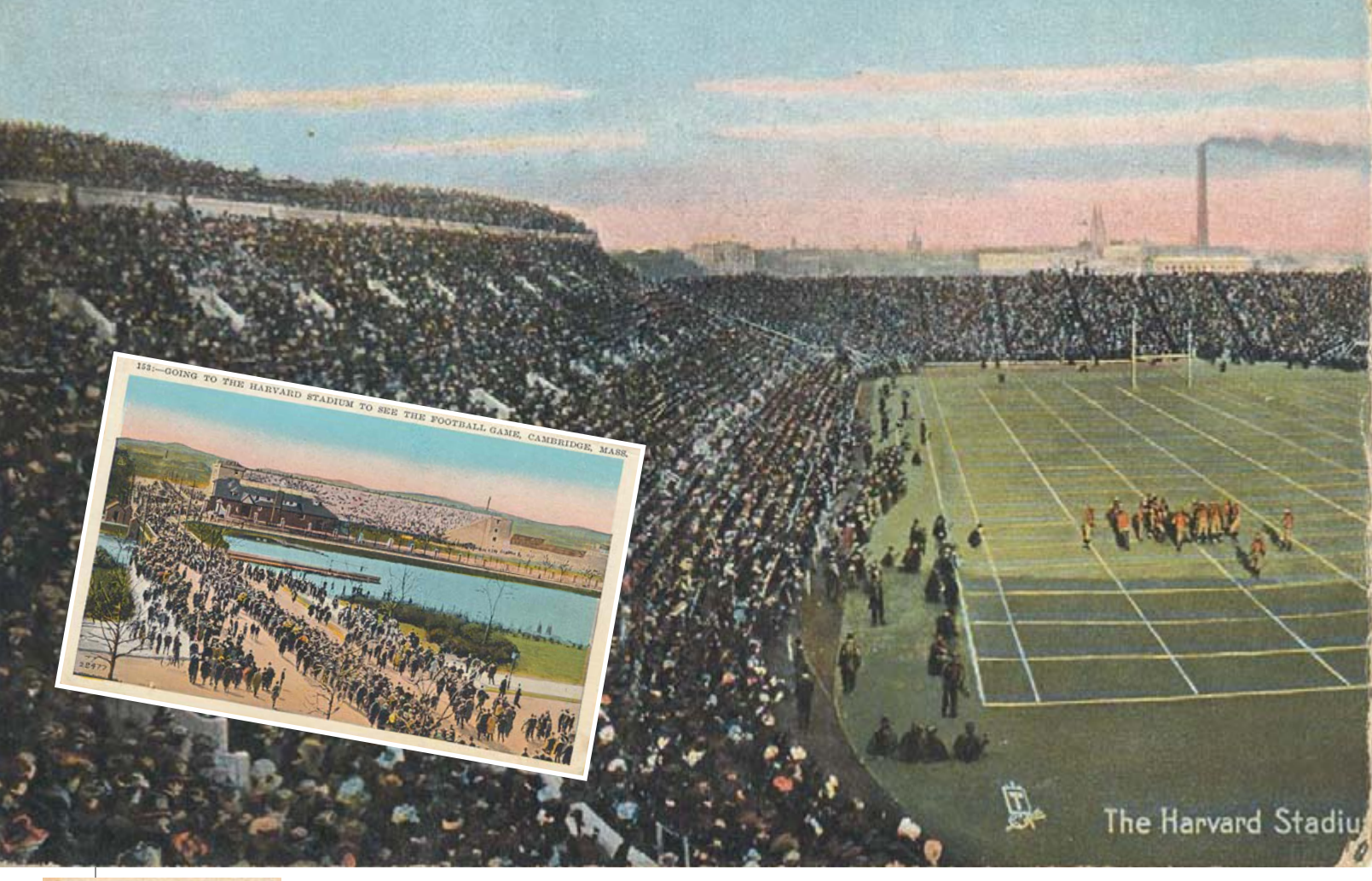


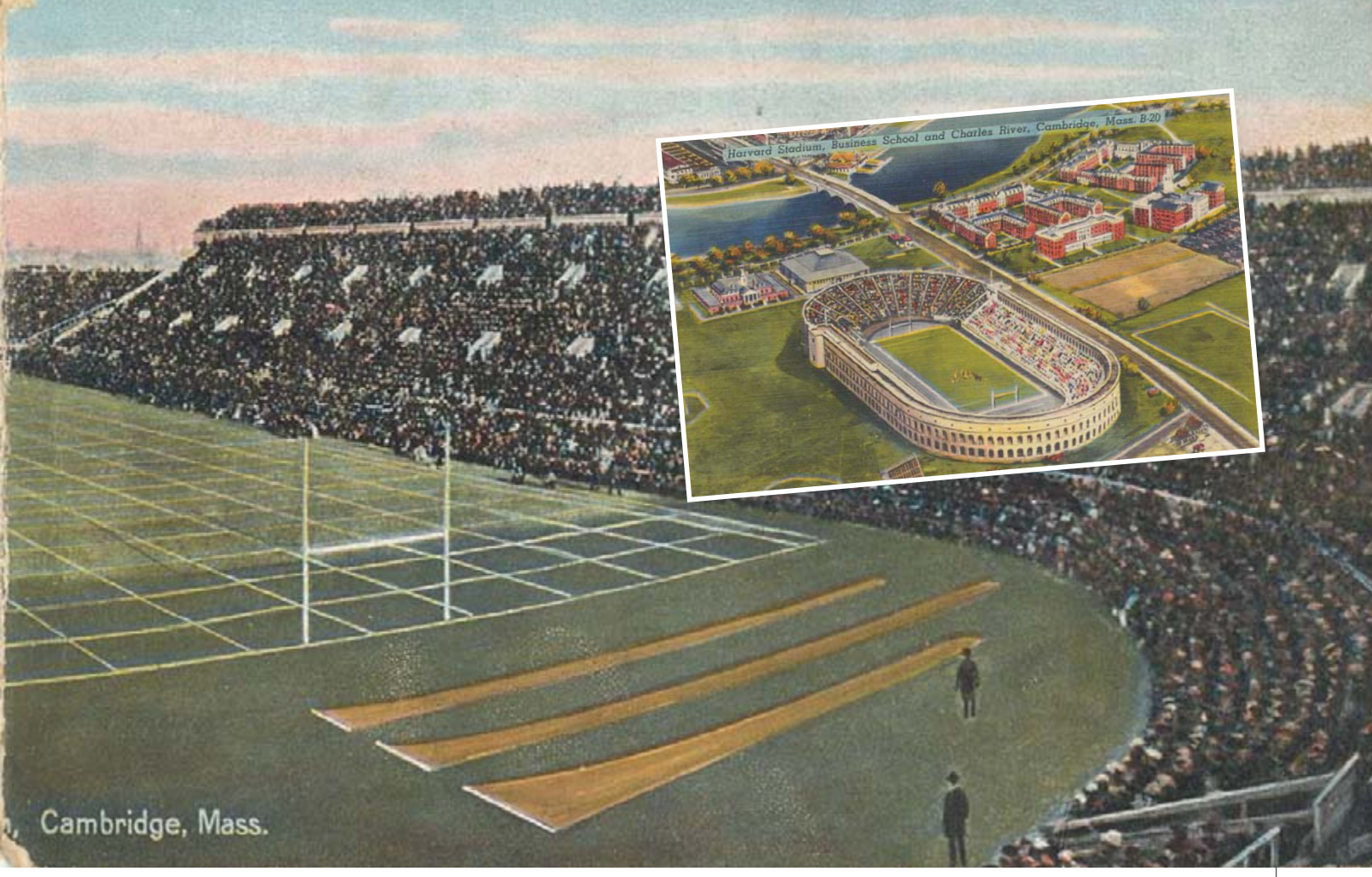
First and 100

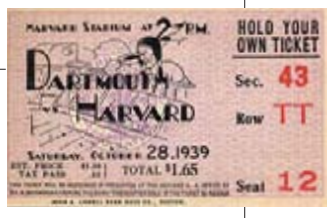
Football, a century ago, was an unruly, dangerous, and wildly exciting spectacle. It resembled rugby: minimal protective gear, no forward passes, mass plays that involved several players linking arms and thrusting forward, and a great deal of kicking—both of balls and opponents. The contests often turned into bloody brawls. Footballers poked at each other's eyes, threw haymakers, and leaped in the air like pro wrestlers to fall on a downed man with their full avoirdupois. In 1905, arguably the sport's most violent year ever, 18 players were killed on the field and 159 seriously injured, the fatalities coming mostly from brain concussions, spinal injuries, and body blows, according to John Sayle Watterson's *College Football: History, Spectacle, Controversy.* "I saw a Yale man throttle—literally throttle—Kernan, so that he dropped the ball," wrote an observer of the 1902 Harvard-Yale game, quoted in *Football: The Ivy League Origins of an American Obsession,* by Mark F. Bernstein. "The two hands reached up in plain view of every one—and all saw but the umpire—and choked and choked; such a man would cheat at your cardtable."

The sport roused powerful passions and triggered primitive, atavistic celebrations. In 1911, after an 8-6 Princeton victory over Harvard, "A very tornado seemed to break loose on [Princeton's] Osborne Field," wrote a reporter quoted by Bernstein. "The crowd surged and swarmed down on the field for the snake dance. In columns ten or six abreast they pranced about the field, chanting incoherently, beside themselves with happiness, and over the bars of the goal posts they tossed their hats, felts, caps, and derbies in accordance with ancient custom."

The frenzy to win football games drove colleges to recruit ringers—older roughnecks who had merely a nodding acquaintance with academic life—to play. Columbia's 1900 roster had only three undergraduates. Teams avidly sought out tough players and carefully schooled them in their prime mission: fomenting havoc on the gridiron. "The beef must be active, teachable, and intelligent," wrote Harvard coach William Reid, A.B. 1901, in his journal, quoted in *Manhood at Harvard: William James and Others* by Kim Townsend.

The games gushed cash. In 1893 the Yale Football Association's revenues of $31,000 surpassed the annual receipts of Yale's medical, art, or music departments, and by 1903 the gross was more





Harvard Stadium, with its storied past, is football's Edifice Rex.

Essay by CRAIG LAMBERT *Chronology by* JOHN T. BETHELL

