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A study of eight-man football in Indiana

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A STUDY OF EIGHT-MAN FOOTBALL
IN INDIANA

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Education
Indiana State Teachers College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

by
Charles Cecil Broadwell
June 1950

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The thesis of Charles Cecil Broadwell,
Contribution of the Graduate School, Indiana State
Teachers College, Number 713, under the title --
A STUDY OF EIGHT-MAN FOOTBALL
IN INDIANA

is hereby approved as counting toward the completion
of the Master's degree in the amount of 8 hours'
credit.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Football is a game which has been very popular for years. It is usually thought of as an eleven-man game as it is played by high schools, colleges and professional organizations of our country, but several varieties have sprung up in different localities. Among these are the twelve-man game as played in Canada, the six-man game, and the eight-man game.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It is the purpose of this study to reveal the techniques and popularity of the recently created game of eight-man football and to show its development from the conventional eleven-man and six-man games.

Importance of the study. It is generally assumed that football has educational values; otherwise we should not find it included in the programs of about eight thousand of our American public high schools. There are, however, more than twice as many public high schools in the United States playing basketball. It would be logical to

assume that more would participate in football if the expense and the number of boys required to field a team were not prohibitive to the smaller schools.

Approximately three fourths of the twenty five thousand public high schools of the United States have an enrollment of two hundred or fewer students, and about one half are considered as small schools, having less than one hundred enrolled. Stephen Epler originated a football game for the small schools in 1934 with the innovation of the six-man game. Since that time, it has been realized that there is a football need for the middle-sized high school, one with an enrollment of two hundred to three hundred students. It was with this in mind that the school officials of the Pocket Athletic Conference of Indiana originated the game of eight-man football.

Since the game is still in its infancy, not much has been written about it. In this study an attempt is made to present techniques which are employed by those playing the game, and to familiarize those interested in football with the newest variety of the already popular sport.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Eight-man football. Eight-man football is precisely what the name implies, a game of football in which the teams are composed of eight members.

P. A. C. The P. A. C. is the abbreviation for the Pocket Athletic Conference. This conference, whose member schools have an average enrollment slightly in excess of two hundred students, is the only one known at the present time which lists eight-man football as a part of its athletic program. Membership is limited to ten schools, the group currently being composed of Cannelton, Dale, Mount Vernon, Oakland City, Owensville, Petersburg, Poseyville, Richland, Rockport, and Tell City.

III. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As previously stated, not much has been written concerning eight-man football. This writing will not attempt to show fallaciousness or inadequacies of past investigations, but will endeavor to combine what can be found in the limited work of others with new research on the subject.

Information relative to the development of the game of six-man football, and the need for football of

some kind in high school athletic programs was provided by Duncan.¹

Baxter² has done valuable work on the athletic programs of the Pocket Athletic Conference. His study was extensive covering the entire program of the conference, and for that reason the study of eight-man football was limited.

Kell³ as secretary of the P.A.C. was called upon for an article relative to the new variety of football. He merely told of the conversion from six-man to eight-man football and of conditions which led to the change. Even in its first season he acclaimed the sport as popular in every quarter.

IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As has been previously inferred, this study deals with the game of eight-man football as it is played in the

¹ Ray O. Duncan, Six-Man Football (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1940), pp. 1-3.

² James O. Baxter, "History of the Pocket Athletic Conference", (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1950).

³ Marlin E. Kell, "Eight-Man Football" (unpublished article prepared for Orlo Miller, Consultant, Indiana State Board of Health, Indianapolis, Indiana, September, 1947).

Pocket Athletic Conference, which is composed of a group of high schools located in the southwestern part of Indiana. This is the only place the game is played on an organized basis, although it is mentioned in the athletic handbook of at least one other state, Illinois.⁴

The above limitation added to the fact that literature pertaining to the subject is very scant has of necessity provided for restricted writing concerning the study.

⁴ Illinois High School Association Official Handbook,
1949, p. 23.

