

# From Football to Rugby—and Back, 1906-1919: The University of California-Stanford University Response to the “Football Crisis of 1905”

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During the 1890s and early 1900s a debate of considerable proportions raged in the public press, on college campuses, and in educational, literary, and sporting journals over the game of “American Football.”<sup>1</sup> The events and incidents, discussions and diatribes which led up to and surrounded what has come to be known as “the football crisis of 1905-06” have been examined by several historians. A number of years ago Moore called the period between 1893 and 1913 “football’s ugly decades” and maintained that the game reached its nadir in 1905. Lewis has suggested, however, that the American form of the game was so firmly entrenched that in spite of extensive agitation its banishment from college campuses was never a serious threat. More recently Smith has argued that evidence, specifically that concerning developments at Harvard and Columbia, indicates that the future of American intercollegiate football was briefly in jeopardy.<sup>2</sup> The old Football Rules Committee was ultimately forced to relinquish its more or less monopolistic hold on the game and new rules were imposed for the 1906 football season. The President of the United States, an avowed devotee of “the Strenuous Life” and the “manly” virtues of vigorous physical activities, insisted that a way must be found to eliminate foul play and intentional brutality so that the game might continue.<sup>3</sup> Columbia University abolished football at the end of the

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1. Among the many and varied publications which included articles were: *American Physical Education Review*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, *Chautauquan*, *Collier's*, *Harper's Weekly*, *McClure's Magazine*, *Nation*, *New England and Yale Review*, *Outing Magazine*, *Outlook*, *Popular Science Monthly*, *School Review*, *Scribner's*, *World's Work*. The daily press in scores of cities commented on the problem.

2. John H. Moore, “Football’s Ugly Decades, 1893-1913,” *Smithsonian Journal of History*, 2 (Fall 1967), 49-68; Guy M. Lewis, “Theodore Roosevelt’s Role in the 1905 Football Controversy,” *Research Quarterly*, 40 (December 1969), 717-724; Ronald A. Smith, “Harvard and Columbia and a Reconsideration of the 1905-06 Football Crisis,” *Journal of Sport History*, 8 (Winter 1981) 5-19. Several other works have examined, with varying exactness, the issues surrounding American football in 1905-06. Many of these are discussed in footnote no. 2 of Smith’s above mentioned article.

3. See, for example, Theodore Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life: Essays and Addresses* (New York: Century Co., 1901), 4-5; 8. In 1908 Roosevelt wrote a ten-page letter to Charles W. Eliot, whom some contemporaries believed had become unreasonable in his stand against intercollegiate athletics, upbraiding the Harvard presi-

1905 season, and other universities and colleges dropped the game beginning with the 1906 season. A few replaced it with English rugby.

Among those schools which dropped American football and adopted rugby in 1905-06 were the University of California and Leland Stanford Jr. University, the two leading institutions of higher learning on the Pacific Coast. Their presidents, Benjamin Ide Wheeler and David Starr Jordan, engaged in an active campaign aimed at persuading other colleges and universities, as well as the state's secondary schools, to convert to English rugby. Although they were successful in convincing the administrators of many public high schools, some parochial and private schools, and a few colleges to follow their lead, many schools—especially those at greater distances from the two universities—remained loyal to American football.

Individuals elsewhere in the United States who were concerned about the future of football as an intercollegiate sport did register some interest in the events which were occurring in California. However, it would be an exaggeration to contend that either the University of California or Stanford University, in the early 1900s, was sufficiently prestigious to bring about a nation-wide movement to make English rugby the "intercollegiate" game. California was still too geographically remote, and the two universities were still far too young and too removed from the traditional economic, political, and intellectual centers of power, to significantly influence events at Eastern, or even Mid-Western, schools. Generally, Pacific Coast football was deemed inferior to that played in the East. Writing for the December 1905 *Outing Magazine*, for example, Ralph D. Paine declared: "It is the fashion of the experts beyond the Rockies to set down Pacific Coast football as slow and second class."<sup>4</sup> The student bodies of both universities repeatedly looked eastward for their football coaches, especially to Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Dartmouth during the 1890s and early 1900s. By taking up the English game in 1906, they temporarily excluded themselves from innovations which were occurring elsewhere in American football. However, both Stanford and, especially, California became increasingly interested in developing intercollegiate athletic programs which might compare favorably with those of major colleges and universities across the United States. It was soon recognized that the absence of *football*, the predominant American intercollegiate sport, made unlikely any possible advantageous comparison, no matter how successful teams in other sports might become.

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dent for the adamant stand the latter had taken in debarring from competition two members of the Harvard crew for allegedly pilfering a book from the college library. Incensed that his initial telegram had been made public, Roosevelt maintained that the penalty was far too severe. The two athletes, he insisted. "...were doing work for the benefit of the whole college..." hence they merited special privileges "[L]ike most sane and healthy Harvard graduates." Roosevelt declared, "I am anxious to see the eleven, or the nine, or the crew, or the track team. win." Theodore Roosevelt, letter to Eliot, 10 July 1908. (By permission of the Harvard University Archives: hereinafter referred to as HUA.)

4. Ralph D. Paine, "The School and College World: View-Points of the Pacific Coast," *Outing Magazine*, 47 (December 1905), 366-368. No West Coast university appeared in the rankings of football teams which annually appeared in Caspar Whitney's "The Sportman's View-Point" column for *Outing Magazine* although an occasional comment was made regarding which of the institutions "appeared to lead" on the Pacific Coast See, for example, *Outing Magazine*, 45 (January 1905), 493-498.

The decision made by Berkeley and Stanford did for a time have a considerable influence upon American football on the West Coast. It also resulted in the development of rugby contacts with British Columbia, Australia, and New Zealand. In northern California, St. Mary's College and the University of Santa Clara, the two Bay Area Catholic institutions, switched to rugby. In the southern portion of the state, the University of Southern California ultimately adopted the English game, as did the Los Angeles Athletic Club. The University of Nevada also converted to rugby and was a frequent opponent for both California and Stanford. By 1910 a substantial number of those high schools which had a sufficiently large student-body to make it possible to field a team had converted to rugby. This was useful in providing a continuing supply of players for the intercollegiate teams.<sup>5</sup>

A visiting New Zealand touring side was instrumental in Wheeler's and Jordan's initial efforts to establish rugby as *the* intercollegiate contest between their two universities. At the end of the 1906 season the British Columbia Rugby Union invited the team which won the annual California-Stanford Big Game to travel north for a series of matches during the Christmas break. This became a regular fixture. In 1910 a combined universities rugby team played in Australia and New Zealand. Australian teams visited California in 1909 and 1912, and the New Zealand All-Blacks played Stanford, Berkeley, and the University of Southern California in 1913. Wheeler was particularly anxious to establish rugby-playing relationships with Britain and with Dominion countries, and made the ambitious—and erroneous—prediction that the West's "football" future would be with rugby-playing countries rather than with American universities.<sup>6</sup>

Between 1906 and 1914 the University of California and Stanford University played rugby as their major intercollegiate sport. The dominant forces behind the change were California's president, Wheeler, and Stanford's president, Jordan. Although both men were occasionally concerned about the professionalism and corruption which they feared were creeping into other sport—notably baseball—it was football, the preeminent sport in the intercollegiate ranks, upon which they focused their efforts to redeem college athletics.

It is doubtful that Wheeler and Jordan could have been successful in convincing their institutions to convert to English rugby if it had not been for the intensity of the agitation which surrounded American football in 1905-06. (It was, of course, this agitation which prompted each man to take the actions

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5. Throughout November 1910, for example, reports of local and state secondary school games in gridiron football appeared side-by-side with reports of similar games in rugby. See, for example, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 9 November 1910 and 20 November 1910. On the latter date Palo Alto High School defeated San Jose High School 6-0 in the district competition for the State rugby championship, while Alameda High School was handing a 9-0 defeat in American football to William T. Reid, Jr's Belmont team.

6. Wheeler to C. M. Hickey, Victorian Football League, Melbourne, Australia, 15 August 1906. Wheeler to J. E. Stubbs, President, University of Nevada, 9 August 1906 (Papers of President Benjamin Ide Wheeler, University Archives, University of California, Bancroft Library. See especially the item referred to as "Football Folder"; hereinafter referred to as UCBL. By permission.) Karl A. Bickel, "Rugby Football on the Pacific Coast." *The World Today*, 8, October 1907), 1049-1051.

which he did.) The geographic remoteness of the two universities from other major American football-playing institutions facilitated the transition. It was imperative that both agree to play the same game, and the ultimate disaffection of Berkeley precipitated the demise of rugby as an important intercollegiate and interscholastic sport on the West Coast. Initially, the rugby game was not looked upon with favor by players, students, or alumni. In general, those men who had played the "old intercollegiate" were never very supportive. It is doubtful, also, that members of the general public who were avid sports fans ever cared much for rugby. Some scoffed at the "English game," considering it a "pink tea party," not fit for "real" men, and cast aspersions on the "short pants" and absence of aggressive, crushing, tackling. The daily newspapers were ambivalent about the game, at times ridiculing it as effeminate—cartoons on the sports pages were especially disparaging—at times praising the speed and open play of rugby as superior to the massed plays of American football. Critics of the imported English game complained that although rules changes and new formations after 1905 had made the American game more open and interesting, those intent on promoting rugby studiously ignored these innovations.<sup>7</sup>

The Stanford and California varsities were forced to rely upon games with smaller colleges and local rugby clubs for their preliminary contests, and occasional contests with the University of Southern California and, especially, the University of Nevada. The clubs, in particular, did not engage in regular daily practices, and criticisms were increasingly voiced that such games could not provide the two "big" varsities with adequate competition. Preliminary contests attracted only moderate spectator support. It was the *spectacle* of the Big Game, the intense symbolism associated with it, and the multiple layers of cultural performances in which it was embedded (e.g., rallies, dinners, alumni reunions, school colors, songs, etc.) which made it possible for rugby to perform many of the same functions between 1906 and 1914 that American football had earlier—and would again perform from 1918 onwards.<sup>8</sup> Even Walter Camp was willing to acknowledge that within three years of its introduction rugby had gained considerable interest among Californians.<sup>9</sup>

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7. This opinion was forcefully emphasized by an anonymous writer who was identified as "An Eastern Stanfordite" in the June 1914 issue *Outing Magazine*, pp. 380-383.

8. Bruce Allan Tindall, "A Functional Comparison of Football and Rugby at the University of California, 1900-1916," Masters thesis, University of California, 1969, suggests that there were few differences. Like so many structuralist-functionalist accounts of the past, however, Tindall's strong adherence to social science models tends to obscure the subtle, but nonetheless significant, particular events with which history is concerned. This is not to imply that historians would not benefit from paying greater attention to some of the more recent theoretical work in the social sciences. For example, to date, insufficient attention has been directed to the multiple performative layers in which games and sports take place. Building upon Gregory Bateson's and Erving Goffman's insightful work on the "framing" of cultural performances, John J. MacAloon has recently provided two elegant studies of the symbolic frameworks in which athletic contests occur: *Pierre de Coubertin and the Origins of the Modern Olympics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981) and "Olympic Games and the Theory of Spectacle in Modern Societies," in John J. MacAloon, ed., *Rite, Drama, Festival and Spectacle, Rehearsals Toward a Theory of Cultural Performance* (Philadelphia Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1984). See also, my "Boys Into Men—State Into Nation: Rites of Passage in College Athletics, 1890-1905," in Brian Sutton-Smith and Diana Kelly-Byrne, eds., *Masks of Play* (New York: Leisure Press, 1984) pp. 51-62.

9. Walter Camp, "Rugby Football in America," *Outing Magazine*, 57 (March 1911), 707-713.

The initial enthusiasm was not enough, however, to counter a growing desire on the part of students and alumni to conform to the values and structures which dominated collegiate life in the United States in the early twentieth century. While this was apparent at Stanford, it was more pronounced at Berkeley. By 1910 the scope of the intercollegiate sports program had expanded at both campuses. Track teams and crews were sent to important meets outside of the state. In 1913 the University of California finally succeeded in its efforts to gain recognition by the Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Athletes of America and sent a track team to the I.C.A.A.A. meet at Harvard. This was heralded in student publications as the beginning of a new era in Berkeley's athletic relations.<sup>10</sup>

In 1915 the State of California staged an elaborate public celebration intended to mark the state's readiness to take its place as an agricultural, industrial, and cultural leader of the nation. The Panama-Pacific International Exposition opened in San Francisco on February 20 and closed nearly 10 months later on December 4.<sup>11</sup> Also in 1915 California and Stanford broke off athletic relations in a disagreement which focused upon the issue of "freshman eligibility." The hidden reason was Berkeley's desire to return to American football. The return to the American game that fall announced the intent of the California student-body and alumni to bring their athletic programs into national prominence and extend their athletic influence beyond the state.

*Wheeler and Jordan: University Presidents With A High Regard for Gentlemanly Athletics*

Without the determined and persuasive efforts of the two presidents, it is unlikely that either California or Stanford would have abandoned American football, even briefly. It seems worthwhile, therefore, to examine each man's attitude toward vigorous physical activity and athletics.