than $100,000. The sport was so popular and lucrative that some felt football had begun to overshadow education as the mission of colleges. When he returned to Harvard to coach football in 1905, Reid collected a salary that was a third higher than any faculty member's and only slightly less than that paid the president of the University, according to Townsend.

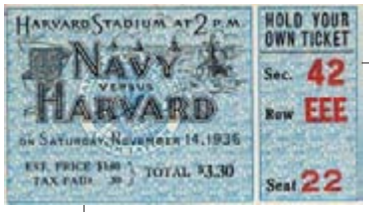
Many called for drastic reforms—even abolition of the game. Among those who spoke out, perhaps the most vociferous critic and surely the one with the highest profile was Harvard's Charles William Eliot, the first college president to roundly attack intercollegiate sports. Year after year, in his annual reports, Eliot lambasted football as a brutal and corrupting endeavor, antithetical to Harvard's educational mission. Given "the moral quality" of the game, he wrote in the 1903-04 report, as quoted by Watterson, "worse preparation for the real struggles and contests of life can hardly be imagined." Football, he believed, incapacitated students for intellectual activity.

Eliot denounced the competitive and deceptive aspects of athletics in general (criticizing baseball's curve ball, for example, because it deceived the batter). He abhorred the lawless mentality—"an unwholesome desire for victory by whatever means"—that overtook many athletes and coaches. Eliot felt it was wrong for college sports to entertain the general public, and that sports stole time away from the more rewarding pursuits of college life. To him, football did not so much build character as twist it in undesirable directions.

He was not alone, but by the end of the century, control of college football, particularly its financial aspects, had passed into the hands of the alumni. In the 1880s a Harvard athletic committee had tried to abolish football, and in 1895 the faculty voted two-to-one to do so, following a particularly violent game with Yale the previous fall. The athletic committee, dominated by alumni and students, voted unanimously to keep on playing, however, and the Harvard Corporation sided with the committee. In 1905 the faculty again tried to end football, this time with the Overseers' support, and that fall, even this magazine's progenitor, the *Har-*

The picture above, from a postcard mailed in 1908, shows the Stadium when the field was truly a "gridiron." Note extra seating in wooden stands at the far end; steel stands had replaced them by the 1930s (above, right). Another postcard, sent in 1929 (above, left) shows thronging crowds.

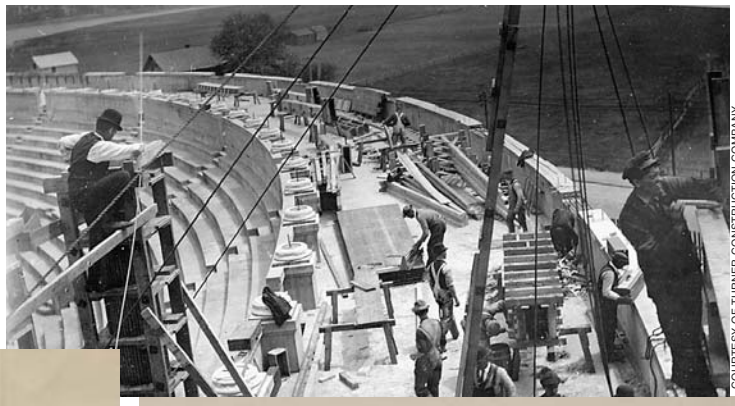
Postcards courtesy of Warren M. "Renny" Little
Game tickets courtesy of Harvard University Sports Information



vard Bulletin, recommended abolition, writing, as Bernstein notes, "Something is the matter with a game which grows more and more uninteresting every year."

