

John B. Foster's Annual Gridiron Forecast. Analysis of Rules and Outline of New Plays to Follow Change in Code . . .

BY JOHN B. FOSTER.

At least be satisfied of one fact. The football coaches of the larger colleges have no fixed opinion as to their probable chance of success in the season to come. The change of the rules has been too effective and too radical to make them assured as to the outcome of the autumn.

Princeton was conceded the supremacy in the East last year. It is true that some of the Princeton game was comparatively weak and its team work less effective than that of Yale or Harvard, but the Tigers won and results must count no matter what the quality of the individual effort may have been.

There were flashes in the work of Yale, which were more brilliant than some of the team work of Princeton, and equally accurate comment might be made of the game with Harvard, but individual efforts and the alertness to grasp opportunity and arise to the occasion, the individual effort of "Sammy" White, whose skill in taking advantage of a fumbled ball placed Princeton in the lead, was far more in evidence among the Tigers than it was in the eleven of Yale and Harvard.

When the season of 1911 was completed Princeton lost some of its best football players. The finish of their senior year ended their amusement on the gridiron and not all of them were glad that they were through.

As Hart said shortly after the Yale game was over: "I've played a long time to be a member of a football eleven that won what is as near a football championship as can be, and I'd like just one year more to see if it is possible to duplicate the success that Princeton had in 1911."

The Tigers will lose White and others of the varsity eleven of last year, who while not so powerful in advancing the ball as were some of their rivals, were fairly steady on defence, and when the game of Princeton was thoroughly analyzed for the year it was easy to note of what great importance their ability to defend their goal had proved.

From the Freshmen.

Some good material will enter the squad from the freshman eleven of 1911. There will be some second string men of last autumn, who should develop into good football players this year, and it is very likely that the Tigers will be glad to

avail themselves of some of the physically strong men, who may be a little slower on their feet than their rivals, but who will be powerful defenders of the goal when the ball draws nigh to their line with the attacking eleven having the advantage of an added down.

The election of Pendleton as captain of the team should have a good effect on the players. He seems to be possessed of the magnetism which is an essential with a leader. Last autumn the student body centered much of its faith and hope in Pendleton, and that could not help but be reflected back to the other players.

The Princeton line has been depleted of strength, that is, known strength, more than the back field. There were two of the best players of the season of 1911 who should be high class football players this year. Whether the line has all the experienced material which is necessary to make a team of determined forwards is something which the early games of the season must prove, and it is very doubtful whether Princeton will settle upon a varsity team until the games with Harvard and Yale crowd closely into the schedule.

The Tiger nucleus is good and powerful at that, for Dunlap and Hammond, promising ends, are available, as are Brown and Wilson as guards, while Blumhert, the Princeton full back, and Campbell, Huntington and Frothingham, half backs.

Fisher, captain of 1911, was one of the best football players of the season. He was aggressive, strong in defence, a good leader and a player who ranged over the field with much speed for his weight. Potter was a good quarter back, but too easily injured to be of the value to his team that he would have been, and Smith, a reliable and saucy end, whom it will be hard for the crimson to replace.

Yet the outlook for Harvard is good this year—very good. In the line, for instance, Gardner, Hitchcock and Storer will be available for tackle positions. Gardner is a promising player in the United States, but was compelled to stop play because of injury.

If he makes the team this autumn, and there is no reason to doubt that he may, Harvard will have a wonderfully good pair of tackles in Gardner and Hitchcock, and a pair of players who should be successful under the new rules, if we can guess that the new rules will call for specially good men to play tackle. Men, who must be speedy, strong and quick at diving where the attack is to be directed.

Storer, who had played centre a great deal for Harvard in 1911, was shifted to tackle in the last two games of the season for one who was in a position quite new to him, made a success of it. Presuming that if he is retained at tackle he will play better this year than he did last, the crimson seems to be in a position where there will be no necessity to worry about its tackles.

New Guards.

If the team promises to be strong at tackle it also appears as if it will be experimental at guard. Both veteran guards are gone. To replace them there are Penneck and Trumbull of the freshman eleven. Both of these men were steady guards for the first year team and both of them were coached to find a place on the varsity eleven this year, for it was known, of course, that Leslie and Fisher were to play their last football in 1911.

