Yesteryears

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Heisman coached Akron football

His innovative ideas changed the way the game was played

By Lois Firestone

THEY BOUGHT THEIR own jerseys and padded knickers and paid for the team's short road trips with their own money, because they were so eager to be the first to play the new game — crowds filled the grandstand at Buchtel Field to watch their practices, "a confused mass of legs and arms," as one spectator put it at the time.

It was Monday, October 26, 1891 and tiny Buchtel College in Akron was making history — while Alonzo Stagg was organizing the game at the University of Chicago and Walter Camp was guiding his Yale men to an undefeated season, Buchtel gridders fielded their first football game.

For nine years, Buchtel students had begged the administration to sanction the game, but other than one game between upperclassmen and freshmen, (the faculty won, 30 to 8) officials refused. Then the school was forced into competitive football after the Ohio Intercollegiate Athletic Association, at their annual meeting in June 1891, decreed that member colleges must field teams or be dropped. As members, Buchtel had competed in baseball, track and oratorical contests, and didn't want to be dropped from the association — the forerunner of the Ohio Conference — which included Denison, Kenyon, Ohio State, Adelbert (now Case Western Reserve) and Buchtel.

One name stands out from those early years when the University of Akron was still called Buchtel College. John W. Heisman's career as a gridiron coach spanned 36 successful years, but his lasting fame rests on the clever inventions he devised on the football field, many made during his short tenure as Buchtel coach in 1893 — and the collegiate football trophy awarded in his name every year.

Early football was far different from today's game — a man couldn't be taken out unless he was hurt so bad he couldn't stand: the only excuses were a broken arm, leg, nose, shoulder, or rib, and there were plenty of those in every game.

Playing was fierce: massed plays were popular, among them the flying wedge. When 22 men collided after a ten-yard start in a double V formation, disastrous things happened to the men in the front lines.

Halves were 45 minutes long and play was on a 110-yard field. A team scored 4 points for a touchdown, 5 points for a field goal and 2 points for an extra point kick and a safety.

Heisman originated the idea of dividing the game into quarters, the spin play and the use of the shift as an offensive weapon. He promoted legalizing the forward pass. When he coached in Akron one of his ideas to direct the center to toss the ball through his legs to the quarterback instead of rolling it, a major change in the way the game was played.

Left halfback Johnson McLean was the lone scorer in the first game and first win — 22-6 — when the coachless Hilltoppers traveled to Hudson to battle the Western Reserve Academy on Oct. 26. The first intercollegiate game was on the following week against Kenyon; Buchtel was beaten 42-0. They finished out the season losing to Case Tech, same score, before dropping a bitterly contested battle with Ohio State, 4-0.

Heisman came on board the next year following an undefeated season at Oberlin, his first job after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania. Buchtel officials talked him into taking over the dual duties of football coach and athletic director.

That year Buchtel had its first winning season, 5-2, and scored 276 points to establish an all-time University of Akron record that wasn't broken until

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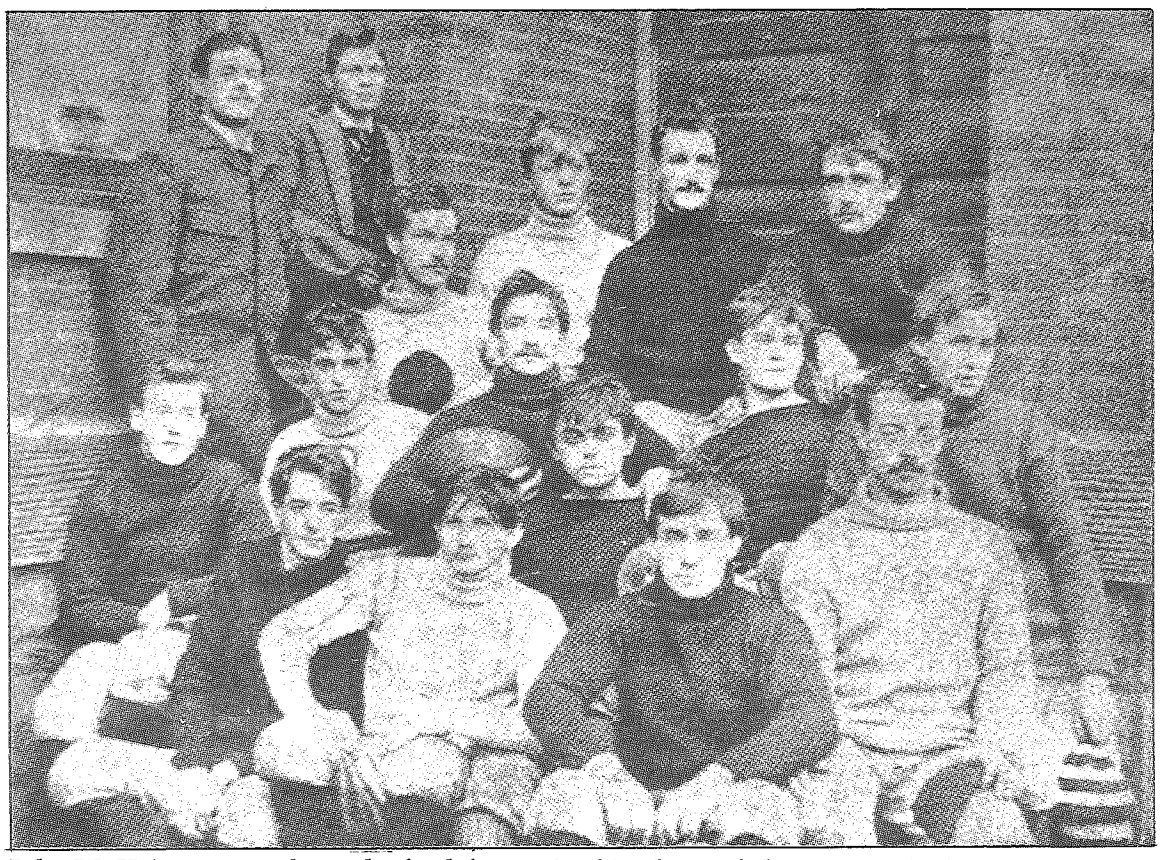
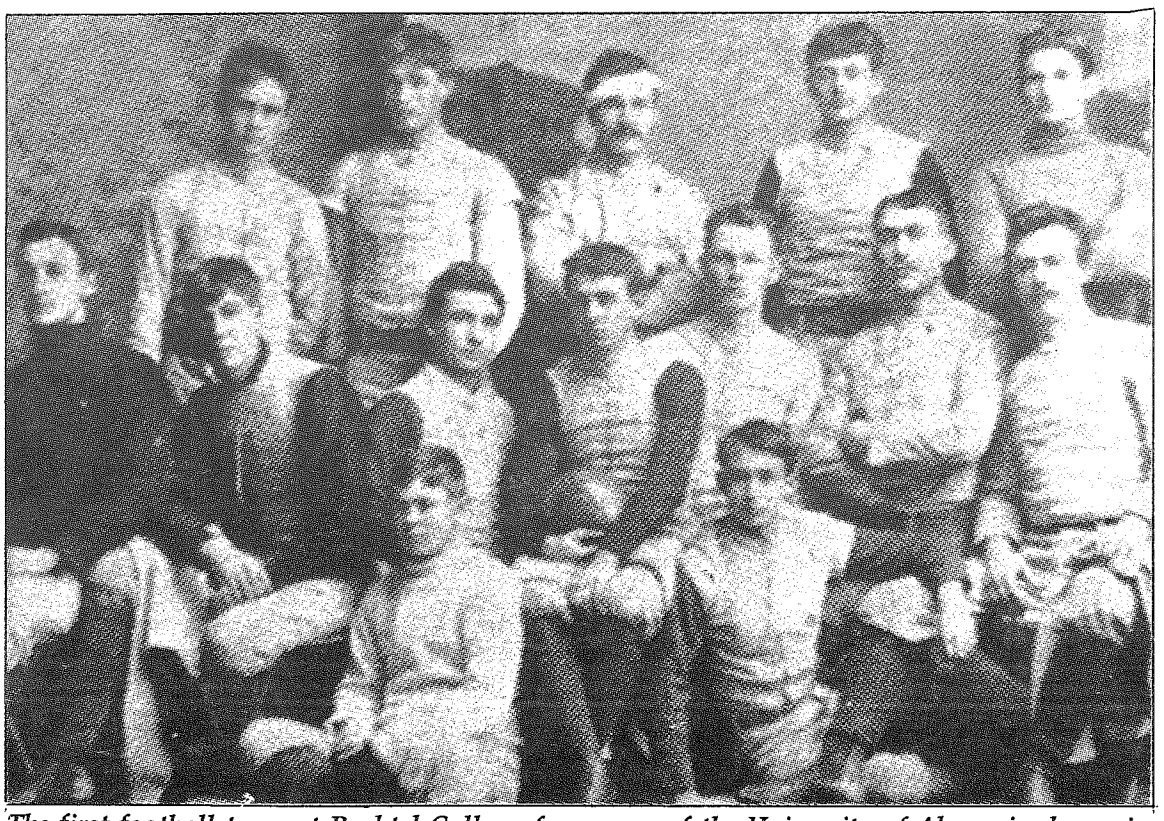


