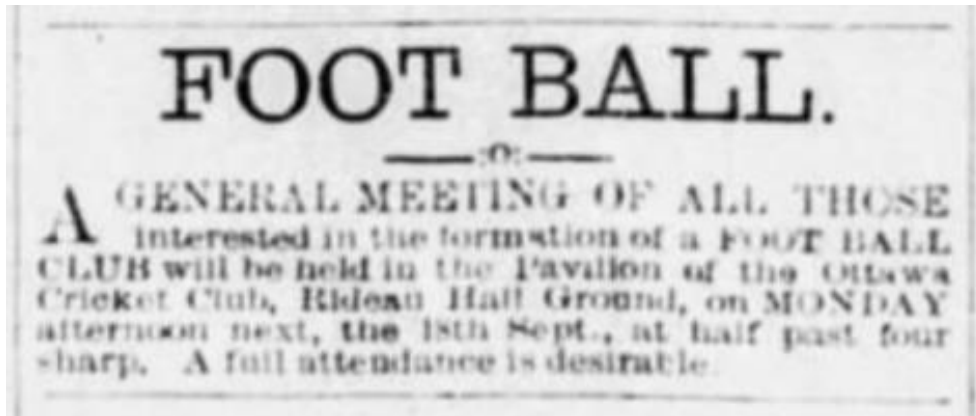


A small advertisement appeared in the Ottawa Daily Citizen on September 16, 1876 inviting those interested in forming a “Foot Ball” club to meet on Monday afternoon, 18 September next, at 4:30pm sharp at the pavilion of the Ottawa Cricket Club located at Rideau Hall, the home of Canada’s Governor General.



Announcing a meeting to form the Ottawa Football Club, Ottawa Daily Citizen, 16 September 1876.

The meeting went on a long time as it was adjourned until the following evening when “a goodly number of gentlemen” assembled in a private room at the Russell House hotel. There, on 19 September 1876, a club to be called the Ottawa Football Club was formed with thirty-four members. The president of the new sports club was Mr. Allan Gilmour, a pioneering Ottawa lumberman for whom Gilmour Street is named.

There seems to have been little doubt that a team would be established as the uniforms for the Ottawa Club’s footballers had already been ordered from England and were expected to arrive in Ottawa in ten days or less. The jerseys and stockings were in cerise and French grey—the colours of the new team. Their trousers were navy blue knickerbockers.

The new football club wasted no time in getting on the field. The following Saturday, the Ottawa Football Club took on the Aylmer Football Club. The game lasted one and a half hours with Ottawa emerging victorious. The score of the closely contested game was not reported. But Ottawa secured its first victory when Mr. Sherwood kicked the ball through the Aylmer goal.

During much of their early years, the team played in either the Quebec or Ontario Rugby Unions under the name the Ottawa Football Club, or more colloquially known as the “Ottawas” or even the “Senators.” It didn’t get the moniker, the “Rough Riders,” until 1898, the year the team won its first Canadian championship title.

1898 was the year of the Spanish-American War in which the United States intervened on the side of Cuban revolutionaries against Spanish colonial rule. In this conflict, Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, later President Roosevelt, came to popular attention as the commander of the “Rough Riders” who distinguished themselves at the Battle of San Juan Hill. Up until then, a rough rider was synonymous with a horse breaker. Roosevelt’s regiment apparently received its nickname owing to many of its members being “bronco busters” from the western plains.

From: [HTTPS://TODAYINOTTAWASHISTORY.WORDPRESS.COM/2022/09/10/OTTAWA-FOOT-BALL-CLUB-A-K-A-ROUGH-RIDERS/](https://todayinottawashistory.wordpress.com/2022/09/10/ottawa-foot-ball-club-a-k-a-rough-riders/)