If either Trumbull or Penneck should fail to come up to expectation there is Keyes, a burly young man who is likely to develop into a good guard primarily because of the reason that he has all the qualifications for the position.

Very likely centre will be taken care of by Parmenter. In the game against Yale he played excellent football. He should play better this year, and with so many good centres going out of commission, as it were, because their college terms have expired, Harvard may have one of the best centres in the country. Parmenter is injured, or if he fails to come up to expectations, there is Storer to fall back upon, and while there were some criticisms of his work in 1911, the fact that he has had experience with the eleven in important games will make him a very valuable man for the crimson this season. Wigglesworth, not the pudgy little back of that name, but a brother, will also be a candidate for centre, so that Harvard seems to have ascertained enough to find somebody who will handle the position with shrewdness and accuracy, and accuracy is one of the most important qualities of all for a centre.

Harvard's forward line, though that Smith was the best end of the season in 1911. They were not without reason for their opinion, but Smith is gone. In his place there will be some candidates from the freshman squad, but it is more than likely that the ends, who will take part in the important games of the season, will be Felton and O'Brien. Felton earned his place in 1911 as a general availability, proved that he was almost the fastest end of the season although, like all young players, he occasionally overran his man and occasionally was turned back upon his own defence.

Gardner at Quarter.

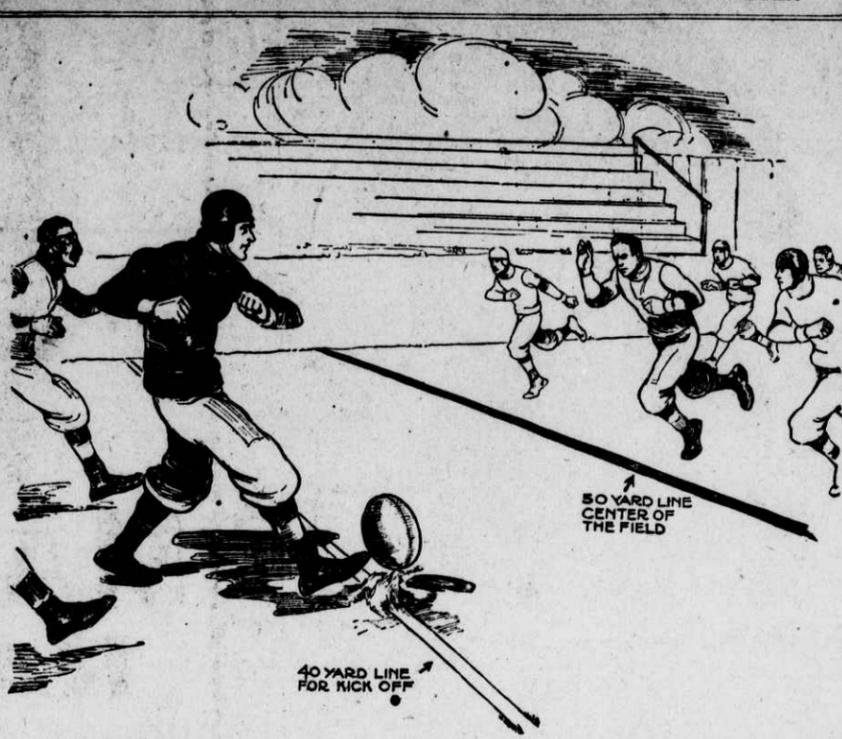
Gardner seems to be the logical man for quarter back, judging by the experience which he had in 1911, and the understudies to him will probably be Logan, who was quarter back for the freshman team and Freedyer.

Percy Wendell, captain of the eleven, will play half back as a matter of course, and with him are Reynolds and "Tom" Frothingham of the 1911 squad. To assist them will very likely be Brickley, of the freshman team, who was considered last year to be the most sensational first year back in the East.

Brickley had an eventful career with the freshman. He was captain of the team and scored point after point by his sensational goals from field. Brickley played at Everett and at Exeter. One of his wonderfully good performances last autumn was in the game against the Princeton freshmen. He made four field goals and all of them were beautiful, and a placement kick from the thirty-seven yard line, and from an angle very sharp, because the ball was only a few feet out from the sideline. He made a drop kick from almost the same angle and at a similar distance from the goal. The other two goals were made from distance, but the angles were not so acute.

