When the one Great Scorer comes to write against your name,
he marks—not whether you won or lost—but how you played
the game.

—Grantland Rice, "Alumnus Football"

I believe that the game of life and the game of football have much
in common, especially if you are going to play them to win.

—Rip Engle

Situated in the Cumberland Valley, just north of the Mason-Dixon
Line, is a sleepy little town that has long been overshadowed by
nearby Civil War sites such as Gettysburg, Chambersburg, and
Antietam, and the larger metropolises of Harrisburg, Baltimore,
and Washington, DC. Virtually no notable persons or events have
been associated with Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, but from the
1930s to the 1950s this municipality of about 12,000 experienced
a strong sense of communal pride from its football teams that had
far-reaching consequences.\(^1\) The key figure behind this phenom-
enon was a young mathematics teacher named Charles "Rip"
Engle, who for over a decade coached the local high school team
to an unprecedented series of victories and stimulated a general
interest in football until he entered the college ranks in 1941.\(^2\)
Most of his players then went off to war but, on returning, some of them, inspired by the values of sportsmanship and wholesome fun advocated by Engle, formed the Waynesboro Tigers. From 1947 to 1952 these gridiron warriors not only compiled a remarkable record over other teams, from larger towns in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, but they also aroused the entire community. Sometimes nearly half the town’s population attended the home games, and opponents wanted to play there because the gate was so large!

No less important, however, was the legacy Engle left on college football. Building on his Waynesboro experience, he went on to coach successful programs at Western Maryland (now McDaniel) College, Brown University, and Pennsylvania State University. At the latter two schools he became the mentor of Joe Paterno, who served under Engle as player and assistant coach for nineteen years. Indeed much of the success for Paterno’s highly acclaimed Nittany Lions at Penn State, like that of the Tigers in Waynesboro, may be attributed to Engle. Both compiled enviable records, exhibited integrity, and instilled a sense of pride in their respective communities.

Semi-professional football, unlike college or professional endeavors, has attracted virtually no scholarly attention. The William Gudelunas and Stephen Couch study of the Pottsville Maroons comes close. It borrows Benjamin Rader’s “subcommunities” concept to explain how a region beset with ethnic and religious divisions was “unified by one overarching goal” through football. But Waynesboro was a far more homogeneous community where largely Protestants of Germanic descent experienced no serious cultural cleavages. Few could gainsay the sesquicentennial committee’s recognition in 1947 of “150 years of ‘good living.’” Nor does Tom Jable’s explanation of the transition to professional sports from high status athletic clubs in Pittsburgh provide a better fit for the Waynesboro Tigers. Taking a broader view, sociologist Gregory Stone concludes that “sport as a source of solidarity can be found wherever it is a representation of the collective community.” Unlike large cities where this phenomenon was most evident with professional sports, it was most prevalent in the high schools of smaller towns, according to Stone. That it could also take root in the semi-professional ranks and be inspired by a single agent seems beyond the ken of historians and sociologists.

The town that fostered this phenomenon is located in a rich agricultural area characterized by small well-kept farms and commercial orchards. The industry that took root in Waynesboro in the mid-nineteenth century was largely intended to facilitate local farming, starting with George Frick’s
development of steam traction engines that could pull plows, run threshing equipment, and power sawmills and (later) refrigeration systems that could store and convey meat and produce. Similar agricultural interests were served by a firm founded by Peter Geiser, a Frick Company employee, who invented a grain separator. The Landis brothers, Abraham and Franklin, came from Lancaster County to make farm machinery for Geiser Manufacturing but in the process developed grinding and threading machines for more widespread industrial use and founded Landis Tool Company (1897) and Landis Machine Company (1903). These firms formed the nucleus for Waynesboro's dynamic industrial growth.

Local historians note the town's population swelled from 1,988 in 1880 to 11,000 in 1920, and Waynesboro claimed the motto of “The Leading Manufacturing Center of the Cumberland Valley.” In the midst of this civic boom, the earliest organized football team in Waynesboro began in 1896 and was made up of high school students who were independently organized and supported by local merchants, ticket sales, and collections. Prior to World War I a Waynesboro Business College team played a team from the Carlisle Indian Industrial School that included the legendary Jim Thorpe. The Record Herald, the town newspaper, shows that organized high school football was being played as early as the fall of 1924.

Similar sports opportunities were also emerging for a young man in a small town about a hundred miles due west of Waynesboro. Charles Albert Engle, son of Irving and Cora (Newman) Engle, was born on March 26, 1906, in Elk Lick (now Salisbury) in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. “I’ve come from as far down as people can come,” Engle said, recalling the lessons of life he learned from driving a mule in the coal mines at age fourteen. “That mule taught me a lot of lessons.” But the greatest influence on Engle was his mother, a devout member of the Church of the Brethren, according to Engle’s son Chip. She not only went to church and read the Bible “all the time” but also presented an Amish-like image. “My picture of her is in a black dress and a little white cap.” When her less-religious husband moved away, Cora Engle’s influence on Rip and his five siblings became intense. “They were very close to their mother and tried to help her,” Chip recalls. “She was very morally upright, and I think that’s where he got his sense of morality.” As a youngster Engle was nicknamed “Rip” for ripping his trousers four times in a week playing games at school.

In 1925 Engle graduated from Salisbury High School, where he had played basketball for two years. Then he furthered his education and sporting interests by teaching in Elk Lick Township schools, attending...
California State Normal School (now California University of Pennsylvania), and playing on the Salisbury Cardinals semi-pro basketball team, which won the Pennsylvania-Maryland League championship in 1926. Engle first played football at tiny Blue Ridge College in New Windsor, Maryland, from 1926 to 1928. He compiled a 2.86 grade point average while his team, the Fighting Vultures, had a 4-18-1 record from 1924 to 1927, including a 0-110 loss to Temple University in 1927. On transferring to Western Maryland, Rip played right end under legendary coach Dick Harlow on the 1929 undefeated team that shut out Georgetown, Temple, and the University of Maryland. The college Bulletin claimed the Green Terrors had “the most successful season of any football team in the country.” With eleven wins in eleven weeks, it ranked second nationally to the University of Pittsburgh. The basketball team that Engle captained, however, only won a single game that year. He graduated from Western Maryland in 1930 as a math major with a 2.64 average and, having lettered in four sports, received the Alexander Medal as the best all-around athlete of his class.