John W. Heisman stands at the far left rear in this photo of the 1893 Buchtel College football team, the first year Heisman coached the squad to its first winning season. Heisman, known for his inventions concerning the game, coached for 36 years in the country's schools.



The first football team at Buchtel College, forerunner of the University of Akron, is shown in this 1891 photo taken on the campus.

Starting gun's alternative reconstructed

By Michelle Locke
Associated Press

FOR YEARS, CLASSICS professor Stephen G. Miller of Berkeley, Calif. wondered about the stone bases he found beside a running track at the ancient Greek stadium of Nemea.

He knew they had something to do with a starting device, mentioned in texts but never explained.

How it worked was a mystery.

Then, researchers found a vase fragment illustrated with the sketchy outlines of the apparatus. The hunt was on to build a replica and — more importantly — see if it worked.

The moment of truth came last summer when modern athletes tried out the replica, built in collaboration with Greek craftsmen and professor Panos Valavanis of the University of Athens.

'I closed my eyes. I couldn't bear to watch it because I was afraid they were going to trip on it," Miller said.

But, he said, "they didn't even come close to being tangled up."

It was a victory as thrilling as any first-place finish.

"It solves a riddle just in terms of intellectual satisfaction about a machine that has not existed for 2,000 years," said Miller, who has spent 20 years unearthing the secrets of Nemea, one of four sites of the Panhellenic Games.

"It's hard to overstate the exhilaration of knowing that you've seen the past and that you understand how one little part of the past worked," he said.

The device consisted of wooden posts, about 2 inches thick and more than 3 feet high, that stood on each end of the starting line. Two thin cords ran parallel to the ground between the posts, in front of the runners.

Behind the athletes, an official held a release line. When he shouted "Go," and released the line, the posts fell forward with a loud crack and the cords slapped to the ground.

The timely athlete would take off, his feet landing easily outside the ropes. The reckless runner was in for an embarrassing belly-flop and possibly a penalty whipping.

Miller showed slides and a videotape of the test to colleagues and supporters Tuesday at the University of California at Berkeley.

"It's an exciting thing because it's taken a long time," said associate classics professor John Ferrari, who had wondered about the starting device since reading about it in an analogy by Plato. 'It's terrific to see these things brought back to life."

Miller theorizes the starting device, which dates back to the 3rd century B.C., reflects the growing professionalism of ancient athletes who, contrary to popular conception, were in the game for a lot more than the thrill.

For instance, a win at the Panhellenic Games might mean only a wreath on game day. But it meant a free meal a day for life back home, which could amount to a virtual pension for a top athlete, Miller said.

At other games, winners took home jars of olive oil that Miller reckons were worth up to $50,000 in today's money.

"What you also come away with is the sense of the continuity of human effort," he said. "Two thousand years sounds like a really long time to us, but it's really not. To have expanded those ties a little bit really is very, very satisfying."

