

Chapel Hill History

Fat-men's run gone, but football is still popular

The beginning of the modern sports program at UNC-Chapel Hill coincided with the ending of Reconstruction. Julian M. Baker was a gymnastics enthusiast and a junior in 1876 when he financed a small gym which he and university carpenter Foster Utley built south of Gerrard Hall. Inspired by the new facility, students formed the University Athletic Association with Julian Baker as president, began playing interclass baseball games, and in the spring of 1884 played Bingham preparatory school, losing 12-11.

In February 1884, students held their first field day on the large athletic field southeast of Smith Hall where now stands the Playmakers Theatre. The events included greased pig races, long jumps with and without dumbbells, a baseball throw, two- and 18-lap races around a one-sixth-mile track, and three-legged, fat-men's and 100-yard runs.

A growing desire for a substantial gym coincided with a push by some trustees to cease holding the annual commencement ball in Smith Hall because the dance "diverts attention

from study, leads to liquor drinking, involves considerable expense, and is a grief to multitudes of our best citizens." The privately directed University Gymnasium Association incorporated on 29 October 1884, raised money by selling shares at \$10 each, bought a lot now occupied by Phillips Hall, and raised a tin-roofed, frame structure with a 100' by 45' main arena that served both as a gymnasium and a ballroom.

In 1883, the seniors and freshmen united to defeat the juniors and sophomores in UNC's first organized

football game. On 18 October 1888 at the State Fair in Raleigh, UNC began intercollegiate football play, losing to Wake Forest 4-6 with a team captained by Bob Bingham and listing John Motley Morehead and A.H. Patterson as players. In 1889 UNC, Wake Forest, and Trinity College (now Duke University) played spring and fall round robins, each team winning and losing twice. Several serious injuries that year prompted the trustees to ban the sport as a brutal and unwholesome spectacle which encouraged gam-

bling and drinking. Students vigorously protested; professors Horace Williams, Francis Venable, and Eben Alexander urged that the ban be lifted; and the trustees yielded.

Students resumed play in 1891 and fielded a legendary team in 1892, with William P. Graves of Yale as coach, Mike Hoke as captain, and Charles Baskerville and Bill Devin among the players. In October, that team beat Richmond 40-0 and lost to Virginia 18-30. Then during Thanksgiving week they accomplished feats which are, for humanitarian reasons, no longer possible. On Monday, 22 November, they defeated Trinity 24-4 in Chapel Hill. After riding the overnight train to Atlanta, on Tuesday they outscored Auburn 64-0. The next day in Nashville, they beat Vanderbilt 24-0. Returning to Atlanta, on Friday, 26 November they revenged their only loss of the season by trouncing Virginia 26-0. In five days, the UNC eleven had traveled approximately 1,000 grueling miles and beaten four major teams by a combined score of 138-0 without making a single substitution.

"Oh! What a day of triumph it was when the Varsity team returned from Atlanta," George Tayloe Winston later recalled, "bringing with them the beautiful trophy of victory and the bleeding scalp of our ancient foe, the University of Virginia." Tar Heel fans had to subsist on those memories for a long while. Between the 1892 win and a 7-0 victory in 1916, UNC's record against Virginia was a depressing 3-16-1. One of the victories was in 1898, when UNC's only undefeated football squad went 9-0.

After moving to Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1908, William Meade Prince attended the University of Tennessee practices, copied their plays, and gave them to UNC captain George Thomas. The Tar Heel's first scouting report had little practical value, however, since the team lost 0-12.

In 1905, work was completed on the Bynum Gymnasium, donated by Judge William P. Bynum of Lincoln County as a memorial to his grandson, who died while a student at the University. A decade earlier, trustees had leveled the floor of the old Memorial Hall in an unsuccessful effort to improve acoustics. Students started playing interclass basketball in the unheated building in 1903 and fielded a team in 1911 which began intercollegiate play, accumulating a 7-4 record against teams as diverse as Virginia, Woodberry Forest prep school and the Durham YMCA.

The first head basketball coach was Nathaniel J. "Nate" Cartwell, a Kentucky native, a former resident of Asheville, and a University of Pennsylvania track star. Cartwell succeeded in convincing the UNC trustees to levy an annual fee of \$2.50 per student to support athletics, but he resigned in late May 1914 im-

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