

# ALL PROS OF 1930

by John Hogrogian

While the country endured the first year of the great Depression, Bronko Nagurski played his first season with the Chicago Bears. From day one, Nagurski dominated the field with his physical power as a runner and defender. A 1929 All-American at the University of Minnesota, he stepped into the professional ranks without a stumble and led the Bears out of the second division to a strong third place finish.

Trailing the Bears in seventh place were the Chicago Cardinals, also the proud possessors of a superstar fullback. Ernie Nevers already had earned himself a reputation as the greatest back in history, both with his play at Stanford and with his pro service. The dominant force on the Cardinals, Nevers was unrivaled as the fullback extraordinaire until Nagurski came along.

Only in 1930 would All Pro selectors have to weigh the merits of these two superb fullbacks. Nevers would play his final season in 1931 while Nagurski was struggling with injuries.

The closeness of their talents was reflected in the annual poll of sports writers, team officials, coaches, and game officials. The ballot produced a dead heat between the two. The unnamed author of the accompanying article, writing under a Green Bay dateline, stated that he chose to make Nevers the first team fullback because of his wider range of skills.

## First Team

E- Lavern Dilweg, GB  
E- Luke Johnsos, ChiB  
T- Jap Douds, Port  
T- Link Lyman, ChiB  
G- Mike Michalske, GB  
G- Walt Kiesling, ChiB  
C- Swede Hagberg, Bkn  
Q- Benny Friedman, NY  
H- Red Grange, ChiB  
H- Ken Strong, SI  
F- Ernie Nevers, ChiC

## Second Team

E- Tom Nash, GB  
E- Red Badgro, NY  
T- Jim Mooney, Bkn  
T- Bill Kern, GB  
G- Hal Hanson, Fra  
G- Rudy Comstock, NY  
C- Joe Westoupal, NY  
Q- Red Dunn, GB  
H- Stumpy Thomason, Bkn  
H- Father Lumpkin, Port  
F- Bronko Nagurski, ChiB

## Third Team

E- Chuck Kassel, ChiC  
E- Tony Kostos, Fra  
T- Duke Slater, ChiC  
T- Cal Hubbard, GB  
G- Les Caywood, NY  
G- Al Graham, Port

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C- Nate Barrager, Min  
Q- Carl Brumbaugh, ChiB  
H- Johnny Blood, GB  
H- Chuck Bennett, Port  
F- Jack McBride, Bkn

Sources: *Green Bay Press Gazette*, Dec. 20, 1930;  
*Milwaukee Journal*, Dec. 21, 1930.

While this article singles out Nevers and Nagurski for special attention, I must point out that the third team fullback, Jack McBride, actually led the NFL in scoring.

Totally apart from the annual poll, the *Green Bay Press Gazette* conducted a separate poll of NFL players and coaches. The 22-man team, without division into first or second squads, included both Nevers and Nagurski.

E- Tom Nash, GB  
E- Lavern Dilweg, GB  
E- Luke Johnsos, ChiB  
E- Red Badgro, NY  
T- Red Sleight, GB  
T- Link Lyman, ChiB  
T- Steve Owen, NY  
T- John Ward, Min  
G- Mike Michalske, GB  
G- Dan McMullen, ChiB  
G- Rudy Comstock, NY  
G- George Gibson, Min  
C- Nate Barrager, Min  
C- Joe Westoupal, NY  
Q- Benny Friedman, NY  
Q- Red Dunn, GB  
H- Red Grange, ChiB  
H- Ken Strong, SI  
H- Father Lumpkin, Port  
H- Doug Wycoff, SI  
F- Ernie Nevers, ChiC  
F- Bronko Nagurski, ChiB

Source: *Green Bay Press Gazette*, Dec. 17, 1930

This poll, which I have not found for any other year in the 1927-31 period, honored six players who did not appear at all on the regular annual poll of writers and others.

One writer found a novel solution to the Nevers-Nagurski choice. In his selections for the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, Stoney McGlynn named Nevers as the first team fullback and put Nagurski on the first team as a utility player. McGlynn apparently felt strong enough about both men to pick a 12 man squad.

### First Team

E- Lavern Dilweg, GB  
E- Tom Nash, GB  
T- Jap Douds, Port  
T- Link Lyman, ChiB  
G- Rudy Comstock, NY  
G- Walt Kiesling, ChiC  
C- Bert Pearson, ChiB  
Q- Benny Friedman, NY  
H- Red Grange, ChiB  
H- Ken Strong, SI  
F- Ernie Nevers, ChiC  
U- Bronko Nagurski, ChiB

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### Second Team

E- Luke Johnsos, ChiB  
E- Red Badgro, NYT  
T- Jim Mooney, Bkn  
T- Bill Kern, GB  
G- Dan McMullen, ChiB  
G- Jim Bowdoin, GB  
C- Swede Hagberg, Bkn  
Q- Carl Brumbaugh, ChiB  
H- Stumpy Thomason, Bkn  
H- Verne Lewellen, GB  
F- Jack McBride, Bkn

Source: Milwaukee *Sentinel*, Dec. 21, 1930

McGlynn specifically mentioned his disappointment with the play of Mike Michalske, the veteran guard who appeared on all other All-Pro teams.