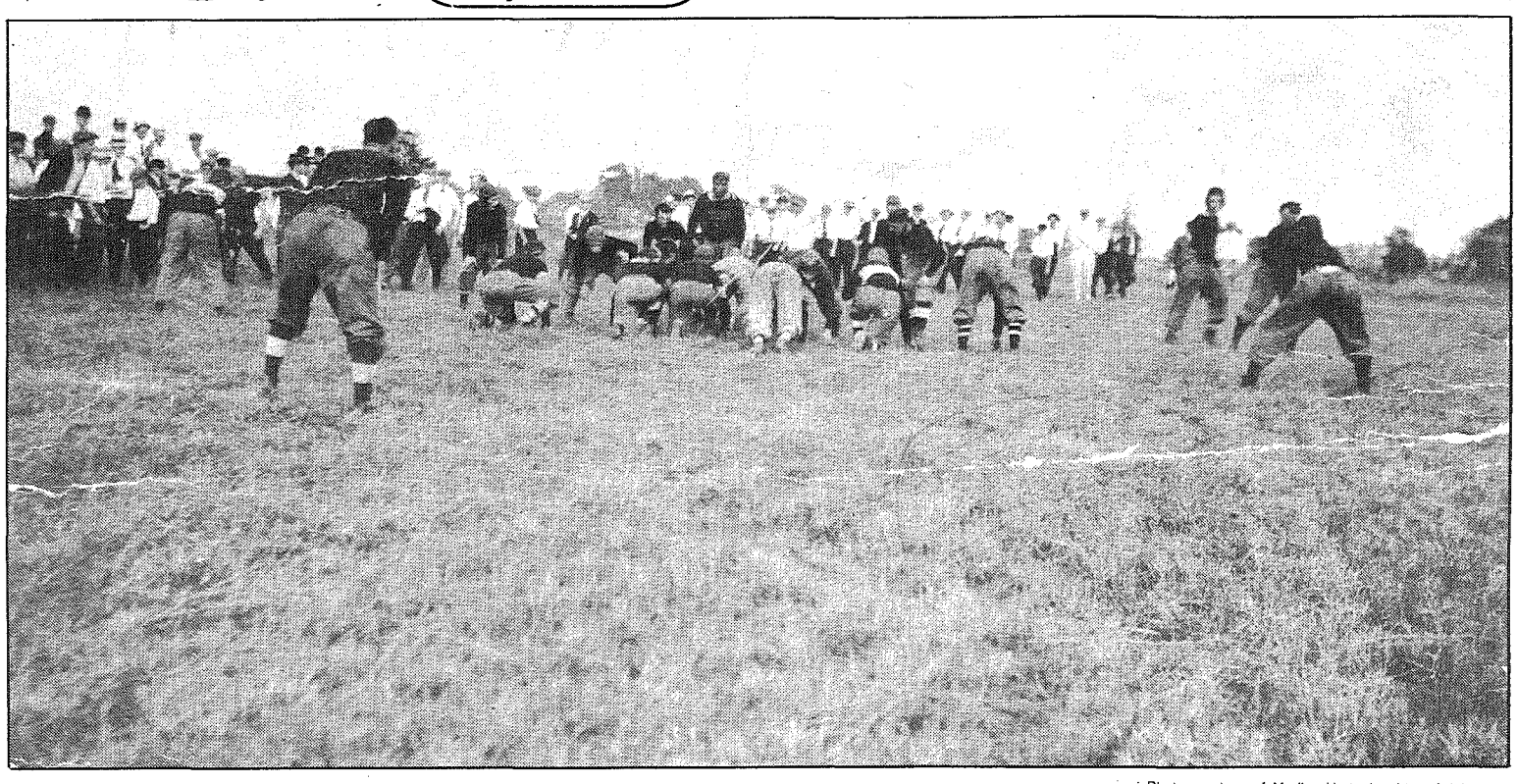


Photo courtesy of Marilyn Hart, daughter of John Litty

When Beloit beat Salem in football in 1915

This postcard photo was found among the papers of the late John Litty of Salem by his daughter, Marilyn Hart. On the back was written, "Salem Athletics vs. Beloit, Sept. 12, 1915. Beloit 19, Salem, O."
Litty played football for the Athletics and the Salem Browns, a semi-pro team in those years. He recalled playing without helmets on rough fields covered with corn stalk stubble. He said sometimes the partisan crowd on the sidelines threw rocks at the players of the opposing team. The Salem Browns team had that name because the players wore brown jerseys.

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Salem's pole vault twins, Rib, Mutt hit new heights

By Dale E. Shaffer

THE YEAR 1928 WAS A very special one for Salem High School's star pole vaulter, Lowell "Little Rib" Allen. His first major achievement that year was on April 28 when he participated in the fifth annual Interscholastic Midwestern Relays sponsored by the University of Wisconsin at Madison. While there he set a new *unofficial* national pole vault record by scaling 13 feet, ¼ -inch. that made him the first high school boy in America to clear 13 feet, although unofficial.

He and Keith "Mutt" Roessler, his pole vaulting "twin," tied for first place that day in the regular competition at 12 feet, ¼ -inch. This was practically the same height at which they tied at the Ohio Relays the preceding week.

"Rib's" astounding feat came after he had missed the higher mark in three regulation tries. Certain that he was capable of going higher, he asked for a chance at higher marks. In three *unofficial* jumps he made track history and brought new fame to the athletic history of Salem.

After clearing the mark at which he and Roessler had tied (12 feet, 5 inches) the bar was placed at 12 feet, 8 inches and he made it on the first jump. The bar was then raised four inches to the record height, which actually turned out to be 13 feet, ¾ -inch when measured after his jump. Allen cleared it on his first try. It was a surprise achievement because all season he had been practicing at the private pit in Roessler's side yard and his best mark was 12 feet, 9 inches.

His next competition was on June 2, 1928 in the national interscholastic field and track meet held at Stagg Field in Chicago. Athletes from 30 states participated. It was there that Allen *officially* cleared 13 feet, 33/16 inches, becoming the new interscholastic pole vault champion of America. Roessler got fifth place with a jump of 12 feet, 3 inches. Never before had a highschooler cleared 13 feet, 3 inches.