Benjamin Ide Wheeler, the man most responsible for Berkeley's conversion from football to rugby, graduated from Brown University in 1875 with honors in classics. He studied comparative philology and linguistics at Heidelberg and was granted the Ph.D. *summa cum laude* in 1885. In 1885-86 Wheeler served as Instructor in German at Harvard, a time when important issues were being discussed in Cambridge and the East concerning the control of intercollegiate athletics.<sup>12</sup> He then moved to Cornell where he was named chair of the Comparative Philology and Greek Department. While at Harvard, Wheeler had developed a considerable respect for Charles W. Eliot, at the time the most distinguished college president in the United States. The two shared similar views regarding the role which athletics should play in the lives

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10. *Blue and Gold* (Student Yearbook, University of California), 1915, 161-165; *Daily Californian*, 10 February 1913.

11. Frank Morton Todd, *The Story of the Exposition: Being the Official History of the International Celebration Held at San Francisco in 1915 to Commemorate the Discovery of the Pacific Ocean and the Construction of the Panama Canal* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1921), 5 vols.

12. See Ronald A. Smith, "Preludes to the N.C.A.A.: Early Failures of Faculty Intercollegiate Athletic Control," *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 54 (December 1983), 372-382.

of young men. In their youth both men had been athletic. Eliot had been an oarsman while in college in the 1850's and continued to be fond of regular exercise, although he abominated baseball and football. As an undergraduate at Brown, Wheeler had also rowed on his class crew, captained his class baseball team, and played left field on the University "nine." At Cornell, he became head of the faculty athletic committee and several times corresponded with Eliot regarding intercollegiate issues.<sup>13</sup>

When he was invited to be interviewed for the post of president of the young University of California, Wheeler sought the advice of Eliot regarding the latter's opinion of his fitness to head a large public university. A brilliant and admired teacher, Wheeler took a deep interest in students' extracurricular activities. In an observation which sheds considerable light upon his attitudes towards athletics, he wrote to Eliot: "...I am interested in nothing so much as education in its application to individual character."<sup>14</sup> What Wheeler meant, as subsequent events would demonstrate, was a concern for what he, and others of a similar ideological inclination, considered to be the development of manly, moral character: And he saw in American football and English rugby examples of just those qualities which, respectively, he least and most admired in men.

Stanford's president was, likewise, a man who respected vigorous physical activity. His favorite sport was baseball. An 1872 botany graduate of Cornell, Jordan claimed to have been the only graduate to be awarded both the bachelor's degree and the master of science degree at the same time. He also received the degree of doctor of medicine (which Jordan claimed was "scarcely earned") for part-time work at the Indiana Medical College. Jordan played baseball at Cornell, and while on the faculty at Lombard University in Galesburg, Illinois, he pitched for the student team. During his term as president of the University of Indiana, he introduced the idea of a faculty/senior commencement baseball game; the custom was continued at Stanford, and Jordan regularly played until 1909. Jordan also corresponded with Clark Hetherington on the subject of football in 1905-06, agreed with his views, and for a while considered bringing the physical educator to Stanford to head the gymnasium and direct athletics. One of the leading ichtheologists of his era, Jordan traveled extensively in North America and abroad, often taking the opportunity to hike or climb in the mountains.<sup>15</sup>

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13. Henry James. *Charles W. Eliot President of Harvard University, 1869-1909*, I (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1930), 53-54; *Ibid.*, [I, 67-71; *Dictionary of American Biography*. s.v. "Eliot, Charles William"; Eugene P. Andrews, "President Wheeler," *University of California Magazine*, 5 September 1899, 221-224; *Dictionary of American Biography*, s.v. "Wheeler, Benjamin Ide": Wheeler, letter to Eliot, 13 February 1897, UCBL.

14. Wheeler, letters to Eliot, 7 March 1899 and 14 March 1899, HVA; Eliot, letter to Wheeler, 9 March 1899, UCBL.

15. David Starr Jordan, *The Days of A Man: Being Memories of A Naturalist, Teacher and Minor Prophet of Democracy* (Yonkers-on-Hudson: World Book Co., 1922), [I, 37-38, 96, 105, 138-189, 416; *Dictionary of American Biography*, s.v. "Jordan, David Starr". Jordan, letters to Clark Hetherington, Director of Physical Training, University of Missouri, 12 December 1905, 6 February 1906, 20 September 1906, and 12 October 1906; Hetherington, letters to Jordan, 20 November 1905, 6 December 1905, and 2 November 1906. (Papers of President David Starr Jordan. University Archives, The Stanford University Libraries; hereinafter referred to as

*Football at Berkeley and Stanford Up to the End of the 1905 Season*

The University of California was founded in 1868, and after 1873 when it moved to Berkeley, students began to play desultory interclass football matches. A University “Fifteen” was established in 1882: in 1886 the eleven-man American game was first played. Until Stanford University was opened in 1891, however, Berkeley men had to be content with games against local high schools, clubs, and small colleges. The first University of California-Stanford University football game was played in San Francisco on March 19, 1892. The February 1893 *Overland Monthly*, commenting upon the rapid rise of football on the Pacific Coast, declared that it was the founding of a rival *university* and the importation of football coaches from the East which had brought football to a place of prominence in Northern California.<sup>16</sup> Both institutions looked to the more prestigious Eastern schools for their athletic models, as well as for their inspiration for other important features of college life. A column dealing with news of Eastern colleges was a regular feature of the *University of California Magazine* in the 1890s. In 1895 Berkeley’s twelve-man track squad, the first of its athletic teams to compete outside the state, was welcomed home from an Eastern trip, which had been more successful than had been anticipated, with the declaration that the University of California must now be recognized as a full partner in the fraternity of the nation’s most prestigious colleges and universities. Surely an exaggeration, this sentiment reflected the prestige which successful athletics were assumed to bestow.<sup>17</sup>

In the 1890s both Stanford and Berkeley sought their football coaches in the East, especially from Yale. Walter Camp served as the Stanford coach for the 1892 and 1895 Big Games. Harry P. Cross (Yale 1896) was recommended by Camp for the 1896 contest, and Yale’s Burr Chamberlin was hired as Stanford’s 1899 coach. The Big Game program declared: “[Walter Camp] has had a leading part in the direction of Stanford’s athletic policy, even at a distance.” The University of California engaged several former Yale players (i.e., Thomas L. “Bum” McClung, W. W. “Pudge” Heffletinger, and Frank Butterworth), then hired Princeton’s Garret Cochran for the 1898 and 1899 seasons.<sup>18</sup>

In 1900 Berkeley and Stanford had entered into an athletic agreement which bound each institution to a system of “graduate coaches,” the primary

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JPSUA. By permission.) David Starr Jordan, “Football: Battle or Sport?” *Pacific Monthly*, March 1908, 330-338.

16. Phil Weaver, Jr., “Inter-Collegiate Football on the Pacific-Coast,” *Overland Monthly*, 21 (February 1893), 113-131; [Clinton] Brick Morse, *California Football History; A History of Football at the University of California From Its Inception in 1882 to 1923* (Berkeley, CA: Press of the Berkeley Gazette, 1924). During the first nine years the students sometimes had difficulty drawing together a team to play even local clubs.

17. See, for example, “Among the Colleges,” *University of California Magazine*, 1 (1895); W. W. Ferrier, *Origin and Development of the University of California* (Berkeley: The Sather Gate Book Shop, 1930), 622-633; Wheeler, letter to Arthur T. Hadley, President of Yale, Records of President Hadley, Yale University Archives, Yale University Library; hereinafter referred to as YUL. By permission.)

18. *Blue and Gold*, 1895-1900; *University of California Magazine*, 8 (February 1902), 41-42; 49-50; *Daily Californian*, 28 November 1898 and 4 December 1899; *1899 Stanford-University of California Football Program*, UCBL.

reason for this allegedly being to avoid professionalism and “tramp” athletes. This agreement expired on December 31, 1904. Berkeley favored abolishing the “graduate coach” system and “...returning to the Eastern man as their instructor in the great American college sport.” Stanford was opposed to any change in the existing agreement.<sup>19</sup> On January 28, 1905 the Intercollegiate Athletic Committees of the two universities agreed to strike the clause regulating the employment of graduate coaches, making it possible to employ either graduate or Eastern coaches. George C. Edwards, Berkeley’s faculty athletic representative, cast the only University of California vote *against* the new agreement. California was of the opinion that the only way to keep pace with its cross-bay rival was to bring in new ideas from the East. James A. Force, captain of the 1905 California varsity, urged speedy ratification so that an Eastern coach might be secured before the supply of good men was exhausted.<sup>20</sup> The issue of “graduate” vs. “professional” coach was one of the several disputes which contributed to the break in athletic relations between the two schools in 1915.

Stanford reluctantly agreed to the new regulations and engaged James F. Lanagan (1900), a former Stanford varsity baseball player, to coach its football and baseball teams. As one of the conditions of his employment, Lanagan was to be sent East once a year, preferably in time for the Harvard-Yale game, to study football. Berkeley secured the services of J. W. Knibbs, captain of the 1905 Dartmouth varsity, as its head coach. D. F. Griffin, also of Dartmouth, was engaged as assistant coach.<sup>21</sup>

The November 1905 Stanford-University of California Big Game was regarded by many as much more than the major annual athletic contest in northern California between two neighboring and intensely competitive institutions. As Sullivan has pointed out in his game-by-game history of the almost century-long football rivalry, California and Stanford were the most powerful teams on the Pacific Coast and their Big Game had come to be regarded as the “unofficial” championship of the West Coast.<sup>22</sup> The 1905 contest was seen as a test of the graduate vs. professional coaching system as well as the event which would determine the football supremacy of the Pacific Coast. The *Stanford Alumnus* summarized general local sentiment when it chided: “California has failed to develop in her large student body of alumni a coach with whom she is satisfied, and had gone East for a coach with merely a professional interest in the results. Stanford has found an alumnus whom she believes to be for her the very best coach.”<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Stanford was quite content

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19. *Daily Californian*, 23 January 1905 and 24 January 1905; *Daily Palo Alto* 20 January 1905; *Stanford Alumnus*, September 1905, 34-36.

20. *Daily Californian*, 30 January 1905 and 15 February 1905; *Daily Palo Alto*, 30 January 1905; *California Occident*, January 1905, 35.

21. *Daily Californian*, 17 August 1905; *Daily Palo Alto*, [September 1905; *Stanford Alumnus*, September 1905, 34.

22. John T. Sullivan, *The Big Game: A Game-By-Game History of One of America's Greatest Football Rivalries* (New York: Leisure Press, 1983), 2nd ed., p.80.

23. *Stanford Alumnus*, October 1905, 1.



with Lanagan, whose teams fared well, and likely would have retained him had he not desired to enter law practice.

The 1905 Big Game received the usual hyperbole afforded major football contests in both the school newspapers and the local press. A newly completed athletic field made it possible for the annual extravaganza to be held at the Palo Alto campus. (The 1904 match had been held on the newly completed field at the Berkeley campus; prior to 1904, it had been held on “neutral” grounds in San Francisco.) Automobiles were to be allowed on the Stanford Campus for the first time, and in anticipation of a record-breaking crowd, the Stanford committee had 15,500 tickets printed.<sup>24</sup>

It had become the custom for a Freshman game to be held some three or four weeks preceding the Big Game. Of considerable importance in its own right, it was from this contest that outstanding players were selected to join the varsity for the event of the year. The 1905 Freshman game, won by California by a score of 6-0, was portrayed in the student newspapers with terms and phrases which clearly reflect the prevailing style of American football: “Relentlessly they attacked the California line, which crumpled back like pasteboard before their fierce bucks. By mass plays outside the tackles, bucks through the center and an occasional end run, the ball was carried sixty yards.” The varsity contest received similar reports in both the student newspapers and the local press;<sup>25</sup> Stanford was the 12 to 5 victor. The California captain, James Force, credited his opponent with “...one of the cleanest and most gentlemanly of games.” A. J. Chalmers, the Stanford captain, declared that the California team had played gamely and fairly; such complimentary rhetoric concerning opponents was not unusual. Both campus newspapers applauded the actions of Force, who insisted that the timer give a badly dazed Chalmers more than the usual time-out allowance and called his coach onto the field to see if the Stanford captain should be taken from the game. The *Daily Californian* praised the efforts of the Dartmouth coaches in the losing cause and maintained that the two had “...taught more real football than any coach has done for the Blue and Gold in years.” Descriptions of the actual play stressed its hard fought, but “clean,” nature and were punctuated by such statements as: “...battered Captain Force, the victim of Stanford’s rushes of the year before, was ashen and ghastly of face...”<sup>26</sup>

Lanagan left immediately for the East to study the Yale-Princeton and Harvard-Yale games. Knibbs and Griffin resigned and received an enthusiastic send off. The Associated Students of the University of California (A.S.U.C.) selected Oscar N. Taylor, M.D., (U.C. 1893) as its coach. Taylor had played American football at Berkeley as an undergraduate under

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24. *Daily Californian*, 23 October 1905; *Stanford Alumnus*, October 1905, 1-2.

25. *Daily Palo Alto*, 16 October 1905 and 11 November 1905; *Daily Californian*, 16 October 1905 and 10 November 1905; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 9 November 1905 and 10 November 1905.

26. *Daily Californian*, 13 November 1905; *Daily Palo Alto*, 13 November 1905; *Stanford Alumnus*, November 1905, 3-13; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 12 November 1905. The *San Francisco Call*, 12 November 1905, was more prone to paeans than the *Chronicle* and carried a three-page coverage of Stanford’s victory, suggesting that Stanford was the equal of many “Atlantic State institutions.”