Harlow provided Engle with more than sound coaching and an instinct to win. He instilled character in his players and an appreciation for culture. “The hobbies of this soft-spoken scholar [Harlow] included collecting flowers, birds’ eggs, stamps, and Chippendale chairs,” according to sports writer Ken Rappoport. He was “intellectual, yet rugged” according to another source. Harlow believed in “clean living” and taught his boys to “speak pleasantly,” to “win with grace & lose with grace,” and to “never cry when going is tough.” He wanted to “keep the game rough” as football was the “only game left that girls can’t play.” Harlow taught his players not to swear, according to a New York reporter. “Swearing frightens birds.” He later advised Rip, “Don’t let the kids ever know by look or word or action that you are downhearted. That is what causes 60–0 scores,” and that he should “never have a thought of failing.” It was Harlow, Engle recalled, who gave him the idea to be a coach. No less important to Engle was the connections he established through Harlow who had played and graduated from Penn State and served as assistant coach for its famous 1912 M-Squad, which posted a perfect (8-0) season. Rip’s uncle, Lloyd “Dad” Engle, had played left tackle. Harlow went on to a brilliant coaching career as head coach at Penn State (1915–17), Western Maryland (1926–34), and Harvard (1935–42, 1945–47). All of these postings would eventually accrue to Rip’s benefit.
Jobs were scarce during the Depression, but Waynesboro school-board members K. G. Potter and Charles Speck, at Harlow’s urging, hired Engle to...
teach mathematics and to coach football and basketball for $1,600 in 1930. Even after his marriage to Mary “Sunny” Broughton in 1931, Rip lived with the Speck family. The friendship of Joe Lohman, a local dentist, also aided the bonding process. Initially Engle was more successful as a basketball coach (43-15) than in football (14-10-4), winning two Cumberland Valley championships in the former during his first three years. Still, more excitement came from football. “Seldom before, has so much enthusiasm been worked up over a series of football games,” observed the Wabian yearbook, even after just five wins, two losses, and two ties in 1930. Much of Engle’s coaching style came from Harlow. “I used a lot of the stuff he taught me,” Engle recalled. “It was sound for years afterward.” Then came the 1933 season in which the Tornado went undefeated with ten victories in nine weeks and a 9-7 win over “ancient rival” Chambersburg. Students attributed this success to their coach, “the man who has put Waynesboro High on the map of the athletic world. . . . We owe it to Rip.” Though winning seasons, 1934 and 1935 were not spectacular, and the latter was marred by a dispute over an official’s call in the Chambersburg game, leading Waynesboro to leave the field and forfeit the game. It ended in “a near riot.” Chambersburg was taken off the football schedule for the next four years and basketball for three.

These turned out to be Rip’s best years, with a 41-5 record from 1936 to 1940, perfect seasons in 1937 and 1939, and a 1940 win over Chambersburg. On Thanksgiving Day of 1939, over 6,000 fans watched the Tornado beat Hagerstown (Maryland), 8-0, at the school stadium on Fairview Avenue, outclassing their opponent with seventeen first downs to four. Part of Engle’s secret to success was attracting families with promising athletes who lived in Quincy Township or Washington Township to move to Waynesboro and play on his teams. After the Levick family moved from Washington Township in 1937, their talented sons—Chase, Tommy, and Bill—became gridiron stars for both the high school and the Waynesboro Tigers. Also, to accommodate Rip’s need for good players, school authorities enabled Don Shockey, a big and talented eighth grader, to skip a grade. Shockey became a mainstay for four of Engle’s best seasons, later a star at the University of Maryland, and eventually a Tiger coach. Rip also benefited from the ability of brothers Charles (Brownie) and James (Footsie) Brightful. Footsie was critical to Engle’s 1939 undefeated season, but he was not able to play teams from Hagerstown or Martinsburg, West Virginia. Owing to racial discrimination, “colored youths are barred from participating in athletics south of
the Mason-Dixon Line,” noted the Record Herald. “Waynesboro has always maintained friendly relations by not playing the colored boys against southern teams. Should Waynesboro waive that friendliness, it is almost assured that relations with southern schools would be immediately severed.” Neither Waynesboro nor Rip was inclined to deny blacks opportunities in sports, but it was a different world two miles south of the city. Though Footsie was denied the opportunity to set some all-time school records, he went on to star at the predominantly African American Morgan State College near Baltimore. By the time Rip left town, his teams had won eight conference titles in eleven years with a 76-21-7 record.

For Engle, however, winning was never enough. He also took his teaching duties seriously. Joe Newman, who played on his 1938 and 1939 teams, recalls him as a good teacher. “You had to pass your grades. He pushed that.” But for Engle the real lessons of life were taught on the gridiron where, according to Newman, “he was pretty strict with his players.” Leroy Maxwell, who played fullback on Rip’s first two teams, recalls carrying the ball up to the goal in a game against Boswell High in Somerset County. “There was a big pileup, and I sneaked the ball to Bud Kauffman who was over the goal.” The referee saw it, however, and disallowed the score. Rip was so upset with his players that he pulled his first team out of the game and Waynesboro lost, 14-0. Reports in the Wabian of Engle’s coaching prowess show as much interest in how he played the game as his winning record. Rip’s achievement in 1935 was attributed to his “untiring efforts, his methodical procedure in carrying out details, his sincerity of purpose, his lofty motives of fair play, his example of character in his boys, and the will to win squarely.” Instrumental to his success in 1936 was “his high standards of clean playing and living.” In 1937 Rip hung a code of sportsmanship in the locker room which his players signed.