Another writer-chosen team appeared under the banner of the Chicago *Daily Times*. The accompanying article bears the by-line of Bill Margolis and states the *Daily Times* made its picks "with the assistance of officials all around the circuit."

### First Team

E- Lavern Dilweg, GB  
E- Luke Johnsos, ChiB  
T- Duke Slater, ChiC  
T- Bill Owen, NY  
G- Mike Michalske, GB  
G- George Gibson, Min  
C- Nate Barrager, Min  
Q- Benny Friedman, NY  
H- Red Grange, ChiB  
H- Bronko Nagurski, ChiB  
F- Ernie Nevers, ChiC

### Second Team

E- Glenn Campbell, NY  
E- Chuck Kassel, ChiC  
T- Jap Douds, Port  
T- Link Lyman, ChiC  
G- Walt Kiesling, ChiC  
G- Zuck Carlson, ChiB  
C- Joe Westoupal, NY  
Q- Verne Lewellen, GB  
H- Ken Strong, SI  
H- Bill Glassgow, Port  
F- Herb Joesting, Min

Source: Chicago *Daily Times*, Dec. 16, 1930;  
New York *Post*, Dec. 17, 1930 (A.P. story, first team only)

Margolis and company couldn't bear to leave either Chicago fullback off their first team, so they made Nagurski one of their halfbacks. The *Daily Times* also named 14 men to an honorable mention list.

One fan sent his selections to a newspaper and got them published. H.L. Bassett's selections appeared in the Green Bay *Press Gazette*.

### First Team

E- Lavern Dilweg, GB  
E- Red Badgro, NY  
T- Red Sleight, GB

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T- Duke Slater, ChiC  
G- Mike Michalske, Gb  
G- Hal Hanson, Fra  
C- Nate Barrager, Min  
Q- Benny Friedman, NY  
H- Ken Strong, SI  
H- Red Grange, ChiB  
F- Ernie Nevers, ChiC

### Second Team

E- Luke Johnsos, ChiB  
E- Tom Nash, GB  
T- John Ward, Min  
T- Steve Owen, NY  
G- Walt Kiesling, ChiC  
G- Al Graham, Port  
C- Joe Westoupal, NY  
Q- Red Dunn, GB  
H- Bill Glassgow, Port  
H- Verne Lewellen, GB  
F- Bronko Nagurski, ChiB

Source: Green Bay Press Gazette, Dec. 9, 1930

Bassett picked six Packers for his top 22 players.

Two other All Pro selectors were themselves famous players. Red Grange, in fact, picked two different teams. For *Collyers' Eye* magazine, he chose a first and second team, leaving a halfback slot vacant on the first team. The magazine went ahead and filled in Grange's name.

### First Team

E- Lavern Dilweg, GB  
E- Luke Johnsos, ChiB  
T- Bill Owen, NY  
T- Link Lyman, ChiB  
G- Mike Michalske, GB  
G- Walt Kiesling, ChiC  
C- Nate Barrager, Min  
Q- Benny Friedman, NY  
H- Red Grange, ChiB  
H- Ken Strong, SI  
F- Ernie Nevers, ChiC

### Second Team

E- Chuck Kassel, ChiC  
E- Tom Nash, GB  
T- Jap Douds, Port  
T- Duke Slater, ChiC  
G- Zuck Carlson, ChiB  
G- George Gibson, Min  
C- Joe Westoupal, NY  
Q- Red Dunn, GB  
H- Bill Glassgow, Port  
H- Johnny Blood, GB  
F- Bronko Nagurski, ChiB

Source: Green Bay Press Gazette, Dec 16, 1930

Grange opted for Nevers over his teammate as the first team fullback.

Another Grange All Pro squad appeared in the Chicago *Herald Examiner* of December 17. Instead of two teams, he picked one squad of 23 players. From the *Collyers'* squad, Kassel, Nash, Douds, Gibson, and

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Grange himself disappeared, replaced by Frosty Peters, Herb Joesting, Wild Bill Kelly, Red Badgro, Cal Hubbard, and Hec Garvey. Nevers and Nagurski enjoyed equal billing on this squad.

Wrapping up on our survey is the All Pro team selected by Ernie Nevers. He modestly left himself off in favor of Nagurski.

E- Lavern Dilweg, GB  
E- Red Badgro, NY  
T- Duke Slater, ChiC  
T- Cal Hubbard, GB  
G- Mike Michalske, GB  
G- George Gibson, Min  
C- Joe Westoupal, NY  
Q- Benny Friedman, NY  
H- Red Grange, ChiB  
H- Johnny Blood, GB  
F- Bronko Nagurski, ChiB

Source: *Green Bay Press Gazette*, Dec. 20, 1930.

All but two of his picks came from the Packers, Giants, and Bears.

Looking at all of the All Pro teams, four men appear as universal honorees. Lavern Dilweg, and Benny Friedman made the first unit of every selection, while Nevers and Grange were missing only from squads picked by themselves.

Dilweg starred as a defender, blocker, and receiver in the Packers' championship drive, and the future congressman exerted strong leadership on his mates. Less famous today than Grange, Nevers, and Friedman, Dilweg was a very valuable member of a triple championship squad and was so recognized by his peers.