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The Coffin Corner

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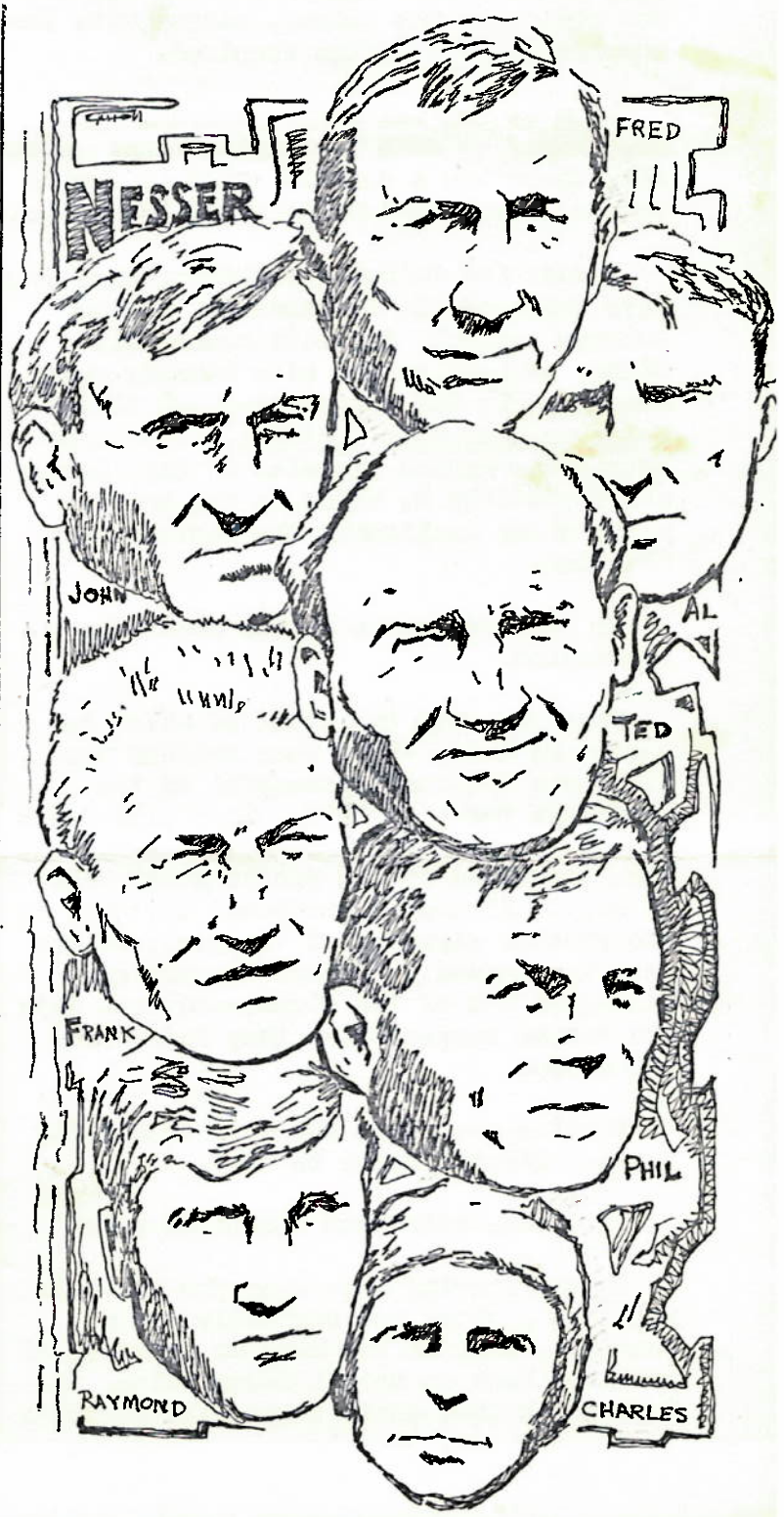
COLUMBUS PANHANDLES

By Bob Braunwart & Bob Carroll

On a bright November afternoon in 1909, a curious parade took place in Dayton, Ohio. Hundreds of people lined the streets to watch five brothers from Columbus walk from their hotel to the ball park. The brothers had put on their football togs at their hotel, and there was nothing in their maroon and gold uniforms to distinguish them from the other members of the Columbus team. However, the crowd had no trouble recognizing them.