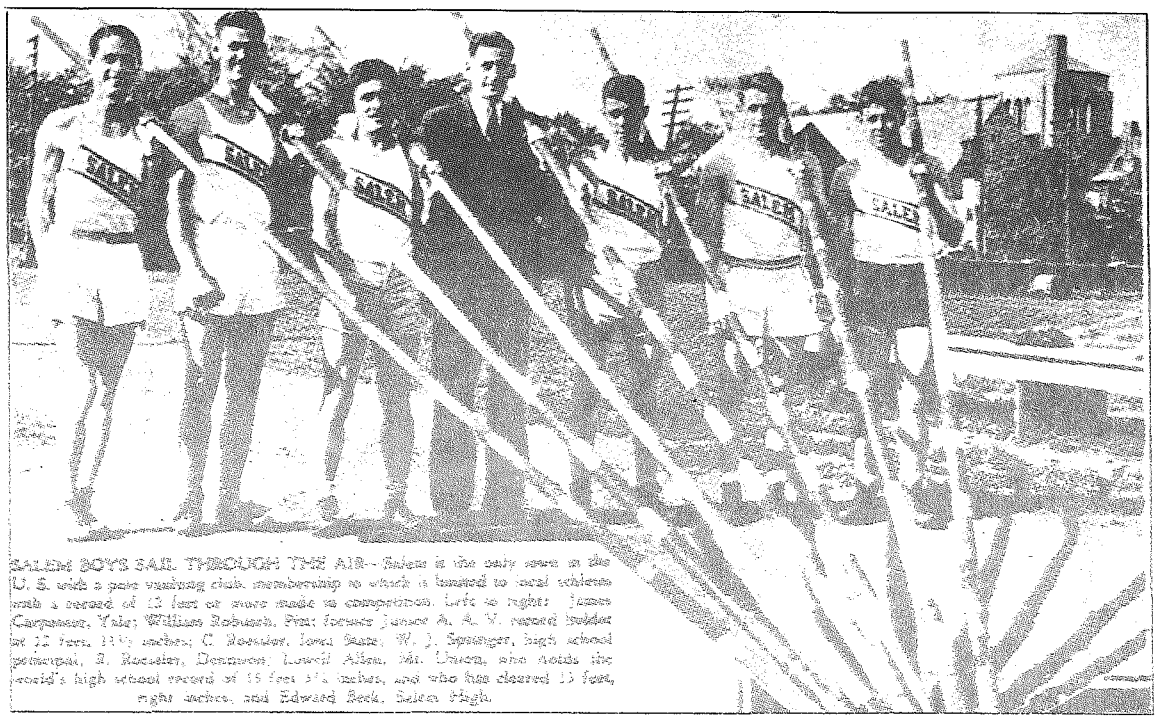
Allen's feat was almost without parallel in interscholastic history. In every vault he was supreme, missing only one and that height was almost two feet lower than his best mark. He went on to try 13 feet, 5 inches but missed three times.

Allen's national record was established in the presence of well known authorities which assured his mark as an *official* record. At the end of the meet, papers were drawn up and signed by officials. Salem had its national record holder and allen would hold it for 40 years.

Allen also won the right to try out for the U.S. Olympic team in final tryouts at Harvard University in Cambridge. He became only the second of two high school athletes in America at that time to be given the trial in pole vaulting in the history of the Olympics.

Coach Wilbur J. Springer called Olympic officials and insisted that both Allen and Roessler be allowed to compete. As it turned out, Allen failed to make the team because of a sore side and Roessler was never given the chance to compete. The world record for pole vaulting at that time was 14 feet, 1½ inches. Saben Carr was the holder.

The "twins" ended up hitchhiking home from Massachusetts. They made the 750-mile journey in 72 hours, riding in cars, trucks, a hay wagon and streetcar. At Niagara Falls they stopped to enjoy the sights.



SALEM BOYS SAIL THROUGH THE AIR—Salem is the only town in the U. S. with a pole vaulting club, membership to which is limited to local athletes with a record of 12 feet or more made in competition. Left to right: James Carpenter, Yale; William Robuck, Pitt; former junior A. A. U. record holder at 12 feet, 11½ inches; C. Roessler, Iowa State; W. J. Springer, high school principal; K. Roessler, Dartmouth; Lowell Allen, Mt. Union, who holds the world's high school record of 13 feet 3⅛ inches, and who has cleared 13 feet, eight inches, and Edward Beck, Salem High.

Salem High's pole vaulting club is shown in this reproduced photo. Membership was limited to athletes with records of 12 feet or more in competition.

There is an interesting little story connected with their two-week trip to Harvard. They rode up with the coach and his wife. W. H. Mullins provided financial support for the trip. While there the coach suggested the "twins" call Mullins for travel money to return home.

He sent each of them $50. But instead of spending the money on tickets, they decided to hitchhike. Upon returning home, Allen and Roessler immediately visited Mullins and returned the money. W. H. was quite impressed and spent several hours talking with the young athletes.

Historically, Allen and Roessler did much to make the years from 1924 through 1928 exciting ones at Salem High School. The "twins" vaulted to record heights in one national meet after another. They were, in the style of Felix "Doc" Blanchard and Glenn Davis of Army's 1944-45-46 football team, probably the two greatest pair of high school vaulters in the country.

For years, and especially in 1928, the Salem News was filled with articles about their many achievements. Headlines read like this: "City & Students Join to Pay Honor to Allen and Roessler;" "Salem Lads Win Pole Vault Honors;" "Honors in National Indoor Track Meet Won by Allen and Roessler;" "Allen Breaks Vault Record in Practice;" "Roessler Wins in Pittsburgh Meet;" "Allen Breaks State Record in Pole Vault;" "Record Set in Salem — Allen Vaults 13 feet, 1⅛ Inches;" "Allen Breaks Vault Record Despite Rain in Pittsburgh;" "Allen and Roessler Leave for Final U.S. Olympic Team Tryouts;" "Vaulting Pair in Final Meet in Detroit."

One very important contributing factor to their outstanding success was their coach, Wilbur J. Springer. He seemed to have the magic touch for turning out champions. Following graduation from Mount Union College in 1924, Springer became athletic director at Salem High School and coached football, basketball and track. Impressed with how well Allen and Roessler performed on the football and basketball squads, he was even more impressed with their performance in track.

