

Marshall High School Football

By Chris Bradford, Dan Gard, and Michael Stepp

Football originated in the United States. It began to develop during the mid1800's. The sport grew out of soccer and rugby, two kicking games that were developed in England. Soccer is called football in many countries, but it is very different from American football.

In the United States two teams of eleven players each play football. Each team tries to score points, mainly by running or passing plays that move an oval ball across the opposing team's goal line. When this is done, a touchdown is scored. The team that carries the football is the offensive team and the team that prevents the offense from scoring is the defensive team. A good football team combines strength and speed (Marshall football is known for its strength and hard-hitting qualities.) Physical contact, especially involving blocking and tackling, is a basic part of football. The sport also requires quick reactions and thorough preparation for each game. In addition, split-second teamwork is essential. All the players on a team must work together to defeat their opponents.

Marshall football has been around since 1897 and is still popular today. Since 1897, Marshall football has changed very much. The first teams only played about three games a year. The games basically had no rules and everything went. Now in the late 1990's the game is still very rough but not as bad as it used to be. We interviewed the current head coach, John Hasten, at Marshall High School. Coach Hasten said, "It is the ultimate team sport." One person cannot win the game, but eleven people working together can win the game. Now players are padded more, and there are stricter rules to help prevent injuries. Football used to be a run-oriented game but now it is like fast-break basketball. Football is running plays mixed with passing plays; when a team needs to get down the field in a few minutes a team needs to pass the ball and take advantage of the defense's mistakes.



The first football field was just a grassy area that had two goal posts. In the late 1950's a football field was constructed on the west side of the new high school, that year Marshall played on the road for the whole season, and practiced in the inside of the track at the fairgrounds until the next year when the field was finished.

When Coach Hasten was asked who were some of the best athletes that have come out of Marshall High he said, "That is a rather hard to answer because there are so many different positions in football." Coach Hasten said Dan Gard was probably the best pulling guard he has ever had and that Michael Stepp had broken all of the passing records because of his dedication to thinking and working. Also Coach said that Christopher Bradford has the speed and size at defensive end that has made him one of the best defensive ends that Marshall has had. T'roy Johnson was an all-state linebacker and probably the best one that he has coached. He later went to Indiana State University and was the Defensive Captain his junior and senior years and is now the

Defensive Coach at Marshall High School. Dan Flowers was an all-state tightend and could catch the ball in traffic and run over people. Denny Morris did not catch as many passes as Jeff Daily but was every bit as good as him. Coach said, " A football team is based on group work and the success of the individual is based on the success of the group."

In 1987 Marshall won nine games and was 9-3 for the season and made the Quarter Finials in 2A. The 1983 and 1997 seasons Marshall football didn't start off well but ended with Marshall beating Casey and going to the Playoffs. Hasten says that these were successful seasons because the teams pulled together to win games. Coach Hasten says that there are some good things that can come for the future of Marshall football. He says we are on a rebound: the year 1994 was a good year but the year after that was not so good with a record of 2-7. Coach Hasten said, "While we were in some games part of the time I just never thought we were in sync on things, but we are getting better." Hasten says that he is seeing more and more dedication and if that continues there will be good things happen for Marshall football. Coach says that although there are more things for kids to do, they still want to stay in shape all year round.

When asked if he had any interesting stories to tell about football since he has been head coach. He said,

"I can remember some wonderful games were games that people say we shouldn't have won, I can remember some heart breaking losses that a fumble at the goal line at the last seconds or something but, I can also remember the seniors shaking hands after their last ball game. I can remember a lot of kids who have graduated that come back just to stand on the sideline because they want to be part of it again those are all things that are important because 'Once a Lion Always a Lion'."



Football is one of the hardest athletic games to play, because of its mental and physical competitiveness. Now with advanced technology, football plays can be ran on computers and then



faxed down to the sidelines to be ran on the field. Marshall football has been around for a long time and is still doing well today.