McClung and Heffelfinger, and rugby as a youth in New Zealand. Between 1896 and 1898 he had coached William T. Reid, Jr., while the latter was a pupil at Belmont School. He had also served as a coach at the Oregon Agricultural College and with the Olympic Club, and he was currently playing with an Oakland "sacker" team. It was thought that this background would qualify Taylor to coach any of various styles of football which might be decided upon for the 1906 season. Even prior to the Union College-New York University game in which William Moore was killed, and which convinced N.Y.U.'s Chancellor Henry MacCracken that something must be done to remedy the abuses of American football, there were suspicions that Berkeley and Stanford might play some other game in the future.<sup>27</sup>

### *Berkeley and Stanford's Response to the 1905 "Football Crisis"*

The presidents of both universities were abundantly aware of the storm of protest which had been growing for several years regarding professionalism and unethical practices in intercollegiate athletics. Jordan had decried "the money evils" of football in an article in 1904. In the fall of 1905 the editor of *Collier's* decided to run a four-part series on commercialism in college football entitled "Buying College Victories," written by Edward S. Jordan, former editor-in-chief of the Wisconsin *Daily Cardinal*. Stanford's president was asked to express his views on the subject. These appeared in the December 9 issue as "The Future of Football." (The text of this article was also carried in full in the December 7 Stanford student newspaper.)<sup>28</sup> Jordan had earlier corresponded with Thomas F. Kane, president of the University of Washington, expressing his concern over summer baseball and the apparent willingness of the Stanford management to "...overlook all kinds of irregularities..." Both he and Wheeler, Jordan stated, were anxious to see clean athletics develop on the Pacific Coast. On October 31, 1905, shortly before his departure for the East to attend the annual convention of the Association of State University Presidents, Wheeler had added a hand-written postscript to a letter to Theodore Roosevelt urging the President of the United States to "...call a constitutional convention of the universities to make a new American game of football."<sup>29</sup>

On November 23, immediately after his return to campus, Wheeler addressed the Berkeley student body, indicating that although football had not been on the formal agenda of the meetings he had just attended, it was a topic of considerable informal discussion. Declaring the game "too good to lose,"

27. *Daily Californian*, 16 November 1905 and 11 December 1905; *Stanford Alumnus*, November 1905. 20. *California Occident*, September 1906. 5: *New York Times*, 26 November 1905. The 3 December 1905 [Cincinnati] *Commercial Tribune* headlined twenty-five killed including a Miss Bernadette Decke of Cumberland, MD.

28. Richard L. Jones, Editorial Rooms, *Collier's*, letters to Jordan, 3 November 1905, 15 November 1905, 4 December 1905, and 18 December 1905, JPSUA. Jones was insistent that many college faculties were "...deficient in moral courage and force..." *Collier's*, 10 December 1904, 11 November 1905, 18 November 1905, 25 November 1905, 2 December 1905, and 9 December 1905; *Daily Palo Alto*, 7 December 1905 UCBL.

29. Jordan, letter to Thomas F. Kane, President of the University of Washington. JPSUA: Wheeler, letter to Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, 31 October 1905, UCBL.

he blamed Walter Camp and his associates for destroying football, and suggested that association “sacker” might replace the American game at Berkeley. These remarks were reported in newspapers across the United States.<sup>30</sup> Upon learning of the death of Moore in the November 25 Union College-N.Y.U. game, the *Chicago Tribune* telegraphed Wheeler, asking for his views on the abolition or reform of football; an identical telegram was dispatched to Jordan. Wheeler’s unequivocal reply was: “The game of football must be made over or go....” He blamed the Football Rules Committee for the dilemma and expressed a hope that Harvard’s President Eliot would take the initiative to try to bring about some type of resolution.<sup>31</sup> Jordan, too, was away from campus in early November attending a meeting of the Trustees of the Carnegie Fund. Upon his return, he declared football too good a game to lose, but stipulated that abuses (e.g., professionalism, “the playing of outside toughs”) must be eliminated.<sup>32</sup> Jordan placed the major blame upon the indifference of college authorities. However, neither Jordan nor Wheeler planned to be among the indifferent.

Both Jordan and Wheeler repeatedly insisted that athletics in California were largely free of the worst abuses which were to be found in colleges in the East and Mid-West. This was substantially true, but much of the reason was due to the attenuated schedules which the two schools played. An article which appeared in *Outing Magazine* in late 1905 praised the absence of graft in California athletics and attributed this substantially to the fact that: “The shortened schedule with only one ‘big game’ permits the Western football man to play and study at the same time.”<sup>33</sup> Students at both universities registered concern that their short schedules and their geographic remoteness had rendered “...the two largest universities in the west...ten years behind modern eastern athletics.” They were also worried that potential varsity athletes were being lost to more prestigious Eastern colleges.<sup>34</sup> It was their hope to remedy both these circumstances.

In view of the fact that there was considerable sentiment on both campuses that the 1905 football season had been extremely successful: that football as played by the two universities was physically demanding, befitting the rugged “manliness” of the Westerner, yet still “clean”: and a belief, albeit somewhat vacillating, that the style of play could improve to a level which would make Pacific Coast football respectable, it is somewhat surprising that within

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30. For example, *Daily Californian*, 24 November 1905; *San Francisco Bulletin*, 24 November 1905; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 November 1905 and 25 November 1905; *Boston Evening Globe*, 25 November 1905; *Minneapolis Journal*, 26 November 1905; *Detroit Free Press*, 26 November 1905; *New York Herald*, 26 November 1905; *San Francisco Call*, 27 November 1905; *Oakland Tribune*, 27 November 1905; *New York Tribune*, 27 November 1905; *San Francisco Examiner*, 28 November 1905.

31. *Chicago Tribune*, telegram to Wheeler, 26 November 1905; Wheeler, handwritten note to *Chicago Tribune*, n.d., UCBL; *Chicago Tribune*, telegram to Jordan, 26 November 1905, JPSUA.

32. *Daily Palo Alto*, 27 November 1905.

33. Paine, “The School and College World: View-Points of the Pacific Coast.” This same December 5, 1905 issue of *Outing Magazine* also contained Walter Camp’s “The Straight Road to An Open Game in Football” in which Camp urged consideration of the “ten-yard” rule (pp. 368-371), *Daily Palo Alto*, 29 November 1905.

34. *Daily Californian*, 19 January 1905.

five months of the death of Moore both the University of California and Leland Stanford Jr. University had abolished the American game and replaced it with English rugby. The impetus for the precipitous conversion must be placed squarely with the presidents of the two institutions, although the evidence also suggests that the two faculty athletic representatives (Berkeley's George C. Edwards and, especially, Stanford's Frank S. Angell, who had played rugby at Oxford) also strongly favored some type of modification. Clearly, both Wheeler and Jordan were adamantly opposed to the value structure which had become associated with American football, believing that the game now taught a morality far removed from that which a college should foster. What both desired for their students was vigorous, wholesome sport, not specialized and commercialized athletics.

Wheeler wrote to Jordan on November 28, three days after the Union College-N.Y.U. tragedy, reaffirming that although he did not wish to see football abolished, he was convinced that it would have to change to a more open, free, running, and kicking game. In this letter he placed the blame on Paul Dashiell, coach of the Naval Academy team, maintaining that Camp had been largely set aside on the Football Rules Committee. Clearly ready to insist that Berkeley play some other form of the game, Wheeler hoped that Stanford would do likewise: "...If the Eastern folk are not ready to act, I am for my part." On the same day Wheeler dispatched his "Are You Ready to Have Football Abolished?" letter to college and university presidents across the nation. Jordan immediately replied that he had been in the process of sending Wheeler a similar letter and proposed a joint meeting with the two faculty athletic committees for the purpose of appointing a committee to study the entire football question.<sup>35</sup>

On November 29, 1905, Berkeley's Academic Council declared its unwillingness to submit to a game that was governed by the Football Rules Committee and urged either the establishment of a new set of rules for contests between California and Stanford or the elimination of American football. It then

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35. Wheeler, letter to Jordan 28 November 1905, UCBL. Wheeler supposed that the students would prefer to play "...a game which was national..." The text of the "Are You Ready..." letter is worth reporting. I use the copy of that sent to Arthur T. Hadley, President of Yale, 28 November 1905, YUL: "Are you ready to have football abolished? If not, are you aware how helpless our situation is regarding any dewed reform? We cannot proceed as individual institutions because our students are bound to play the game as it is played throughout the nation. We are at the mercy of the so called Rules Committee. This committee is responsible for the present situation. It has earnestly promised reform, but the game has grown steadily more hopeless. The Rules Committee is not responsible to anybody, being a self-containing body, all of its members fanatical devotees of the game;—some of them are sellers of silver images. Is there no way in which we can unite for common action?" Eliot replied: "You are quite right in thinking that nothing good can be expected from the existing committee on football rules. It is wholly in the hands of Mr. Camp, and he is the person primarily responsible for the moral ruin of football within the last fifteen year." Eliot, letter to Wheeler, 5 December 1905, UCBL. Hadley responded: "I agree with you heartily in my dissatisfaction with the present Rules Committee. Mr. Camp's plans a year ago were good as far as they went; but finding himself face to face with an adverse majority he faded to insist on his own views as he should have done." Prone to equivocation in his private/public statements regarding football, Hadley concluded: "I am convinced that I can work much more efficiently if I keep my name entirely out of the newspapers..." Hadley, letter to Wheeler, 5 December 1905, UCBL. Columbia's President Butler sent Wheeler a copy of his open letter to students and alumni which was published in the *Columbia Spectator*, 4 December 1905, and informed Wheeler that Columbia had just abolished football Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University, letter to Wheeler, 15 December 1905, UCBL; Jordan, letter to Wheeler, 30 November 1905, JPSUA. Smith. "Football Crisis."

turned the entire matter over to its Faculty Committee on Athletics, chaired by Professor Edwards, who had earlier voted in favor of retaining the “graduate coach” agreement. Edwards was a staunch supporter of athletics and considered football to be far more than a game. It was, he held, an important demonstration of college spirit. However, Edwards, too, was repelled by the excesses which had crept into the sport. It had not been Wheeler’s intention to make an immediate public announcement of the Academic Council’s actions, but when part of the information was divulged, he issued a long statement in the *Daily Californian*; this was picked up and excerpted in the local newspapers. He and Jordan were prepared. Wheeler stated, to have a special committee composed of “expert” coaches and players from both universities “... take up the work, if necessary, of reorganizing the rules so as to construct a game for our own use.” If that proved impossible, football was to be stricken from the list of intercollegiate sports.<sup>36</sup>

Throughout December the local press reported the growing nationwide criticisms of football and denounced Eastern practices. The *San Francisco Bulletin* made the exaggerated claim that since Wheeler’s personal conference with President Roosevelt at the White House and his “ultimatum” to the Football Rules Committee, Berkeley had become a “...center of interest in the unprecedented discussion.”<sup>37</sup> Certainly, some coverage of the events which were occurring in California did appear in newspapers in other states and in various journals. As a football power, neither Berkeley nor Stanford was sufficiently influential to have a major impact outside the state of California. Within the state, however, their decisions were of considerable importance.

Trying to decide how to proceed, Jordan informed Wheeler that Michigan’s President James B. Angell had suggested a return to English rugby and that he, too, would like to see the rugby game tried as an experiment. Wheeler also favored rugby and expressed his views in the *American Monthly Review of Reviews*.<sup>38</sup> The two presidents, with their faculty athletic committees, met in preliminary conference on the afternoon of December 11, 1905. Berkeley was represented by Wheeler, Edwards, and Professors Albert W. Whitney and Harry B. Torrey. Stanford was represented by Jordan and Professors Max Durand and W. F. Snow. (Angell had failed to receive Jordan’s message and

36. University of California, Report on the Football Situation, by the Committee on Athletics of the Academic Council, 23 December 1905, UCBL; *Daily Californian*, 4 December 1905, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 30 November 1905 and 5 December 1905. The Berkeley Committee on Athletics consisted of Professors A. W. Whitney, H. B. Torrey, and G. C. Edwards. Football, it concluded was a *spectacle, not a game*: “It is not what we ordinarily term recreation or pastime. It is not physical culture.” Although the *intolerable* roughness was deemed unacceptable, the committee found the lack of proper moral tone, and crass professionalism and commercialism, to be even greater evils. The committee also declared that it believed in football and felt that it could be modified so as to make it an acceptable game.

37. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5 December 1905; *San Francisco Bulletin*, 5 December 1905; *San Francisco Call*, 5 December 1905.