CHAPTER II

DATA AND PROCEDURE

I. DATA

The data collected for this study, limited as it was, had its origin in a variety of places.

Minutes of the Pocket Athletic Conference. Much information for this study was found in the P.A.C. minute book, a running record of the events of the conference since its inception. It was felt that this should be the most reliable source of facts since it provided the secretary's notes of the meetings as they were held.

Every item relating to eight-man football, or even suggestive of it, was carefully extracted from the minutes to assist in compiling an accurate history of the game.

The questionnaire. In order to ascertain certain facts relative to the study a questionnaire was used. It was short and concise so as to require a minimum of time in answering. A copy is included on page 9.

High school athletic association bulletins. A limited amount of information was gained from an Indiana High School Athletic Association bulletin and from the Illinois

High School Association official handbook.

Evansville College Annual Football Clinic. The only large city located in the midst of the P.A.C. territory is Evansville, Indiana, home of Evansville College, which fulfils a need of football coaches of the area by providing an annual clinic every spring. Recognizing the fact that eight-man football is a vital part of the gridiron activity of the surrounding region, a portion of the program dealt with that sport.

II. PROCEDURE

Treatment of historical data. The procedure for the historical research consisted merely of selecting excerpts pertinent to the study, organizing and writing in such a manner as to portray a true history of the game of eight-man football. Since most of this report deals with the history of the sport, the greater part of the data was treated in this manner.

Treatment of questionnaire. That portion of the study which dealt with the sentiment of the coaches themselves concerning the game of eight-man football was derived by means of questionnaires. They were prepared and, accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelopes, sent to

the football coaches of all of the conference schools.

Some replies were returned within a few days and others within a week or ten days. After a couple of weeks a few follow-up questionnaires were sent with good results. In an effort to secure a response from all the coaches, two additional questionnaires were sent by special delivery, one of which was unnecessary because a reply was in the mail at the time of sending. Evidence indicates that people are forgetful and that "follow-ups" are valuable.

The results of the questionnaire were tabulated, some portions were used in writing the report of the study, and other parts were used in making tables. The survey was a compilation of the opinions of one hundred per cent of the coaches who are directing eight-man football.

QUESTIONNAIRE PERTAINING TO EIGHT-MAN FOOTBALL

1. When did your school begin eight-man football?
2. Did your school play football previously?
If so, what kind and in what years?
3. Number of boys in your school participating in football in 1947.
Number of boys in your school participating in football in 1948.
Number of boys in your school participating in football in 1949.
4. Number of boys in your school participating in football the last year other variety of football was played.
5. Any noticeable difference in number of injuries when changing to the eight-man game.
Approximate number and types of injuries in 1949.
6. Any noticeable difference in following (crowds).
Number of paid admissions for home games in 1949.
Number of paid admissions for home games last year to play other variety of football.
7. Usual offensive formation.
8. Usual defensive formation.
9. Would you prefer to play six-man football?
10. Would you prefer to play eleven-man football?

CHAPTER III

HISTORY OF EIGHT-MAN FOOTBALL

Introduction. Every boy who wishes to play football should have the opportunity to participate. This statement was simply so much theory and far from practical until the year 1934, when Stephen Epler originated the game of six-man football at the high school of Chester, Nebraska. The growth of the game was phenomenal because it was football made practical for small high schools, seventy per cent of our nation's approximately twenty five thousand schools having an enrollment of less than two hundred pupils.

By the end of World War II while the populace in general and educators in particular were still laying great stress upon the physical development of the youth of our land, many schools with an enrollment greater than two hundred were playing six-man football. Some of these schools were coached by former high school and college stars in eleven-man football, and the desire for line play was acute. Then too, schools with a slightly larger enrollment were applying pressure in an effort to eliminate six-man football and have all schools play the eleven-man game. One such condition as this arose in Southwestern

Indiana, where members of the Pocket Athletic Conference, composed of high schools with an average enrollment of 225-235, decided to invent a game to fulfil the requirements of football as needed by their member schools.