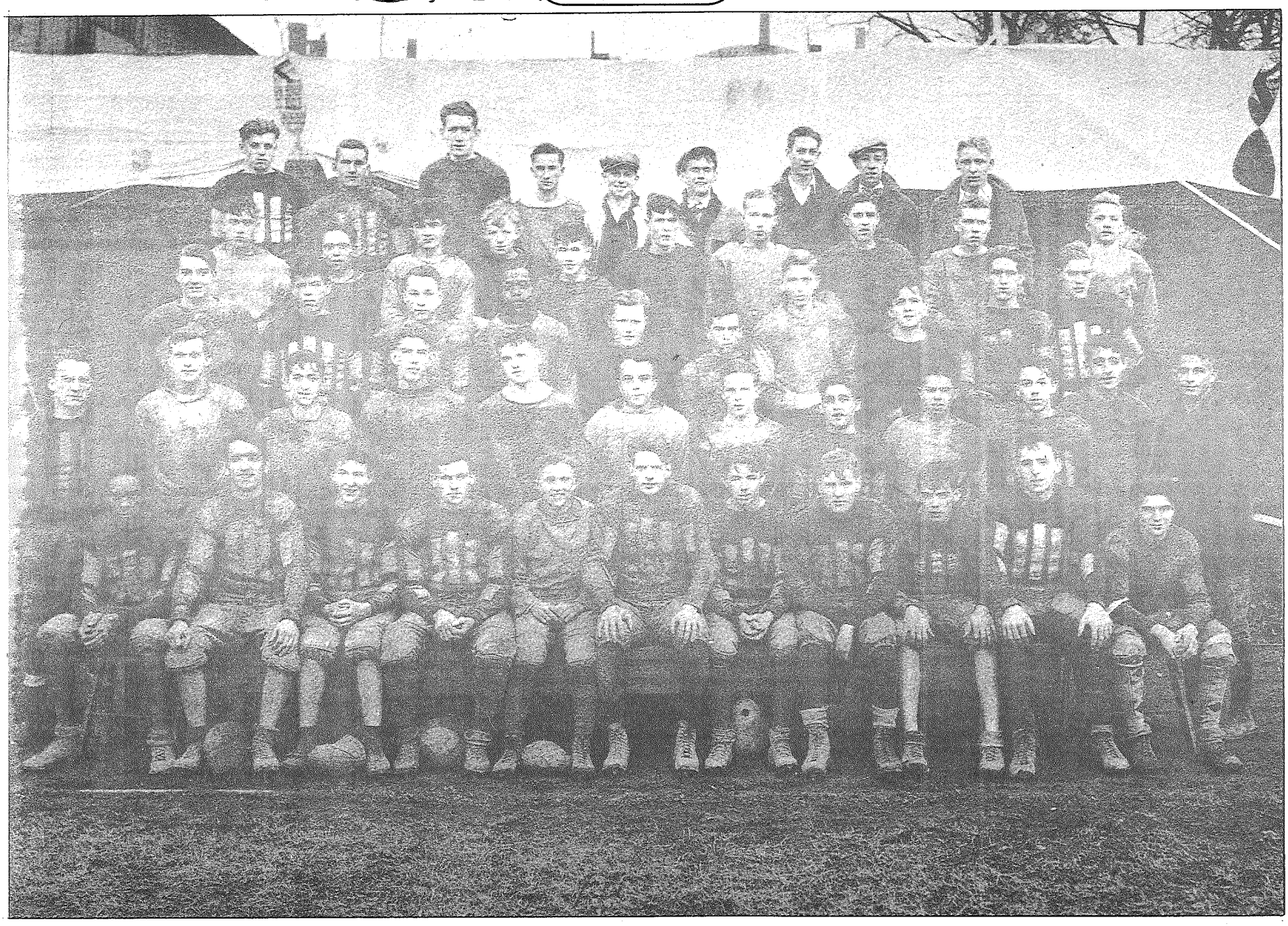
When they started breaking area records in pole vaulting, Coach Springer began looking for national meets in which they could compete. By the time they were seniors in 1928, they were participating in meets every week, from March on through the season. They traveled extensively to meets in Columbus, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Madison and elsewhere.

Roessler was captain of the track team in 1928. He was elected at a banquet held in the old Quaker Tea House along East State Street. Mullins, a great supporter of sports in the city, serenaded Roessler at the Mullins home on South Lincoln Avenue.

Competition between Allen and Roessler was always of a friendly and supportive nature, with the two usually placing first and second. Roessler's highest mark was 12 feet, 9 inches. He beat Allen only once. As a sophomore he vaulted 10 feet, 6 inches in a meet at the University of Pittsburgh. Several times he was able to tie Allen.

While in high school Allen lived on the southwest corner of East Pershing Street and Ohio Avenue near Reilly Field. Roessler lived at 300 Fair Avenue. Both spent many hours practicing in a vacant lot south of where the Roessler family lived. The vaulters, using bamboo (not fiberglas)

See Rib, Mutt on page 7



The 1929 unconquered Salem High School football team is pictured above. Glenn Whinnery, whose serious approach and friendliness toward team members made him one of the finest Red and Black gridders known, is seen sixth from left in front row. Starters on the squad were John French, Bill Smith, Sam Drakulich, Clifford 'Skip' Greenisen, Bill Weber, Oscar Hippley, Paul Sartick, Ed Beck, August Corso, Len Yates and Mike Corso. The success of the team played a major role in attaining a lighting system for the school playing field, Reilly. The city was one of the first schools in Ohio to promote night football which was an overwhelming success from the beginning, in 1929.

Looking back to this week in history

DECEMBER 12

On Dec. 12, 1917, Father Edward Flanagan founded Boys Town outside Omaha, Neb.

In 1901, the first radio signal to cross the Atlantic was picked up near St. John's, Newfoundland, by inventor Guglielmo Marconi. (The signal was transmitted from a point some 2,000 miles away.)

In 1913, authorities in Florence, Italy, announced that the "Mona Lisa," stolen from the Louvre Museum in Paris in 1911, had been recovered.

In 1925, the first motel — the Motel Inn — opened in San Luis Obispo, Calif.

DECEMBER 13

On Dec. 13, 1577, five ships commanded by Sir Francis Drake embarked on Drake's circumnavigation of the globe, a journey that took almost three years.

In 1944, during World War II, a Japanese kamikaze plane crashed into the U.S. cruiser Nashville, killing 138 crewmen.

In 1978, the Philadelphia Mint began stamping the Susan B. Anthony dollar, which went into circulation the following July.

In 1981, authorities in Poland imposed martial law in a crackdown on the Solidarity labor movement. (Major provisions of the decree were lifted a year later; martial law formally ended in 1983.)

DECEMBER 14

On Dec. 14, 1799, the first president of the United States, George Washington, died at his Mount Vernon home at age 67, nearly three years after leaving office.

In 1819, Alabama joined the Union as the 22nd state.