38. Jordan, letters to Wheeler, 4 December 1905, 9 December 1905, and 12 December 1905, JPSUA. Wheeler, letter to Jordan, 8 December 1905, UCBL; *Daily Palo Alto*, 5 December 1905, Benjamin Ide Wheeler, “Shall Football Be Ended or Mended?” *American Monthly Review of Reviews*, 33 (January 1906), 72-73. Wheeler’s was one of five statements which composed the article. The others were by Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University, John H. Finley, President of the City College of New York, Dudley A. Sargent, Director of Harvard’s Hemenway Gymnasium; Luther H. Gulick, Director of Physical Training, New York City.

missed the first meeting.) The joint committee proposed that the two universities should adopt English rugby for their intercollegiate game. Rugby was favored because it was the game from which the now perverted American form had evolved. It was deemed a safer game, and it was assumed that it was a sport in which men were more likely to develop proper moral values. (There is a curious logic here; that being the assumption that the form which a game takes may influence the values which it fosters. More likely, the form *reflects* salient cultural values.)<sup>39</sup>

### *Rugby Replaces American Football*

The substitution of English rugby for American football raised the awkward problem that few Californians (players, coaches, or spectators) knew anything about the game; hence, one of the first of many difficulties which confronted Wheeler and Jordan was how they could convince others that rugby was worth playing and watching. Numerous local residents who claimed to be from rugby-playing countries offered their services. Some were interested for pecuniary reasons, hoping to become coaches; others were persuaded by a conviction that sports should be amateur and gentlemanly.<sup>40</sup> A former player and manager of Auckland's North Shore Football Club notified William Greer Harrison, president of the San Francisco Olympic Club, that a New Zealand rugby side currently touring Great Britain and Ireland might be persuaded to pass through California on its return home. Harrison contacted Wheeler, expressing a hope that Berkeley and Stanford might unite to bring the New Zealanders to the Bay Area. Wheeler was interested; support was also forthcoming from Stanford. The secretary of the British Columbia Rugby Union contacted Angell and offered to send a team to play in an exhibition match in the Bay Area. The *Daily Palo Alto* spoke approvingly of the visit, announcing that it was Angell's intention to try to bring about a match between the Canadian and New Zealand teams.<sup>41</sup>

While negotiations were going forward with the Vancouver and New Zealand rugby groups, the joint Stanford-California athletic committee resumed its meetings. On January 20, 1906 the two presidents, the two faculty athletic committees, and the special advisory board made up of coaches, players, and student representatives met to further consider the form which the game should take. It had been hoped that Harvard coach William T. Reid, Jr..

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39. *Daily Palo Alto*, 12 December 1905, Report of the Football Situation.... 23 December 1905. Historians who are especially interested in the relationships which may exist between salient cultural values and sports might profit from a greater familiarity with some of the more recent sociocultural—especially anthropological—studies which deal with symbols, cultural performances, enculturation, and acculturation. See, for example, the introductory chapter of Janet C. Harris and Roberta J. Park, eds., *Play, Games and Sports in Cultural Contexts* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics Publishers, Inc., 1983).

40. Several such letters are included in the Wheeler correspondence "Football Folder," UCBL. Among the more active supporters were D. Huddleston, who wrote an occasional column on rugby for the *Los Angeles Times* and M. Mullineaux, a former rugby player from England who was residing in San Francisco.

41. Alf Cameron, former player and manager of the North Shore Football Club, Auckland, New Zealand, letter to William Greer Harrison, president of the San Francisco Olympic Club (typewritten copy, n.d.); William G. Harrison, letter to Wheeler, 5 December 1905, UCBL; *Daily Palo Alto*, 12 December 1905; *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, 5 February 1906.

whose home was in Belmont, California, might be able to attend and lend his expert knowledge. Involved in football reform efforts in the East, Reid declined. It is doubtful that he would have participated in any event for Reid considered rugby to be an “effeminate” game, and when later invited to do so, he addressed the Berkeley student body on the merits of American football.<sup>42</sup>

The representatives at the January 20 meeting recommended “...that the Rugby game as played in England and New Zealand be adopted for the intercollegiate Freshman games, and that no person be allowed to play on the varsity team who has not completed a year’s work at the University in question.”<sup>43</sup> The next joint meeting was scheduled for February 17 to allow the committee established to draft new Stanford-California playing rules sufficient time to consider whatever rules changes might be proposed by the National Intercollegiate Football Rules Committee meeting in the East. It also allowed time to observe the forthcoming New Zealand-Vancouver rugby match.<sup>44</sup>

The New Zealand-Vancouver rugby match provided the much-needed opportunity for those who favored the English game to try to convince spectators and players that it could be exciting and should be considered as an adequate substitute for American football. Prior to the arrival of the New Zealand team, the local press had carried brief articles about rugby noting, in particular, that the New Zealanders had lost only one of twenty-six matches in Britain—and that by a score of 3-0 to a Welsh representative side. The two student newspapers were lukewarm, at best, toward the forthcoming match. The exhibition was scheduled for Saturday, February 10, at the Berkeley campus. Wheeler encouraged students to attend, urging them “...to judge for themselves upon the merits of the game”; Jordan indicated that those Stanford students who chose to miss classes to attend the match would not be held accountable for their absences.<sup>45</sup>

The supporters of rugby could not have been more delighted with the results of the match. The Sunday *San Francisco Chronicle* sports section announced: “New Zealanders Give a Thrilling Exhibition.” The full page ac-

42. W. T. Reid, Jr., letter to Walter Camp, 28 February 1908, YUL. I am indebted to Ronald A. Smith for providing me with this information regarding Reid’s attitude toward rugby. (Personal communication to author 21 December 1983); William T. Reid, Jr., “American Football Versus Rugby,” *California Occident*, February 1908, 3-16.

43. *The Rules of the Rugby Game of Football As Played by California and Stanford Universities* was ultimately drawn up, published and distributed to interested colleges, clubs and high schools, UCBL. Numerous high school administrators asked Wheeler for a copy, as well as for help with coaching. See, for example, Edson D. Hale, Principal of Vacaville Union High School, letter to Wheeler, 4 September 1906; Leroy Anderson, Principal of California Polytechnic School [San Luis Obispo], letter to Wheeler, 5 September 1906, UCBL. *Daily Palo Alto*, 19 January 1906 and 22 January 1906; *Daily Californian*, 22 January 1906; *Stanford Alumnus*, January 1906, 12.

44. *Daily Californian*, 29 January 1906; *Daily Palo Alto*, 30 January 1906. While awaiting decisions of the “rules” committee, the two student intercollegiate committees were busy accusing the other’s baseball team of playing “professionals.”

45. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4 February 1906; *San Francisco Bulletin*, 10 February 1906; *Daily Californian*, 8 February 1906 and 9 February 1906; *Daily Palo Alto*, 30 January 1906; Jordan, letter to M. L. Rosenfeld of the Olympic Club, 13 February 1906. JPSUA, Wheeler was unable to attend the February 10 contest because of university business elsewhere. Jordan was in attendance. Wheeler did attend the February 13 match.

count of the game overshadowed a report of the reforms being considered by the Football Rules Committee meeting in New York. Even though it was played in the mud, and won by New Zealand by a large margin (43-6), the game was described as fast, open, and entirely without the "...clash of beef, the steaming straining of two highly organized machines..." found in American football. The reporter enthusiastically proclaimed: "Whether the good old game of Rugby football, as it stands or with American improvements, will succeed the American college game is a question which is yet to be determined by those learned gentlemen who hold in their hand the destinies of college sports. If a vote had been taken yesterday afternoon on the Berkeley campus, the majority of spectators would have been overwhelmingly in favor of the original game of Rugby, from which our own game evolved." The *Daily Californian* declared "Rugby Football Proves Great Spectacle," and commented favorably upon the speed of the players and the quick movement of the ball. The *Daily Palo Alto* agreed that the general consensus seemed to be that from the "...spectacular point of view Rugby was far superior to the American game."<sup>46</sup>

At an Olympic Club dinner honoring the visiting teams, it was agreed that the two would meet in a return match on February 13 at the San Francisco Recreation Grounds. On better turf, New Zealand defeated the British Columbians by a score of 65-6. In spite of the one-sided score, the 1500 enthusiastic onlookers were kept entertained by what was described as the "spectacular" nature of the play. The *San Francisco Chronicle* maintained: "...the superiority of Rugby to our own amended game was demonstrated even more forcibly than at the very interesting contest of last Saturday."<sup>47</sup> The novelty of the sport appealed to the crowds, as did the dazzling play of the New Zealanders.

Rugby was deemed the superior game for several reasons: it was not professional or commercial; it was a "game" rather than a spectacle—a pastime rather than a vocation; it could be played by small and light men as well as by larger and heavier men; it did not lead to injuries like those which were incurred in the brutal American game; it did not necessitate enormous time for practice and interfere unduly with studies; it was free from professional coaches; class teams as well as the varsity could play it; most importantly, it was presumed to be free from the "immoral" influences of the American game.

There were many who did not share Wheeler's, Jordan's, or other rugby enthusiasts' views. This was especially true of the players at both Berkeley and Stanford, as well as among alumni who had had experience with American football. Many followers of collegiate athletics looked with disfavor upon

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46. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 11 February 1906; *San Francisco Bulletin*, 11 February 1906; *San Francisco Call*, 11 February 1906; *Daily Californian*, 12 February 1906; *Daily Palo Alto*, 12 February 1906. The *Oakland Tribune*, 11 February 1906, reported that professors Edwards and Torrey outright favored rugby, and that Force, Berkeley's varsity football captain for 1905, conceded that rugby might be the better game Ray Elliott, the 1906 captain, advocated rugby for interclass games and the freshman game and football for the varsity.

47. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 14 February 1906, *San Francisco Call*, 14 February 1906.



a “foreign” sport replacing the red-blooded American game. The *San Francisco Bulletin* reported that the majority feeling on the West Coast favored the American game and that Stanford students had jeered the idea of substituting rugby. Shortly before the exhibition rugby matches, the *Daily Californian* insisted that Berkeley’s entire *student* intercollegiate committee was opposed to any radical change in the American game, and the *Daily Palo Alto* declared: “...lovers of the great collegiate game are beginning to hope that it will emerge from the ordeal without being distorted into a mongrel form of Association or Rugby football.”<sup>48</sup> Even after the two New Zealand-Canadian exhibition matches, several of the University of California players declared themselves still in favor of American football. E. P. Stott, Stanford’s captain, stated: “If the American game can be slightly modified so as to meet the approval of the Faculty Athletic Committees, I think it would better satisfy the needs of American students than Rugby.” Jordan and Wheeler did not agree. Writing to Wheeler on March 7, the Stanford president declared: “If we cannot adopt the English rugby game for next year, it would be just as well to suspend the intercollegiate games until something arises which can be adopted.” On March 20, 1906 the joint committee voted in favor of “... the Rugby game until such time as an acceptable game should be developed in the East.” The newly-modified American game, it was implied, showed no promise of alleviating the worst evils which it had come to foster. The *Daily Californian* railed against the joint Stanford-California conference committee decision and blamed faculty pressure and the power of President Wheeler. Stanford students, likewise, were convinced that it was President Jordan’s views which had prevailed.<sup>49</sup>

Football enthusiasts in other parts of the country ridiculed the decision to play rugby. A few may have been reluctant to see any large university take up a game which could even in the slightest degree speak against the hegemony of “the American game.” Immediately after the New Zealand-British Columbia matches, Wheeler had informed Camp that his conviction that there was no reason to try to save the American game had been confirmed. Camp responded that there would likely be as many difficulties administering rugby as American football. The English and Canadians, Camp intoned, “...have twisted and turned [rugby] a good deal just as we do at our college conventions....” Harvard’s coach, Reid, wrote to Wheeler, agreeing that what seemed to make the English game appear cleaner was “...the fact that Englishmen do not stretch the rules in every possible way as we do in order to

48. *San Francisco Bulletin*, 5 December 1905 and 12 December 1905; *San Francisco Examiner*, 6 December 1905; *Daily Palo Alto*, 22 January 1906; *Daily Californian*, 26 January 1906.

49. *Daily Palo Alto*, 12 February 1906, 5 March 1906, and 22 March 1906; *Daily Californian*, 12 February 1906 and 26 March 1906; *San Francisco Examiner*, 23 March 1906; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 23 March 1906; *Stanford Alumnus*, February 1906, 27-32 and March 1906, 27; *Stanford Quad* (Student Yearbook), 1910, 334-335; *California Alumni Weekly*, 11 November 1911; Jordan, letter to Wheeler, 7 March 1906; Jordan, letter to E. A. Bryan, President, State College of Washington, 21 March 1906, JPSUA.

win....” However, Reid was convinced that rugby would not be popular because it did not have the precision which appealed to the American boy.<sup>50</sup>

How much more might have been said about football in the spring of 1906 it is impossible to know. In actual fact, few additional public statements of any magnitude were made until the fall semester opened at both universities. In the early morning of April 18 the peninsula south of San Francisco was rocked by a series of violent earth tremors—part of the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906. Two Stanford students were killed outright and six were injured. The following day the Stanford Advisory Board voted to suspend work for the remainder of the semester. Although built almost directly over the confluence of the Hayward and San Andreas earthquake faults, the Berkeley campus was much less damaged than was the Palo Alto campus and continued in session; athletic and other extracurricular events were curtailed, however.<sup>51</sup>

The decision to replace American football with rugby meant that immediate steps had to be taken to convince players to come out for the 1906 season and to interest the student bodies of the two institutions in the new game. In spite of considerable initial resentment, the 1906 Big Game was enthusiastically attended by students and the general public. The *San Francisco Call* was rather eloquent in its reports of the 1906 game, and the *Oakland Tribune* described the pre- and post-game celebrations in glowing terms. The *San Francisco Chronicle*, however, criticized the “silly scrum” and the officiating. The victorious Stanford students spoke enthusiastically of the new rugby game and maintained that it had strong support on the Palo Alto campus. The losing Californians were less sure about the matter. Accounts of the annual California-Stanford contest between 1906 and 1914 have been included in several books which chronicle the football histories of the two schools.<sup>52</sup> The emphasis in the following sections, therefore, will be on the tensions which ultimately led to the return to an annual Big Game in American football.