No one person is given credit for the development of the game of eight-man football. It is a P.A.C. project, and to be the football champion of this conference is synonymoun with being the eight-man football champion of the world.

Steps leading to the formation of the game of eight-man football.¹ At least three years before the game of eight-man football was given a trial, members of the P.A.C. were considering steps necessary to insure the continuance of the conference which was formed in 1938. From the beginning member schools had participated in six-man football. At the semi-annual meeting in October, 1944, the secretary was instructed to contact several neighboring schools relative to the possibility of playing some form of football, thereby strengthening the conference. As a result new life was injected into the P.A.C., but six-man football was still a part of the program;

¹ Minutes of the Pocket Athletic Conference.

likewise the dissatisfaction with the athletic program was still present, probably more intense than before.

The next step leading to eight-man football occurred in October, 1946, when the P.A.C. secretary corresponded with the commissioner of Indiana high school athletics relative to the matter. The entire content of the letter follows:²

Dear Mr. Phillips:

The Pocket Athletic Conference with the following member schools - Cannelton, Tell City, Dale, Rockport, Oakland City, Petersburg, Mt. Vernon and Poseyville - has sponsored six-man football as a major interscholastic sport between the members since the Fall of 1938. We have found this sport to be better for the small schools than the eleven-man game for numerous reasons. However, we are not satisfied that it is the final answer to the need for a fall sport.

After trying this sport for nine seasons the consensus of opinion of the conference members is that the six-man game offense far overbalances the defense and that very little can be done about it. Experience has shown that a team slightly better than another will win by an overwhelming score and often before the second half is completed. If the difference in ability of the two teams warranted such difference in scores, there would be no complaint.

Various means of coping with this situation have been suggested and one of these was a suggestion made quite some time ago and discussed at each succeeding meeting. The suggestion was to substitute eight-man for six-man football. We would place the additional men in the line and make them, together with the

² Minutes of the Pocket Athletic Conference.

center, ineligible to receive passes. By these changes we feel the defense would more nearly balance the offense and a better game would be provided both from player and spectator points of view. We would retain all other features of the six-man game, such as the size of field, 15 yards for first down, required clear pass in the backfield, etc.

When this subject has been mentioned to neighboring schools which sponsor the eleven-man game their invariable comment has been "Why not play eleven men if you are going to have eight?" Our answer has been based largely on the financial point. We can play the eight-man game without additional officials, the present fields will not have to be enlarged, not nearly so much equipment or so large squads are necessary. Member schools now have sufficient boys on squads to play the eight-man game and sufficient equipment.

Our conference holds two annual meetings, one in the spring, the other a fall meeting. November 12, 1946 is the date for our next meeting and I am writing you in the capacity of Secretary of the P.A.C. for your reactions and opinions concerning our proposal. We can find no rule in conflict with our ideas but, of course, we would not want to undertake anything of this nature without the sanction of your office.

Please let us know as soon as possible your reactions to our proposal. I am confident the suggestion will be discussed again at our next regular meeting.

We realize this may not be the answer to our problem but we feel very strongly that it will be a much better game to offer the boys than the one we have offered for the past nine years.

Very sincerely yours,

Marlin E. Kell,
Sec.-Treas. P.A.C.

In the meantime officials of non-member neighboring schools which had a student body comparable to the

larger schools of the P.A.C. continued to apply pressure in an effort to increase the number of schools competing in eleven-man football, even if it meant the total destruction of the six-man league. With a thorough knowledge of this at hand, members of the P.A.C. were relieved to receive official sanction of eight-man football in the reply from the office of the commissioner of Indiana high school athletics.

Trial practice sessions. At the following semi-annual meeting of conference officials in November, 1946, a rather lengthy discussion of the subject of eight-man football occurred. It was decided that member schools should conduct eight-man football spring practice in 1947, and that a committee should formulate tentative rules for same.

