

THE SPORT SHOW

by Red McCarthy

*The Mailman Puts
A Guy On Defense* *And He Finds Most
Stubborn At NHS*

The best defensive record in Norristown High School football annals was brought to mind the other day, when one John Travis got a fellow busy in the archives. The gentleman addressed a letter to this corner:

"I am inquiring for some information on the undefeated 1938 NHS football team. I know that the '38 team had only seven points scored against it all season, and the team that scored the touchdown was Coatesville."

"My cousin attended Coatesville High at the particular time and said that the touchdown was scored on the ground. I say that it was scored through the air. Would you please settle this argument?"



RED MCCARTHY

In a nutshell, John, I can say that you must have seen the game from a better angle than your cousin. The Coatesville touchdown was scored through the air, a 33-yard pass play from the arm of a boy whose name implies as much, Pitcherello, to a teammate, Witte. The extra point was booted by a lad named Diehl, and it gave Coatesville a 7-6 halftime lead. Norristown came back to win it, 13-7.

Those seven points were the only points scored against NHS that season. Ironically, the only player to cross the Eagle goal in 1938, the aforementioned Witte, wound up in Montgomery Hospital with concussion.

Head coach of that football team was Paul Merrill Shellenberger, quarterback of the undefeated and untied 1922 squad.

The Eagles won eight straight games thru the '38 campaign, then put up their undefeated season against a winless Germantown High eleven on Thanksgiving Day. A scoreless tie left NHS just short of a perfect season.

~~The locals had opened with a 31-0 conquest of Conshohocken followed with identical 6-0 victories over Haverford and Norristown before the 13-7 nod over Coatesville. Phoenixville tumbled next, 7-0; Valley Forge Military Academy, 13-0; Lower Merion, 12-0; Chester, 15-0, then the 0-0 windup stunner with Germantown.~~

The Eagles had registered 103 points for nine games while limiting the opposition to 7. That's the best defensive mark in the books since 1900, but just prior to turn of the century, the 1897 team pitched a shutout.

The team of Jimmy Kite, Walter Yost, Roland White, George McNichol, Bill Lovett, Frank Nyce, Warren Supplee, Ron Dettre, Jess Ross, etc., rolled up 102 points, allowed none, while winning 5 and tying 2. They played Arlington High of Philly, Tribby of Bridgeport, Malvern, Royersford, Philadelphia Manual, Ursinus 2nds and Chester.

In 1895, NHS, operating as the Norristown High Canoe Club, won 4 and tied 1 while shutting out the five opponents, 58-0. Fred Cohen was captain of that team that played Ursinus 2nds, Reading, Crescent AA (the one tie), Hancock AA and Doylestown Lenape.

But getting back to the 1938 team, and the best defensive mark in modern NHS annals, it was a well-balanced club directed by the current Town Council prexy, assisted by present high school Principal Lewis V. Kost, Harvey Fishburn and Wayne Henry.

There was great backfield talent, headed by All-Suburban and Maxwell Award winner Harvey Borzelleca, Vernon Pennock, Chud Yetter, Vince Campbell, George Sutch, John Sylvester, Ted Daley and Dick Martin.

And the rugged linemen who did not yield any score on the ground—and very little yardage over the season route—Paul Atkinson, Jim Lloyd, Jim McGrogan, Bill Bailey, Jack Shainline, Ray Musselman, Frank Moister, Ed Krilowicz, George Glisson, Joe Farra, Carl Ault, Ivan Chantry, Bill Cloud, Earl Riley, Jerry Scanlon and Russell Johnson.

A real fine football team with an undefeated record and only one touchdown scored against it.

Man! How those fellows would like to play over that 1938 game with Germantown!

On second thought, they've probably played it over a thousand and one times.