#### *The “Rugby” Years: 1906-1914*

Wheeler and Jordan had spent a considerable amount of time on the football-rugby question and were well aware that their continued support was needed if players, the student bodies, alumni, the high schools from which future players would be drawn, and the sports-minded public were to be converted. During the 1906 season each man made especially vigorous efforts to garner enthusiasm for the new game. Wheeler sent a letter to 200 California

50. Wheeler, letters to Walter Camp, 15 February 1906 and 10 March 1906; Camp, letter to Wheeler, 9 March 1906, William T. Reid, Jr., letter to Wheeler, 9 March 1906, UCBL.

51. *Daily Palo Alto*, 18 April 1906 and 19 April 1906. “The April Calamity and the University,” *Blue and Gold*, 1908, n.p.

52. *San Francisco Call*, 11 November 1906; *Oakland Tribune*, 11 November 1906; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 12 November 1906. The 13 November *Daily Palo Alto* declared: “Saturday’s victory was as enthusiastically received as any recent Stanford victory.” Nick Peters, *100 Years of Blue and Gold: A Pictorial History of California Football* (Virginia Beach, VA: JCP Corp. of Virginia, 1982); Don E. Liebendorfer, *The Color of Life Is Red: A History of Stanford Athletics, 1892-1972* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University, Department of Athletics, 1972); Sullivan, *The Big Game*; S. Dan Brodie, *66 Years on the California Gridiron, 1882-1948* (Oakland, CA: Olympic Publishing Co., 1949)

high school and private school principals early in the fall urging them to follow the lead of the two universities, enclosing a copy of the newly completed *U.C.-Stanford Rugby Rules*. Several newspapers across the United States reprinted the substance of these remarks; he also initiated a short-lived widely circulated “Weekly Newsletter” concerning rugby.<sup>53</sup>

One of the many difficulties which confronted those interested in establishing intercollegiate rugby on the Pacific Coast was the lack of qualified coaches and competent referees. Taylor was in Europe when he learned of Berkeley’s conversion to rugby and arranged to return home by way of England and Wales so that he might study new techniques. Lanagan spent the spring of 1906 in British Columbia studying rugby. In 1907 he visited Australia and New Zealand with former varsity player George Presley, who would soon become Stanford’s head coach. When James C. “Jimmié” Schaeffer, former Freshman football and varsity rugby player at the University of California, was named Berkeley’s coach in 1909. He immediately went to Australia and New Zealand to study rugby, arranging to bring back as his assistant William J. “Mother” Howe, a former All-Australian.<sup>54</sup>

Jordan and Wheeler, in particular, were hopeful that regular competitions might be established with rugby-playing countries. Wheeler even visualized something like a Pan-Pacific rugby union which would embrace teams from the Pacific Coast, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Rugby teams from the Vancouver area traveled south on a regular basis to play the two universities. A touring side of British Columbia All-Stars played several games in California in 1911, losing twice to Berkeley and beating Stanford by a single point. The winner of the California-Stanford Big Game was annually invited north by the British Columbia Rugby Union for a series of matches, the victor being awarded the perpetual Cooper-Keith Trophy. Although the men who participated seem to have enjoyed these trips, the contests never created much interest on either campus, in part because they occurred during the Christmas holiday break. Even more important, however, was the fact that *the* event of the season—the one before which all others paled—was the Big Game. Most students, alumni, and even the public, considered other contests to be far less consequential.<sup>55</sup>

Competitions with teams from Australia and New Zealand usually attracted more attention in the student newspapers and the local press than did contests with Canadian teams. Efforts were made to attract Australian and New Zealand teams in 1907. In 1909 the Australian Wallabies arrived in the Bay Area on their way home from a tour of England and Wales and played a series of matches, defeating both universities easily. In May 1910 a squad of twenty-

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53. Wheeler, form letter to 200 High School Principals in California and Heads of Private Schools for Boys, 30 August 1906; Wheeler, form letter to High School Principals in California, 5 September 1906. “Weekly Newsletter on Rugby Football at Berkeley,” 7 November 1906, UCBL: *Boston Transcript*, 19 September 1906; *New York Evening Post*, 26 September 1906.

54. *California Occident*, September 1906, 5; *Daily Palo Alto*, 28 August 1906 and 3 September 1907; *California Alumni Weekly*, 13 March 1909 and 4 September 1909.

55. Wheeler, letter to C. M. Hockey, Victorian [Australian] Football League, 15 August 1906. UCBL: *Daily Palo Alto*, 2 September 1907 and 13 November 1907; *Stanford Quad*, 1908, 28).

three students drawn from Stanford, California, and the University of Nevada embarked on a 16,000-mile rugby tour of Australia and New Zealand. It was hoped and expected that the experience of playing teams in these two strong rugby countries would help improve the standard of rugby on the West Coast. The Americans won three, tied two, and lost nine games during their extended tour. In general, the players and their supporters were disappointed with these results.<sup>56</sup>

In October 1912 the Australian Waratahs arrived in San Francisco to play a series of contests with local college and club teams, concluding their visit with a 12-8 victory over an "All-American" team composed of players from Bay Area colleges and clubs. A combined Oxford-Cambridge tour was also discussed in 1912. The New Zealand All-Blacks arrived the following fall and culminated their West Coast tour with a 51-3 victory over an "All-American" team composed of men from the Stanford and California varsities, the Olympic Club, the Barbarians, the Los Angeles Athletic Club, the Titans, and Santa Clara University. Although there had been some dissatisfaction expressed over the rugby superiority of the Australians as early as the Wallabies visit of 1909, it was the crushing defeats which the Americans experienced at the hands of the All-Blacks (victories over Stanford: 54-0 and 56-0; victories over California: 33-0 and 38-3) which contributed to the already growing disaffection that many students and local sports enthusiasts had begun to feel for rugby.<sup>57</sup> The University of California quarreled with the newly formed California Rugby Union over the selection of "All-American" members for the 1913 match and threatened to withdraw. Berkeley ultimately did resign from the California Rugby Union and temporarily suspended football relations with Stanford at the end of the 1913 season.<sup>58</sup>

No sooner had the two universities adopted rugby than it became apparent that many of the practices which critics had found objectionable in American football were being introduced into the new game. Both foreign visitors and local commentators knowledgeable about rugby repeatedly observed that the Americans relied upon bulk, strength, and tackling, while teams from other countries emphasized speed and skillful ball handling. Disagreements arose almost immediately over the rules and the officiating. Part of the difficulty was caused by a lack of familiarity with the rules, but the desire to incorporate football strategies into rugby created even greater problems. William Unmack, an Australian living in California, had been engaged to referee the 1906 Big Game. His officiating received considerable criticism, especially

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56. *Daily Palo Alto*, 4 February 1907; *California Occident*, November 1907, 10-11 and September 1910, 20-26; *San Francisco Call*, 7 February 1909, *Stanford Alumnus*, September 1910, 17-18; *Stanford Quad*, 1910, 334-335.

57. *Daily Californian*, 28 October 1912, 31 October 1912, 4 November 1912, 16 October 1913, 27 October 1913 and 17 November 1913; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 6 November 1912, 11 November 1913, 15 November 1913 and 16 November 1913; *Los Angeles Times*, 20 October 1913; *California Alumnus Weekly*, 2 November 1912. During their tour the All-Blacks scored 213 points to their opponents 6. Berkeley players accounted for all six—one try by Jack Abrams in the varsity's 38-3 loss and one penalty kick by Stirling Peart in the All-star game.

58. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 6 November 1912 and 14 November 1912; *California Alumnus Weekly*, 3 March 1913.

from the losing California supporters. In an effort to keep early games from getting out of hand, Wheeler asked the Mayor of the City of Vancouver to intercede so that George Jenkinson could be released from his job with the British Columbia Electric Railway Company long enough to referee the 1907 California-Stanford Big Game. When possible, an Australian or New Zealand rugby luminary was called upon to officiate the annual contest. In 1913 W. W. Hill, Secretary of the New South Wales Rugby Union, journeyed to California solely to referee the Big Game. Frank Angell, Stanford's Athletic Representative, and others soon became convinced there was a decided need to form a Referee's Union which could appoint officials who would have the power to suspend players for persistent foul play and keep coaches and alumni off the playing field.<sup>59</sup>

When Berkeley had converted to rugby in 1906, Wheeler wrote optimistically to Harvard's president Eliot proclaiming the dawn of a new day for sport in the West. The latter's reaction was far from sanguine. Eliot found it mortifying that Americans were "morally inferior" to the English in competitive sports. Acknowledging that he considered rugby to be a "pretty game," he declared that Harvard "...students in any keen competition would make it a rough and cheating game in fifteen minutes."<sup>60</sup> Wheeler had good cause to recall these remarks, for in less than ten years he would offer an almost identical observation to Stanford's new President Ray Lyman Wilber about the nature of the rugby being played by their two institutions. The Secretary of the British Columbia Rugby Union entreated the Californians not to "...pander to the spectacular instead of sport..." and stop trying to change the rules of the game. In an article which he prepared in 1911 for *Spalding's Guide* Wheeler maintained that he was very much afraid of any changes whatsoever in the rules of rugby, contending that it was the alterations made by Walter Camp which had utterly ruined the game in the 1890s. By 1913 the University of California had begun to advocate a seven-man scrum and a fourteen-man team, claiming that the monopoly of play by the forwards had made the game uninteresting. When other teams chose not to support the recommendations, Berkeley dropped the matter and concentrated on preparing for the visit of the *fifteen*-man New Zealand team.<sup>61</sup>

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59. Wheeler, letter to Alexander Bethune, Mayor of the City of Vancouver, 25 October 1907; Bethune, letter to Wheeler, 29 October 1907; Frank Angell, letter to Wheeler, 21 September 1911. UCBL, *Stanford Alumnus*, November 1906, 95-100; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 9 November 1912, *Los Angeles Times*, 26 October 1913; *Sacramento Bee*, 31 October 1913.

60. Eliot, letters to Wheeler, 8 February 1906 and 19 September 1906, UCBL; Wheeler, letter to Eliot, 23 September 1906. HUA. In an article which also appeared in the January 1906 *American Review of Reviews* entitled "What the English Can Teach L's in Athletics." G. Upton Harvey described with approbation the willingness of the New Zealand All-Blacks touring team to continue a play short on its exhibition match with a New York team when a member of the latter had to withdraw, maintaining that such laudable behavior was foreign to the win at all costs attitude of the American In America. Harvey held, athletics did nothing to "Raise the standard of average manhood..." and thus benefit the nation (pp. 302-304)

61. Roy T.S. Sachs. British Columbia Rugby Union, letter to Wheeler, 14 September 1911; Wheeler, letter to Sachs, 18 September 1911; Wheeler, statement prepared for *Spalding's Guide*, 7 September 1911, UCBL *California Occident*, November 1912, 12-13; *California Alumni Weekly*, 13 September 14 13 and 27 September 1913.

*The Break in Athletic Relations: 1915*

Since their first meeting in 1892 Stanford had won eleven Big Games. Five contests had ended in a tie. California had been victorious only seven times. Stanford had a slight edge in rugby, leading five games to three (the 1912 game was a 3-3 tie) in the English sport. In 1914 Stanford's varsity had delivered a 26-8 defeat to the rival "Bruins" at California Field. Shortly after the 1914 Big Game an exhibition match was played at Berkeley to raise funds for the Red Cross and for Belgium relief. Billed as an "All American"- "All British" contest, the two teams were composed of players from local clubs (i.e., Olympic, Barbarians, Titans, Alumni) and from the Stanford, California, Nevada, and Santa Clara varsities. Several Stanford players were named to the All-British squad, including Danny Carroll, a former All-Australian and member of the Waratahs team which had visited California in 1912, and Jim Wylie, a member of the 1913 New Zealand All-Blacks team. Both had registered at Stanford. It was, in part, because of "foreign" players on varsity rugby teams that athletic relations between the two universities became strained. (In soccer, clearly a "minor" sport, however, no such concern was expressed over "foreign" players. In fact, California spoke with pride of its Australian center forward's contributions to the 3 to 2 victory over Stanford in 1916, the first time in eight years that Berkeley had beaten Stanford in soccer.)<sup>62</sup>

Berkeley students and alumni had become increasingly disgruntled about their teams' inability to win the Big Game. The Executive Committee of the A.S.U.C., which controlled the governance of intercollegiate athletics at Berkeley, was clearly in the mood to remedy this after the 1914 defeat. A break in athletic relations quickly erupted. The U.C. student body met and adopted a five-point resolution for its Intercollegiate Athletic Committee to present to Stanford in January 1915 when the existing five-year pact between the two schools expired. Although there were several points in dispute, the disagreement centered on barring freshmen from varsity teams. California declared that it would henceforth eliminate first year students in order to bring its athletic practices in line with those of other major American universities. Stanford countered that because its student body was so much smaller it was necessary to use freshmen on varsity teams to remain competitive. Stanford objected to Berkeley's use of men from "affiliated colleges" (i.e., dentistry, medicine, law, pharmacy, the "farm school"), and accused California of holding lower scholarship standards for athletes. California responded with a slightly veiled accusation that Stanford had to rely on prominent foreign athletes to gain superiority in rugby. The Stanford student body hotly denied the charge, instructed its Intercollegiate Athletic Committee to enter into no agreement which prohibited freshmen from competing on varsity teams, and

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62. *Daily Palo Alto*, 3 September 1914, 17 November 1914, 20 November 1914, and 23 November 1914; *Daily Californian*, 27 November 1914.

demanded an apology from the A.S.U.C.<sup>63</sup> There was far more at stake, however, than the apparent school-boy quarrel.

