carlessly up to his tasks and does them in an unconscious way that paralyzes the spectators. There is nothing showy or suggestive of extreme effort in his work. In this respect he is the Lajoie of the athletic field.

Thorpe is a living exemplification of the saying that "there are better fish in the sea than have ever been caught," and just how close this fish came to escaping the net and living out his entire existence splashing around in the unknown depths of some obscure pool is shown by the incident, or accident, that was responsible for the discovery of the greatest all-round athlete the world has ever seen.

On his native heath in Oklahoma, Thorpe, whose father was a trader, and later a farmer, was considered but an average Indian youth. He had shown no athletic ability that was calculated to startle the natives, and was, in fact, always considered rather a careless and shiftless youth, lacking in ambition, whose predominating trait was a sense of humor. He was always mixed up in any prank that might be perpetrated at the reservation school, and while always a victor in the sports and games with the other Indian youths, he had never displayed any exceptional athletic ability, because he had never been extended to the point where he reached his limitations, and with his usual careless and shiftless nature he never did anything better than he just had to to get away with it. While all this time there was a latent ability that was destined to make this careless child of Nature the athletic marvel of the age slumbering in his frame, it never even entered his own head that he was capable of doing anything remarkable. Down in Oklahoma they can't figure out yet how it happened.

Discovery of Thorpe

The Indian School Commissioner, who induced Jim Thorpe's father to sign an application blank to have him entered in the Carlisle School at the age of eighteen, knew not that he was the Christopher Columbus of the greatest athlete the world had ever seen. To the Commissioner there was nothing about the young Jim Thorpe to recommend him above the many other Indian youths he was enrolling for entrance at Carlisle, and the fact that Thorpe's name appeared on that application blank instead of one of the neighboring boys was a mere accident of circumstance.

In the spring of 1908, Glenn Warner, athletic coach of the Carlisle Indian School, was standing on the athletic field at Carlisle watching the candidates for the Indian track team practising their stunts, when he saw a young Indian boy, who had been working about the grounds clad in overalls, walking over and slouchingly taking one of the high jumps at which the members of his track team had been straining. The careless manner in which he did it almost knocked Warner off his feet. He didn't know who this Indian was, but he determined to watch him. He next saw him go into a hurdle race, clad in his overalls, with some members of the team who were in the regulation track regalia, and the way that overall-ed Indian skimmed those hurdles caused Warner to go over and tap him on the shoulder and say: "Hey, you, go over to the gym and get into a track suit."

Thus was the accidental discovery of the world's greatest athlete accomplished, and Jim Thorpe's astounding career followed. It had never dawned upon this simple-minded Indian that he possessed any more ability than that of the average youth, and even now he ascribes his recent successes more to weakness on the the part of his opopnents than to any specially remarkable ability on his own part. If this careless Indian is ever called upon to discard his nonchalant manner and really exert himself, we tremble for all past records.

PRINCETON IS FIRST IN FOOTBALL HONORS

BY WALTER MARCHAND.

By Leased Wire to The Tribune.

NEW YORK, Dec. 2.—With the returns of the football season of 1911 all in, first honors must go to Princeton.

It may be argued by enthusiastic friends of other teams that Princeton has not the strongest eleven and they may make a plausible argument, by means of diagram and analysis of play, but in football, as in other games, it is the score which counts and on the score the laurel wreath must be presented to hang in the trophy room of old Nassau.

Princeton luck is a good cry to soothe the feelings of the vanquished, but the team which can go through the season without a single defeat chalked against it and can, on three successive Saturdays, defeat Harvard Dartmouth and Yale has something besides luck in the lineup.

Princeton luck is the same kind of luck that made the Philadelphia Athletics the world's champions in baseball.

The new rules which have had their first real trial this season, are here to stay. Not only do they make the play more open and interesting to the spectator, but they have cut out in large measure the "rough house" which was bringing the game into disrepute.