Demonstration game.³ Within the limits of the athletic departments of the participating schools the practice sessions of eight-man football proved very successful. A demonstration game between members of the host school was held at the spring meeting of the

³ Minutes of the Pocket Athletic Conference.

P.A.C. coaches and principals at Mount Vernon on April 3, 1947. During the ensuing business meeting it was decided by a unanimous vote that member schools should play eight-man football in the fall of 1947. A committee composed of the football coaches of the conference was delegated to formulate rules by which the interscholastic games should be played.

Eight-man football at the present time. Although some people look upon eight-man football as a stepping stone from the six-man game to eleven-man football, others are just as thoroughly convinced that the game is the answer to the problem of a fall sport for schools having an enrollment of about two hundred. It is not an imitation of the grand game of football but is simply a game of its own, displaying the same fundamentals as the original game on a somewhat limited scale.

CHAPTER IV

RULES OF EIGHT-MAN FOOTBALL

Rules used in the first eight-man football game.¹

Since the game was a direct outgrowth of six-man football, the rules of that sport were considered as basic in 1947. The players included a center, two guards, two ends, a quarterback, a halfback and a fullback. Only the backs and the ends were eligible receivers of forward passes. No clear pass was necessary before the ball crossed the scrimmage line. The game was played in ten minute quarters, all of which were completed regardless of the score. The size of the playing field (forty yards by eighty yards, plus ten yard end zones before the goal posts) was retained as in six-man football, as was the scoring system (touchdown, six points; field goal, four points; successful try for point after touchdown by kicking, two points, but by running or passing, only one point). Any other controversial issues were settled by the six-man rule book.²

¹ "Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Coach William Weathers, May 31, 1950."

² "Personal Interview by the Author with Principal Marlin Kell, May 28, 1950."

Rule changes. The changes in the rules for eight-man football have shown a tendency to disregard the six-man rules. The difficulty in securing competent officials brought about the immediate realization of the necessity of such a change.³

In 1948 the eleven-man football rule book was accepted as the standard with the following exceptions:⁴ (1) the playing field shall be the same as for the six-man game; (2) scoring shall be the same as in six-man football; (3) fifteen yards from scrimmage shall be required in a series of four downs; (4) the game shall be played in four quarters of eight minutes each; and, (5) the ball shall be placed on the one yard line for point-after-touchdown attempts.

Since the eleven-man football rule book was accepted as the basis of the eight-man game, only minor changes have been added.⁵ In 1949 the responsibility of keeping time was again vested in an official at the bench, and the rule changes for 1950 include (1) a change in the

³ Minutes of the Pocket Athletic Conference.

⁴ "Personal Correspondence of the Author, letter from Coach William Weathers, May 31, 1950."

⁵ "Personal Interview by the Author, with Principal Marlin Kell, May 28, 1950."

length of quarters from eight minutes to ten minutes; and (2) placing the ball on the two yard line for point-after-touchdown attempts.

Thus, after a life of three years the game of eight-man football has undergone a metamorphosis to the extent that it is very much like eleven-man football. The differences are limited, namely (1) size of the field; (2) method of scoring; (3) fifteen yards required for a first down; and (4) length of the game.

CHAPTER V

TECHNIQUES OF EIGHT-MAN FOOTBALL

Sound techniques and fundamentals of play are necessary in eight-man football as in any other variety of the game. There is no substitute for hard blocking and clean vicious tackling. Likewise the boy who can throw the football proficiently should be able to excel in eight-man football as well as in the regular eleven-man game. With this in mind, this chapter will discuss briefly several general football techniques as well as some applicable only to the eight-man game.

Defense. Probably the one thing foremost in the minds of the P.A.C. coaches as they considered the possibility of playing eight-man football was a desire to stress defense. Lopsided scores were very common in the six-man game. Quite often the difference in the ability of two teams was very small; yet according to the final score the two teams should never have been matched on the same field of play.

The fact that there were more players on the same sized field was a natural aid to a defensive ball game in eight-man football; likewise was the eleven-man rule that only backs and ends were eligible forward pass receivers.