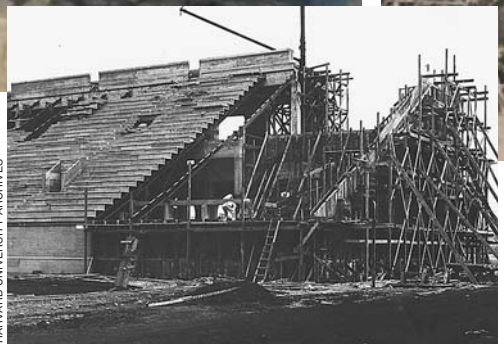
Yet amid this turmoil, something extraordinary happened—an event nearly inconceivable today. In 1903, despite President Eliot's fusillades, an enthusiastic band of Harvard alumni funded and had built a new arena for football games: the country's largest venue for intercollegiate sports.

Eliot harbored practical as well as philosophical concerns about the structure; he worried that it would become a white elephant once the football craze had blown over. Time has proven his fears groundless. This fall, Harvard Stadium, the first and oldest football field in America, observes its hundredth birthday with a special celebration on the weekend of the Princeton game, October 25. It is hard to overestimate the building's significance in football history. In the sport's formative years, the gridiron on Soldiers Field actually changed the way the game was played, and in some ways created football as we know it today.


COURTESY OF TURNER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY


HARVARD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

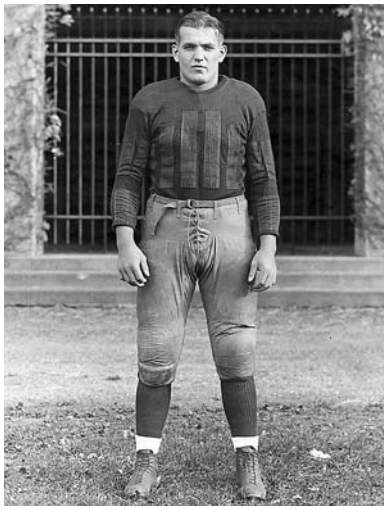

HARVARD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES


HARVARD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Scenes from a construction site, 1903. Clockwise from top: three views of the Stadium as a work in progress; laborers take a moment to pose.

Architecturally, the edifice remains magnificent. Only three football arenas in America hold the status of National Historic Landmarks: Harvard Stadium, Yale Bowl (opened 1914), and the Rose Bowl (1922). "It's a beautiful building," says Robert Campbell '58, M.Arch. '67, architectural writer for the *Boston Globe.* "It successfully employs classical imagery to suggest the tradition of athletics going back to Greece and Rome, but does so without pretension and without disguising the fact that this was probably the biggest single chunk of concrete in the world up to that time."

True enough. When built, Harvard Stadium was the largest reinforced concrete (i.e., concrete with embedded steel rods, also called ferroconcrete) building in the world, and the first massive structure ever made of that material. Some doubted that the newfangled concrete could survive New England winters; the hardiness of a 6,300-foot concrete fence around Soldiers Field, erected several years before the Stadium, partly dispelled such fears. Others wondered if the new material might collapse under the weight of crowds. As a test, 12 men marched onto the seat slabs after they were set in place. "These men were...caused to jump up and down as nearly in unison as possible," reported the *Harvard*


HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

Herman "Gunny" Gundlach '35, Harvard's oldest living football captain

"It was just a thrill to walk out in that stadium. You felt like you were going to war. Just before the Yale game, our coach, Eddie Casey, liked to tell the team, 'This is the most important hour you'll ever have in your life.' On March 23, 1945, when we crossed the Rhine, I remember thinking, 'Eddie, you were wrong. *This* is a much more important hour.'"

HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

Dick Clasby '54, star running back

"The biggest thrill I ever had in sports didn't count. Against Dartmouth in 1952, I caught a kickoff five yards deep in the end zone and ran it back for a touchdown. There was a clipping penalty 20 or 30 yards behind me and it was called back. But it was an awesome feeling—everyone in the crowd stood up in unison. I ran up the left side of the field and my feet didn't touch the ground; I was elevated by the crowd standing up, a marvelous feeling. After the game I said, 'They can take away the points, but they will never take away the thrill.'"

Engineering Journal for June 1904, in a special issue devoted to the Stadium. "The jumping was intended to bring to light what defects might appear from the boisterousness of the excited crowds soon to occupy them." The slabs' behavior "was entirely satisfactory." Even so, the construction manager perambulated beneath the Stadium's tiers during the first game played there—whether to preen, scout for problems, or to advertise his confidence in the structure is not known.

Ira Nelson Hollis, professor of mechanical engineering from 1883 to 1913, was central to the Stadium's creation. The chairman of the University athletic committee, Hollis was keen to build a permanent football facility. The wooden stands then in use were costly to maintain and posed a fire hazard; in fact, wooden bleachers on Soldiers Field caught fire during a spring 1903 baseball game with Princeton. Although no one was hurt, the bleachers were destroyed.

There was a treasure chest: the University had saved $75,000 from athletic receipts, and the fall of 1903 would bring in $25,000 more. Then, some alumni in their mid 40s made a larger project possible; two years before its twenty-fifth reunion, the class of 1879 had decided to up the ante from the reunion gifts of earlier classes, typically about $10,000. They kicked in $100,000, which went a long way toward the Stadium's eventual cost of $310,000. Recouping some of the outlay via ticket sales posed little problem; in 1903, the box office sent $12,000 back to alumni and students whose orders for Yale tickets could not be filled.

By the time the Stadium opened that November, Harvard had been playing football, or something like it, for nearly three decades. In 1874, the Crimson played its first football game against McGill on Jarvis Field, north of the Yard, where Littauer Center now stands. Other contests went off at Holmes Field, now mostly covered by the Law School's Langdell Library. In 1890, Major Henry Lee Higginson, A.B. 1855, changed the future of Harvard athletics by giving the University the 31 acres dedicated as Soldiers Field. His gift honors six young Harvard men—"friends, comrades, kinsmen"—who perished in the Civil War. Their names are engraved on a marble shaft that stands in the corner of Soldiers Field nearest Harvard Square (see page 100).