1. Keep your temper.
2. Keep faith with your teammates.
4. Keep a stout heart in defeat.
5. Keep your pride under in victory.
6. Keep the rules.
7. Keep a sound soul, a clean mind, and a healthy body.
8. Play the game.
“He just kept after us all the time,” says Newman. “When you went out to practice, you practiced.” Engle was “pretty strict with the players” and “didn’t like people staying up late.” Paula Ringer, then dating her future husband Bob who played on the 1939 team, recalls a 10 o’clock curfew that Rip enforced by riding around town and checking players’ homes. “Come ten, Bob was off the porch and gone.” Engle would also stop at the Wyand Baking Company to see if his players were getting butterfly buns being made for the next day. “They used to love them. By the time he came, they were all gone,” according to Paula. What he gave to them, however, was a “love of the game. And Rip was a very clean sort of person. He wanted his players to live clean.” Though destined for greater places, Engle had fond memories of Waynesboro. “We had a lot of fun,” he later stated.15

Engle carried his positive values and spirit to Western Maryland College when he left Waynesboro in 1941 to pursue a master’s degree in physical education and coach freshman football and basketball. Rip was recruited by Charles Havens, who had captained Western Maryland’s undefeated 1929 team and was now head football coach and athletic director. Before leaving for Brown University a year later, Engle posted an undefeated season with two recruits from his Waynesboro teams. Curly Coffman, observed the Washington, whose “spirit added greatly to the team,” was known for his “hard hitting ability,” and Joe Kugler, a 220-pound tackle, had “a mental attitude above reproach and the strength to back up a ‘never-say-die’ spirit.”16 Kugler would later convey Engle’s outlook on life as head coach of the Waynesboro Tigers.

In the meantime, enthusiasm over Engle’s winning ways was being imparted through sandlot teams to Waynesboro youth not attending college. Whether Rip had a hand in their formation cannot be determined, but in the early thirties he played on a semi-pro club in Baltimore and would often take some boys with him to learn from more mature players. He also attended games of local teams and provided coaching tips. The earliest record of such a contest dates from November 1935 when the South End Green Dragons defeated the Junior All Stars, 20-7. Several days later the Dragons lost to the North End Bombers, 19-0, in what was to become an intra-town rivalry. Two of the Dragons had played on Rip’s 1934 squad. In 1936 the Bombers won seven straight games until beaten by the South End on Thanksgiving, 6-0. Other sandlot teams, Bears, Lions, and West End, also emerged in Waynesboro. Joe Kugler, a freshman and too young to play for Rip, scored two touchdowns for the Bears against the Lions.
“RIP” ENGLE, THE TIGERS, AND THE SPIRIT OF WAYNESBORO

In 1937 the North End and South End teams were engaging teams from Hagerstown and Chambersburg. By this time most home games were played on Sunday afternoons on E-B Field (later Memorial Park), a lot owned by Emerson-Brantingham, a local manufacturing firm. Paula Ringer recalls there were officials and lines, but the bleachers were rusty and the playing field uneven. According to Bud Hovis, a South End player, some of the games were spontaneous get-togethers and teams could not afford uniforms. When asked how they could tell who was who, Joe Newman replied, “Aw, we all knew each other!” But by the end of 1937 the South End was reorganized by Art Manahan, who had played for Rip in 1931. Leftover shoulder pads, pants, and shoes were secured from teams at Mercersburg Academy and United Brethren Orphanage at Quincy, and players paid for their own jerseys. When the uniforms arrived they were orange and black, so the Green Dragons changed their name to the Fighting Tigers and became the year’s sandlot champions.17

In 1938 the Tigers remained undefeated and unscored-on for nine games prior to their engagement with the Bombers on Thanksgiving. “One of the largest crowds to ever witness a sandlot encounter in this vicinity” was predicted by the Record Herald, but only about 100 shivering fans showed up to watch the Tigers win 12-0 in the snow and sleet. The sandlots were now attracting more of Rip’s protégés, including nineteen former Tornado men who made up the new Waynesboro Lions. Despite high hopes, this aggregation managed just a scoreless tie against the Brunswick (Maryland) Railroaders. On November 18, 1939, a team from the Quincy Orphanage handed the Tigers their first loss in twenty-eight starts, but they defeated North End (6-0) for the annual sandlot crown. Much publicity surrounded the 1940 city championship played at the high school stadium. The Bombers were beefed up by players from Rip’s former teams, the local Lions Club provided sponsorship, and several hundred advance tickets were sold. The unfortunate result was a scoreless deadlock. “Less than a hundred fans,” according to the newspaper, “braved a cold drizzle to witness nearly an hour of eventless football.” It was to be the last recorded game of Waynesboro’s sandlot teams until the end of World War II.18

Yet semi-professional football was firmly established, bolstered by the excitement Engle had generated and the participation of his high school veterans. Especially with the South End Tigers, there was an organizational nucleus and a winning tradition. When the war ended in 1945 there was no evidence of sandlot play, but in October 1946 the South End Tigers
reemerged and played an eight-game season, replete with coaches, local sponsors, and a staff. The team, observed the Record Herald, was “composed almost entirely of former high school gridders, who served their country through World War II and augmented by a number of sandlot stars.” With A. J. “Doc” Gardenhour, a local electrician, heading the front office, financial support from the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, and Eagles Club, and coaching by Joe Kugler and Robert “Chub” Woolridge, another of Rip’s former stars, “the Tigers have gone all-out to organize a strong club and secure the necessary backing for next season.”19

It was a composite of the sandlot clubs from the 1930s. “The youths play a hard game of football,” the local paper noted prior to their showdown with the Frederick VFW on November 22. “Playing in nondescript outfits, hand-me-downs and second hand equipment from a dozen different sources, the squad is none too impressive but in action the boys go all-out in a hard clean game.” Despite an icy wind, 600 fans showed up to watch the Tigers defeat Frederick, 2–0. Also on hand were the high school band and a large number of students who “jammed the school’s usual cheering section and sent up cheers for the Tigers instead of the Tornado.” It helped the popularity of the Tigers that the Tornado had experienced lackluster seasons since Rip left in 1941. The Tigers were filling a void. On Thanksgiving about 1,000 fans showed up to cheer what was now dubbed the “Waynesboro Tigers” to a 20–0 victory against the South End Athletic Club of Hagerstown. By contrast the Tornado lost to Hagerstown High School, 46–7. The magic imparted by Rip a decade earlier was paying off.20