Not that the field goals will not be so much advantage to a team this year, yet it is a little difficult to figure that they will lack all their usefulness of the past, and if Brickley proves to be a high class back in other qualities than kicking it is not out of the question to figure that he

KICKING OFF BACK OF FIELD CENTRE.



THIS year when play is started in a football game the ball will be kicked from a little mound of earth at the forty yard line, instead of from an improvised tee on the line which denotes the centre of the field. The reason for starting the ball at the forty yard line is that the playing length of the field has been brought down to 100 yards. The old distance from centre to goal was fifty-five yards. Frequently the man who kicked off kicked the ball into touch. It was the opinion that at fifty yards he would be likely to do so even more frequently. For that reason it was thought best to drop the team in possession of the ball back of the centre of the field. As there is no forty-five yard line on the new gridiron the committee decided to put the ball in play at the forty yard line. That makes the kickoff distance longer than it was under the old rules. Another reason for changing the position of the kickoff was to compensate as much as possible for the shortened playing field by giving the defending side running area to take care of the ball on the first attack.

There will be a great deal of competition for the place of one guard and one tackle until well along toward the middle of the season, and the players must come from the second string squad or from the freshman eleven of 1911. A second guard does not seem to be available in the freshman eleven, so the coaches will have to work one of the older football squad into playing condition to meet the varsity eleven of the East.

In the back field there is little doubt that Camp, Spalding, Dunn and the other backs of 1911 will play regularly. Nor is there much doubt that Avery will play on the other end from Homeliner. If the latter can keep from being injured this should be his most sensational season at Yale, for he is easily superior to any end in sight at the present moment.

The Pennsylvania holds the position of being one team which is intermediary between the East and the West, because it plays Michigan as well as the eleven in the East. It is always interesting to note what the red and blue has in sight for a football season.

It is true that the Pennamites have lost their games with the larger colleges in the East because of reasons which are best known to the students, but so long as Pennsylvania plays Michigan and is willing to give game to all Eastern colleges which will schedule contests with the weaker team the team will hold the attention of the public.

The Pennsylvania team of 1911 was not one of the best in the history of the university, but it pulled together and made a better showing than had been expected. The men who went out with the completion of the season of 1911 were Kennedy, Thayer, Morris, Wolfert and Pindelson. Morris, Pindelson and Wolfert comprised a great deal of the defence of the team, so the coaches will be confronted with the necessity of building up a strong defence for the coming season.

There are plenty of backs left. Among the Quakers will be the latter's running mate. He is about 175 pounds in weight and agile and quick on his feet. He has excellent football judgment and is expert in backing up the line. He drop kicks well and can kick off well, and if there are any better qualifications for centre than those which have been enumerated they are not to be found in the present football curriculum.

Green and Crawford may be the tackles for this season—a pair of men with some experience, with a great deal of physical resistance and a little awkward in open field tackling, which, it is thought, can be remedied by plenty of hard coaching.

Lewis, who was a guard on the second eleven of 1911, is likely to make the varsity this year with the modified rules. In company with him is Nisson, who may be one of the sensational guards of the season. He worked out all the autumn of 1911 on the scrub with Pennsylvania, and some of his work is said to have been phenomenal. He won the wrestling championship of the university at 175 pounds, and with his weight and strength is said to combine speed, which would make him an ideal player for the place.

Crane, a player who had experience with experience, with a great deal of physical resistance and a little awkward in open field tackling, which, it is thought, can be remedied by plenty of hard coaching.

Lewis, who was a guard on the second eleven of 1911, is likely to make the varsity this year with the modified rules. In company with him is Nisson, who may be one of the sensational guards of the season. He worked out all the autumn of 1911 on the scrub with Pennsylvania, and some of his work is said to have been phenomenal.

Crane, a player who had experience with experience, with a great deal of physical resistance and a little awkward in open field tackling, which, it is thought, can be remedied by plenty of hard coaching.