Professor Frederick Law Olmsted, A.B. 1894, son of America's most famous landscape architect and a skilled landscape designer in his own right, took charge of *(text continues on page 50)*

Little Red Flag

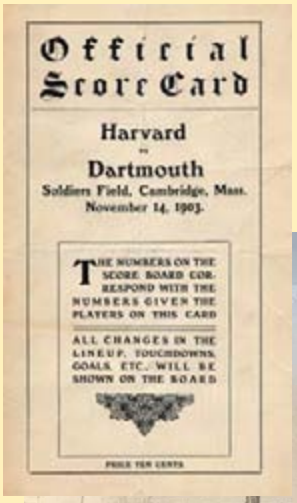
Frederick Plummer, A.B. 1888, who attended 59 consecutive Harvard-Yale games before his death in 1949, customarily carried a certain small banner to The Game as a talisman of Harvard luck. Made of magenta and brick-red silk with an olive H stitched to one side and mounted on a small walking stick, the "little red flag," as it has come to be called, is one of The Game's more arcane traditions. In 1950, when the flag appeared among the various unassigned items in Plummer's estate, William Bentinck-Smith '37, then editor of this magazine's predecessor, the *Harvard Alumni Bulletin*, suggested awarding the honor of carrying the flag on Game day to the Harvard man in attendance who had seen the largest number of Yale games. On Commencement Day 1951, Spencer Borden, A.B. 1894, who had witnessed every Yale game since 1889, took up the banner. The legacy has continued, as detailed below. Seeing the most Yale games is no longer the criterion for flag bearing; current bearer William Markus '60, wouldn't qualify by that standard, though none can doubt his commitment to the cause (see "Superfan," page 94).

NANCY J. WITTING

Richard P. Hallowell '20 with the flag

	Class	Yale games	Flag years
Frederick Plummer	1888	59	1884-1948
Spencer Borden	1894	62	1951-1956
Allen Rice	1902	73	1957-1969
Richard P. Hallowell	1920	66	1970-1977
Douglas Hamilton	1923	66	1977-1985
James Dwinell	1931	42	1985
Harold Sedgwick	1930	55	1986-1996, 1998
Sam Donnell	1937	54	1997
Burdette Johnson	1927	66	1999-2000
William Markus	1960	12	2001-

Stadium Stories



HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

November 1903: Dartmouth scores the first Stadium touchdown. Note unfinished stands.

INAUSPICIOUS START

November 14, 1903. In the first game played in the newly completed Stadium, Dartmouth—winless in its 18 previous meetings with Harvard—upsets a lethargic Crimson eleven, 11-0. "It was an uninteresting game," reports the *Harvard Bulletin.* "The University team had the ball but a few minutes. Several of the Harvard players were not in first-class shape as they had recently recovered from tonsillitis." The *Bulletin* states only that "a very large crowd was present." Yale comes to the Stadium a week later and scores a 16-0 victory. The crowd is estimated at 40,000.

SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT

October 1, 1904. Harvard begins a 7-2-1 season with its first Stadium victory, a 24-0 defeat of Williams. President Theodore Roosevelt, class of 1880, wires congratulations. The team wins six straight before losing to Pennsylvania at the Stadium.

1903-1906. Harvard hockey teams compete in the Stadium and enjoy a three-year unbeaten streak.

June 16 and 19, 1906. The classics department presents the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, with chariots, live horses, and a specially built temple at the bowl end of the Stadium. Future Stadium productions will include Schiller's *Maid of Orleans* (1909); the *Iphigenia* and *Trojan Women* of Euripides, and Wagner's *Siegfried* (1915); and *The Bacchae* of Euripides (1982).

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

September 28, 1906. Harvard slips past Williams, 7-0, in the first game played under rules that permit forward passing. "The forward pass was a failure," reports the *Bulletin.*

May 29, 1909. IC4A track championships are held in the Stadium; Harvard wins a national title for the last time.

October 6, 1909. Undergraduates march to the Stadium by torchlight to hail Harvard's newly inaugurated president, A. Lawrence Lowell. A blazing set piece in the open end spells out LOWELL, HARVARD.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

1912: Ice hockey, on a winter day.

EDUCATED TOE

November 22, 1913. With a 15-5 defeat of Yale, Harvard completes a second consecutive unbeaten, untied season under coach Percy Haughton '99. All-America fullback Charlie Brickley '15 monopolizes the scoring against Yale, drop-kicking four field goals and nailing another on a placement kick.

TAKE NO PRISONERS

November 20, 1915. Harvard gives Yale its worst beating in 44 years of football: 41-0. Captain Eddie Mahan '16, a halfback, scores four touchdowns and kicks five points-after.

ROSE BOWL BOUND

November 22, 1919. Harvard passes set up a field goal and produce a touchdown in a hard-fought 10-3 victory over Yale. The Blue scores late in the game on Jim Braden's record 53-yard drop-kick, and then drives to Harvard's one-foot line—

HARVARD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

1906: *Agamemnon* in the Stadium

where a missed signal gives the Crimson the ball as time expires. With a 9-0-1 season, Harvard earns its first and only trip to the Rose Bowl. There, on New Year's Day 1920, coach Bob Fisher's team edges Oregon, 7-6. (The trophy appears on page 108.)

July 23, 1921. The Harvard-Yale-Oxford-Cambridge track meet is revived after a wartime hiatus. Edward O.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

1921: Gourdin's record leap

HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

HARVARD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Brickley demonstrates the drop kick (left) and boots one in a game.

Gourdin '21 wins the 100-yard dash and sets a world broad-jump record of 25 feet, 3 inches.

November 14, 1921. Marshal Ferdinand Foch, arriving from France for a special honorary-degree presentation, reviews Harvard's ROTC unit at the Stadium.

COURTESY OF WARREN M. LITTLE

1921: Marshal Foch reviews ROTC.

May 22, 1925. A capacity crowd fills the Stadium for an exhibition mile by the "Flying Finn," Paavo Nurmi. Admission is free. Battling gusty winds, Nurmi runs the mile in 4:15.2.

July 11, 1925. Al "Truck" Miller '27, a 215-pound dash man who also plays halfback on the football team, wins the hundred in the Harvard-Yale-Oxford-Cambridge meet, tying the Harvard record of :09.8.

"A SCORELESS VICTORY"

November 21, 1925. Stubborn defensive play holds a heavily favored Yale eleven to a 0-0 tie; time runs out with the visitors on Harvard's one-foot line, unable to agree about what play to run. The *Harvard Crimson* declares it "a scoreless victory."

April 15, 1926. Harvard's lacrosse team takes on an Oxford-Cambridge squad at the Stadium and prevails, 6-0.

SOPHOMORE HEROICS

October 17, 1929. Before 57,000 tense spectators, sophomore W. Barry Wood '32 enters the game at quarterback with Harvard trailing Army, 20-13, in the final period. Wood coolly throws a 40-yard scoring pass to reserve end Victor Harding '31, then dropkicks the extra point to gain a 20-20 tie. Wood will be the starting quarterback for the 22 games that remain in his college career, and will captain the team in his senior year.