On March 1, 1947, the Tigers were incorporated. By this time Engle had been coaching at Brown for five seasons, yet he continued to visit Waynesboro and stay with the Lohman family. On April 1947 he spoke to a sports banquet at the YMCA where he stressed religion and counseled that “successful athletics are a combination of coaching, material and community participation.” Waynesboro celebrated its sesquicentennial in July by prominently showcasing the city as a crossroads of agriculture and industry. For a week its citizens celebrated with parades, beauty, beard, and band contests, banquets, a fashion show, a visit from the governor, a historical pageant, and broadcasts of Breakfast in Hollywood by radio celebrity Tom Breneman (a Waynesboro native) from the high school auditorium.21 “The community was really involved,” recalls Louis Barlup, later town mayor for seventeen years. The sesquicentennial leadership was “very capable. Then came the Tigers on the heels of that. There was definitely an upswing and carryover.”22
The celebration was an unprecedented event that involved all sectors of the community and generated a high degree of enthusiasm and civic pride. It was the kind of bonding the Tigers needed to prepare local citizens to support their undertaking. They did. On Labor Day 3,500 fans watched the Tigers defeat the Hagerstown Athletic Club, 13-6, at the school stadium before disposing of six more opponents over the next two months. In an October encounter with the Harrisburg Bears, temporary end-zone bleachers had to be installed for an overflow crowd of over 5,000. It was cited by the Record Herald as “hard played from whistle to whistle” and “one of the cleanest in Waynesboro’s gridiron history.” Most Tiger victories were one-sided. Although the Martinsburg American Legion team “had a wealth of experience in semi-pro ball” with linemen over six feet and averaging 220 pounds, it was crushed by the Tigers, 44-0. Robert “Quack” Geesaman was the leading ground gainer, and the team’s favorite weapon was the quarterback sneak with Dick Margin carrying the ball ninety-nine times, averaging 2.9 yards per carry. The only notable
weaknesses were in the air, where gains were less impressive, and pass defense was often lax. Another liability was injuries. After the Martinsburg game four linemen and a back were out. Still the Tigers roared through their first season undefeated with only one minor setback, a 6-6 tie with the Baltimore Marines. In the Engle tradition, it was a “clean, hard-fought ball game.” By the end of the season, the Tigers compiled an 11-0-1 record. An estimated 31,447 fans saw them play, including about 8,000 in two Hagerstown away games. Receipts totaled $14,488, while disbursements were $9,216, leaving a balance of $5,272, some of which was donated to local charities.

It was a remarkable performance for a voluntary organization, and the community showed support not only by its attendance but by small tokens of gratitude, ranging from postgame chocolate milk from a local dairy to a first aid cabinet from employees of Landis Machine Company where some of the players worked. R. G. Mowrey, superintendent of county schools, congratulated the Tigers for “providing such clean sport” and winning “the admiration and respect of all civic-minded persons. . . . Not only are you providing entertainment and recreation for those who are privileged to attend the games but . . . you are aiding charitable institutions. . . . This is one of the best examples of good citizenship that I know.” A Tigers spokesman reciprocated, thanking the city for its loyalty. “The attendance during the year far exceeded our highest hopes.” Reflecting Engle’s spirit, the Tigers hoped to “stimulate the highest type of sportsmanship” by being “a living example of the value of hard training, clean living, intelligent thinking and a true competitive spirit.” Courtesy of the team, Santa Claus (local trucker Dan Fitz) made his first public appearance at halftime of the Tigers’ final game and distributed 500 bags of candy to town children. Another indication of their popularity was the launching of a Waynesboro Tigers basketball team that played in a league against teams in the Hanover area.

Community support was critical to the Tigers’ football success in 1947, facilitated by the fact that ten of their twelve games were played at home. Waynesboro not only had a fine stadium but it also was one of the first in the area with lights, thanks to Works Progress Administration funding in the 1930s. While the high school played on Friday nights, the Tigers played on Saturdays, a prime entertainment time for families. Hence turnout was high, and teams from other towns were eager to play in Waynesboro because they were guaranteed a good gate. “Most of our games were played here because we got the crowds,” boasted a former player. “You go to other places, they’d get only four or five hundred people. We could give them five or six hundred bucks, and that was more than they could make in a whole season.” Paula
“RIP” Engle, the Tigers, and the Spirit of Waynesboro

Ringer concurs that other teams “made money by coming here. The Tigers lost money by going elsewhere.” Many fans also attended team practices.

That home games helped the Tigers gain a winning edge over their opponents is validated by sociological studies. “In the midst of an assembly animated by a common passion,” observed Emile Durkheim, “we become susceptible of acts and sentiments of which we are incapable when reduced to our own forces.” In applying this construct to home advantage in sport, Barry Schwartz and Stephen Barsky show that local fan support is “as important a determinant of performance as team quality.” Furthermore,

if residents invest themselves in favor of their local athletic teams, it is partly because those teams are exponents of a community to which they feel themselves somehow bound and in whose destiny they find themselves in some way implicated. . . . A local team is not only an expression of the moral integrity of a community; it is also a means by which that community becomes conscious of itself and achieves its concrete representation.

As Mark Mizruchi shows, smaller towns like Waynesboro, having “fewer alternative outlets for expression of community pride,” would exhibit an

---

FIGURE 3: The 1947 Waynesboro Tigers, with such key performers as Wallace “Chase” Levick (91 lower left), Joe Newman (31), Tom Levick (31), Robert “Quack” Geesaman (11), Leroy “Woody” Woodring (30), and Eldon “Buck” Sheldon (88), and flanked by coaches Robert “Monk” Ringer (l.) and Joe Kugler (r.).

Source: 1947 Tiger Yearbook.
even “greater sense of community identification.” Hence the home advantage would be “more pronounced.” Another reason for the Tigers’ large fan base was that virtually all of them had played high school football locally. In fact, the Tiger constitution specified that players “must have attended school in either Waynesboro, Washington Township or Quincy Township.” Many fans knew the players personally from living in the same neighborhoods, attending the same schools and churches, and working in the same shops. It was a very homogeneous, ethnocentric environment.29

There were other factors, too, that contributed to Tiger fortunes. The team was composed primarily of two demographic elements—veterans of World War II and former players of Rip Engle. Eldon “Buck” Sheldon, who played right tackle, recalls that he and his teammates had really experienced the war.

It cleared their minds by playing football. Every now and then one of them would sit down and say, boy I remember Okinawa, and then they would start talking. I think that helped get the guys to play. The first game when we lined up the first eleven guys, every one of them had been overseas. There weren’t any young ones. . . . We were veterans. We hit it at the right time because everybody was coming home and wanted something to do.