Lewis, who was a guard on the second eleven of 1911, is likely to make the varsity this year with the modified rules. In company with him is Nisson, who may be one of the sensational guards of the season.

WESTERN FOOTBALL OUTLOOK EXCELLENT

THROUGHOUT the West last season football seemed to be better played than it had been in the year before. Here and there was an exception in the colleges, but there is no college which, at some time, must not bear with an "off year" so far as football material is concerned.

At Minnesota, where, by the way, some most excellent football was played in 1911, the third year men who are eligible for the eleven are Robinson, Smith, Morrell, Powers and Frank. Of the second year men there are McEwen, Wallender, Capron, McAlmon, Lawler, O'Shaughnessy, Tobin and Hayward. It is said that some good players are in sight from the first year season.

Minnesota will unquestionably be as much a factor in the season of 1912 as it was in 1911. The team made a strong bid for the leadership in the West last season and was successful, and since then, some of the players, which were developed at Minnesota, were good enough for Yale. Williams, the Minnesota coach, who is a Yale man, devised a shift which was employed by the Elis to their great advantage.

At the University of Chicago the third year men who are eligible are Whiting, Carpenter, Paine, Freeman, Sellers, Canning, Lawler, Fonger. Second year men, Goller, Scruby, Norgren, Pierce, Goddard, Harris, Kennedy, Molander, Walker, Fitzpatrick and Polak.

There are prospects of excellent players from the first year with one or two stars on the freshman team. At least the impression of the Chicago critics, Springer, a half back, will very likely be eligible to play.

Chicago is now one of the teams which plays with excellent freshmen material and there is always interest in the personnel of the players and their style of play.

While the eleven did not look at the beginning of 1911 as if it would be a powerful factor in the Western football world, it developed strength which was far above the early expectations of Alonzo Stagg, the coach. Among the men who proved to be of the greatest value to the Chicago team was Scruby, a remarkably good kicker and a player whose work attracted much attention throughout the East.

Wisconsin's Squad.

Wisconsin will have from the third year men, Bright, Gillette, Hayes, Hoefel, Lange, Ostie, Pierce, Samp, Tandberg, Wild. Second year men, Butler, Alexander, Castle, Chambers, Dickman, Hyman, Pollock, Roberts, Skinner, Powell, Tormey, Van Riper, Van Ghent, Wood, Wernicke, McHugh, Gilbert.

There is excellent freshmen material at Wisconsin. The eleven will miss Moll, a quarterback, whose fine work in 1911 helped largely to keep Wisconsin in the front rank of the Western colleges. The Wisconsin team will need a lot of repair on the line, for some of its best forwards were lost by graduation. Wisconsin is said to have plenty of good reserve for linemen, and if that proves to be the case the task of the coach will be lightened to that extent. He will only be obliged to coach the players and will not be compelled to select them.

men, Prince, Hall, P. Beiting, Rowe, Carter, Fisher, Tillson, Lane, Simpson, Randolph, Mann, F. Prince.

The freshmen material is excellent and Illinois will welcome all that it can get. The freshmen material is excellent and Illinois will welcome all that it can get.

At Michigan, but perhaps not as much as last season. The third year men who are eligible are Thompson, Eogle, Quinn, McMillan, Picard. Second year men, Anderson, Baird, Korf, Bowman, Rogers, Heibel, Torbet, Pontius, Garrela, Craig, Smith, Roblee. First year men are permitted to play and the material is excellent.

Other colleges the situation is summarized as follows:— Iowa—Third year men: Hanson, Ney, Buckley. Second year men: Penningroth, McElionis, Meloy, Van Lockum, Banton, Bowen, Baird, Korf, Bowman, Rogers, Heibel, Torbet, Pontius, Garrela, Craig, Smith, Roblee. First year men: Brasda, Von Maur, Clemens. Good first year material.

Northwestern—Third year men: Johnson, McPherson, Robbins, Wandrack, Spina, French, Dunwoody, Ball, Dilts, Sicks, Cullen, Taylor. Second year men: Freygang, Glossop, Winston, Oliphant, Berns, Rubey, Norris, Taylor, Lubker, Price, Limer. First year material good.