Stanford speculated, quite correctly, that California was using the issue of freshman eligibility to engineer a break in order to return to American football. The local press was of the same opinion and predicted that if a break occurred, U.C. would immediately open relations with colleges in Washington and Oregon, which were playing American football, and with the University of Southern California, which had shown signs of intending to return to the American game. If this were to occur, Stanford would be left with few collegiate rugby-playing opponents. Local sentiment, the press insisted, was greatly in favor of continued athletic relations between the state's two principal colleges, and it was hoped that matters could be mended.<sup>64</sup>

Commentaries on the sporting pages of local newspapers, the statements of student athletes and student leaders at both universities, and an increasing volume of alumni correspondence and commentary attest to the fact that many individuals were anxious to return to American football. Whether the general public which attended the annual California-Stanford Big Game cared a great deal which form of the sport was played is much more difficult to determine. During the years from 1906 to 1914 this event routinely enjoyed extensive coverage in the local press and the campus newspapers. The nature of this coverage was quite similar to that which the Big Game had received prior to 1906—and would receive after 1918 when the schools resumed games with each other in American football. The rallies, alumni receptions, and other ritual and festival “frames” in which the athletic contests were embedded were largely the same for rugby as for the American game. Big Game attendance was large and increased during the rugby-playing years, although attendance at other rugby games tended to be small. Financial receipts also increased, the greater income regularly obtained in those years when the Big Game was held in the more densely populated Berkeley area. The *Daily Californian* readily admitted that receipts from the 1914 contest were the largest in the history of California-Stanford football—\$54,634.00<sup>65</sup>

California's position regarding the so-called “freshman eligibility” disagreement was accurately summed up in an article which appeared in the *Stanford Illustrated Review*. According to the author, a Berkeley student, the University of California sought a return to football in 1915 for four reasons: (1) changes in the rules, the forward pass, end runs, and punting had vastly improved the American game; (2) students and the general public preferred and identified with football; (3) the university was anxious to extend athletic relations to other universities—even Cornell, Yale and Harvard; (4) being associated with American football made one “...feel a bit proud to know that

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63. *Daly Palo Alto*, 8 January 1915, 12 January 1915, 15 January 1915, and 18 January 1915, *Daily Californian*, 14 January 1915, 15 January 1915, and 19 January 1915, *California Alumni Weekly*, 16 January 1915; *Stanford Illustrated Review*, May 1916, 16-17.

64. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 15 January 1915 and 17 January 1915

65. *Daily Californian*, 22 January 1915.

he is an American playing an American game the same as other great American universities."<sup>66</sup>

The student intercollegiate athletic committees of the two universities failed to negotiate a new athletic pact, but settled for a "gentlemen's agreement" which would permit competitions in baseball, track and other spring sports to continue for one semester. Of the four terms set forth in the tentative agreement, the restoration of Freshman football (which the Stanford faculty strongly opposed) was the key issue. The whole matter was then turned over to the faculties.

Wheeler immediately wrote to James C. Branner, who had become president of Stanford when Jordan retired in 1913,<sup>67</sup> proposing a meeting between representatives of their two faculties and asserting that the continuance of acceptable athletic relations between the two universities was of the utmost importance. Wheeler was convinced that he could not prevent his university's return to American football if athletic relations were severed because there would then be no comparable institution with which Berkeley could play rugby. (It is highly probable that Wheeler was fully aware that the "freshman" issue was little more than a ruse.) Efforts to restore acceptable relations were unsuccessful. On May 24, 1915 the A.S.U.C. issued a resolution dissolving its agreement committee and instructing its president to appoint a committee to confer with President Wheeler on the matter of American football.<sup>68</sup>

Desperately trying to prevent the break which he knew would result in a return to American football, Wheeler appealed to Branner hoping that he would set aside the Stanford Faculty Athletic Committee's rejection of a proposed concession which would have postponed the freshman issue for one year: "Is there not one last thing that can be done to prevent the break?" Wheeler wrote, "I have intervened repeatedly to gain time and new consideration. There is so far as I know nothing further which I can do." The strength of Wheeler's dismay was reflected in two particular lines: "I grieve to have the universities go asunder, even in athletics. If we go asunder now, it will be difficult to come together again—especially in football"; "I care more for this than for the mere outward form of intercollegiate sport."<sup>69</sup> Wheeler recalled these words in 1919 when Stanford University officially returned to American football.

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66. *Stanford Illustrated Review*, May 1916, 12-15. *Daily Palo Alto*, 27 April 1915. Stanford pointed out that California had never denied published statements that the A.S.U.C. leadership had made agreements with the University of Washington to play American football and discussed possible football relations with U.S.C. before rugby relations with Stanford were severed.

67. Upon his retirement from the presidency in 1913, Jordan was named to the honorific position of "Chancellor" at Stanford.

68. Wheeler, letters to James C. Branner 25 January 1915 and 30 January 1915; Branner, letter to Wheeler, 29 January 1915. (Papers of President James C. Branner, University Archives. The Stanford University Libraries; hereinafter referred to as BPSUA. By permission) Minutes of the Associated Students. University of California, 23 April 1915 and 14 May 1915, Eshleman Library, University of California; hereinafter referred to as A.S.U.C. Minutes: *Stanford Alumnus*, May 1915, 356 and September 1915, 8-19.

69. Wheeler, letter to Branner, 3 June 1915, BPSUA.



Wheeler's letter did not immediately reach Branner, who was in the East. He then requested that his letter be submitted to Vice-President R. N. Stillman, Acting President, in the hope that early resolution might be achieved. Stillman replied that his office had assumed that Wheeler's letter constituted a personal matter with Branner, and in any event, it was Branner's policy to refer such matters to the Faculty Athletic Committee. Chairman Frank Angell did not wish to take action in view of the personal nature of Wheeler's appeal, but expressed a willingness to confer. By now Wheeler had left campus for a series of meetings. Upon departure he had given his secretary instructions concerning how to act in case Branner did not intercede. Since the two faculty committees had been unable to reach an agreement Wheeler saw no benefit in further meetings; hence, his secretary was to give "...to the Executive Committee of the Associated Students, through its Graduate Manager, power to proceed with arrangements to play American football next year."<sup>70</sup>

It is rather doubtful that Branner would have intervened had he been available to do so. Whereas both Jordan and Wheeler were highly idealistic, Branner was an eminently practical man. Born on a small farm in Tennessee, he had personally felt the ravages of the Civil War. Stimulated by a childhood spent in the out-of-doors, he became one of the foremost American geologists of his era. At Cornell, where he was a classmate of Jordan, Branner worked his way through college, having little time for anything but his studies. He was a man who was extremely interested in students, their needs and their aspirations: and he believed in letting men make their own decisions about those things which were of the greatest concern to them.<sup>71</sup> By June 1915 Branner was looking forward to stepping down from the presidency.

In 1915 the State of California celebrated its emergence as an agricultural and industrial leader—s well as San Francisco's recovery from the disastrous 1906 earthquake—with the opening of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Modelled on the various late nineteenth century international world's fairs, particularly the 1893 Chicago Exposition, the fair commemorated the construction of the Panama Canal. The P.P.I.E. arranged a large number of athletic events as part of its festivities. In August, Exposition officials, the president of the Olympic Club, and California's Governor Hiram Johnson attempted to persuade the two universities to set aside the freshman eligibility issue for one year so that a California-Stanford Big Game might be incorporated into the Exposition sports schedule. This group requested that *football* be the game played. Angell was agreeable to compromising on the issue of freshman players provided the two schools played rugby.<sup>72</sup> No agreement was reached and the proposal was abandoned.

70. [?] Clark, letter to Branner, 10 June 1915; R. N. Stillman, letter to Wheeler, 10 June 1915; C. M. Torrey, letter to Stillman, 11 June 1915, BPSUA.

71. Frank Robert Jackie, "John Casper Branner and Brazil," Doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, 1966. *Dictionary of American Biography* s.v. "Branner, John Casper."

72. Todd, *Story of the Exposition*. See, especially, volumes II and III. See also my "Sports, Athletics and the 1915 San Francisco World's Fair: An Early Twentieth Century Cultural Performance," Paper presented at the 1984 Olympic Scientific Congress, Eugene, OR, July 19-26. James Lanagan, letter to Frank Angell, 3 August 1915; Angell, letter to Lanagan, 8 August 1915, BPSLUA.

As soon as it was clear that Berkeley would play American football, California's coach went north to consult with the University of Washington's successful coach Gilmour Dobie about the new game his team would have to learn for the 1915 season. Schaeffer then visited several Mid-Western colleges, finally persuading Andrew Latham Smith, a former All-American from the University of Pennsylvania currently coaching at Purdue, to come to California to coach the 1916 season. Schaeffer managed to secure Dr. Andrew W. Smith, a former assistant to Fielding P. "Hurry Up" Yost at Michigan, to help him with the 1915 season. As Stanford had speculated, arrangements had already been discussed with the University of Washington for home-and-home games of American football. The first, to be held on the Berkeley campus in early November, was designated as California's 1915 "Big Game." Stanford continued playing rugby and engaged Santa Clara University for its 1915 "Big Game."<sup>73</sup>

Stanford proposed that two exhibition games be held—one at Berkeley and one at Palo Alto—in which Stanford would play one half in rugby and California would play one half in American football against comparable teams from the Olympic Club. Spectators might then decide for themselves which was the better game. California rejected the proposal on the grounds that it had only just returned to the American game and any comparison would be unfair. The reappearance of American football on the Berkeley campus was enthusiastically applauded. A "monster" rally was held at which former players of the "old" game, the current players, and the coaches gave emotional speeches. The *Daily Californian* declared: "From now on it will be the American game for Americans, and best of all, for California."<sup>74</sup> Almost immediately the campus newspaper began to carry reports of the type which had contributed to the rejection of football in 1906 (i.e., excessive training schedules; highly paid coaches; a freshman squad riddled with academic difficulties and injuries.)

#### *Effects on Schools and Colleges*

When it became certain that the two major universities were serious in their intention to play rugby, a considerable number of the state's preparatory and high schools followed their lead: many others, however, remained committed to American football. Between 1909 and 1918 within the same county—even the same city—one could find both games being played. Because the high schools knew nothing about the English game, they found it necessary to ask various universities which played it for help. George Edwards set up a coaching bureau in an attempt to provide assistance to those secondary schools which wanted to play rugby. In 1909 Berkeley's captain Cedric Cerf coached San Francisco's Lowell High School team, and in 1910 Stirling Peart of the U.C. varsity coached at Woodland High School. The public schools also tried

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73. *Daily California*, 17 August 1915 and 20 August 1915; A.S.U.C. Minutes 22 September 1915.

74. *Daily Californian*, 17 September 1915, 20 September 1915, 24 September 1915, and 14 October 1915.

to secure the services of someone in the locality who had played the game as a youth in his native country.<sup>75</sup>

The agitation which had been directed at American football in 1905 had somewhat abated when new rules were enacted for the 1906 season, yet there were still individuals who were dissatisfied with it. In the fall of 1909 another rash of injuries and fatalities resulted in a further outcry against football's brutality. In November, California newspapers reported that the Board of Superintendents of the New York Public Schools had taken action to abolish football; the Washington, D.C. schools did likewise. Speaking before the annual meeting of the Intercollegiate Athletic Association. Chancellor Roscoe Day of Syracuse University denounced American football and suggested that if it were not possible to create a safe game. the nation's schools and colleges either should follow the lead of California and adopt rugby or take up the Association game.<sup>76</sup>

Palo Alto. San Jose and Santa Clara High Schools. influenced by their proximity to rugby-playing universities. had converted to the English game quite early. In the San Francisco Bay Area, however, only a few of the secondary schools (e.g., Lowell and Mission) were playing rugby in 1909. The renewed agitation prompted a number of other preparatory and high schools in various locations in the state to abandon gridiron football. Many of the larger schools in Central California (e.g., Sacramento. Woodland. Chico. Auburn) changed to rugby for the 1910 season. The California High School Teachers Association discussed the football issue and passed resolutions in 1909 aimed at doing away with American football and eliminating the paid coach. A survey was conducted the following year to determine to what extent schools had complied. Of the seventy-eight which responded, sixty-four schools maintained that they did not play American football: fifty-six did not hire special coaches.<sup>77</sup>

Oakland's St. Mary's College and Santa Clara College (later University), the two major Catholic institutions in the Bay Area. converted to rugby shortly after Berkeley and Stanford had done so. Their own rivalry, the St. Mary's-Santa Clara "Big Game," attracted a considerable following. St. Ignatius College, the University of the Pacific. the Agricultural College at

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75. Wheeler, letter to David Huddleston, 22 September 1906; George C. Edwards, letter to J. H. Francis, Principal of Los Angeles Polytechnic High School, 27 September 1906, UCBL; *San Jose Mercury and Herald*, 26 November 1909; *Sacramento Bee*, 7 October 1910.