Team members concur that the need for an outlet for their pent-up energies in a small town with limited recreational opportunities was a motivating factor.30 The Tigers also benefited from having many veterans from Engle’s championship teams of the thirties come to relive their previous glory in a new guise. Fifteen of the thirty-one men featured in the 1947 Tiger yearbook had played for him. That they were coached by Joe Kugler and Bob “Monk” Ringer, two of his devoted followers, ensured continuance of his approach to the game. Had they also had the services of one of Rip’s greatest stars, tackle Glenn Henicle, who was killed in the South Pacific during the war, the Tigers could have been even better. On board ship in 1944 Henicle wrote to Rip that he and teammate Don Peiffer often reminisced about “old times” and how remarkable it was that “we’ve stuck together since we’ve been in the Corp. . . . Just last night we were talking about how angry you got when we went to Harrisburg to play football and you caught me eating cherry pie. Do you remember? We got beat. . . . Wish I had a piece of that cherry pie now.”31 Fond memories of Rip lingered long after playing days, even in the wartime South Pacific.
The impact of his coaching was also evident in the loss of another Engle protégé during the 1948 season. Chub Woolridge had played for him in 1940, was a Navy World War II veteran, and a founder and captain of the 1947 Tigers. Chub was “the main cog in the Kugler-Ringer machine and was the coolest, most dependable player on the field,” noted the Record Herald. When what was thought to be kidney stones turned out to be cancer, there was an outpouring of concern. Prior to the new season his teammates named him most valuable player for 1947, visited him at his Baltimore hospital, and presented him with an autographed football. “That football signed by the squad meant more to me than someone giving me a thousand dollars,” he told his coach.

But it doesn’t put me on a hill by myself, whatever credit I got for playing football. I know the other 10 fellows helped me obtain such credit. It still takes 11 men to play the game. I found that out in 1940 when we played Hanover. We lost because one man didn’t cooperate until it was too late. That man was me. I thought then I knew all the football a guy could learn but after the game Rip Engle taught me something I’ll never forget. It takes 11 men cooperating together to win and the things which makes football heroes are the other 10 men doing a little bit more than his share... I don’t want to break away altogether because I can play no more. I still want to be with the squad.

Engle visited Woolridge, too, from Brown and also attended the Tigers “training camp” one evening in Waynesboro. “In fact ‘Rip’ took over for a while,” observed the local paper.

Discovering that the timing was bad on several offensive maneuvers, the Bruin boss quickly discovered the cause and made corrections. He outlined and explained several new plays and brought the Tiger formations up to par with their particular style of play.32

Indeed Engle, a prolific correspondent, continued to send plays to Tiger coaches from Brown. Engle was also likely responsible for a subsequent scrimmage with the Green Terrors from his alma mater in Westminster and the recruitment of Ray Topper, a Tiger tackle, to attend Brown.33 When Woolridge died in early November, recalls Louis Barlup, “the whole
community grieved” and the Tigers paid tribute to him by staging a fundraiser to donate $500 to the Damon Runyon Cancer Fund.\textsuperscript{34}

The loss of one of their most beloved players seemed to strengthen the Tigers’ resolve and further enlist community support in 1948. Labor Day, declared “Chub Woolridge Day,” featured their first game, a benefit baseball game at Memorial Park, and a parade from City Hall to the stadium. The festivities had a patriotic flavor, combining honor for a fallen veteran with loyalty to the town’s combatants on the gridiron. A holiday crowd of over 5,000 watched their heroes crush the Martinsburg American Legion, 44-0. Critical to continuing the Tiger winning streak was the addition of Ray Dull who, according to the team’s 1953 yearbook, was “one of the fastest and hardest running backs ever to hit Waynesboro.” After four games he had gained 326 yards, or 7.1 per carry, more than the rest of the team combined. For the next two games, against the Lykens Rockets and the Harrisburg Eagles, he thrilled fans with runs of seventy-four and sixty yards respectively. So great was fan support that two-thirds of the 600 attending the Lykens away game, including the Wayne Band, were from Waynesboro. What most impressed the host newspaper was the community backing of their opponents.

The Tiger club is a town sponsored project. The financial support to start the team was given by the fifteen churches of the town. Now in the second year, the officers and members of the association including many of the town’s top citizens, among them businessmen, doctors and ministers, have combined their efforts and produced a team comparable to many of our colleges, not only in actual playing of the game, but in spectator spirit and entertainment.

When the Tigers played the South End Athletic Club in Hagerstown “the majority” of the 4000 fans were from Waynesboro. Fan support was so great in Waynesboro that streets were jammed with cars in a four-block radius of the stadium.\textsuperscript{35}

It was no doubt the prospect of a sizable gate that prompted the Martinsburg American Legion to grant the Tigers “special dispensation to use Negro players if they desire.” They had none, but all receipts after expenses from their game with the all-black Anacostia Eagles on Veterans Day ($855) were donated to the Waynesboro Ministerium to aid the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The Tigers also paid $900 yearly for use of the stadium,
enabling the school board to expand the press box, extend water lines, and improve the lavatories. The Tiger organization provided lots of pregame and half-time entertainments, featuring town bands and aggregations as far away as Washington, DC. There were cheerleaders too, but more excitement was generated by a self-appointed cheerleader named Harry Elmer “Horky” Elmes, a middle-aged Frick Company worker who had just one cheer, borrowed from a familiar Cab Calloway tune. As Elmes sauntered around in a suit and slouch hat, he would lead sections of the crowd in a responsive cheer, increasing in volume with each line.

| Elmes: Hi-de-hi | Crowd: Hi-de-hi |
| Elmes: Hi-de-ho | Crowd: Hi-de-ho |
| Elmes: Come on Tigers | Crowd: Come on Tigers |
| Elmes: Let’s go! | Crowd: Let’s go! |

The half-pickled Elmes became the most popular personality on the field. Fans never tired of him and repeatedly solicited his cheer. The Tiger organization dubbed him “Mr. Tiger,” and fans called him “Hi-De-Ho.” Even opponents embraced him. At the 1948 season opener, “Horky was surrounded by a bevy of Martinsburg females, and his antics were rewarded with kisses,” according to a press report. With seemingly unlimited support from the community, the Tigers finished the season with an unblemished record. The only drawback, noted the local paper, was that “every opponent is out to knock the Cats off their perch.”