Notre Dame—This year men: Morgan, Oasa, Crowley, Rockne, McGinnis, Deane, McGrath, Smith. Second year men: Feeney, O'Neill, Jones, Larson, Harvat, Manger, LeBlanc, Duggan, Yundt, Lath, Moore, Jones, Dolan, Ellward, Armstrong, Vaughan, McLaughlin, Lee, Finnegan, Bergman, Barger, Pliska, Miller, Smith, Kelleher, Salmon, Eichenlaub. Freshmen allowed to play at Notre Dame.

Capron in 1911.

To Capron, of Minnesota, belongs the credit of being one of the greatest quarterbacks the West has produced in years. He has all the speed, generalship and dodging ability of his predecessor, former Captain McGovern, and in addition has the build and weight which make him an invaluable player. His handling of punts almost is flawless. He seldom misjudges them and never misses them. In running back the ball his dodging comes into play, and this, aided by his use of the stiff arm and the manner in which he carries his weight, enables him to withstand shocks that would down a lighter man.

From Wisconsin there comes a report that five men are trying for the quarter back position to fill the vacancy left by Mole. They are: "Ede" Gillette, "Doc" Tormey, Bellows, Rush and Castle. It now looks as though the back field trio would be made up of Van Riper and Bright, Tormey, and either Samp or Tandberg, full back.

Mauer will undoubtedly play the centre position. He weighs over 340, and while playing with the winter football squad showed considerable aggressiveness and speed. The guards will probably be Joe Younger and "Ole" Moffet. Van Ghent and Butler, the two likely tackles, have both had considerable experience in the place. Captain Hoefel and Ostie undoubtedly will start in as the regular ends, with Raymond and Lange as capable understudies.

LINE SHIFT KEEN WEAPON THIS YEAR

LET it be conceded that the first effort every coach this season will be to devise plays by which he expects to gain ground around the ends, through the tackles, or between guard and tackle. It is impossible to expect any other plan in the early coaching. No matter what may be entertained in mind regarding the use of the forward pass it is safe to say that first attention will be devoted to the running game.

There is nothing in the changes, which have been made in the rules for 1912, that prevents any team from putting into play the shift which was adopted toward the latter part of last season. Beginning in the West at Minnesota the new formation was taken advantage of by Yale, and from Yale went to West Point and Harvard.

Princeton was not coached in it, nor were some of the other eleven of the East, but those who made use of the shift found that it was good, and a powerful assistance to the team in possession of the ball.

The object of this formation is to put men into the interference in advance of the runner without violating the rules. The shift, primarily, uses seven men. The formation takes place behind the line, but the ball is not put into play until the men are in their positions and there are seven men on the line not in motion, as demanded by the rules, when the ball is snapped back.

Power In It.

It is a tremendously powerful method of attack. The signal is given and the men upon whom the play develops, if they happen to be tackles, guards or ends, drop back. The ball is not passed then. If it were the play would be illegal. The quarter back times the snapping of the ball with the arrival of the men at the positions which they are to fill. The moment that he sees seven men in the forward line, the play halting for the fraction of a second, but long enough to keep within the rule, he can give an added signal or ask for the ball. Being thoroughly understood by his fellow players, the man who is to receive the ball is then ready to take it and make the try with his interference in front of him and to one side of him.

The momentary pause on the line and the putting of the ball into play were so well timed by the quarter backs of the teams which tried the shift last season that the attempt to gain ground much resembled some of the flying plays of other days. There seemed to be no particular danger attached to it, but the attack was so well concentrated with powerful men to assist the man with the ball, not by pushing or pulling him, but by turning the defence aside, that not infrequently big gains were the result.

Stopped Through Keen Observation.

It is true that when the play was diagnosed carefully and the defence had men who were keen enough to note the direction which the ball was taking, and careful to ascertain the man who had it, they were able to elude the interference or dart between the players who composed it and bring the ball to a stop with only a few feet gain, sometimes none. Nor was it wholly infrequent that some players got through the attack and tumbled the man with the ball to the ground for a loss.

This year the defence is weakened somewhat because the forward pass can go to any distance and can be used to make

Lafayette and who is eligible to play this year with Pennsylvania, may get into the varsity eleven, and, if he does, will probably land at tackle.

