

HERB McCRACKEN

Last March the college football world lost one of its true pioneers with the passing of Mr G. Herbert McCracken in Boynton Beach, Florida. Mr McCracken had a career in the game that encompassed both the player and coaching roles of the sport.

Born in Sewickley, PA., McCracken was a running back for Glenn "Pop" Warner at Pittsburgh from 1918-1920, after which he entered the coaching ranks in 1921 at little Allegheny College in Pennsylvania. After three seasons McCracken moved into the head coach position at Lafayette College in 1924, where he succeeded the legendary Jock Sutherland Herb filled the head spot at Lafayette from 1924-35, when he retired to the business world with an overall coaching record of 76-47-7. His greatest team at Lafayette was the 1926 edition, which featured triple-threat tailback Frank Kirkleski, and compiled a record of 9-0 that included wins over Pittsburgh and Washington&Jefferson.

Mr McCracken is considered by many to be the originator of the full-time use of the offensive team huddle, having installed the technique at Lafayette in 1924 to prevent the swiping of their signals. Warner is among the many crediting McCracken with this innovation. During his coaching days, McCracken was the cofounder of the very successful Scholastic Inc publishing concern, which he was associated with for 63 years McCracken was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1973.

LES HORVATH

College football lost one of its former Heisman Trophy winners with the passing of Les Horvath in mid-November. Mr Horvath was a unanimous All-America First Team halfback in 1944, as he led Ohio State to a record of 9-0 and the #2 ranking in the country. That season he was the nation's #2 rusher with 905 yards, while passing for 344 yards and scoring 12 touchdowns. This performance was good enough to pick up the Heisman award of 1944. One of the high points of his season was an 18-14 win over Michigan, in which Horvath tallied two TD's for the Buckeyes.

Born in Parma, Ohio, Horvath was a three-sport high school star in Cleveland, and then went on to play four seasons of varsity football at Ohio State, including the famous season of 1942 when the Buckeyes were voted the nation's #1 team by the Associated Press poll. In the Michigan game of that season Horvath, playing wingback, had another big day, as he passed for one touchdown and scored another himself on the way to the 21-7 win. In 1944, Mr Horvath had offers to play pro football, but opted to use his final year of eligibility while attending the Ohio State graduate school of Dentistry. He also won the 1944 Silver Football Award as the Big Ten's Most Valuable Player.

Horvath is also notable for having played in two of the East-West Shrine games, as he appeared in the 1943 and 1945 games. While in the Military during the latter stages of the War, Horvath served as the assistant football coach at Great Lakes Naval Station in 1946. Returning to civilian life, Horvath played three years of professional football, and retired from the game after playing for the Cleveland Browns in 1949. He then opened a dental practice in the Los Angeles that he carried on for over 40 years, while living in the suburb of Glendale.

Former midwest sportswriter Howard Roberts said of the Ohio State star: "Horvath was the backbone, the wheelhorse, and the inspiration of the team ... he was a real iron man". Les Horvath was elected to the College Football Hall of Fame in 1969.