76. John S. Watterson, III, "The Football Crisis of 1909-1910: The Response of the 'Big Three,'" *Journal of Sport History*, 8 (Spring 1981), 33-49; *Los Angeles Times*, 19 November 1909; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 19 November 1909; *Sacramento Bee*, 19 November 1909; *Fresno Morning Republican*, 19 November 1909; James Roscoe Day, "The Function of College Athletics," *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States, December 28, 1909*, 34-43. This paper, like so many of those presented at the early I.A.A. and N.C.A.A. meetings, was printed in full in the *American Physical Education Review*, 15 (February 1910), 88-97.

77. *San Jose Mercury and Herald*, 21 November 1909; *Sacramento Bee*, 7 October 1910, 22 November 1910, and 25 November 1910. Sierra Educational News, December 1911; *The Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of California* (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1909) reported 179 public high schools ranging in size from sixteen students to well over one thousand. man of the very small schools never fielded a team in either gridiron or rugby. See, Rodger Sherman Phelps, Principal of Willits High School, letter to Wheeler, 18 September 1906, UCBL.

Davis, and the Sacramento Athletic Club also began to play the English game. When Pomona College and Occidental College insisted that the University of Southern California restrict its football varsity to students enrolled in its liberal arts college, U.S.C. took up rugby and came north in 1910 to play the U.C. Freshman team. The University of Nevada converted to rugby in 1906, asking Berkeley for assistance in launching its program. Over the years the Nevada teams provided both the Stanford and the California varsities with some of their more challenging matches. Rugby clubs like the Titans, the Barbarians, and especially, the Olympic Club, also competed against the collegiate varsities, but were rarely a match for the big Berkeley and Cardinal teams, which enjoyed the benefits of daily practice sessions. In an effort to help their varsity prepare for the all-important Big Game, U.C. alumni formed the University of California (Alumni) Club in 1913. The Palo Alto Athletic Club was established, in part, to provide practice games for the Stanford varsity.<sup>78</sup>

As soon as it was clear that the University of California was committed to a return to American football for the 1915 season clubs, colleges and high schools throughout the state which were playing rugby also began to switch. St. Mary's College announced its intention to "abandon the sport of foreigners" and return to football. The Palo Alto Athletic Club threatened to revert to football, leaving Stanford with only Santa Clara University, the Barbarians, the Olympic Club, and local rugby-playing high schools as possible opponents. In southern California, the Los Angeles Athletic Club rugby squad disbanded and the University of Southern California immediately switched to American football. Pomona College, Occidental College, the University of Redlands, and Whittier College were already playing American football, as were most of the high schools. The Interscholastic Football League (Whittier, Santa Ana, Long Beach, Chaffy, Pasadena, South Pasadena, San Diego, Santa Monica, and Venice High Schools and the San Diego Army and Navy Academy) also played gridiron football. The *Los Angeles Times* reported in fall 1915 that the entire Citrus League, except for Pomona High School, was now playing football, and in the greater Los Angeles area only Manual Arts, Polytechnic, and Lincoln High Schools remained committed to rugby. Los Angeles High School even traveled north to play the U.C. Freshman team in American football in 1915.<sup>79</sup>

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78. Wheeler, letter to Professor Beveridge Kennedy, University of Nevada, 19 September 1906; N. Wilson, Acting President, University of Nevada, telegram to Wheeler, 20 November 1906. UCBL: *Los Angeles Times*, 19 October 1913; *Blue and Gold*, 1915, 134-135; *Stanford Policy on Athletics, September 17, 1915* (Papers of President Ray Lyman Wilbur, Stanford Archives, The Stanford University Libraries; hereinafter referred to as RLWSUA. By Permission.) *San Francisco Chronicle*, 3 September 1915.

79. *Daily Californian*, 26 August 1915, 15 September 1915, 16 September 1915, 28 September 1915, and 5 November 1915; *Daily Palo Alto*, 27 September 1915, 1 October 1915 and 1 November 1915. During the fall of 1915 the *Daily Californian* and the *Daily Palo Alto* took diametrically opposed positions regarding the "health" of rugby in the State of California. The former strongly suggested that the game was now defunct as an interscholastic and intercollegiate sport of any consequence: the later repeatedly commented upon the continued interest in rugby and blamed U.C. football interests for pressuring high school principal to return to American football. Lanagan was asked to provide a series on the benefits of rugby for the Stanford newspaper. San Francisco's rugby referee Reverend M. Mullineaux, ostensibly working at the behest of a prominent Oxford University rugby enthusiast, set about trying to organize a high school and collegiate championship tour of

Although many principals, as well as California Commissioner of Secondary Schools, Will C. Wood, and State Supervisor of Physical Education, Clark W. Hetherington, supported rugby, believing that American football was tainted with uncorrectable corrupting influences of professionalism and commercialism, more probably preferred the American game. Almost everyone was convinced that rugby could only remain an acceptable high school sport if the two large universities continued to play it. With Stanford the only rugby-playing college of major status in the West, by the fall of 1917 few high schools in not-them California had not returned to American football. Berkeley High School changed in 1918. In nearby Oakland, however, Fremont, Oakland, and Oakland Technical High Schools played rugby through the 1919 season. San Jose High School had intended to continue with rugby, but suddenly switched to gridiron in November 1919. There was a general feeling that the only good players came from southern California and that until all high schools returned to American football Berkeley could never become competitive with teams in the Northwest.<sup>80</sup>

*The Return to American Football: 1915-1919*

In spite of Berkeley's overwhelming loss to the University of Washington (72-0) in the 1915 "Big Game," the *Daily Californian* and local newspapers were jubilant about the return of American football. Gate receipts were only \$24,000, but it was expected that they would soon increase. When U.C. lost the return match at Seattle by only seven points (13-6), many felt that the decision to reject rugby had been vindicated.<sup>81</sup> Stanford's "Big Game" with Santa Clara was a rout for the Cardinal and there was a concern that attendance might drop over the years. The Stanford Executive Committee made an effort at arbitration, but California refused to consider the matter unless the freshman rule was adopted, now citing a commitment to other colleges which abided by it.<sup>82</sup>

In early December 1915 the University of California had joined with the University of Washington, the University of Oregon, and Oregon Agricultural College to form the Pacific Coast Intercollegiate Conference. The regulations of the P.C.I.C. were binding upon member institutions in American football, baseball, track, basketball, and crew; however, it was concerned primarily

Australia and new Zealand. This tour never eventuated. See, *Daily Palo Alto*, 21 September 1915 and 7 October 1915; *Los Angeles Times*, 31 October 1913, 5 September 1915, and 14 September 1915; *San Francisco Call and Post*, 5 October 1915 and 7 October 1915; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 October 1915. The public press tended to be more balanced in its coverage of both forms of the game.

80. W. T. Reid, Sr., Headmaster of Belmont School, letter to Wheeler, 4 September 1906; P. W. Kauffman, Superintendent of Pomona City Schools, letter to Wheeler, 1 January 1907; J. H. Francis, Principal of Los Angeles Polytechnic High School, letter to Wheeler, 15 May 1907, UCBL; Will C. Wood, Commissioner of Secondary Schools, California State Board of Education, letter to Ray Lyman Wilbur, 6 December 1916; Charles S. Morris Vice-Principal of Modesto Public Schools, letter to Wilbur, 1 May 1916; RLWSUA: *Stanford Illustrated Review*, November 1916, 109; *San Francisco Call and Post*, 19 December 1918; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 30 November 1919; *Oakland Tribune*, 13 November 1919.

81. *Daily Californian*, 10 November 1915, 11 November 1915, 15 November 1915, and 2 December 1915; *San Francisco Examiner*, 27 April 1916; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 3 May 1916.

82. *Stanford Alumnus*, November 1915, 129; *Daily Californian*, 2 November 1915; *Daily Palo Alto*, 15 November 1915 and 2 December 1915.

with the conduct of football. In keeping with national trends, the P.C.I.C. barred freshmen from varsity teams. The P.C.I.C. did not interfere in non-conference competitions or prohibit its member schools from using freshmen in these. Since Stanford was not a member, Berkeley was free to schedule a variety of contests with its cross-bay rival. Bitterness over the rugby-American football issue did not impede the two from carrying out a comprehensive schedule of contests in other sports. Baseball, track, and crew competitions were held during the spring 1916 semester, and a U.C.-Stanford soccer match served as a curtain raiser to the 1916 California-Washington football game.<sup>83</sup>

On January 1, 1916 Ray Lyman Wilbur was inaugurated as president of Stanford University. An 1896 Stanford graduate, Wilbur had obtained his medical degree from San Francisco's Cooper Medical College in 1899 and pursued advanced medical studies in Europe. In 1909 he became the head of Stanford's new medical school. While an undergraduate, Wilbur had taken an active interest in athletics and had enjoyed his work in the gymnasium. He was also the author of the "Athletic History of the '96 Class." In his autobiography Wilbur wrote: "Too much of my time was taken up by outside jobs and by my heavy laboratory courses for me to participate in these games [i.e., athletics] as much as I would have liked, but there was no more vociferous rooter. Competitive athletics have always been of the keenest interest to me. I never appreciated having my side lose." Looking back upon his presidency, he observed that although he had been accused so often of being opposed to university athletics that he had almost come to believe it, this assertion was incorrect. What he wanted was a program of athletics which would benefit the entire student body. Of all the issues with which he had to deal during his first years in office, Wilbur felt that "the football question" was one of the most vexing.<sup>84</sup>

Beginning in early 1916 a growing number of Stanford students and alumni actively sought a resumption of relations in American football with the University of California. The majority of alumni support for rugby had always come from individuals located in the greater Bay Area; alumni residing at farther distances from the Stanford campus tended to favor the American game. Wilbur, however, was committed to the values which had led Jordan and Wheeler to press for rugby in 1906 and was not in favor of relinquishing the sport. In April 1916 the Stanford Athletic Advisory Committee, the Student Executive Committee, and the President all went on record against a return to football. The *Standard Illustrated Review* thereupon declared that it would make no further efforts to press for a reversion. The issue was far from closed, however. In May 1916 the Stanford student body barely rejected a motion (441-392) to return to American football. Many of those who held out for rugby did so because they detested the idea of giving in once again to their

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83. *Rules of the Pacific Coast Intercollegiate Conference, Adopted December 1, 1916*, mimeographed. RLWSUA; *Daily Californian*, 20 November 1916.

84. Edgar Eugene Robinson and Paul Carroll Edwards, eds *The Memoirs of Ray Lyman Wilbur, 1875-1949* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1960), 60-61; 218-222.

cross-bay rival. California was accused of spending \$11,000 on professional coaching, and of having engineered the return to football mainly because it had won only seven of twenty-three intercollegiate contests since competitions were initiated with Stanford in 1892.<sup>85</sup>

Different types of athletic control permitted dissimilar developments at the two universities. Stanford had a long tradition under Jordan of a strong centralized organizational structure which put a great deal of power in the hands of the administration. Early in 1916 Wilbur set up an athletic advisory committee composed of students, faculty, and alumni to aid him in his efforts to deal with the football situation. This was soon formalized as Stanford's Board of Athletic Control and placed in charge of all athletics and physical training. Every action of this Board was subject to the approval of the President. At the University of California the management of athletics was almost exclusively in the hands of the Executive Committee of the A.S.U.C. One member of the Faculty Committee on Athletics and one individual representing the alumni association served in an advisory capacity.<sup>86</sup> The Berkeley structure prevented Wheeler from having a major official position in many decisions regarding athletics. It had been substantially a matter of his ability to *influence* faculty and students, and the somewhat hysterical climate created by the "football crisis of 1905," which had enabled him to be effective in 1906. In the ensuing years even more of the control of intercollegiate athletics at Berkeley had been transferred to student government. After the break with Stanford in 1915, Wheeler gave every indication that he wished to have as little to do with athletics as propriety would permit.

By 1917 interest on both campuses in favor of reviving the annual Stanford-California Big Game had reached major proportions. The Stanford humor magazine ridiculed faculty attitudes and prophesized an early death for intercollegiate athletics if the present policies persisted. When Stanford lost its 1916 rugby match to Santa Clara (28-5), local sports writers predicted that Stanford would soon abandon the English sport; sentiment at Santa Clara also favored a rapid return to American football. Wilbur reluctantly acknowledged that a return to the American game probably could not be prevented and that he might be agreeable if California would return to the alumni coach. Neither the California student athletic leaders nor the well-paid coaching staff had any intention of relinquishing the professional coach system. (Andy Smith had negotiated a \$4,000-a-year contract in late 1916; trainer Charles Volz was to

85. Charles L. Firebaugh (Stanford 1904), letters to Wilbur, 4 February 1916 and 14 November 1916. RLWSUA: *Stanford Illustrated Review*, November 1916, 101-103; *Daily Palo Alto*, 3 May 1916 and 5 May 1916; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2 May 1916, 3 May 1916, and 4 May 1916 Frank L. Kleeberger. Professor Physical Education and Director of the Men's Gymnasium, University of California, replied to an inquiry from President H. J. Waters of Kansas Agricultural College concerning a possible director of athletics and professor of physical education at the latter's institution stating that the character and ability of Berkeley's new coaching staff was still to be tested and that the production of winning teams was likely to be paramount Kleeberger, letter to H. J. Waters, 16 June 1916. (Archives of the Department of Physical Education, Hearst Gymnasium, University of California: hereinafter referred to as HGA.)