Mercer's coaches will play half back or full back, and there are quite enough candidates for the other positions to insure him two good running mates. Without much doubt Mide will be the quarter back.

Dartmouth must be considered as a football factor in 1912. Combined with the varsity players who are left out of the successful team of 1911 are some promising players who will be in the line of the Dartmouth plan of play, and if signs are not misleading Dartmouth's eleven should be even stronger under the code of 1912 than it was under that of 1911.

The same should be more to their liking, and if the team does not fall from form in its most important games of the year it is not likely to be an easy matter to stop its drive once it is under way.

If Dartmouth had the players of two and three years ago for this season, it would be one of the most dangerous of the eleven playing football. It is doubtful as to the strength of the men who will take the vacant positions this autumn, and for that reason it is not easy to place the team's prospects.

The material which was left to the coaches is good, but if the never man responds quickly to teaching and are as fast and as strong as the Dartmouth players have been in the last few seasons, Princeton and Harvard will find the Hanover eleven a dangerous opponent.

The changes in the rules should favor Cornell if the Cornell eleven is recruited with strength. What will be even more in Cornell's favor will be the benefit of practical coaching from a man like Sharpe.

The Ithacans, always a menace to the peace of mind of Pennsylvania for the last ten years, and very frequently dangerous have, with most of the rest, because their players did not know the first needs of football than any eleven playing in the United States.

Weak in Rudiments.

Cornell has gone to Philadelphia to play against Pennsylvania, with a team which seemed able to beat the red and blue, but has failed to win some time because the Cornell players were hopelessly devoid of the ability to tackle players. They had the instinct but they didn't know how. At other times they have lost because their strategy was so bad that it was almost meant every thing to their team, but it has been no point of their game so completely inefficient as that of tackling the runner with the ball.

Williams is hoped to be a big football year and will have a team which will probably be as good as that of 1911. Daly will coach again and the students are enthusiastic over the chances of their eleven.

Brown University is making an effort to put an eleven into the field which will retain a little of the football honor which was lost last season. Because of the line's success in the football game last year Brown team was overrated last year. Critics, who forced themselves to say that they could not understand why Brown did not play better, simply did not take into consideration the fact that Brown had less football ability than it possessed the season before.

By the time that West Point and Annapolis are ready to try their usual engagement on the football field, the fact that Brown had less football ability than it possessed the season before.

Force of the Attack.

Under this arrangement the attack can send from seven to nine men against a single end or tackle. With the backs scattered widely to defend two wings of which they are fearful, and with the secondary defence being left in the rear of the line, the shift is likely to prevail where there is a disparity between weights and the strength of two eleven.

Under the rule which permits an offensive back to take the ball in at least one foot behind the rush line, it will be probable that two or three backs on the attack will form a single line man and cut him out of the line man carrying the cup through which the man carrying the ball is likely to gain more liberally than he has last season, in view of the fact that the secondary defence is less powerful than it has been in the past, if the force of the forward pass is as much a menace as it is felt that it is likely to be.

On the First Down.

The temptation to use the play on the first down will be great, and if it happens to bring five or six yards' gain with it the next down will probably find it employed again. With only a yard or so to gain after this the attacking eleven has two more tries to get the ball the required distance, and if the shift appears to be too risky to be used again, the straight, old fashioned line plunges are likely to take the ball that two yards or so more which are necessary.

In resorting to the play it is imperatively necessary that seven men are on the line and that they are not in motion when the ball is passed, although the fact that they are not set on their feet but are on their toes, gives them the jump on their opponents, unless the latter are quick to concentrate and turn the advance.

One of the most important of football maxims, if not the most important of all, is that the defence must follow the ball as closely as the attack, and this year—more than last, or more than the year before—it becomes even more necessary that the ball what the defending players are keen enough of perception to gather when the blow is to strike their line. If they miss it, under the present advantage which is given to the attack by an additional down, they will find that the first play against them has put the ball within three or four yards of the coveted ten, a point from which the attacking side will be unable to try to break the line for the needed distance without sending the ball to the goal line apart with a shift wedge.

"REVISED GRIDIRON" WITH NEW BOUNDARIES.