What made the Tigers click so well was a strong cohesive bond and community recognition. “When we started the Tigers and you went somewhere,” recalls Buck Sheldon, “people talked to you that you didn’t know. We were celebrities.” Woody Woodring concurs that “being a Waynesboro Tiger was a big deal. Everybody knew you. Everywhere you went, they were talking of football.” But it was comradeship that brought the team together. “Beginning practice in early August and being out there for four or five weeks in the hot, hot, hot,” it was, for Woodring, “your life, your friends, and your family. We were all close.” Two places where the community and team intersected were on South Potomac Street, the Mobil service station owned by Austin “Diz” Freeman and Bill Levick and the barber shop of Willard Smith, team president for 1949. “We ran around together and worked together,” recalls Woodring.
Down there at the Mobil station everyone was in and out of there, and I worked down there too, and that was a hub. People would call

**Figure 4:** Harry Elmer "Horky" Elmes, "Mr. Hi-De-Ho," at the entrance to the high school stadium on Fairview Avenue where the Tigers played their games on Saturday nights.

*Source: 1947 Tiger Yearbook.*
up about the Tigers and this and that. It was all the time. Everybody
came around on Saturday afternoons when we were about ready to take
off. They closed the station at six o’clock, and everyone went to the
football game. . . . The stadium would be packed, and you’d come out
of the locker room, and holy mackerel, all these people!

Sheldon reveals another side of community interaction. After the war he
and many of his teammates

wanted something to do besides go down to the VFW and American
Legion and drink, so we played football. The thing that bothered me
after we played our first or second year was to go to some place like
the VFW, and you couldn’t buy a drink. There were so many drunks
and people who didn’t play football, and they’d slobber and lay on
your shoulder. “Are you too good to drink a beer?” I didn’t drink,
and I didn’t want somebody always hounding me. So I dropped my
memberships.

Though Rip Engle had been gone for over a decade, his clean-living way,
like his style of play, remained with the Tigers. They were never prone to
dissipation. 37

In 1949 the Tigers continued winning through the first five games, out-
scoring opponents 188 to 24, and drawing higher-than-ever crowds. In their
defeat of the Virginia Cardinals, Ray Dull ran a record 222 yards, including
an eighty-six-yard final touchdown. According to Joe Newman, a six-year
guard, “the best plays were off-tackle when we would block a man out, the
center would fall down, and that would leave a hole. Then Ray Dull would
come through. Oh, that Ray Dull!” On October 15 the Tigers defeated a
team from Bressler, Pennsylvania, that had four professional players, 26-0. 38
But the critical test was their encounter with the undefeated Chambersburg
Cardinals. The two cities were traditional rivals, but Chambersburg always
had an edge, being almost twice as large, the county seat, and more centrally
located. Averages from data compiled every fifth year from 1925 to 1945,
however, indicate that Waynesboro with its three large industries—Landis
Machine, Landis Tool, and Frick Company—was economically more robust
(see table 1).

It is not surprising that many in Waynesboro, with its more working-
class makeup, should feel slighted at being regarded as Franklin County’s
“second city” and that these feelings should emerge on the gridiron. Metaphorically they were fostering a team of giant killers. Since 1947 the Tigers had won twenty-seven games with one tie, while the Cardinals had won twenty and tied twice. That they did not play in 1948 was due to a disagreement over compensation terms. Some in Chambersburg even speculated the Tigers were “afraid” to play them. So great was the anticipation that 1,350 reserved seats were sold two weeks prior to the game. While the Tigers were slight favorites, a 32-7 loss by the high school team to the Chambersburg Trojans the night before their game seemed an ill omen. 39

An estimated 8,400 fans, however, watched the Tigers humble the Cardinals 13-6, leading a reporter to call it the “game of the century. . . . Today the Tiger stands master of all he surveys in the Mason-Dixon area football domain.” Civic pride was boiling over.

It was a great game between two great teams. It was a clean, hard-fought contest. For the Cards it was the first setback in 24 games.

The crowd, orderly in every sense of the word, was the largest ever to see an independent football game in Southern Pennsylvania.

It was by far the largest crowd ever to witness an athletic contest in Waynesboro.

The Waynesboro dressing room was a bedlam after the game. Head Coach Joe Kugler, former Waynesboro High School and Western Maryland College star, stood in the middle of the locker room as if stunned.

Tears of joy streamed down his cheeks as he slapped the players on the back.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAMBERSBURG</th>
<th>WAYNESBORO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>2,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages and salaries</td>
<td>$3,015,780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital investment</td>
<td>$7,246,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of products</td>
<td>$10,630,580</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

39
“I can’t help it,” he choked, “I’m so proud of them.”

Burley Buck Sheldon held up the remnant of a Cardinal jersey, his souvenir of the terrific line play.

Hilarious players and exuberant fans, who had crashed the doors, danced about the dressing room.

Then in swarmed the Cardinals to congratulate the Tigers on a “swell” game. They were especially loud in their praise of Waynesboro’s offensive plays.40

For Sheldon it was “the highlight of my football career.” Likewise for Joe Newman, no other event gave him greater joy than beating the Cardinals. Led by the hard running of Ray Dull, the fancy footwork of scatback Quack Geesaman, and the field generalship of ace kicker Chase Levick, the Tigers compiled 233 yards on the ground to Chambersburg’s 90. Although the latter had the edge in passing, it was a climactic experience the Tigers and their huge fan base would savor for generations.41

The team easily demolished its remaining opponents and entered the 1950 season with a twenty-one-game winning streak and undefeated after three years of play. In response to popular demand, the organization expanded seating, provided a concrete band platform, and numbered the reserved seats. But Waynesboro’s ground game, inherited from Rip, proved insufficient when the Tigers faced their most formidable foe to date on September 30, Car Credit of Washington, DC, which in three seasons compiled a 45-1-2 record. “Fumbles were costly to both teams,” noted the Record Herald, but “the terrific line play of the Tigers, particularly when the chips were down and Car Credit was hammering at touchdown’s door, was magnificent.” The Tigers escaped with a 13-13 tie. The next weekend Car Credit handed Chambersburg a 6-0 defeat, only its third in thirty-three games.42

The Tigers’ tie and Cardinals’ loss with Car Credit set the stage for another showdown for the “mythical semi-pro football championship of Franklin County,” this time on the enemy’s home turf. “The Bengals will have to play their best brand of ball,” a pundit predicted, “in fact give the best performance of their four years.” With a strong passing attack and a formidable line, the Cardinals humbled the Tigers, 18-7.
There were sad hearts in Waynesboro Saturday night. Fandom knew the Tigers couldn’t go on forever but when defeat came it registered a shock. Probably the shock wouldn’t have been as stunning had the conqueror been anyone else but Waynesboro’s most bitter rival.