They were bigger than their mates, but that wasn't it. It wasn't even so much the family resemblance, although all five had that same blocky solidity that made them look like they'd been carved by Rodin. The identification went deeper. It was in the walk which was not a self-serving swagger but an aggressive planting of one great foot after another and who-the-hell's-gonna-stop-me? It was in the mannerisms -- confident, strong, sure. It was the way the uniforms fit, like they'd been born in them. It was the whole animal! Everything went together to say: "We're the Nessers. We play football."



Later that afternoon before the biggest football crowd Dayton had ever seen, they did just that, disposing of the locals 16-0. Brother Fred scored a touchdown. So did brother Frank. Brother Phil steamed from his tackle position, took the ball around end, and went 40 yards to another touchdown with the irresistible momentum of a battleship from Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet. Brother John blocked and tackled as though he was involved in a personal vendetta. Brother Ted, neither the biggest nor the fastest but obviously the leader, played with the inspiration his office required.

When it was all over, everyone went home happy — even the Dayton fans. After all, there was a certain honor in losing to the Nessers and the Columbus Panhandles.

Today, few Columbus residents ever even have heard of the Panhandles. At the buckeye capital, football means Ohio State. A book on the city library shelf announces in its tongue-in-cheek title: Columbus Discovers Football. Its pages detail the fabled exploits of Chic Harley and Coach John W. Wilce at the university, never mentioning the contemporary 'Handles.

No one ever wrote a book about the Panhandles.

They were not the stuff of which legends are made. They were neither the first nor the most successful of the early pro teams in Ohio. They played few pivotal games. None of their players has been enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame. If they contributed anything to the greater strategy of the game, it has gone unrecorded. Just as the pro game struggled out of its nickle-and-dime days and became respectable, they faded from its scene.

They've been gone for more than fifty years. They'll never be back.

Yet, some attention should be paid.

In the rag-tag days when pro football was less a sport and certainly not a business, when it was more an assembly of ruffians bent on mutual destruction, the Panhandles took their lumps like spartans and handed them out like a street gang. They held their own and kept the dream going.

The chief dreamer never played for the 'Handles. He was a little guy named Joe Carr who looked at first glance like Caspar Milquetoast. He grayed and balded early and his rimless spectacles gave him the constantly surprised expression of a scholar touring Atlantis. But, behind his glasses, the blue eyes were honest and tough, and his firm chin could jut forward to denote a determination that belied the first impression.

Joseph F. Carr was a gentleman, but nobody ever pushed him around.

He was a machinist with the Panhandle Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and he loved sports. So, at the age of twenty — just as a new century began — he started a new career as a sportswriter. For six years he served as assistant sports editor for the Ohio State Journal, one of three major newspapers in Columbus at that time.

Reporting the events was all right in its way, but Joe wanted to be more at the center. He wanted to make things happen.

He'd always been an admirer of the Old Roman, Charles Comiskey, who'd just gone out and started the Chicago White Sox in the fledgling American Baseball League. Emulating his idol, Joe went to some of his more athletic buddies back at the railroad and started the "Famous Panhandle White Sox" in 1901. How a baseball team could become famous in its first year while using another team's nickname was never made clear, but the squad played around Columbus ball lots for many seasons and fair success.

In 1904, Joe tried his hand at his first love: football. Again he went to the Panhandle Division to form a team. They played two games, winning both by big scores. But, apparently, they didn't make money because they disappeared from the pages of even Carr's Journal after that.

But in 1907 they were back. This time they stayed for twenty years.

In the years before World War I, the Railroaders never won the Ohio championship which was the same as the world's championship in those days, but they played the teams that did. And sometimes they beat them. Anyway, druggists always knew when the local team had played the Panhandles because most of the players showed up at the store for bandages and iodine on Monday morning.

The 'Handles were a good attraction around Ohio. They played rough and they had all those Nessers. Eventually there were eight — seven brothers and a son. Brother acts weren't unusual in those days. In addition to the Nessers, the Panhandles had Emmett and Homer Ruh and the Kuehner twins, Oscar and Roscoe. Plenty of teams had two or three siblings playing together. What made the Nessers unique was that there were so many of them and that they were so good.