TABLE I
 USUAL OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE FORMATIONS
 USED IN EIGHT-MAN FOOTBALL

	OFFENSIVE FORMATION	DEFENSIVE FORMATION
Cannelton	Single Wing	4-2-2
Dale	Single Wing	4-1-2-1
Mount Vernon	Single Wing	5-2-1
Oakland City	Single Wing	4-1-2-1
Owensville	"T"	5-2-1
Petersburg	Single Wing	4-1-2-1
Poseyville	Single Wing	5-2-1
Richland	"T"	4-4
Rockport	Single Wing	5-2-1
Tell City	Single Wing	4-3-1

Most schools in the eight-man game use basically a four-man line with variations in the backfield, the diamond being predominant, as is shown by Table I, page 20. This defense was used by Petersburg, the conference champion for the last two years. The second common type of defense is the five-two-one while the goal line pattern usually becomes six-two. Both the three-two-two-one and the three-three-two types of defense have been used on different occasions, especially to halt strong passing attacks.

Offense. The available personnel is the ever-present factor to help a coach determine the type of offense to use. Some coaches believe the size of the field prevents the success of "T" plays in the eight-man game. However, such plays are second only to the single wing as a general offensive pattern (Table I, page 20). A third type of offense to be mentioned is the short punt formation, and that admittedly was used only sparingly. The team which won the P.A.C. championship the last two years used single wingback plays almost altogether.

Tackling. Good tackling is just as important in eight-man football as in any other type of football. Its importance cannot be stressed too much. If a tackle is missed, a long gain is usually the result.

Speed and determination are the most important requirements for good tackling.¹ A beginner should be permitted to experience the thrill of tackling before he is jarred too thoroughly; otherwise he may develop slowly or lose his courage and never develop at all.

All types of tackling are in use in eight-man football. Probably not so many head-on tackles are executed as in the regular eleven-man game, but there is still considerable play directly in front of the defensive team. Even the boy who does not possess a great deal of speed is capable of making good head-on tackles.

The side tackle is very common. A tackler should be taught whether to thrust his head in front or in back of the runner, although some coaches permit the discretion of the players at the time of execution of the tackle. As a general rule this is considered unsound because a tackler may hesitate momentarily for his decision and thereby lose his opportunity.

The rear tackle is another type which is seen occasionally. Here the matter is entirely a question of speed. The tackler must overtake the runner and simply jump upon his back, dragging his legs so as to null the

¹ Ray O. Duncan, Six-Man Football (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1940), p. 13.

ball carrier down as soon as possible.² He should aim high lest he miss the runner entirely or get kicked in the head.

Blocking. With the phenomenal success and popularity of the "T" formation, blocking in football has been somewhat revised. Although the occasion to use a cross-body block or a reverse-body block is still much in evidence, the shoulder block is in much more common use. There is a type of block for every occasion, and to fail to recognize it and use it at the proper time may mean the loss of a touchdown.³

Much can be written about blocking, and anything concerning it relative to any variety of football also applies to the eight-man game. It is as true here as in any football game that the team that can block and tackle well is hard to beat.

Kicking. According to many authorities on football, present rules have practically eliminated the foot

² Ray O. Duncan, Six-Man Football (New York: A.S. Barnes and Company, 1940), p. 16.

³ Duke Greenwich, "Football Fundamentals: Blocking." Athletic Journal, 29:46, May, 1949.

from football.⁴ Full cognizance of this was realized when the method of scoring in six-man football was devised.⁵ However, punting was almost a lost art in this game because it was strictly an offensive contest. The originators of eight-man football gave due consideration to these two facts, and drop kicking, place kicking, and punting are all three important in the game. In the initial season for the sport there were more punts in the first two games than in a full season of six-man games.⁶

Passing. A good passing attack is just as valuable in eight-man football as in any other variety of the game. This depends primarily upon a passer and receivers although pass protection also must be given due consideration.