In 1861, Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, died in London.

In 1911, Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen became the first man to reach the South Pole, beating out an expedition led by Robert F. Scott.

In 1939, the Soviet Union was dropped from the League of Nations.

In 1945, Josef Kramer, known as "the beast of Belsen," and ten others were hanged in Hamelin for crimes committed at the Belsen and Auschwitz Nazi concentration camps.

In 1962, the U.S. space probe Mariner Two approached Venus, transmitting information about the planet's atmosphere and surface temperature.

DECEMBER 15

In 1890, Sioux Indian Chief Sitting Bull and eleven other tribe members were killed in Grand River, South Dakota, during a fracas with Indian police working for the U.S. government.

In 1939, the motion picture "Gone With the Wind," starring Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable, had its world premiere in Atlanta.

In 1944, a plane carrying bandleader Glenn Miller — a U.S. Army major — disappeared during a flight over the English Channel.

In 1961, former Nazi official Adolf Eichmann was sentenced to death in Jerusalem.

In 1966, movie producer Walt Disney died in Los Angeles.

DECEMBER 16

On Dec. 16, 1773, the Boston Tea Party took place when American colonists, disguised as Indians, boarded a British ship in Boston Harbor and dumped more than 300 chests of tea overboard in a protest against tea taxes.

In 1809, Napoleon Bonaparte was divorced from the Empress Josephine by an act of the French Senate.

DECEMBER 17

On Dec. 17, 1903, the Wright Brothers — Orville and Wilbur — staged the first successful powered-airplane flights near Kitty Hawk, N.C.

In 1933, in the first world championship football game, the Chicago Bears defeated the New York Giants, 23-21.

DECEMBER 18

On Dec. 18, 1865, the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, abolishing slavery, was declared in effect.

In 1890, Edwin Howard Armstrong, the inventor of wide-band FM (frequency modulation) radio broadcasting, was born in New York.

In 1915, President Wilson, widowed the year before, married Edith Bolling Galt at her Washington home.

In 1940, Adolf Hitler signed a secret directive ordering preparations for a Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union

In 1972, the United States began its heaviest bombing of North Vietnam at that time during the Vietnam War.

Sex at top isn't new; look at King David

By Sid Moody
AP Newsfeatures

SEX IS ONLY A HEART throb away from the seats of political power.

Sen. Robert Packwood's entanglement with political incorrectness is only the latest in a long line of affairs of state snarled in affairs of the libido.

Recent reports from Gender Gap might confirm one's beliefs that the nation's capital has turned into an electoral petting zoo.

Some instances:

▲ House panjandrum Wilbur Mills takes a midnight dip with a stripper in the Reflecting Pool in the nation's capital.

▲ Presidential candidate Gary Hart challenges the media to catch him in a sexual dalliance. They oblige.

These developments cannot and have not been tsk-tsked away. But before the censorious are convinced that the barbarians are at the bedroom door, some perspective is called for.

Firstly, we are increasingly in a scandal-obsessed age when nothing is swept under the rug without some reporter vacuuming up the dirt.

Secondly, and more to the point, sex at the summit is nothing new in this republic — or any realm you can think of. If James Earl Carter confessed to occasional lust in his heart, what was King David thinking when he spotted Bathsheba sponging herself?

David, in due course, seduced Bathsheba, yet still qualifies for the Bible. Jimmy Carter was only sharing daydreams in a Playboy interview that raised some doubt about his qualifications for office, which may say something about prudery in America.

Europeans, awash in royal bastardy and eminent voluptuaries, often marvel at American primness regarding sex.

When in 1899 screams erupted from the private study of French President Felix Faure, aides scurried to the scene. They found a certain distraught — and nude — Mme. de Steinheil, wife of a painter, and the Republic's leader felled at a delicate moment by a fatal stroke. Frenchmen paid no mind to the lady but conjectured whether Faure had been poisoned by a cigarette given him earlier in the day by the Prince of Monaco.

Americans, however, seem to like to hold their leaders to a higher standard than they themselves might practice. If this be hypocrisy, political scandalmongers have made the most of it.

In 1802, James Thomson Callender, a newspaper editor of few scruples but large circulation, tarred Thomas Jefferson with besporting through the chambers of Monticello with a slave, Sally Hennings. Dumas Malone, Jefferson's most exhaustive biographer, says the story is "legend." Author Fawn Brodie disagrees. Take your pick, but remember the original source was from an editor who had no love for the president.

Our forebears seemed to have been more broadminded in matters of Venus. The major complaints against a colonial governor of New Jersey was incompetence, not that he used to dress up in drag.

We have all but canonized George Washington. We remember George and the cherry tree. A myth. We overlook the love letter he wrote Sally Fairfax, his neighbor's wife, when engaged to Martha. A fact.

One must doubt that the supermarket tabloids of today would have sat on the story. But Washington's contemporaries, had they known, probably would have shrugged — an estimated quarter of the brides in Puritan New England were pregnant at the altar.

Sex way back then was usually a cause for ribaldry. The Boston Gazette, reflecting the general racism of the time, poetized to the tune of "Yankee Doodle" the gossip about widower Jefferson and Ms. Hennings:

"Yankee Doodle, what's the noodle?

"Without a wife half so handy?

"To breed a flock of slaves for stock

"A blackamoor's the dandy."

Sex threatened to run away with the 1884 presidential campaign when Republicans dug up one Maria Halpin who claimed Grover Cleveland was the father of her 8-year-old son, Oscar Folsom Cleveland, born on the wrong side of the blanket. Cleveland, the Democratic candidate, assumed paternity in lieu of other great and good friends of Ms. Halpin — and himself — on the grounds that they were all married and he wasn't.

Gleeful Republicans burst into verse:

"Ma, Ma where's my Pa?

"Gone to the White House, ha! ha! ha!"

Cleveland had some minor matrimonial dirt on his opponent, James G. Blaine, which he ordered his aides to throw in the wastebasket. His advice to his campaign staff left the bastardy issue stillborn and should be embossed in scarlet letters on the National Seal for all in sexual stress to read.

"Tell the truth," Cleveland commanded.

Years later, a long and impatient line formed outside another coat room, this one at the humongous old mansion of the Vanderbilts in Newport, R.I., The Breakers. The guests at a white tie charity ball were told the cloakroom was off limits until the junior senator from Massachusetts emerged with his date.