"LITTLE BOY BLUE"

November 21, 1931. For the first time since 1913, Harvard takes an undefeated record into the Yale game. In the final quarter, with the ball on the four-yard line, Albie Booth—Yale's answer to Barry Wood—kicks a field goal to edge out Wood's team, 3-0. The game draws a capacity crowd of 58,000.

FROM *THE H BOOK OF HARVARD ATHLETICS*

1925: Al "Truck" Miller wins the hundred.

OLD ELI'S HOPES WE ARE DASHING

November 20, 1937. On a cold, dark, and snowy day, Yale's Clint Frank makes 50 tackles and keeps the Blue fighting to the finish, but Harvard upends a previously unbeaten Eli eleven, 13-6, to gain its first Big Three title since 1915.

FRESHMAN HEROICS.

October 31, 1942. Harvard earns its first victory of the season, overcoming Princeton, 19-14. With less than a minute to play, John Comeford '46, a freshman passing ace who is eligible under wartime rules, connects with third-string halfback Gordon Lyle '43 for a game-winning 61-yard touchdown.

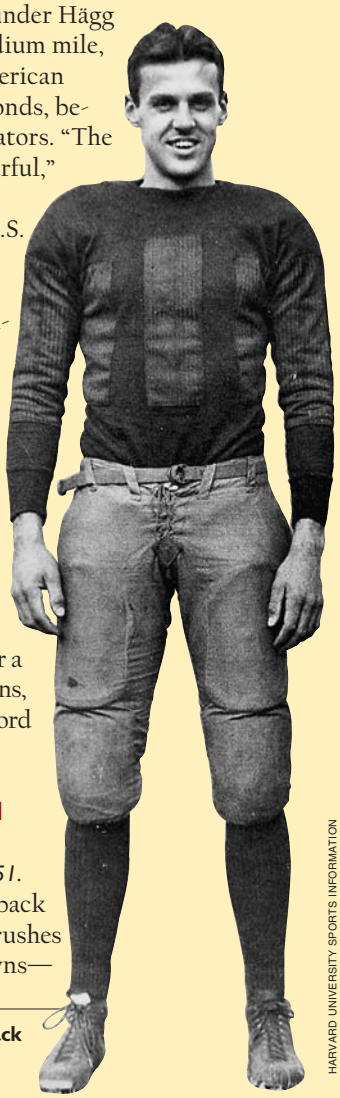
July 24, 1943. Gunder Hägg runs a 4:05.3 Stadium mile, eclipsing the American record by 1.4 seconds, before 14,000 spectators. "The track was wonderful," says the touring Swedish miler. U.S. miler Gil Dodds, finishing second, sets a new American record.

ONE FOR THE BOOKS

October 30, 1948. Harvard pulls a reverse on a Holy Cross punt and halfback Hal Moffie '50 runs a record 89 yards for a score. Harvard wins, 20-13. Moffie's record still stands.

SMASH-MOUTH FOOTBALL

November 17, 1951. Hard-hitting fullback Tom Ossman '52 rushes for five touchdowns—



HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

1931: Star quarterback Barry Wood '32

A 1950s cartoon with Lowenstein and Clasby.

another record that still stands—in a 34-21 defeat of Brown.

SEE DICK RUN

October 11, 1952. In a 42-0 whitewash of Washington University of St. Louis, halfback Dick Clasby '54 breaks loose for a 96-yard touchdown—the longest run from scrimmage in Harvard annals.

SEE CARROLL THROW

October 31, 1953. Diminutive quarterback Carroll Lowenstein '52, returning to action after military service during the Korean War, passes for a record five touchdowns as Harvard routs Davidson, 42-6. He also runs for the team's first score.

May 8, 1954. By winning the final event—the mile relay, with Warren Little '55 running the anchor leg—Harvard pulls out a surprise victory over undefeated Yale, 72-68.

COURTESY OF WARREN M. LITTLE

1954: Little in action (above, left), and lifted after the Yale triumph.

JUGGLING ACT

November 20, 1954. Harvard scores twice in the final period and overtakes Yale, 13-9. The winning touchdown comes on a 23-yard reverse pass from reserve halfback Frank White '55 to end Bob Cochran '55, who juggles the ball tantalizingly as he skitters down the sideline. The victory is Harvard's 500th since 1874.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

August 14, 1960. The newly assembled Boston Patriots play their first "home" exhibition game at the Stadium before 11,000 spectators . The Pats lose to the Dallas Texans, 24-14

UNBREAKABLE

October 20, 1964. Back John Dockery '66 picks off a Cornell pass in his own end zone and returns it 100 yards for a touchdown. Harvard wins, 16-0. Dockery's record may someday be tied, but can never be broken.

ANOTHER ONE FOR THE BOOKS

October 14, 1967. Among many spectacular plays in a 49-13 romp over Columbia are a 91-yard interception runback by reserve safety Ken Thomas '70—so low on the depth chart that he isn't listed in the program—and a record 51-yard field goal by Tom Wynne '69. Wynne's three-pointer is still Harvard's longest.

HARVARD BEATS YALE, 29-29

November 23, 1968. In a showdown between unbeaten squads, Harvard trails Yale in the fourth period, 29-13, then scores 16 points in the last 42 seconds to secure an astounding 29-29 tie. Reserve quarterback Frank Champi '70, entering the game in the second half, plays a key role in the miracle finish.

April 14 and 18, 1969. Mass meetings, the first attended by almost 10,000 people, are convened at the Stadium to decide whether or not to extend a student strike called after the forcible eviction of protesters occupying University Hall.

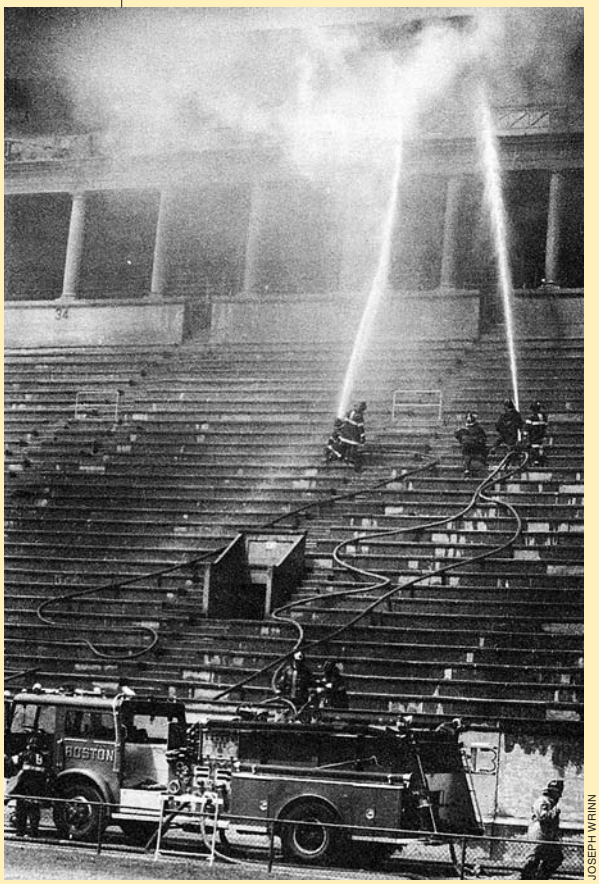
HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

1954: Cochran juggles the ball but scores.

