

## 'Round And About

By Tompy Shield

One day last fall at a football game in Toronto, a group of sports writers were discussing the system in vogue in reporting lineups and summaries of gridiron contests. It was the general opinion that listing a starting team was a waste of time and energy, and not worth the effort involved in interviewing coaches or team managers prior to a game with a view of getting such a lineup.

The reason given was simple, and decisive: Most starting lineups given out and sent over press wires did not stand up for the opening kickoff. In all good faith, a coach would list his starting lineup and then be forced to switch personnel at the last moment, depending on which team took the kickoff and whether it was necessary to have an offensive or defensive team out there at kickoff time.

On this particular day, it was the consensus of opinion that the best way to handle the problem would be to list all players taking part in the game for a team, aligning them in their proper categories as backs, quarterbacks, flying wings, etc. This suggestion was passed along to Jack Sullivan, of The Canadian Press, and the CP's sports editor must have given it some thought, for a recent circular asked opinions of sports writers on adopting this procedure as standard for Canadian football. It is probable that all those included in the poll will vote in favor of the idea.

### Making Things Clearer

Another query in the same circular probably will result in uniform nomenclature being adopted throughout Canada for football coverage. In the past few years, with emphasis placed on U.S. imports and the trend towards U.S. terminology, there has been a hit-and-miss mixture of Canadian and U.S. names for positions. We read one program last fall where a Western Canada flying wing was officially listed as a "flanker", and no mention was made of the position of flying wing. There was a mixture of backs, fullbacks, insides, tackles, guards, ends, scatbacks, etc., etc.

This writer stood up for retention of Canadian nomenclature at that time, contending that the positions on a Canadian team were listed in the Canadian Rugby Football Union's rule book, and until such time as the names of these positions were changed by CRU executives, they should be used as listed. The CRU is the governing body of football in Canada, and, while a player might be a tackle in North Dakota, he was a middle wing when playing in Canada. Or a player in Michigan could be a guard there, but he became an inside wing when he moved to a club north of the border.

To arrive at some sort of standard team-position names, the CP circular asked the sports writers to vote and express either approval or disapproval of the idea of listing the players on Canadian teams as: Flying wings, halves, quarters, centers, guards, tackles and ends. With Western Canada leading the way, it is probable that this change will be approved. Under present-day conditions, this writer is voting for such a change.

### Closer To American Game

This brings us around to the point where the Canadian game has been drawn one more step closer to the American game. Now, if this change is adopted, team positions will be the same in Canada as in the U.S., with the exception of the flying wing, which is the twelfth place on a Canadian team. The U.S. teams have no need for such a name for a position, as their eleven-man teams have no such position.

So, in future, it is probable that Canadian readers will see the flying wings, halfbacks and quarterbacks listed as the only members of a team retaining the Canadian nomenclature. The snaps now become centers; the inside wings are guards; the middle wings are tackles, and the outside wings are the ends of the future. Some of the terms are appropriate, such as that of end. The man in that position is the outside, or end, of the line. Application of the terms tackle and guards to men playing between the ends and the center is something that might be debated. It is our opinion that the word center is descriptive of the player filling the position previously designated as snap.

So, while awaiting a result of the poll, it seems safe to predict that football fans in the immediate future will be reading the lineups as indicated above. If it is adopted by Canadian sports writers from Coast to Coast, at least there will be a common understanding of what positions are being played by individuals, once the fans get accustomed to the fact that the new terms have been adopted throughout the nation.

### Playing Rules Suit Fans

Changing the method of listing lineups, and changing the positions' names may be all right, but it is hoped that the rule-makers will not immediately go into session to consider or make wholesale changes. It seems to be the consensus of opinion that our Canadian football game is quite satisfactory to Canadian fans just as it is at present.

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