Another good result has been the bringing up of the playing strength of the smaller institutions. Formerly the games played by Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Pennsylvania and the like with the teams from small colleges were merely tryouts for the big teams, with the results never in doubt. Now when Brown, Dartmouth, Carlisle, Army, Navy, Penn State and several other small teams line up against the best of them it means a battle from the very start. And this is good for the game.

Harvard Has Good Men.

Harvard will be in the game next year. She has a freshman team which has won all its games and has never had its goal crossed. Freshman football, as a rule, does not amount to much, and is of little interest even to the colleges themselves. The results of the cubs' games are of importance only because they give some sort of line on a college's prospects for other years, prospects, incidentally, that are not always what they seem to be.

These youngsters at Harvard, however, are an exceptional lot. The team is the heaviest freshman eleven Harvard has ever had. Hardwick, a 178-pounder, is the highest man in the backfield, barring Quarterback Logan, and the linesmen, a well-balanced set as to weight, average around 173. Fullback Grickley is a delicate sort of child who can make 188 by training hard.

He is not only a line plunger of uncommon strength, but has shown such wonderful skill in the drop-kicking line that he is already considered a certainty for next year's varsity. Not in years has Harvard had a back combining such rushing strength and kicking ability.

Brickley, more than any other man, has been responsible for the Harvard cubs' present exalted position among the freshman teams. Hardwick and Brickley are both good punters and consistent ground gainers, but the line, though heavy, is rather weak. The secondary defense has done more to foster that scoreless record than the forwards.

Brickley was at his best as a drop kicker when Harvard, '15, defeated the Princeton freshmen, 12 to 0. That morning the stocky Crimson fullback kicked four field goals, scoring all his team's points at distances ranging up to thirty-seven yards. All told, he had six chances to score, all but the first—a placement effort from the thirty-seven-yard line—at difficult angles. Only Thorpe, who kicked four against the Harvard varsity, last week, has equaled this record of Brickley's.

Though most of the strength of the team is concentrated in the back field quartette, there are two youngsters of unusual ability in the rush line, both bearing familiar names. There is another Withington, younger brother of Paul and Lathrop, as well as a second Wigglesworth. There was a Frothingham in the back field, but he had the bridge of his nose broken at Princeton and his face generally badly mussed up.

Yale and Princeton are not so well supplied with star freshmen. The Tiger cubs have been beaten or tied by very nearly every team they have played, and the Bulldog's pups, though boasting of a better record, are no stronger. There are promising men on both, but it will take a lot of coaching to bring them up to varsity form.

Yale Players Graduate.

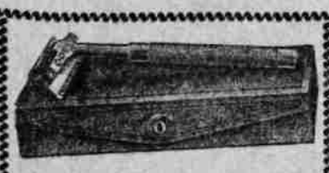
It looks as though Yale is going to be up against it next year. Nine of this year's football outfit graduate next June. And the worst of it is that the young material at New Haven has not shown up any too well this year. The men wearing blue togs for the last time are Francis, Scully, Childs, McDevitt, Paul, Howe, Freeman, Loree, Reilly and Strout. Camp, Spaulding, Bomeisler and Ketcham are the only first-string men on this season's eleven that will be on the job when the call for candidates is issued next year.

The only eleven, east or west, which has been able to make any consistent headway with the rushing game is Glen Warner's "thin red line and backfield heroes" from Carlisle.

The Indians have shown the strongest scoring machine in the east, with a fast, powerful, rushing attack well bolstered with the fine kicking ability. Defensively the Indians are not as strong as Princeton, Yale, Dartmouth or West Point, but they deserve credit for attempting more innovations than any other team, and thereby giving the new game a fairer test.

Dartmouth lost both her big games this year through the merest flukes, and by so doing has set the record for such losses. Princeton's field goal, resulting from a ballet dance all by itself, has made a football record to last for years, if not forever. Her defeat by Harvard came from a blocked kick on a muddy field. The Hanover gladiators should receive sympathy from all, for undoubtedly Dartmouth has one of the most powerful elevens of the season.

O'Brien of the Iowa eleven looks to be the star among the western drop-kickers.



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