DÉJÀ VU

November 23, 1974. Once again, Harvard topples an unbeaten Yale squad as time expires. With Yale ahead 16-14 and five minutes to play, senior quarterback Milt Holt leads his team 94 yards downfield, diving in for the winning touchdown with 19 seconds remaining. The 21-16 upset earns Harvard a share of the Ivy title.

1981: Firefighters douse press-box blaze.



JOSEPH WRINN

HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

1982: Stadium restoration underway.

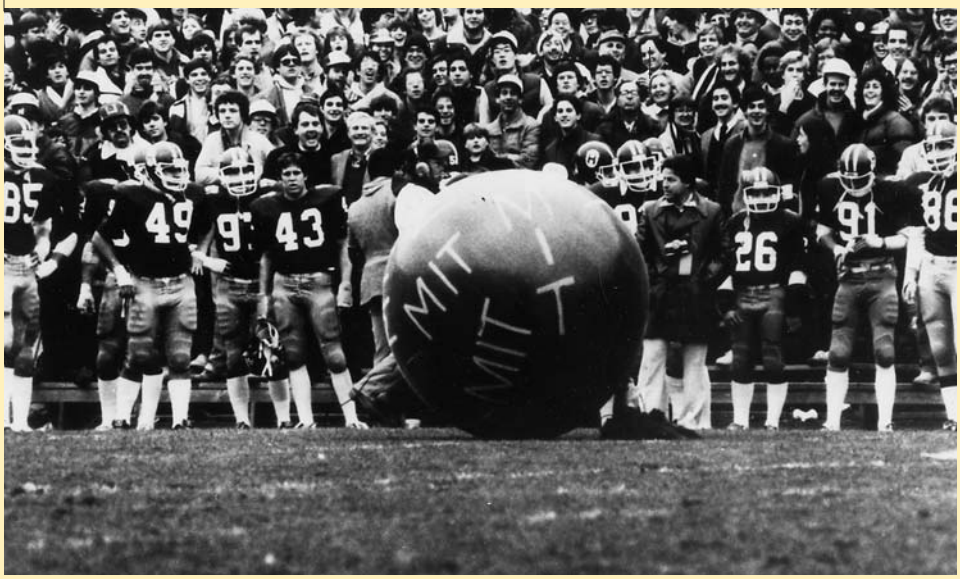
April 21, 1981. A six-alarm fire set by an 18-year-old arsonist consumes the Stadium press box.

September 18, 1982. After extensive renovations to the Stadium, Harvard begins its 107th football season on schedule. The $8-million restoration project, funded by the Harvard Campaign, provides new steel supports, new concrete seating, face-liftings for the walls and colonnade, and refurbished rest rooms and concession stands.

JOE PANTAGES

1984: Soccer's Olympic ceremonies.

1982: The MIT balloon prank succeeds.



BOB BROOKS

POOF

November 20, 1982. The sudden mushrooming of a menacing black balloon on the field at half-time rocks the Stadium crowd; unfazed by this MIT prank, Harvard rocks Yale, 45-7. Never has a Crimson team scored so many points against the Eli.

JIM HARRISON

1986: Fireworks at Harvard's 350th anniversary celebration

May 11, 1983. Harvard downs Northwestern, 9-4, in the semifinals of the NCAA women's lacrosse tournament.

July 29-August 3, 1984. Soccer teams representing Cameroon, Canada, Chile, France, Iraq, Norway, and Qatar compete in Olympic Games quarter-finals at the Stadium.

September 10, 1986. The Stadium is the setting for a nocturnal extravaganza climaxing Harvard's 350th anniversary celebration. TV journalist Walter Cronkite narrates, the Harvard Band and the Boston Pops Orchestra play, standup comedians tell lame jokes, and fireworks light up the sky.

HARVARD BEATS YALE, SORT OF

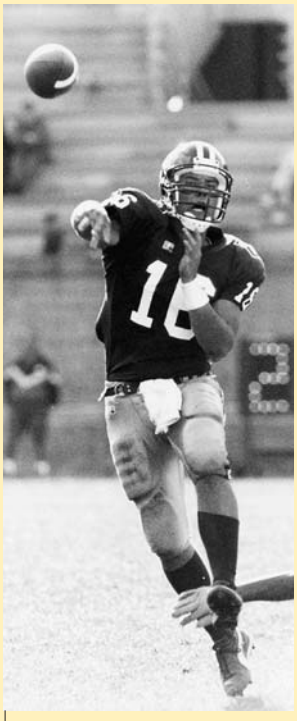
June 22, 1991. Harvard hosts the first Japanese collegiate football game played in America. A Keio University squad guided by Harvard's coaches edges Yale-coached Waseda University, 21-19.

PAYBACK FOR THAT 1903 GAME

October 23, 1999. Harvard's offense goes wild against Dartmouth: eight school records are broken or tied in a 63-21 rout. Senior tailback Chris Menick scores four touchdowns and establishes a new Harvard record for career yardage.

PRELUDE TO A PERFECT SEASON

November 10, 2001. Seeking Harvard's first undefeated, untied season in 88 years, the Crimson must get past unbeaten Penn, the defending Ivy champion. The Quakers take a quick 14-0 lead, but Harvard answers with four consecutive touchdowns en route to a 28-21 victory. Quarterback Neil Rose '02 and all-Ivy receiver Carl Morris '03 continue on their record-setting way, connecting on a stunning 62-yard pass play that yields the go-ahead touchdown.



HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

2001: Quarterback Neil Rose '02 passes

siting the Stadium, and whether by luck or wisdom found an ideal location. "That turns out to be the only piece of land that could have supported so heavy a structure," says R. Victor Jones, Wallace professor of applied physics. "Until the dam went in [in 1911], the Charles River was very much a tidal stream and most of the land nearby was swampy and gummy. Other structures of this sort disappeared into the ground." But borings at the Stadium site disclosed hard gravel and clay to a depth of at least 40 feet.