Passes can be of two types, forward and lateral. The forward pass is by far the more common. It is the

⁴ Arnold A. Fenton, "The Art of Controlled Kicking," Scholastic Coach, 10:9, September, 1940.

⁵ Ray O. Duncan, Six-Man Football (New York: A.S. Barnes and Company, 1940) p. 3.

⁶ Marlin E. Kell, "Eight-Man Football" (unpublished article prepared for Orlo Miller, Consultant, Indiana State Board of Health, Indianapolis, Indiana, September, 1947).

one usually referred to when passing is mentioned. The lateral pass is commonly used when the ball carrier is about to be tackled; therefore both the passer and receiver are in motion in the open field.

There are many general rules for pass throwing and receiving which must be considered as sound. However, one of the all-time greats as a football passer in both the collegiate and professional ranks advocates, "If a boy can sling them, let him sling them."⁷ His idea is that a boy is doing it correctly when he does it well.

Running. Too much cannot be said concerning the value of the ability to run as an aid in playing football. It is sometimes said that one reason the Southwest produces so many good football teams is the fact that great stress is also placed upon track events. Running is an art of its own.

On the gridiron, running with the ball can usually be classified as line bucking or open field running. Bucking the line requires a sudden burst of power and the ability to feint, spin, and hit holes. Open field running

⁷ Cecil Isbel, "The Forward Pass," (lecture delivered at the Evansville College Football Clinic, Evansville, Indiana, March 31, 1950).

requires speed, shiftiness, and the ability to start and stop quickly. A back should run with high knee action and be able to side step and cross-over.

Running is of vital importance to all football players. Not only is it of necessity in the fundamentals of the game, but also the majority of the repertoire of plays of most football teams are of the running type.

CHAPTER VI

THE SAFETY OF EIGHT-MAN FOOTBALL

Factors relative to the safety of the game. As in any game, equipment, supervision, and conditioning are of prime importance. There are fewer serious football injuries now than years ago because of the vast improvement in the type of equipment worn by the players. The improved suspension helmet has prevented many concussions, and sponge rubber pads have eased the pain on many aching bones and muscles.

The supervision, or coaching and officiating, and the conditioning, or training, must work hand in hand. Most football injuries occur in the first few plays of the game.¹ After becoming relaxed and overcoming the fear of the first tackle, the player who is in good physical condition can take the hard knocks in stride until fatigue wears him down. Add the knowledge of football and its techniques to a sound, well protected body, and the number of injuries should not be great. This is true in eight-man football as in any sport.

¹ Larry Cappiello, "New Football Seasoning," Scholastic Coach, 19:7, 57, May, 1950.

Comparison of eight-man football injuries with those of other varieties of football. Of the schools contacted in this survey, only one had previously played both eleven-man and six-man football. The opinion of the coach of this school concurs with the author in believing more injuries develop in eleven-man than in eight-man football. There are two reasons for this, namely (1) more players involved; and (2) more bruising line play.

Eight-man football does not feature off-tackle smashes and ensuing pile-ups as does the regular eleven-man game. Probably this factor alone eliminates many injuries in the game.

As a general rule, the number of injuries in six-man and eight-man football are about the same, according to the opinions of the coaches surveyed. The eight-man game is not so fast but there is more line play. Although the team is composed of more members, the squads are increased only slightly (Table II, page 29); therefore, the player-injury ratio is not changed appreciably.

TABLE II

NUMBER OF BOYS PARTICIPATING IN FOOTBALL IN THE
HIGH SCHOOLS OF THE POCKET ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

	SIX-MAN FOOTBALL	EIGHT-MAN FOOTBALL		
	1946	1947	1948	1949
Cannelton	*	28	25	30
Dale	*	30	25	22
Mount Vernon	35	35	37	41
Oakland City	22	24	26	30
Owensville	14	19	22	25
Petersburg	26	32	40	45
Poseyville	17	22	16	17
Richland	**	20	24	25
Rockport	*	*	17	35
Tell City	35	30	35	40

* Data not available.