The presidential sex life of that senator, John F. Kennedy, has stimulated revision of the idyllic portrait of Camelot-on-the-Potomac. Starting with interludes between Inaugural Balls, Kennedy left a record of White House hospitality that may never have been surpassed. Sharing the mistress of a Mafia don, to name one of many, redefined what one may be asked to do for his country.

How Kennedy's place in history will be judged may not be based on his sexual exploits, achieved despite a bad back.

Franklin D. Roosevelt is not best remembered for a 30-year relationship with Eleanor's one-time social secretary, Lucy Page Mercer, later Mrs. Rutherfurd, which only ended when he died — died in her presence while sitting for a portrait for her niece.

Americans still liked Ike despite his strong affection overseas for his wartime chauffeur, Kay Summersby.

Indisputably, the biggest flap of the political bedclothes, one that did alter the course of the ship of state, centered on one Peggy (nee Margaret O'Neale) Timberlake (first husband) Eaton (second husband). Peggy's father ran an inn between the capital and Georgetown, and Peggy was equally accommodating.

Timberlake, on leave while his accounts as a Navy purser were audited, espied Peggy in the tavern taproom and declared he would meet her by 6 p.m.. He did and by 11 had her promise to wed. They did when she was sweet 16, same age as the 19th century.

Then, Sen. John Henry Eaton of Tennessee, a friend of president-to-be Andrew Jackson, became an admirer. He pulled strings to have Timberlake assigned to sea duty, leaving Peggy all to himself. When Timberlake returned, his accounts were once again in question. Eaton gave him $10,000 to help balance the books, then finagled Timberlake to sea for four more years aboard the U.S.S. Constitution.

Peggy, meanwhile, fought off the attentions of Richard K. Call, a boarder at the O'Neale Tavern and another friend of Jackson's, with a coal shovel in a display of unaccustomed virtue that evoked Old Hickory's lasting admiration.

Thus, when Jackson was elected president and named Eaton his secretary of war, he pressured him to marry Peggy to present a licit domesticity to Washington society.

Eaton subsequently drank his way through an ambassadorship to Spain where Peggy, bruised but unbowed, took up cigars, the smoke curling upwards as she passed into history.

Until the next time sex would vex the eternal Potomac.

Heisman

Continued from page 1

1969. Trouble loomed, though. After pressure from the faculty that Heisman change his methods of selecting players — the charge leveled against him was that he was responsible for "the evil inherent in our athletic system, its tendency to train the few and neglect the many" — he resigned in 1894. Officially detached from Buchtel, he helped the team defeat Ohio State, 12-6, in the school's only game in 1894. The game went down in school history as the most satisfying victory of the era.

Heisman described the winning touchdown in a letter to Dean Charles Bulger: "...Finally we found their goal line looming up less than four yards awy. At this juncture, I deliberately stopped and gave our men a little talk, reciting that we had been there once before and that I myself had thrown our chances away by a rotten fumble, and that this time we were going over, if only everyone would get into this play. So said they all, and I called for Frank Fisher to buck through right tackle. I got hold of the ball safely and stuck it squarely into his breadbasket. Fortunately, he either saw or felt it — and got it. Then away we all went like mad. I think about everyone on the team had his hands on Frank somewhere; for that was the day days when hiking the runner was the big thing in games. I recall I had hold of him by the back of his jersey and was going in front of him. And we all went through together, just like water over a mill dam when the dam goes out. With a last yank I tore the jersey clear off Frank's back — but what did it matter since we were across!"

Heisman went on to coach for decades at several schools, including Auburn, Clemson, Georgia Tech, Pennsylvani, Washington and Jefferson and Rice. After serving two terms as president of the American Football Coaches Association, he passed away in 1936. His name lives on, engraved on the trophy bearing the bronzed figure of a football play, the Heisman Memorial Trophy.

Rib, Mutt

Continued from page 3

poles, ran from east to west making their jumps. This lot remains vacant today just as it was in the late 1920s.

During the summer following graduation from high school, Allen and Roessler pole vaulted for the Pittsburgh Athletic Association. Allen would receive another great honor by being selected as member of the U.S. all-star track and field team for a dual meet with leading starts from Great Britain. He was the youngest athlete in the meet.

Allen enrolled at the University of Michigan and spent one year there. He then transferred to Mount Union College in order to be close to Coach Springer. At Mount he continued his pole vaulting.