The architectural plan modeled itself on ancient Greek stadia—Harvard Stadium's length of 576 feet matches that of the great stadium in Athens—and the design also recalls a small Roman circus. The architect was Charles Follen McKim of the New York firm McKim, Mead, and White (an honorary master's degree recipient in 1890), who took off from a design sketched several years earlier by assistant professor of civil engineering Lewis J. Johnson, A.B. 1887, along lines laid out by the Athletic Association. Much of the work was done by McKim's associate George B. de Gersdorff, A.B. 1888. Under Professor Hollis's supervision, officers, advanced students, and recent graduates of the Harvard Division of Engineering tackled the engineering tasks. The design called for 37 sections, with 31 rows per section, and a seating capacity of 22,000. In 1909 and 1910 the colonnade was added; that, plus wooden track seats on the field, brought the seating to nearly 40,000. (In 1929 additional steel stands enclosed the open end, boosting capacity again, to 57,750; these were dismantled in 1952 and today the Stadium seats 30,898.) Regarding other possible uses for the space beneath the seats, the 1904 *Harvard Engineering Journal* mentions handball courts and speculates that "The first addition will probably be a rifle range, as 130 yards can be found entirely free from obstruction and located in such a way that by no possible chance could a passer-by be injured."

The groundbreaking on June 22, 1903, kicked off an amazing frenzy of heavy work: the Stadium rose into the air in only four and a half months. That summer and fall, tireless construction crews poured 200,000 cubic feet of Portland cement. (Another 50,000 cubic feet were added the following spring.) All but one end of the east stand was finished when Harvard opposed Dartmouth on November 14, 1903, for the first game played there. More than 200 Italian workmen who had built the Stadium were in attendance, as was Franklin D. Roosevelt, A.B. 1904, who proposed to his date, his cousin Eleanor, the following day. The

The Empty Seat

For as long as I can remember, there has been a man sitting next to me in Row 00 of Section 28 at the Harvard Stadium: Robert D. Hall, class of 1955. Hall, I soon discovered, was an exceptionally devoted Harvard alumnus. He interviewed potential scholarship candidates. He attended Harvard athletic meetings. And he always knew something about the background of the Harvard football players we watched on autumn Saturday afternoons. He even knew whom to watch and worry about on the visiting teams.

As season-ticket holders, we attended every home game. I continue to drive from York, Maine, to Cambridge (I am class of '38), enduring gridlocks on Route 128 and never-ending construction after exiting from Route 2. But Robert never drove to games from his home on the Cape, always coming by train or bus. By the same means, he also went to every away game for which public transportation was available. Despite occasional surprises—like the return train to Boston from a Penn game at Philadelphia that made an unscheduled diversion to Springfield, Massachusetts—he persevered season after season. He even forgave the Harvard Ticket Office for blindsiding him in the fall of 2001 by selling him a ticket for The Game in New Haven that turned out to be on the Yale side of the Bowl.

COURTESY OF ALVAH SULLOWAY

From left, Alvah Sulloway and Robert Hall at the Stadium

Over the years the Harvard Athletic Department has periodically shifted us Varsity Club season-ticket holders farther and farther down field from the 50-yard line. Our present seats on the 20-yard line are acceptable only because they are still high up in Row 00, only one row below the colonnade, and have a view of the whole field. When I was asked to accept these downshifts, I always consented subject to the condition that my new seat not be separated from Robert Hall's and that the Row 00 height level be maintained.

I last saw Robert, though not to talk to, at the Cornell game on October 12, 2002. We had each retreated to the colonnades because it was raining. Robert, arriving early, had found a seat higher up on the colonnade's wooden benches than I dared to climb, but we waved.

Robert didn't occupy his seat in Row 00 at the Northeastern game on October 19. As I had adjoining seats for my son Brook, his wife, and four children under seven years, and the kids were a distraction because they couldn't sit still, I figured that Robert had taken a look at the situation and found himself an empty seat elsewhere. This would have been a realistic precaution because I missed one out of every two plays myself.

The next two games were away, but when Robert didn't show up for the Columbia game on November 9 and the Yale game on November 23, I wrote to him at his law office on the Cape, expressing my concern that he might be ill, as I knew that only a serious health problem could have kept him from attending the last three home games of the season.

By return mail I received a letter from Robert's secretary advising me of his death on November 11, two days after the Columbia game. He had gone to Cambridge earlier that day, intending to go to the football game, but never got there.

I will renew my own season tickets for the 2003 football season. Even though the hallowed seat next to me will be sold eventually to someone else, for me it will always be Robert Hall's empty seat.

—Alvah W. Sulloway

HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

Eion Hu '97, record-breaking running back

"It's easily the best stadium in the Ivy League—players from other schools tell me that. It's what you picture Ivy football to be, but you don't have it in the other stadiums. One lasting memory was my last game, senior year, against Yale. When I passed the 3,000-yard [career] rushing mark, they stopped the game and announced it. Then, while we were in the huddle, a teammate told me, 'Hey, look up!' I saw all the fans clapping, and my parents had brought a huge banner that said, EION, THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES. It was the happiest and saddest moment, because I knew I would never play another game in the Stadium."

new field brought no luck to the Crimson, however; Harvard failed to score there that fall, losing to Dartmouth, 11-0, and a week later to Yale, 16-0. (Harvard later returned the favor, shellacking the Bulldogs, 36-0, when the new Yale Bowl first hosted The Game in 1914.)

The field itself is 481 feet long by 230 feet wide, a width just adequate for a football field and the running track that originally ran around its perimeter. Those dimensions played a crucial role in the evolution of football. In 1905, the outcry over the violence, foul play, and other abuses reached the highest office of the land: President Theodore Roosevelt, A.B. 1880, convened representatives from Harvard, Yale, and Princeton at the White House. Coach William Reid of Harvard was there, as was the overlord of college football, Yale's "advisory coach" and patriarch Walter Camp. The meeting ended with little more than promises, however, and that fall the gridiron mayhem went on unabated. In December, Columbia president Nicholas Murray Butler announced that his college was abolishing football, and

Victory and Defeat at the Stadium

Harvard's all-time Stadium record: 387-211-34 (.639 winning percentage).

The Voices from On High

IN 1930, Harvard hired its first public-address announcer for home football games, and in the intervening 73 years, the position has turned over but once. Charles Arthur Dale Sr. called games at the Stadium from 1930 until his death in August 1991—an astonishing 61 years at the microphone. At his wake, Dale's widow, Ann Dale, although devastated by grief, greeted Bill Cleary '56 and John Veneziano, then Harvard's directors of athletics and sports information, respectively, who had come to pay their respects. "Thank you, boys," she said. "And wouldn't my grandson Chad do a fine job in Charlie's spot?" 'Nuff said. Charles Arthur Dale III, known as Chad, has been announcing Harvard games ever since.