The Tigers were under terrific pressure. They had a record at stake. Week in and week out for the last four years, the pressure had been building up. . . . Chambersburg had nothing to lose and all to gain and shot the works, and to the victors went the spoils.

Even on the ground the Cardinals bested the Tigers, holding Ray Dull to just twenty-six yards. To Buck Sheldon it was “hard losing” and “that game we lost to Chambersburg will live in my mind till I die.” To Louis Barlup, “the loss to the Cardinals” was the “low point” of his association with the Tigers.

To a child of seven, many of whose most joyous memories, going back to the sesquicentennial, were associated with Tiger victories, it was a shattering experience. We had driven to Chambersburg in my parents’ 1947 Oldsmobile believing in the Tigers’ invincibility and that they would assert our town’s superiority. That they did not was disillusioning. Then the Bengals were beaten the next week by the Lebanon Rams. The Tigers’ net gain was one yard. They rebounded with a 58-0 shutout of the Anacostia Eagles and closed with a 6-2-1 record, but it was a sobering season. Attendance, owing partly to bad weather, was lower than 1949, and the organization barely broke even financially.

The Tigers bounced back in 1951, winning their first six games. In their September 15 game the Scranton Anthracites showed up with fifteen men. “With only four substitutes the Anthracites bench resembled the front pew at a country prayer meeting,” commented the Record Herald. Despite the Tigers’ 25-0 victory, the coal miners played a rough brand of football, and in “the closing minutes tempers flared and some fists flew.” That the Tigers might have lapsed from their Engle-inspired sportsmanship is possible, but the hundred yards of Scranton penalties as against only five for the Tigers suggests otherwise. By this time attendance was back up, and community support seemed as great as ever. Town businesses started sponsoring individual players in full-page newspaper ads—Brown’s Tire Service for end Don Loy, the Savoy Restaurant for tackle Doug Schlotterbach, Stouffer Nash Motors for guard Dick Etter, Glick’s Shoes for back Bill Levick, and many more.
“RIP” ENGLE, THE TIGERS, AND THE SPIRIT OF WAYNESBORO

Then came the annual showdown with the Cardinals on October 20. Anticipating a sellout crowd, the front office added 1,500 seats and recruited one of Engle’s former stars, Footsie Brightful, who had been playing with a semi-pro club in Baltimore. “He’s the first Negro to don a Tiger uniform,” noted the Waynesboro paper. Hopes were also pinned on the passing arm of quarterback Vic Pepper, who had played for Geneva College and the Pittsburgh Steelers, and was employed by the Army at nearby Fort Ritchie. “It was a clean, hard fought contest” before a capacity crowd of 6,000, but Chambersburg retained its mythical crown by a 13-7 score. Although Waynesboro outgained the Cardinals in passing, 90 to 71 yards, the latter outrushed the Tigers, with Brightful gaining only 58 yards in 21 carries. The largest gain for the Tigers, however, was at the box office where the organization cleared $963.45

Despite beating Anacostia the next week, 44-6, the team seemed beleaguered. Five leading players were suffering injuries—Ray Dull and Bill Levick (torn chest cartilage), Bobby Jones (shoulder dislocation), Whitey Royer (torn knee ligament), and Gus Henicle (torn leg ligament). Footsie Brightful would never don a Tiger uniform again, and Dull would return only briefly. Other veterans, too, all dating back to 1947, would depart within the next year. There were able recruits, but they did not always fit into the tight-knit Tiger community. Just the mention of Vic Pepper, a Pittsburgh import, elicits loud laughter from the Tigers. They remember him as “a devil of a good ball player, but he didn’t fit in with our crowd. He just thought he was better than us.” He “could have made a good quarterback, but we didn’t like his attitude.” It is hardly surprising that Pepper, shunned by his teammates, left at the end of the season. Another talented outsider, from Altoona, was mysteriously whisked away before the start of a late-season game by the FBI. It was “a crippled Waynesboro Tiger,” remarked the Record Herald, that “crawled back into its lair Saturday night to lick its wounds” after its defeat on November 11 by Car Credit, 18-7. Yet it was only the fourth loss in fifty-one outings.46

Uncertainty prevailed as the team approached the 1952 season. Coach Kugler promised a more open style “with fancy running plays and a daring air attack.” The Tiger offense would also be “beefed up” by 345-pound Harold (Tiny) Lam from Fort Ritchie. Though a fan favorite because of his size, he saw limited action because of his immobility. “If he stood still, they couldn’t knock him down,” recalls Buck Sheldon. “He was not the kind of player we needed.” Lam would return to his native St. Louis before the end of
the season. More regrettable was the loss of Ray Dull in midseason. Without Dull, the Tigers bowed to Car Credit on September 27 before a large crowd, 20-6. Hopes still remained high of beating Chambersburg, and Kugler, reflecting back on his Rip Engle roots, was determined that it would be done the right way. There would be no “padding” of the team this year with imports such as Footsie Brightful, he promised.

This game is not being played for any individual or clique of individuals. . . . Bettors are continually bothering the players for advice on how to place their money and at what odds. . . . We’re not toutin’ our team, we want no part of the gambling aspect. . . . Our boys are playing football for the love of the game and to give fans of Waynesboro and Franklin County the best brand of football we can produce.

But it is not certain that Chambersburg subscribed to the same ethical code. The Cardinals claimed a 16-6 victory before a capacity crowd of 5,500, largely from hard running by Armin Hostetter, a former star with Hanover High School and the York White Roses. “The bull-like wrecker bored into the center of the Bengal line with sledgehammer-like blows for consistent yardage,” reported the Record Herald.