Jim Durfee, a Columbus newspaperman who refereed more than a hundred 'Handle games, said, "You had to be an All-American to beat the Nessers." The boys never got any AA mentions themselves; none of those college-boy frills for them! They were boilermakers by trade and rugged to a fault. None of them was ever accused of using finesse on the gridiron. Accounts of Panhandle games teem with reports of rival players being forced out of games with broken bones and assorted injuries. At least once a year, a news story would commend the team for playing a clean game. It's easy to read the unwritten footnote: "Unlike their normal style."

However, though they played football like the Wild Bunch toured a cattle town, they also had very real ability.

Their father, Theodore Nesser, hailed from Alsace-Loraine and was a veteran of the Franco-Prussian War. Having had it with Europe, he took a boat to America and settled in Columbus, taking a job following his boilermaker trade with the railroad. A year or so later, Katherine Nesser joined her husband, bringing along their five children — John, Phil, Pete, Minnie, and Anna. In Columbus, six more children — five of them boys — were born to the family, all delivered "within hearing of the Panhandle whistle."

PANHANDLES' RECORD

YEAR	W - L - T	Pct.	PTS-OPP
1904	2 - 0 - 0	1.000	53- 0
1905		No team	
1906		No team	
1907	2 - 3 - 1	.400	115- 36
1908	3 - 3 - 1	.500	109- 19
1909	7 - 1 - 1	.875	217- 13
1910	3 - 2 - 2	.600	68- 57
1911	5 - 4 - 1	.555	52- 88
1912	3 - 5 - 1	.375	81- 83
1913	3 - 4 - 1	.429	117- 46
1914	7 - 2 - 0	.778	210- 60
1915	8 - 3 - 1	.728	192- 37
1916	7 - 5 - 0	.584	186- 68
1917	2 - 6 - 0	.250	51-151
1918	0 - 1 - 0	.000	0- 12
1919	3 - 6 - 1	.333	77-122
1920*	2 - 6 - 2	.250	41-121
1921*	2 - 8 - 0	.200	64-229
1922*	3 - 8 - 0	.273	52-180
1923*/	5 - 4 - 1	.555	119- 35
1924*/	4 - 4 - 0	.500	91- 68
1925*/	2 - 9 - 0	.182	54-127
1926*/	1 - 7 - 0	.125	26- 99
21 yrs	74 -91 -13	.448	2026-1651

*-Member NFL, but non-league games included in record.
/-Team known as Columbus Tigers.

There's a famous story that when the boys grew up and the football team was going strong, Theodore served as water boy and Katherine washed and ironed the team's uniforms. The first part is probably imaginary, although old Theodore may gone out on the field a couple of times during time outs to give his boys hell if they were losing. The second part of the story has to be true to some extent. If Mrs. Nesser cleaned only her own boys' uniforms, she was practically laundress for the team.

And, what oversized uniforms they were!

John was the midget of the family — a mere 185 pounds. He was also the oldest. Quarterback, his usual position, called primarily for blocking and tackling ability in those days, John was so good at what he did that one year he won a medal

as champion all-around athlete of the whole Pennsylvania Railway System. His main competitors were his own brothers.

Phil was a champion hammer-thrower who played in the line but often carried the ball on murderous tackle-around plays. He was the second oldest and played at 236 pounds. Years later, he remembered the most rugged game of his career as one against an all-star college team on the stones of the Columbus barracks grounds.

Oddly enough, the biggest Nesser of all, brother Pete at 350 pounds, did not play football, which saved Mama Nesser much washing and opposing teams much grief.

They called Ted "the greatest of all the Nessers." He was about ten years younger than John and about 40 pounds heavier. He could and did play any position well, but halfback was probably his best spot because of an uncanny ability to stay on his feet no matter what or how many hit him. He usually coached the team, marking him as the leader of the clan.

One time, Ted's old friend, Texas A & M coach Charley Moran offered him $50 plus expenses to come west and help defeat arch-rival Texas. Ted went out to the A & M campus and wore a freshman beanie for a week. He sat on the bench during the game, unneeded as it turned out. Afterwards, he and Moran went duck hunting. Ted brought $200 back — as an employee of the Pennsylvania Railroad, he had no traveling expenses.