The Stadium had arc lighting installed as early as 1916 to permit after-dark practices, and by 1924 there were microphones to pick up the crowd's cheering for radio broadcasts. Yet it was not until 1929 that sportswriter Victor Jones '28 had a public-address system installed just for the press box. Some graduates sitting in sections 31 and 32, immediately below the reporters, could hear everything spoken above, and asked, "If you can do it for them, why can't you announce to the whole stadium?" In 1930 an improved PA system went in, and by 1931 the whole Stadium could hear Charlie Dale's voice.

He was hired at an open tryout. Dale was the first candidate of four scheduled to audition, and the last three never got a chance: Charlie Dale was so impressive that he was hired on the spot. During the rest of his life he missed only two games: in the mid 1940s due to illness, and later for a wedding.

"He would get up bright and early on Saturday morning," Chad Dale recalls. "He would already have read the media package cover to cover—he knew everything about the game. Those five Saturdays in the fall were the best Saturdays of his year." Over the years, Charlie Dale became friendly with Thomas Stephenson '37, A.M. '38, and his wife, Libby (Forster) Stephenson. (Their son Thomas F. Stephenson '64, M.B.A. '66, has endowed the Thomas Stephenson Family Coach for Harvard Football.) The Stephensons became press-box regulars as spotters for Charlie Dale, and continue in that role for Chad.

The elder Dale, who worked in the printing business, had no truck with the idea of a forward pass being "incomplete"; he invariably declared that the pass had "failed." On occasion he had a bit of fun with players' names. In 1936, when Amherst's A.A. Snowball tackled Crimson fullback Vern Struck '38, Dale announced, "Struck by Snowball," to the crowd's delight. Later that year, when a player named Cohen entered the backfield as a substitute for Pope, Dale deadpanned, "Cohen for Pope."

Like his grandfather, Chad Dale—who played baseball and hockey and was a high-school quarterback—did not attend Harvard, but loves the job: "It's a classy program, nice people, and also a successful football team." A downtown lawyer, Dale has his grandfather's penchant for preparation, and also gets an occasional rise out of the crowd, as when he first announced a penalty infraction for the bona fide violation "illegal touching." Chad has also inherited much of his grandfather's ironman durability and has missed only two games. "I enjoy it very much," he says. "I want to do it long enough for my kids to do it with me." Since those kids include boys of six and four years, plus a baby girl, there should be Dales atop Harvard Stadium for a long time to come.

MIT, Northwestern, Trinity, Duke, and others followed suit. Stanford and California switched to rugby.

With the sport in crisis, two rival rules committees—the Intercollegiate Rules Committee (IRC) and the newly founded Intercollegiate Athletic Association (ICAA, which four years later changed its name to the National Collegiate Athletic Association, or NCAA)—met in neighboring New York hotels in January 1906. Reid, with Roosevelt's backing, proposed 19 new rules to open up play and reduce the carnage. The proposals shortened the game from 70 to 60 minutes, added a neutral zone between the scrimmage lines to stem the fisticuffs there, required six men on the scrimmage line (to undercut the use of mass plays), increased the distance for a first down to 10 yards, and spread out defenders by legalizing the forward pass.

President Eliot had jawboned the Harvard Overseers into killing football unless the new rules were approved. Reid, a skillful politician and negotiator, used this as leverage. Reid explained "the new facts of life to Camp and the others," writes Bernstein. "Either the new 'rules go through or there will be no football at Harvard,' Reid told them; 'and if Harvard throws out the game, many other colleges will follow Harvard's lead, and an important blow will be dealt to the game.'"

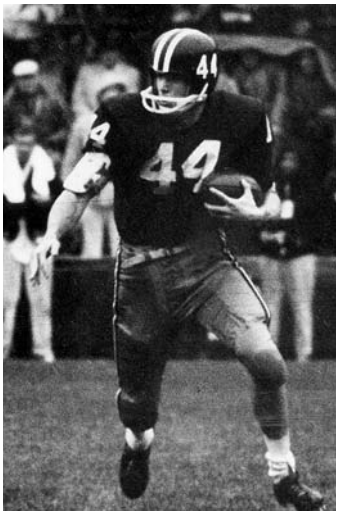

HARVARD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

HARVARD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Essential atmospherics, clockwise from top: pennants for sale; the Harvard Band and its bass drum; spectators near the Band section.

Walter Camp was outmaneuvered, but continued to drag his feet. He was from the old school; he loved the running game and despised the forward pass, whose advocates had slipped past his defense and were making their way downfield. Camp suggested, as an alter-



HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPORTS INFORMATION

John Dockery '66, Harvard and New York Jets defensive back and network sports broadcaster

"In a rainstorm against Cornell, my life began and ended with the 104-yard run—my only claim to fame. [Dockery intercepted a pass four yards deep in the end zone and ran it back for a touchdown.] It's something that rivals our [New York Jets] Super Bowl win against the Colts. It felt like slow motion, slogging along in the wet mud. There was a bevy of characters chasing me, also in slow motion. I can still see the route, from the closed end to the open end of the Stadium, veering from the Harvard side to the Cornell side. Blurry kinds of memories—colors moving past you, atmospheric details like Renoir. Magic happens how many times in your life?"

native to the pass, opening up the game by making the field 40 feet wider, an idea that garnered some support. But the looming bulk of Harvard Stadium silently vetoed Camp's proposal: his widened playing field would not fit the Stadium's confines. The forward pass was saved, and paths of glory opened up for the likes of Y.A. Tittle, Johnny Unitas, and Jerry Rice.

After considerable wrangling, a joint committee of the IRC and ICAA adopted several reforms based on the Harvard proposals. In May 1906, the Harvard Corporation voted to play football for at least another season; the Overseers concurred. President Eliot voted with the minority on both occasions.

History has now outvoted him as well, though the concerns he raised—violence, professionalism, the worship of winning, and the overemphasis on sports—still roil intercollegiate sports. Sphinx-like, the Stadium itself remains silent on the problems of football. Yet it is the only place on earth that has hosted a hundred years of the complex, hard-hitting game, and to the legions who have run, tackled, kicked, cheered, wept, and thrilled with excitement there, the verdict is most conclusively in.

Craig A. Lambert '69, Ph.D. '78, is deputy editor of this magazine. He gratefully acknowledges three excellent sources: Football: The Ivy League Origins of an American Obsession, *by Mark F. Bernstein (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001);* College Football: History, Spectacle, Controversy, *by John Sayle Watterson (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000); and* Manhood at Harvard: William James and Others, *by Kim Townsend (W.W. Norton, 1996).*

John T. Bethell '54, who has long followed and written about Harvard football, served as editor of this magazine from 1966 to 1994.

The editors wish to thank Warren M. "Renny" Little '55 for his help in locating historical images as illustrations for this article.

The Game remains The Game: Harvard versus Yale, 2002

Photograph by Stu Rosner