86. Wilbur, *Memoirs*, 220-221; H[enry] Morse Stephens, letter to Wheeler, 16 January 1919. RLWSUA For a useful discussion of the different early patterns of athletic control see, John A. Lucas and Ronald A. Smith, *Saga of American Sports* (Philadelphia: Lea and Febiger, 1978), chapter 13.

receive \$1,600 for his services.)<sup>87</sup> Wilbur also wanted rugby to continue as an intercollegiate sport between the two schools even if Stanford should adopt the American game. An informal alumni delegation from Berkeley approached Leland W. Cutler, president of the Stanford Alumni Association and member of the Board of Athletic Control, in the hope of establishing competitive relations in American football. This offer might have been accepted, but when Berkeley adamantly refused Stanford's request for a return rugby match the efforts failed.<sup>88</sup>

World War I had erupted in the summer of 1914. The United States initially pursued a policy of neutrality, but German attacks on allied shipping ultimately forced President Woodrow Wilson to call a special session of Congress on April 2, 1917 to act upon a declaration of war. The nation was wholly unprepared to engage in military combat and it was several months before the federal government could organize the various efforts needed to mobilize men and materials. Even though regulations enforcing conscription were enacted in 1917, it was not until 1918 that the United States could muster troops in sufficient numbers to offer effective aid to the badly depleted Allied forces. As part of the mobilization efforts, the War Department decided to establish Student Army Training Corps (S.A.T.C.) programs at colleges as a means to develop "...reservoirs of officer material for the duration of the war." Stanford was named S.A.T.C. headquarters for California, Nevada, and Utah. This action virtually turned the campus into an auxiliary military establishment. At the University of California 3500 men enlisted in the S.A.T.C., the University Naval Unit, and the School of Military Aeronautics. On October 1, 1918 some 150,000 American college students who were registered under the selective services regulations were inducted into the armed forces.<sup>89</sup>

The organization of the S.A.T.C. put an end to all ordinary athletic regulations at Stanford and paved the way for the Cardinal's return to American football. The federal government had requested that every inducted student take part in some type of physical activity. Stanford's athletics and physical education were transferred to campus military authorities. Captain Sam M. Parker, commanding officer, placed a high value on the contributions which athletics could make to the development of good soldiers: And he believed that American football, not rugby, was the game which would develop the type of spirit needed by fighting men. Lieutenant Arthur H. Badenock, a graduate of the University of Chicago and former coach at New Mexico, was

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87. *Daily Californian*, 9 November 1916; *Daily Palo Alto*, 14 November 1916; *San Francisco Bulletin*, 27 November 1916; A.S.U.C. Minutes, 3 May 1916 and 17 February 1917. Stanford joined the P.C.I.C for the 1917 season.

88. *Stanford Illustrated Review*, December 1917, 91; Wilbur, letter to Leland Cutler, n.d., RLWSUA.

89. Wilbur was named S.A.T.C. District Educational Director. Colonel Robert L. Rees, Chairman of the Committee on Education and Special Training, War Department, form letter to Colleges of the United States, 28 August 1918, HGA; *Daily Palo Alto*, 28 September 1918 and 2 October 1918. *Daily Californian*, 30 September 1918 and 1 October 1918. See also, *Extracts from the Manual of Physical Training for Use in the United States Army* (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1918) and A. E. Marriott, *Suggested Athletics for Army Camps* (New York, Association Press, 1918).



placed in charge of developing a S.A.T.C. team in American football and a series of games was immediately arranged with teams from local military bases (e.g., Mare Island, Mather Field). Rugby matches were also scheduled with the University of Santa Clara.<sup>90</sup>

At Berkeley Andy Smith had cancelled spring football practice because so few players were available. The “Big Game” with Washington was then cancelled in the interests of “war time economy measures”; instead a schedule of games was arranged with local military teams, St. Mary’s. U.S.C., and the University of Oregon. According to rules enacted under the war-time measures, *all* men in military units were eligible for varsity competitions; non-enlisted freshmen remained ineligible, however. Coach Smith issued a call for two hundred men, contending that this number could be handled without difficulty even though only a short time earlier Berkeley had maintained that one of the reasons it could no longer play rugby was its inability to accommodate more than one hundred men on its playing fields.<sup>91</sup>

Captain Parker approached Captain Winfield Scott Overton of the University of California S.A.T.C. with a proposal for a rugby match between their two universities to be followed by a match in American football. Overton enthusiastically supported the proposal. (A number of Stanford’s S.A.T.C. officers were Berkeley graduates and anxious to see a return of the Big Game.) Angell was incensed at what he believed was manipulation to bring football back to Stanford, claiming that the over-extended athletic programs at both universities wanted such a game to ease their financial difficulties. Meanwhile, the San Francisco phase of the United War Work Fund campaign was scheduled to begin on November 11. On October 31, 1918 the A.S.U.C. president issued a challenge to Stanford, indicating that the Sports Committee of the United War Fund Drive had requested that California play a benefit game and pointing out that a match between the two universities “...would be incomparably better than any other that could be proposed.” The proceeds from the game would be donated to the Fund as a joint gift from the two student bodies. As an incentive, California agreed to a rugby match at Palo Alto early in 1919, provided rugby henceforth be designated a “minor” sport. (This game, played in late February 1919, was won by Stanford by a score of 21-8. It received only perfunctory attention in the newspapers and was deemed to lack the “class” of the old-time rugby matches.)<sup>92</sup>

Both Angell and Wilbur insisted that the football game was to be regarded solely as a S.A.T.C. affair and that the team from Stanford did *not* represent the University. A dispute erupted almost immediately over the composition of the teams. Stanford insisted that only members of the military could be represented. California’s football team was composed of non-military men as well

90. *Daily Palo Alto*, 23 October 1918 and 8 November 1918; *Stanford Quad*, 1920, 187-208.

91. *Daily Californian*, 30 September 1918; *Blue and Gold*, 1920, 205-225.

92. Brodie, 66 Years, 114-118; *Blue and Gold*, 1920, 88-121; 220-221; *Daily Californian*, 31 October 1918; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 6 November 1918; W. S. Overton, letters to Frank Kleeberger, 7 November 1918, HGA. Overton stated that Parker and he had collaborated to bring the contest about, and declared “We are going to make the game a big thing....” *Daily Californian*, 22 January 1919 and 24 January 1919.

as those registered under military regulations. Two of Berkeley's best players, Bryant Sprott and L. L. Hooper, were not attached to a military unit. The A.S.U.C. telegraphed the national S.A.T.C. commander asking for a ruling on non-military athletes. The reply stated that civilians should not be prohibited from playing. With the benefits derived from three years of football competition, the Berkeley team overwhelmed the Stanford S.A.T.C. team on November 28 by a score of 67-0.<sup>93</sup> Whether this contest was to be included in the overall standings between the two universities depended upon the viewpoint of the individual.

Although the November 18 newspapers had carried banner headlines announcing the signing of the Armistice, nothing as inconsequential as the official end to hostilities could stand in the way of the long-awaited resumption of an annual Berkeley-Stanford match in American football. The *San Francisco Chronicle* society page had billed the affair as the leading event on the Thanksgiving week calendar: "...prominent folk from both sides of the bay are eager to witness the first American game played between the two Universities since 1905 .....There never has been an attraction offered since which could hope to interest Californians as did the old Stanford-U.C. games."<sup>94</sup> Traditions like painting school colors on the opponents' campus were revived, and spectators jammed the stands at California Field. Sports fans were ecstatic. Herbert Hause, sports columnist for the *Oakland Tribune*, proclaimed: "We have had our football appetites appeased for the first time in four years and it is hoped that nothing will ever come up again to block this great contest." "Brick" Morse, an ardent U.C. alumnus writing a column for the *San Francisco Call and Post*, bombastically declared that the California varsity could beat any team in America and called for games with Yale, Harvard, and Princeton.<sup>95</sup>

Almost everyone felt certain that normal football relations would prevail between the two universities in 1919, yet Wilbur, Angell, and a few others who abhorred the types of values which they believed the game fostered were still not quite ready to relent. The circumstances which existed on the two campuses had helped to shape their athletic programs in somewhat different ways. Angell correctly maintained that U.C. had become an enormous "...state institution, with a scattered student body, with little facility for out of door athletics..." while Stanford was medium sized with ample playing fields and a "concentrated" student body. These differences, along with somewhat dissimilar developments in their programs of physical education, suggested to some that it was logical that the two schools should follow different paths.<sup>96</sup>

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93. Angell, memorandum to Wilbur, 13 November 1918, RLWSUA; *Daily Californian*, 1 November 1918; *Oakland Tribune*, 2 November 1918.

94. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 November 1918 and 29 November 1918.

95. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 26 November 1918; *Oakland Tribune*, 26 November 1918 and 1918; *Daily Palo Alto*, 29 November 1918; *San Francisco Call and Post*, 11 December 1918.

96. Angell, letter to Wilbur, 6 February 1918, RLWSUA.

Wilbur sent Wheeler a proposal drafted by the Stanford Board of Athletic Control for the conduct of athletics between their two schools beginning with fall 1919. A key point specified that *all* coaches must be “regular appointees” and “...give service in not less than two regular sports or gymnasium activities.” This was in line with the Stanford desire to bring all its physical education and athletic offerings under the jurisdiction of Dr. Herbert R. Stolz, Director of the Gymnasium and in charge of the Department of Physical Education. Stanford’s coaches were to be concerned with the general student, not solely a small group of elite performers. At Berkeley, Professor Frank L. Kleeberger, Chairman of the Department of Physical Education and Director of the Gymnasium, was intent upon strengthening the professional major in physical education and establishing a comprehensive program of “developmental athletics” (i.e., games in the physical education curriculum and intramural sports). Although the various intercollegiate sports were administratively allied to his department, the fact that their control rested in the hands of the A.S.U.C. meant that Kleeberger had little or no authority in their conduct. The proposal also called for at least two games each year between the two universities in several sports: American football; rugby; soccer; baseball; track; tennis; swimming; boxing; fencing; handball. It was hoped that the presence of at least two matches in American football might somehow dilute the intensity of the annual Big Game.<sup>97</sup>

Wheeler had long since become convinced, as had Eliot, that in the hands of American students any game could be corrupted, and that the American version of rugby had taken on many of the objectional features of football. Heartily disgusted with the whole matter, and close to retirement, he responded that his consultations with students, alumni, and professors had led him to conclude that the present Berkeley arrangement, which placed the control of athletics in the hands of the student body, was appropriate and he would not intercede. He also pointed out that U.C. already had athletic commitments to other colleges and could not possibly promise Stanford such a large number of contests. Besides, Wheeler maintained, almost with a tone of reprimand, the old exclusive arrangement with Stanford “...leaves in our minds a memory of intensities which we really do not wish to recall again into being. We feel it best to dilute that intensity by the help and presence of other neighbors, who, while they cannot be expected to be quite as dear to us as Stanford, are yet in our world.”<sup>98</sup>

On November 22, 1919 the University of California met Leland Stanford Jr. University in the first “official” varsity game of American football to be held since 1905. For weeks preceding the game the student newspapers expressed their approval of the return of the rivalry; so did the local press. Over

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97. Wilbur, letter to Wheeler, 2 January 1919. RLWSUA; Frank Kleeberger, “Physical Education of University Men.” *School and Society*, 32 (November 1930), 1-9; Kleeberger, letter to E. Dana Caulkms, Executive Secretary, National Committee on Physical Education, 25 February 1919; “Physical Education in Universities,” undated manuscript [1916?] signed by F. L. Kleeberger, HGA.

98. Clark W. Hetherington, California State Supervisor of Physical Education, letter to Wilbur, 13 January 1919; Wheeler, letter to Wilbur, 30 January 1919. RLWSUA.

18,000 spectators overflowed the stadium at Palo Alto. Although California was a decided favorite, the Berkeley team narrowly averted defeat in the fourth quarter to emerge a 14-10 victor. Two weeks later the universities met for their annual rugby match, now clearly a "minor" sport. As a result of the 3-3 tie, it was a "combined fifteen" which went north for the annual Vancouver Cooper-Keith Trophy matches.<sup>99</sup> Rugby did, however, leave a legacy to both the University and to the state. For several decades, California has been the locale of some of the best club and collegiate rugby in the United States.<sup>100</sup>

On Thanksgiving Day 1919 several *gridiron* football games took place. The Olympic Club defeated Santa Clara University by a score of 6-0. Stanford closed its 1919 season with a 14-0 loss to U.S.C. in Southern California. The University of California's last football game of the season was against the University of Washington at Seattle on November 27. If victorious, the Blue and Gold would almost certainly be named champion of the Pacific Coast and be nominated to represent the West in the New Year's Day classic at Pasadena. In heavy mud, the Berkeleyans lost the contest 7-0. Neither the U.C. student body nor the local press was dismayed, however. What they had long desired had been achieved. American football had been restored to its "rightful" place in the cosmos.<sup>101</sup>

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99. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 23 November 1919; *Daily Californian*, 21 November 1919 and 24 November 1919; *San Francisco Call and Post*, 21 November 1919; *Daily Palo Alto*, 2 December 1919 and 8 December 1919.

100. See my "Ladies, Gentlemen and 'Ruffians': The Origins and Development of Hockey, Cricket and Rugby in the San Francisco Area." *Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of the International Association for the History of Physical Education and Sport*, Dartford, England, 1977, 455-472.

101. *Daily Californian*, 26 November 1919 and 1 December 1919; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 November 1919, 27 November 1919, and 28 November 1919; *San Francisco Examiner*, 27 November 1919 and 28 November 1919.