Fred was the tallest Nesser at six feet five, but he was no string bean, filling out at 215 and eventually 235. He played mostly tackle and end, but sometimes he switched into the backfield. Fred was a boxer and good enough to have been considered a prize contender for Jess Willard's heavyweight crown. One day in Toledo, the 'Handles were playing the Maroons. Big Fred was opposed by the smallest man on the Toledo squad — Little Monk Sala who weighed 140 pounds with a pocketful of marbles. It was an absurd mismatch, and Fred pushed Sala around the way a Tiger might do with a rabbit just before gobbling him up. Sala was not amused. Finally, Fred deposited Monk on the seat of his pants in a most unceremonius fashion and went on to better things. Little Sala leaped to his feet and ran across the field, catching up with Fred just as the big guy turned around. Sala was too short to reach Fred's chin from the ground so he jumped into the air and swung with all his might. More from astonishment than from the blow, Fred went over backwards into a very embarrassing position for a heavyweight contender. Before murder could ensue, a quick-witted official tossed both Sala and Fred out of the game. As the big guy went to the sideline, still not quite sure what had happened, both teams dissolved in laughter.

At times, Frank Nesser could do unbelievable things with a football. He weighed 250 pounds, but he carried it with the grace of a ballet dancer. He was one of the greatest punters who ever lived, and 70-yard boots were common with him. He could drop kick and placekick, too. One of his efforts from placement was reported at a mind-boggling 63-yards in 1908. Even making allowances for the air-filled watermelon used for a football back then, that ain't no chip shot!

Frank was a sensational runner, but his greatest value in the backfield was as a passer. He could wing the ball like a bullet fifty or sixty yards downfield with amazing accuracy. His brothers always swore that he once completed a pass that traveled 83 yards in the air. Of course, the brothers were big enough and tough enough that they could have sworn that the ball flew from Columbus to Cincinnati and no one would have argued.

As good as he was in the backfield, Frank often played in the line where he was every bit as good. From time to time a brother would accept an offer from another team and go off to play there for a game or a season. In 1913, Frank went to Akron. When it came time to play the Akron-Panhandle game, Frank was at tackle. Lined up across from him at tackle for Columbus he found his brother Ted, who as coach had inserted himself in that position for the occasion. Supposedly, the 2,000 Akron fans stopped watching the game shortly after the kickoff and concentrated on the titanic struggle going on between the two Nessers. Although Akron won the game, the more important match was declared a draw.

Frank also starred as a baseball player who never ranked below third in batting in the Ohio State League and Southern Association in six years as a pro.

They called brother Al "Happy" but not because he affected opponents that way. He was a star guard and end who usually played at 190 pounds. He started playing with some of the sandlot teams in Columbus while still in his mid-teens and graduated to the Panhandles before he turned twenty. After 1917, Al moved to Akron where he played for many years. After almost a quarter century of football wars, he finally retired in 1931. He was a regular on several championship teams in Akron and other places. Although none of the Nessers has been named to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Al was elected to the professional branch of the Helms Foundation Hall in 1952.

The youngest of the Nesser brothers was Raymond who was a rangy 193 pounds. He's the mystery man of the family because he never seems to have appeared in the lineup although he was often advertised as being on the team in pre-game publicity. There's a story that Raymond didn't like football and didn't play it very well, but that may be a recent invention. It's known that he did some boxing. Apparently, he did not follow his brothers into the boilermaker trade, but instead became a policeman.

In the early 1920's, Ted's son Charles played for the team, making them the only father-son combo ever to appear in a pro lineup together. Reportedly, he was an adequate halfback.

To round out the family, a brother-in-law named Schneider also played for several years.

The team was at its best just before World War I. In 1914, at 7-2-0, they were contenders for the Ohio pro crown. The 1915 squad — 8-3-1 — was probably the best despite some tough losses, and the 1916 team wasn't far behind although its record of 7-5-0 was disappointing. All the brothers were in top form then. In 1917, Al went to Akron and Frank put in most of his season at Detroit. The team slipped and never really came back.

For years the team had an advantage over other clubs, one that kept them solvent while others were folding like they played on dotted lines. Because most of their players were employed by the railroad, they could ride almost anywhere free. By playing mostly on the road, the Panhandles paid no stadium rentals. On long trips, they had to find places to stay overnight, but, according to one ex-Panhandle, they often slept in haylofts to save money.