** Did not play football until 1947.

CHAPTER VII

POPULARITY OF EIGHT-MAN FOOTBALL

Appeal to participants. From the standpoint of the players, eight-man football is a very good game. The six-man game was sometimes labeled "glorified tag"¹ and was accepted by team members only because of the absence of other competitive sports during the autumn. The eight-man game provides a real football background, giving athletes valuable experience before entering college. Then, too, there are more positions to be filled, thereby stimulating interest and providing the motivation for a better physical training program.

Appeal to school officials. The school officials most vitally concerned with athletics are the coaches and the administrators. It is the duty of coaches to produce the best possible teams, while the administrators have the problems of general management and finance.

Of the schools surveyed, every coach was emphatic in the belief that eight-man football is superior to six-

¹ Marlin E. Kell, "Eight-Man Football," (unpublished article prepared for Orlo Miller, Consultant, Indiana State Board of Health, Indianapolis, Indiana, September, 1947).

TABLE III
 PREFERENCE FOR OTHER VARIETY OF FOOTBALL
 OVER EIGHT-MAN FOOTBALL AS CAST
 BY RESPECTIVE COACHES

	APPROXIMATE ENROLLMENT	SIX-MAN FOOTBALL	ELEVEN-MAN FOOTBALL
Cannelton	200	No	No*
Dale	160	No	Yes
Mount Vernon	325	No	Yes
Oakland City	240	No	No*
Owensville	200	No	Yes*
Petersburg	300	No	No
Poseyville	110	No	No*
Richland	150	No	No*
Rockport	200	No	Yes*
Tell City	375	No	No

* Depending upon the size of the school.

man. Table III, page 31, shows that not one desired to return to the game played by conference members only a few years ago. The facts were not so convincing in regard to eleven-man football. There was a tie vote amongst those who stated a definite choice between eight-man football and the regular game, but the majority of the answers considered the size of the school as the deciding factor.

As far as school administrators are concerned, they favor that which does good for the most students. Since the number of players is larger than in the six-man game and the gate receipts provide the means necessary for the athletic program, eight-man football continues to receive official sanction.

Appeal to the general public. The fans were not hesitant to show their preference for eight-man football over six-man. A larger number of participants assures a larger following. It also has a much greater resemblance to regular football, and in some places is preferred to the eleven-man game because it is faster and the line play does not produce so much congestion that good vision is hindered.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study of eight-man football dealt with the game as it is played in the Pocket Athletic Conference of Indiana. This is the only place known that the game is played on an organized basis. The conference is composed of ten member schools with an average enrollment of 225-235 students.

After compilation and treatment of available data, the facts relative to the study seem to indicate that eight-man football is a sport worthy of consideration by schools which appear too small to compete with the majority of schools playing eleven-man football. While evidence is insufficient to claim it to be preferred over regular football, the survey shows that the coaches who have handled both six-man and eight-man football have a unanimous preference for the latter (Table III, page 31).

Factors which have caused the sport to gain immediate popularity are (1) the similarity to eleven-man football; (2) the speed and open-field play of the game; (3) the adaptability to the middle-sized school; and (4) the carry-over value for the athletes who anticipate playing college football.

Although the teams are composed of more members than in six-man football, squads are only slightly larger. Table II, page 29, presents figures which show that there was only a slight increase in number of boys participating when the transition from six-man to eight-man football occurred. This helps explain the opinions of the coaches in believing that injuries suffered in the two sports are about the same in number.

An idea concerning the most popular defensive and offensive formations in use in eight-man football can be ascertained by looking at Table I, page 20. A four man line with a diamond backfield is the typical defensive pattern while most offenses feature the single wing.

Since the game of eight-man football is scarcely three years old, it is impossible to determine if it is here to stay or merely a passing fancy; however, at the time of this writing officials of the Pocket Athletic Conference are convinced that the game fulfills the demand for a fall sport in a most satisfactory manner.

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