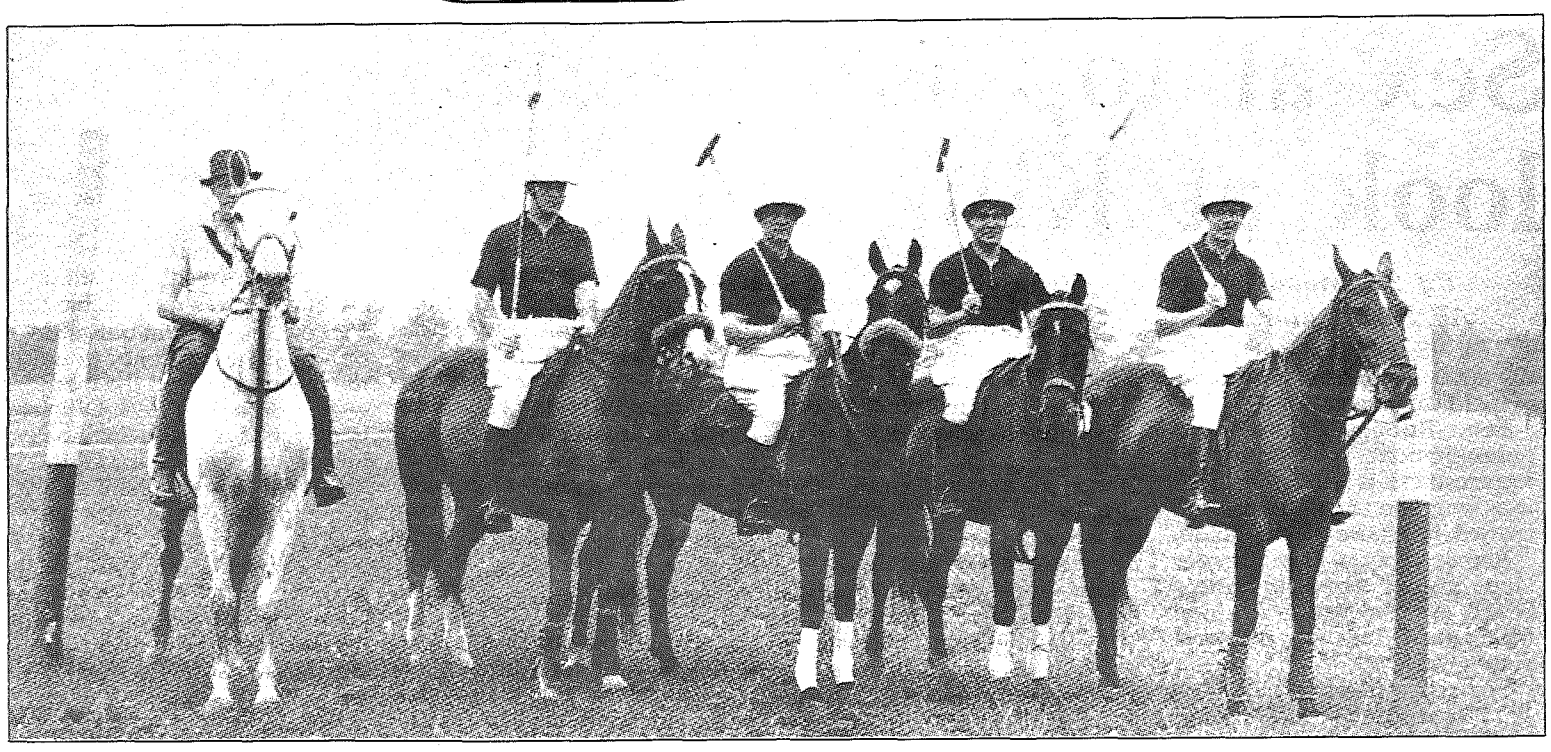
Following graduation he took a job at Boardman High School coaching football and track. He remained there for 35 years as coach and teacher of mechanical drawing and photography, retiring in1 970. During his coaching career he was inducted into the Ohio Association of Track Coaches' Hall of Fame in Columbus.

Roessler attended Denison University at Granville for one year with his tuition paid by a Mr. Olmstead of cleveland. At the university Roessler played freshman football and basketball but did not pole vault. Mr. Olmstead died the following summer, eliminating Roessler's financial support for going to college. He went to work at the Salem China Co. and later became a diemaker at the Gonda Engineering Co. In 1975 he retired from Sekely Industries.

The last time "Rib" and "Mutt" got together was a few years ago. Allen had come to Salem to play golf with Fred Cope. Roessler still resides in Salem, at 550 Fair Ave., just up the street from where he and his "twin" spent so much time, over 65 years ago, challenging each other to vault higher and higher, inch by inch, toward a height of national record.

Lowell Allen died on Oct. 23, 1993. Both he and Keith Roessler will long be remembered as two of Salem's finest athletes. Allen's achievements in setting a national record in pole vaulitng will forever remain as one of those proud and special moments in the sports history of Salem High School. Yesteryears salutes both gentlemen.

Polo Club active on city fields



Referee Jack Hendricks (from left) and Salem Polo Club players Pete Votaw, Tony Sheen, Ray Hoff and Jim Pidgeon are shown in the above photo taken in the late 1930s.

Salem Polo Club members are pictured in this 1938 photo (first row, left) Ralph Phillips, Jack Hendricks, Willy Smith, Jim Pidgeon, Pete Votaw, Ray Moff, Wade Loop, Len Yates; second row, Billy Osborne, Ed Sheen, Ned Wells, Earl Grate, Franklin Smith, Walt Fernengel, Bob Clunen, John Herman, Hap Taylor, Ed Sheen Sr., Carl Juergens; third row, Wally Grimes, John Doyle, Joe Pidgeon, Wally Duncan, Bruce Carey, Bob Carey, Jack Gallatin, Bill Gibson, Merle Coy.

GAMES WERE PLAYED at Shelton's Grove on Saturday and Sunday afternoons during the early spring and on through late summer — J. B. "Pete" Votaw, Jim Pidgeon Jr. and Paul Cranmer formed the Salem Polo Club in 1933.

For three years the club used the grounds at the grove, a popular picnic area southwest of the Route 45 and Teegarden Road intersection.

Then in 1936 they moved the play to the Salem Fairgrounds, a 35-acre park in the southeast section of Salem. The main entrance was an ornamental gateway at the south end of Fair Street at the junction of Maple Street. A huge grandstand to the left of the entrance faced a track which was kept in the best of condition for the numerous events held there. The club rented a barn near the fairgrounds to stable the horses.

In the late 1880s, John Evans built a small race track for his stable in Evans Woods, a section of his farm which covered most of the south side of East State Street on the site of the Centennial Park ball diamond. Bill Bentley put in a half-mile track on his property which lay across the street from the Salem Community Hospital.

These were private tracks but local sportsmen borrowed them for horse and bicycle contests. Racing enthusiasts promoted a contest, collected a winner's purse and took a few friendly bets on the outcome of the race. However, although both were highly popular with the townspeople, neither track was equipped for expansion — or spectators — so both were eventually abandoned.

In 1890, the newly-organized Salem Fair and Exhibition Company leased the 35 acres and built an exhibition hall, covered grandstand and track. In the decades to follow, crowds swarmed to the annual fairs and the various races, including sulky races and bicycle races — the earliest were high-front-wheeled bicycles, then later regular racing bikes and still later, motorcycles. there were band concerts, fireworks, ball games, horse-pulling contests and horse shows.

By 1936, the club had moved to land along North Ellsworth Avenue, across from the IGA store. Wilford R. "Willie" Smith, Raymond Moff and Anthony Sheen joined the team. Walter S. Fernengel became a member in 1941 when the new field was constructed on his farm.

Jack Hendricks and Wally Duncan were popular referees. The Penn-Ohio Polo League, established in 1938, included teams from Alliance, Poland, Zelienople, North Hills, Harbor Hills and Akron. Other teams traveled from St. Louis, Detroit, Columbus, Youngstown, Cleveland, Dayton, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Darlington and Chicago. A 25-head barn was available to house visiting horses. Salem won the championship in 1953.

Games were suspended during the World War II years, although members met in 1943 to keep the team together and to raise money for men and in the service — Bibles were sent as one of the club's projects.