Lee Snoots, longtime halfback with the team, recalled: "Our trips were wonderful. We preferred the yearly trek to Toledo. We would leave on Saturday night and stay over at a small town called Carrothers. Here I learned how to eat, Nesser style. P. Regula owned a saloon and boarding house in Carrothers. In the rear of the house was a barn with the upstairs furnished somewhat. The Nesser boys preferred this barn to the house and after a card session, off to bed they would go. The snoring coming from that barn was a fright from midnight on. There wasn't a tenor among them. All bassos."

The snoring, however, wouldn't have bothered the Nessers; they admitted that years in the boiler factory had made them all a little deaf.

Playing on the road usually worked to the advantage of the Panhandles' pocketbook, but it couldn't have helped their performance to have constantly faced unfriendly crowds. Then, too, there were inevitable mix-ups. The worst was in 1917 when they went all the way to Lafayette, Indiana, to play the Pine Village team on Thanksgiving. When they got off the train no one met them. Eventually, they learned the Villagers had gone to Wabash to play. Far from home on a holiday, the Panhandles walked around Lafayette a little, grumbled a lot, and then got back on another train bound for Columbus.

Finding time to practice was another problem. "There was an athletic field just outside the gates," Al Nesser recalled of his days working for the railroad. "We toiled for five hours, ate lunch and then practiced on full stomachs before going back to work." For the record, the "athletic field" was topped with cinders.

However, Snoots said later that they never scrimmaged. "There weren't enough

of us to make two teams." After work, there was more practice, according to Snoots. "Sometimes we would hop a street car and head for Indianola Park. The entrance there had two swell electric carbon arc lights that provided fine illumination. Sometimes Mr. Carr would take us to a hole in the ground at Naghten and High Streets just south of Union Depot. We used to draw crowds there at night. The lights on High Street were perfect to guide our practice."

The Panhandles were still around in 1920 when the National Football League, then called the American Professional Football Association, was formed in a Canton auto agency. Carr brought the Railroaders into the new league, but he must have had some second thoughts later when his team lost every game it played against a league team.

That first year was less than a rousing success for the whole league. When the demoralized owners gathered to lick their financial wounds in 1921, things looked bleak. Aside from the football problems, there was a miserable economic situation over the whole country. There were 20,000 business failures and widespread unemployment.

Carr rallied the owners, cajoled, bullied, and bushwacked them into trying again. For his efforts, he was elected league president -- "much against my will when I was out of the room." The honor promised to be on a par with that of kamakaze flight leader. However, he filled the job so well that they got through another year. And then another. They kept Carr as president year after year as the league survived and, surprisingly, began to grow. He was still in charge at his death in 1939.

Carr was a tireless worker and a shrewd and innovative organizer. In addition to his N.F.L. duties, he served for a while as president of the Columbus minor league baseball team and as head of the early professional basketball league. When he died, he was promotion director for baseball's minor leagues.

Although Carr handled the affairs of the big organization well, even brilliantly, he couldn't do much for his Panhandles. The Nessers were getting old. The sandlot players who had filled in around them for so many years couldn't compete with the better-trained college stars coming into the growing league. The winless N.F.L. streak stretched for three years.

Finally, the Nessers retired, and Carr got himself some new players. There was an Indian summer winning season in 1923, but then things got worse again. With the Nessers went the connection with the railroad. The team nickname was changed to "Tigers," but it cost money now and lots of it to go on the road. Playing in Columbus was no good either. The city could not fill a stadium the way New York or Chicago or other big cities could. The Tigers couldn't even pay the guarantees necessary to bring the big city teams to Columbus.

Caught between a rock and a hard place, the team folded after the 1926 season.

Of all the memorable moments that no one remembers any more, one kind of sums up the Panhandles. It happened in December of 1921, long after the squad could intiminate anyone. It was really a "who cares?" game. The opponents were the unknown Louisville Brecks, not even an N.F.L. team. They'd pushed the graying railroaders around all afternoon, but somehow the game was still scoreless in the last quarter.

The Brecks had the advantage of youth, but the Panhandles had the Nessers and a bunch of other guys who had been together too long to lie down. Probably they knew that this was the last game for most of them, the last time they'd play together. Perhaps they'd even kidded about it on the train to Louisville.

Somehow, as the minutes ran out, they got a drive going. With much huffing and puffing, with hurts they couldn't shake off as they had twenty years before, the old men got the ball to the Brecks' 30-yard line.

And that was it. As a team, they'd never go any farther.

