

IT'S A MINOR THING

By Steven M. Brainerd

DOUBLEHEADER

Semi-pro football teams have played three games a week, eight games in a month and even two days in a row. However, no team ever did what the Terre Haute Thunder did August 10th, 1986.

The Thunder (Tri-States League) were told by the league that the Henderson Flash (their opponent for the 8/10/86 game) had folded and that they were awarded a forfeit victory. To fill the date, the Thunder contacted the Chicago Chargers (Metro League) and the Chargers agreed to show up.

About two hours before game time the Chargers arrived at Indiana State U. Stadium for the game. As the two teams were warming up, the Henderson club arrived for its game with the Thunder. With two teams to play the Thunder did the only logical thing. They played Chicago first, losing 21-7. And in an unprecedented event in the entire history of semi-pro football the Terre Haute Thunder then defeated the Henderson Flash, 43-27, in the second game of an unscheduled doubleheader.

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DOUBLEHEADER II

Steve Yonich earned himself a unique place in the semi-pro football record book. His team, the Whatcom County Lakers (Northwest International League) were playing the Snohomish County Ramblers (NWIL) September 15, 1974. Yonich played offensive tackle and was lined as a tackle eligible and caught a six yard touchdown pass for the first score of the game. Snohomish tied the game at 6-6. Late in the third quarter, Yonich again lined up as a tackle eligible and caught his second and game winning touchdown pass of the day. The Lakers won the game, 12-6.

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OVERTIME AND AGAIN

Contrary to popular belief, the first sudden death overtime game was not the 1959 NFL championship game, but it was a playoff game. The 1940 Eastern Pennsylvania Conference used a four team Shaughnessy playoff (that is first versus third and second versus fourth) and two teams were tied for the fourth playoff spot. The Chester Pros and the Philadelphia Seymour AA squared off December 4th to decide the issue. Earlier in the season, Seymour had beaten Chester 7-0. The playoff game was played in a blizzard and ended regulation 0-0. Quarter five saw no change in the score. The sixth quarter came and went with still no change in the score. Ninety minutes of football with no end in sight. The league ended the game at this point. Chester was declared the winner on the basis of first downs 12-5.

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WHAT WAS THE SCORE?

Scores of football games vary a lot, from 7-0 to 47-45, but there have been some odd ones from time to time in semi-pro football. Toledo Tornadoes 3, Grand Rapids Blazers 2. Sounds like a baseball score, right. Wrong, Grand Rapids scored a safety early in the game and it holds up until the third quarter when Tom Taber kicks a 30 yard field goal to win it for Toledo. The Richmond Ravens 3 and the Washington Metro Bucs 2 managed to duplicate that score.

1987 saw several unusual scores. The Pueblo Crusaders defeated the Omaha River Raiders, 2-0 in a rainstorm at home. This score is the usual forfeit score (sometimes 6-0 and 7-0 is used depending on the league.) 2-0 as a real score is very uncommon.

A very odd score, heretofore unknown, was the Galveston Islanders 4-0 victory over the Oklahoma City Thunderchiefs. Two bad center snaps accounted for all the scoring that night.

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STILL WORKING OVERTIME

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The longest overtime game 10/1/76 when the Marlboro Shamrocks at the Providence Kings (both Eastern League) played through four overtimes, with the Kings finally winning 12-6.

The 1986 Frederick Falcons (Continental Interstate League) played four overtime games; winning three.

Remember the Chester Pros and the EPFC. Well, the 1940 American Association was faced with the same problem. They had to have a fourth place playoff game and there had to be a winner. On December 1, the Long island Indians visited the Newark Bears to settle the issue. Four quarters later it was a 0-0 tie. Instead of going into overtime to finish the game, it was ended with the intention of playing a Wednesday game to decide the issue. Again the weather intervened and the Commissioner, Joe Rosentover, decided to settle the matter with a conference call and a coin toss. Newark guessed right three times, Long Island only twice. It would be nice to report that Newark went on to the league title, but they lost their game to the Jersey City Little Giants 7-6.

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WHY CAN'T WE WIN THE LAST GAME?

Glens Falls' Greenjackets are a very frustrated football team. For each of the last eight years they have been in the Empire League playoffs. Eight years in a row they have lost their last game.

The team's eight year record is 63 wins and 34 losses, winning five division titles. The Greenjackets have lost five straight championship games (1981-1985) including three in a row to the Scranton Eagles. The 1984 loss (to Scranton) was a tough 16-14 defeat.