

Ave Blake, Sr., Box Lacrosse Veteran, Tells Local Story of Exciting Sport

By HARRY MAITLAND
Avery Blake has been associated with sports in this area for some time, but seeing him standing amidst several thousand shoulder pads, hip pads, football helmets, shoes and countless other athletic articles was a new experience. Before he could scramble out of his position, the first question had been thrown.

"When was box lacrosse first introduced into Delaware County?" echoed across the factory room.

"It was in 1932 when a group of Swarthmore men banded together and formed the original Swarthmore Indians," returned Blake over the hum of large leather sewing machines, huge uniform washers and shoe rebuilding equipment.

According to Blake, Porter Waite, Swarthmore garage owner and Wallingford resident, was the father of box lacrosse in this area.

In '32 Waite practiced lacrosse on the field which is now the Swarthmore College box on the campus. Some of the early enthusiasts of the speedy Canadian game were Waite, Percy, Johnny and Henry Belfield, Bud Green, Ray Fellows, Wilkie Strait, Joe and Irv Kahler, Hank Ford, and Blake.

The group played in the open field without a box at that time. Waite built the first box himself on Fairview rd., across from the Player's Club. This box was constructed in '33 and the Indians scheduled many matches with the only existing two teams, Baltimore and Philadelphia. Fans were plentiful and jammed the tilts held at the Swarthmore site, standing seven and eight deep to see the highly interesting, fast matches.

Move to Chester

In '36 the group of "boxla" players moved to PMC and had a box erected on the old polo field. They played at night under lights and were known as the Chester squad. Their stay in Chester was brief and the next year they played in Swarthmore again. This time the box was located opposite the Rutgers av., grammar school. Lights were erected and the teams played there until the outbreak of war disrupted things in '41. Waite was regarded as the "financial angel" during the operations of all these years. The field was dismantled when houses were erected at the spot during the war.

Bill Ziegenfus helped locate the game in this area after the close of the war when following his appointment as athletic director for Sun Oil, he made it a major sport with the oil company. A box was built in '46 and Sun fielded a team composed mostly of old Indian players. The Indians were also revived and now form a hot rivalry with the Sun squad. Joe Kahler has been delegated to take charge of the lacrosse activity at Sun Oil. The two hot rivals, Sun and Swarthmore, will meet tonight in a match in the Sun Oil A. A. box at Feltonville. Sun beat the Indians 10-8 in their meeting earlier this season. Game time is 8 p. m.

Of the old warriors the Kahlers and Strait play with Sun and Ford, Blake, Waite and Green are still



AVE BLAKE SR.

playing with the Indians. Percy Belfield is now assistant lacrosse coach at Univ. of Penn. Blake coaches soccer and football at Swarthmore College and Ford coaches the sport at Lower Merion High. Ford and Blake now have grown sons playing with them.

Still Going Strong

Blake was born in Buffalo, N. Y., the son of a sales manager, and constantly moved all over the country. He remained in Baltimore long enough to finish his education at Baltimore Poly Institute and then Swarthmore College. Attack was Blake's early position and now he has moved back to defense. Players

YMRC Gains Little League Win, 10-3

The Young Men's Republican Club entry in the Little League trimmed the R. L. Painter team 10 to 3, Tuesday, at the Pulton st. field. The victors collected eight hits to five for Painter's.

Ronald Coyer led the hitting with three for four as Joe Burns scattered five Painter hits and fanned nine batters. John Schmidt rapped out a home run.

YMRC	ab	h	o	r	R. L. Painter	ab	h	o	r
R. Coyer, ss	4	3	1	0	R. Lott, 3b	3	2	0	1
J. Moore, 3b	2	0	1	0	Dodds, ss	3	1	0	0
J. Zover, lf	4	1	0	0	Culley, p	2	1	2	5
Schmidt, cf	4	2	1	0	Mills, rf	2	0	0	0
Spr'm'n, lb	3	0	3	0	B'n't, lf	1	0	0	0
L. Pintol, c	3	0	0	0	Baker, 2b	2	0	1	4
Berman, 2b	3	0	2	0	Keenan, lf	3	0	0	0
Gilmore, rf	2	1	2	0	Crist, c	2	0	0	0
J. Burns, p	2	1	0	2	M'Wier, cf	2	0	0	0
					B'bus'n, lb	2	1	0	0

Totals	20	8	18	5	Totals	22	5	18	10
YMRC	3	2	0	0	1	4	10	3	
R. L. Painter	1	0	0	0	1	3			
Burns-Coyer 2, Moore, Bower 2, Culley, Robinson, Zover-Berman 1, Dodds, 1, Mills 1, Robinson 3, Two-base hits-Robinson, Schmidt, Three-base hits-Dodds, Home runs-Schmidt									
Struck out by-Burns 9, Culley 5, Winning pitcher-Burns, Losing pitcher-Culley, Umpire-News and Di-Cave.									

Plans Uncertain

Dick Walkup Sprangfield's flashy and Strait play with Temple or Blake, Waite and Green are still

gradually shift from attack to defense and then goalie as they age, Blake said, "but they'll never get me to play goal."

The owner of the Triangle Renovators, 15th and Crosby sts., claims his best play was accomplished when he was a teammate of Bobby Pool and Jack Turnbull on the Mt. Washington Club. The team was the "super-super" in lacrosse clubs. Pool, best dodger in the game, was an All-American and had played at Baltimore Poly with Blake as a kid. Turnbull, the game's most outstanding attack player, was killed in the war while flying over Belgium. He was cited as being the greatest lacrosse player of all time. A memorial award is presented annually in his honor to the year's finest attack man.

Blake now lives at 49 Amherst av., Swarthmore. He married the former Mabel Neid. They have one son Avery Jr., or Bunky. The 6'4", 185-lb., grid star was given the name by his uncle, Wayne Neid, for his resemblance to the favorite comic character of years gone by. The moniker has stuck and Bunky it is.

The renovating plant, for athletic equipment, has been operating for four years. The Blake sideline has grown from a hobby activity to full-time concern employing 18 workers and servicing 150 high schools and colleges with repair and cleaning of all types of equipment.

At the close of the interview, Blake went back to his work, past piles of football helmets, kidney pads and bins of cleated shoes.

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