Ted Nesser called his brother Frank and Emmett Ruh together and spoke to them briefly. The Louisville players knew what was coming. Ruh was the fastest Columbus man on the field and Frank Nes-

ser was a passer.

The ball was snapped to Frank. Phil and Ted and Fred and the others pushed off on aching and creaking legs, trying desperately to give Frank a chance. Ruh fought his way downfield and into the end zone, but he was still covered. The Louisville linemen were almost on Frank.

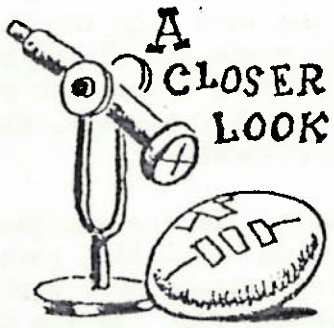
Suddenly, Frank Nesser's arm moved in a blur. A thunderbolt exploded on a slightly rising path into the end zone. Ruh leaped. The ball hit him like a cannon shell, turning him over in midair. He came down on his shoulder with a crash.

He still held the ball!

A few moments later, the game was over. The team began limping toward their train, many of them for the last time. It had been a superhuman effort, and they had nothing left.

Many years later, Al Nesser said, "Football was made for everybody to enjoy." But the meaningless game in a forgotten year against an unheard of opponent was something else.

Call it pride or ego or self-identification. Whatever it was, it gave them the right to sit aching on that train back to Columbus and say to themselves: "We're the Panhandles. We play football."



PRO MYTH ?

Guest columnist: David Shapiro

(Ed. note: David Shapiro is a stat maverick. His book The 135 Greatest Pro Running Backs cast some fresh light on measuring the performances of backs from one era against those of backs from other eras. Now he's back at work on a new and more inclusive work, casting his jaundiced eye upon the whole range of statistical proofs that TV commentators hold up as holy writ.)

Pro football tends to be awash with mythology, with the kind of chimerical stuff of which the Emperor's Clothes are usually fashioned, with offhand remarks made by participants in the game in response to a specific set of circumstances which are then passed on as Great Truths, etc. There are many. Some are so self-evident that they become platitudes after a short while — Football is a game of inches (that's as controversial a proposition as the observation that the sun rises in the east and yet it's amazing how frequently one will hear this during pro football telecasts). Others are not that self-evident but tend to become "givens" because of repetition by the "pros" (those self-same TV sportscasters). But is this second category made up of great truths?

Here we could include:

A team cannot hope to mount a successful passing attack unless it can first establish an effective ground game.

A team cannot effectively defend against a passing attack unless it is itself proficient in using the pass as an offensive weapon.

A team cannot win consistently unless it is heavily into the passing game (or some such wording).

To some extent, these (and others like them) can be somewhat tested statistically. I say somewhat because, and here we come to the most egregious use of statistical testing, nothing can ever be proved through the use of statistical testing alone! If there was anything I learned from my old professor, the eminent Fred Mills, it has to be that there are only two justifiable conclusions one can reach after con-

ducting a statistical test — the data are inconsistent with the hypothesis or the data are not inconsistent with the hypothesis. One can never say that the data prove the hypothesis.

However, statistical testing can give one something to ponder.

The test I chose to look at here is the one related to the passing attack and the ground game (the first of the three listed above). Here's how it was done.

I made the assumption that pass completion percentage is a reasonable indicator of passing success and that average yards gained per rushing attempt from scrimmage is a good measure of a team's ability to establish a ground game. There are others, these are highly relevant for the contention to be tested.

I then ranked all the teams in the NFL, the AAFC, and the AFL each year from 1936 to 1978 two ways — in descending order of pass completion percentage and in descending order of average yards gained per rushing attempt from scrimmage.

The final step was to calculate and evaluate the Spearman Coefficient of Rank Correlation for each year. These coefficients can range from +1 to -1. A coefficient of +1 would mean perfect correlation between the two rankings. Say there were eight teams playing during a given year. We would get a +1 if the team with the highest passing completion percentage also had the highest average yards gained per rushing attempt from scrimmage, the team with the second highest passing completion percentage also had the second highest average yards gained per rushing attempt, etc. Were this the case, one could hardly quarrel with the stated hypothesis.

A coefficient of -1 would mean a perfect inverse correlation. In the example given above, we would get a -1 if the team with the highest passing completion percentage would also have the lowest average yards gained per rushing attempt from scrimmage, the team with the second highest passing completion percentage also had the second lowest average yards gained per rushing attempt from scrimmage, etc. Our response to the given hypothesis then would have to be in the nature of a "Are you kidding? It looks like it's just the other way around."

A coefficient of zero or near zero means you're probably dealing with apples and oranges, or cars and windmills.

Obviously, then, a negative coefficient, a zero, or a near zero would justify one concluding that the stated proposition — in this case, whether in fact a successful passing game is dependent upon an effective accompanying ground attack — is probably not true.

Now, let's look at positive coefficients only. By using a table prepared for such a purpose, one could make a statement about a given coefficient and feel confident about the reasonableness of that statement to the degree that there was one chance in ten, or one chance in twenty, or one chance in a hundred that a dependence does indeed exist and that chance alone accounted for the "unhappy" result.

To handle the positive coefficients in this case, I used a confidence level of .05. At this level, if the rank correlation coefficient obtained for any one year was of a magnitude that might occur at least five times out of a hundred (one chance in twenty) due to chance alone without there being a "real" relationship between the two rankings, then the contention of dependence between the rankings was rejected (indicated in the table by an (R) after the coefficient. On the other hand, if the coefficient calculated for any one year was of a magnitude that might occur less frequently than five times out of a hundred etc. etc. etc., then the statement was accepted as supportable (indicated by an (A) after the coefficient.

Don't be puzzled by the fact that a +0.5030 (NFL 1939) can result in a rejection while a lower number (+0.4859, NFL 1977) can result in an acceptance. The number of teams in the league each year has a determining influence on the outcome. Essentially, the fewer the teams, the higher the coefficient must be to lead to acceptance.

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Year	League	Coefficient	Year	League	Coefficient	Year	League	Coefficient
1936	NFL	-0.0500(R)	1951	NFL	+0.6224(A)	1965	NFL	+0.2000(R)
1937	NFL	+0.5879(A)	1952	NFL	+0.3864(R)	1965	AFL	+0.9048(A)
1938	NFL	+0.0424(R)	1953	NFL	+0.3427(R)	1966	NFL	+0.2107(R)
1939	NFL	+0.5030(R)	1954	NFL	+0.1958(R)	1966	AFL	+0.8167(A)
1940	NFL	+0.1152(R)	1955	NFL	-0.1189(R)	1967	NFL	-0.2000(R)
1941	NFL	-0.3091(R)	1956	NFL	+0.6154(A)	1967	AFL	+0.3667(R)
1942	NFL	-0.0061(R)	1957	NFL	+0.2098(R)	1968	NFL	-0.2500(R)
1943	NFL	+0.0952(R)	1958	NFL	+0.5385(A)	1968	AFL	+0.7455(A)
1944	NFL	-0.0303(R)	1959	NFL	-0.0280(R)	1969	NFL	+0.2912(R)
1945	NFL	+0.5515(R)	1960	NFL	-0.1923(R)	1969	AFL	+0.0424(R)
1946	NFL	+0.2485(R)	1960	AFL	+0.3095(R)	1970	NFL	+0.2513(R)
1946	AAFC	+0.0952(R)	1961	NFL	+0.5648(R)	1971	NFL	+0.2239(R)
1947	NFL	+0.1909(R)	1961	AFL	0.0000(R)	1972	NFL	-0.0092(R)
1947	AAFC	+0.5238(R)	1962	NFL	-0.1121(R)	1973	NFL	+0.1036(R)
1948	NFL	0.2606(R)	1962	AFL	+0.6190(A)	1974	NFL	-0.1203(R)
1948	AAFC	+0.1833(R)	1963	NFL	+0.4725(A)	1975	NFL	+0.0920(R)
1949	NFL	-0.2121(R)	1963	AFL	+0.3571(R)	1976	NFL	-0.0055(R)
1949	AAFC	-0.3214(R)	1964	NFL	-0.0198(R)	1977	NFL	+0.4859(A)
1950	NFL	+0.3571(R)	1964	AFL	+0.1190(R)	1978	NFL	-0.1448(R)

You can play with the table any way you would like but it sums up this way:

All leagues, 47 rejections out of 57 years, 82.46%
NFL only, 37 rejections out of 43 years, 86.05%
AAFC only, 4 rejections out of 4 years, 100.00%
AFL only, 6 rejections out of 10 years, 60.00%

I leave it to the reader to decide for himself if it is true.

** Happy birthday to Vic Frolund, 79 years young.

** Reminder. PFRA has acquired a limited number of Robert W. Wheeler's definitive biography of Jim Thorpe, Pathway to Glory. The book usually retails at $10, but we can offer it to members at a super discount of $2. Write to PFRA, 218 Wise St., N.E., North Canton, Ohio, 44720.

** The same address should be used by anyone wishing information on PFRA membership.

** The Hall of Fame, through Joe Horrigan, expresses its thanks to Tom Nikitas for supplying some fascinating material on the Frankford Yellowjackets. His contributions have helped quite a bit on clearing up the Frankford picture.

** Incidentally, Tom is still working toward establishing regional chapters and would like to hear from other members of a similar mind.

** The results of the PFRA election are in. Bob Carroll was elected president; Bob Braunwart was named vice president. Joe Horrigan is the secretary and Vic Frolund is treasurer.

** Blame the post office. A couple of chartermemberships were delayed in the mail. We're happy to add Robert Sproule of Ontario and Denny Lynch of Ohio to our roll.

** John Hogrogian is researching the Staten Island Stapletons. He has addresses for Ken Strong and Cookie Cunningham but would like to reach some other survivors. In general, he'd appreciate any information on the Stapes. Write John at 9 Columbia St., Hartford, Conn. 06106.

** David Neft writes: "One particular interest that I have is developing statistical data for the 1920-1932 period. The only way (I think) that this can be accomplished is by finding play-by-plays and then compiling the data game-by-game. I would like to propose that if any PFRA members have, or find, play-by-plays for this period, they send a copy to me (525 East 86th St., N.Y. 10028) and I will compile the data and make copies of the results available to PFRA."

** Denny Lynch sends along this: The Cleveland Browns are celebrating their 30th year in the NFL during the '79 season, and Wendy's Old-Fashioned Hamburger operators (How do you operate a hamburger?) of Northeast Ohio are sponsoring a promotion to select the 25 greatest players in Brown history. A blue-ribbon panel of media representatives from NE Ohio selected 61 Browns' players to be listed on a ballot available at Wendy's outlets. Results will be announced in mid-November.

* We think PFRA should conduct its own poll (all ballots due by Nov. 15) and compare our results with those of the Browns' fans.

* Here are the names on the Wendy's list:

OFFENSE:

Running backs (select two) Jim Brown, Dub Jones, Leroy Kelly, Marion Motley, Bobby Mitchell, Greg Pruitt.

Receivers (select three) Pete Brewster, Gary Collins, Dub Jones, Dante Lavelli, Milt Morin, Ray Renfro, Mac Speedie, Paul Warfield.

Quarterbacks (select one) Otto Graham, Bill Nelson, Frank Ryan.

Guards (select two) Abe Gibron, Gene Hickerson, Lin Houston, Jim Ray Smith, Ed Ulinski, John Wooten.

Tackles (select two) Doug Dieken, Lou Groza, Mike McCormick, Lou Rymkus, Dick Schafrath.

Centers (select one) Frank Gatski, Art Hunter, John Morrow.

DEFENSE:

Backs (select four) Erich Barnes, Thom Darden, Ben Davis, Ross Fichtner, Tommy James, Ken Konz, Warren Lahr, Bernie Parrish, Don Paul.

Linebackers (select three) Tony Adamle, Tom Catlin, Vince Costello, Galen Fiss, Jim Houston, Walt Michaels, Chuck Noll, Tommy Thompson, Bill Willis.

Ends (select two) Len Ford, Bill Glass, Jack Gregory, Paul Wiggin, John Yonakor, George Young.

Tackles (select two) Don Colo, Bob Gain, Walter Johnson, John Kissell, Jerry Sherk.

Punters (select one) Don Cockroft, Gary Collins, Horace Gillom.

Placekickers (select one) Lou Groza, Don Cockroft.

Kick returners (select one) Leroy Kelly, Bobby Mitchell, Greg Pruitt.

Professional Football Researchers Association

WOJCIECHOWICZ
FRIEDMAN
CRONIN
ODEN

RIPLEY
DOUGLAS
FRIEDMAN
[illegible]
CALVERLY
CGAVI
LEVANG
NOVAK