A premonition of disaster occurred at the outset of the game, caused inadvertently by Bobby Jones, a recent Tiger import from the coal-mining area of Clearfield. It was a “slap in the chops before the opening whistle had died” when Jones, trying to catch a kick near the end zone, allowed the ball to go straight through him and was “flattened” for a two-point safety. Shock was palpable among fans and teammates, recalls Buck Sheldon. Later, back in the dressing room, Kugler addressed the team. “I don’t want to hear any more about Jones. Just remember, there were eleven men who lost that football game.” These were sentiments straight from the playbook of Rip Engle, and Sheldon notes that “we never kidded him any more. We were all on the same team, you know.” But fans were far less forgiving, “and after that when Jones would go out on the field, they would boo him. But that’s the spirit of the game,” observed Sheldon. But it was also the spirit of Waynesboro fans, frustrated at their team’s inability to subdue their archrival. Not surprisingly, Jones, the team’s best running back after Dull’s departure, felt ostracized and left town before the end of the season.

No less devastating was the loss of another promising back, Bates Johnson, in the Tigers’ 14-12 loss at Lebanon on November 22. It had been raining
all day, and the field was a sticky, gooey mess. In the third period Johnson was hit hard as he barreled through the line and suffered a clean break of his left tibia. He was hospitalized for six months. To Buck Sheldon, it was the low point of his Tiger experience. “I sort of felt responsible, even though you couldn’t say that, but you felt that way. You were close enough together that if a guy got hurt, you felt bad too.” A fundraiser for Johnson at the York White Roses game on Thanksgiving yielded $181 from players and fans.

Clearly, however, the bloom was off the rose. Despite a disappointing 8-3 season, the Tigers had outscored their opponents 208 to 82 and outgained them 2,628 to 1,368 yards. Statistics since 1947 are even more impressive. They had won fifty-three games, lost seven, and tied two. For forty games over four seasons the Tigers were undefeated, half the victories being shutouts. From 1947 to 1952 the Tigers had outgained their opponents’ 17,097 to 8,435 yards and outscored them 1,493 to 368.

By the end of the 1952 season, however, only thirteen members of the 1947 team remained. Such was the exodus of veterans that the Record Herald expressed concern over the team’s survival: “The six-year-old Tiger may have to go back to the sandlots for activity next season because he may not have enough playmates.” Jim Shindle recalls when he joined the team in 1951 there was “a lot of dedication and enthusiasm. The fans, the band, the whole town was behind the Tigers. Then some of the older guys dropped out and enthusiasm dropped off. They had just had enough.” Age, injuries, and concerns about family and careers were other factors, and the Korean War was taking a toll. Bates Johnson’s injury not only raised concerns about personal risk but also took a toll on Tiger finances. Shindle notes that the team’s generosity in paying his family’s bills “pretty much broke us financially. . . . After that, things sort of fell apart.” Woody Woodring concurs that some of the guys were getting up around 30 and quitting. Then we weren’t getting the players out of high school to amount to anything to make up the slack. . . . We had guys coming out who didn’t know any more about football than a man in the moon. I remember one year we started practice, and we had between seventy and eighty guys come out for practice. After a week we were down to thirty something. They found out it wasn’t that easy once they started getting beat around.

Most critically, the team was losing its fan base, a deterioration Joe Newman attributes to an influx of players from other locales, such as Fort Ritchie.
“When you start importing players, that’s when you start losing interest.” In the early days “all the players were from around here, and the town knew everybody that was playing. We packed the stadium every week.” Other factors contributing to fan loss, besides the changing nature of the players and their inability to win, were changes in town life. Television was a new entertainment medium that kept people home to watch professional football on Saturday nights. “That hurt us,” recalls Woodring. Shindle agrees it was “a big change. As time went on you had shopping malls and things like that, and downtowns like Waynesboro’s just sort of faded away.” Neither the city nor the team was as closely knit.50

The 1953 season would be a watershed in Tiger fortunes. Most visible was the replacement of coaches Kugler and Ringer by two other Rip Engle protégés, Don Shockey and Chase Levick. Still it was a departure from tradition. To revive its finances, the organization held a carnival in the city parking lot. “We were broke,” according to Woodring, the entertainment chairman. “We weren’t getting the crowds and weren’t getting the money, so we had this big carnival.” He booked a country music band that drew large crowds all six nights. “We really did good.” The Tigers helped instigate the Interstate Football League (IFL) with six other teams—Harrisburg Bears and Lions, York White Roses, Alexandria Rams, Susquehanna Eagles, and Car Credit. Rip Engle was still drawing the attention of Waynesboro fans, but now it was from his role as Penn State’s head coach. He did, however, express pride in the Tigers at the outset of the 1953 season. “They have brought pleasure and entertainment to the fans of Waynesboro in a healthy manner and deserve the appreciation and congratulation of all of us.”51

Another change designed to attract fans and shore up finances was to schedule nonleague Chambersburg games on holiday weekends at the beginning and end of the season. Despite a sellout crowd, the Tigers were “unimpressive” in their 13-7 loss to the Cardinals on Labor Day, flashing “their old time form for a few brief moments at the outset of the second half,” according to the report. No one expected them to beat Car Credit on October 3, but a crowd of 2,000, hoping for an upset, sat “stunned” as the Washington team “administered the worst beating in Tiger history,” 39-7. By the time the team, with a 4-3 record, played the league-leading Harrisburg Lions on November 21, its future was in jeopardy. Paid attendance for the previous five outings had averaged 600. “Unless the attendance is greatly increased for the remaining two games,” warned one official, “Waynesboro may suffer the loss of a fine semi-pro football team.”
“RIP” ENGLE, THE TIGERS, AND THE SPIRIT OF WAYNESBORO

Fewer than 400 showed up, however, to watch the Tigers fall to the all-black Lions, 25-13. While “fog, smog, or smaze” enveloped the field, Tiger frustrations boiled over after a game-clinching Lion score. “Tempers flared and fists flew,” noted the Record Herald, and “it looked as the game was going to get out of hands as the fiery-eyed players poured off both benches with clinched fists, spoiling for a slugfest. Even some spectators tried to get into the act.” The Tigers not only lost the game but lost their cool. Only 1,800 fans showed up on Thanksgiving Day to watch the Cardinals, using their air superiority, give the Tigers a 29-0 drubbing and their first ever (4-5) losing season.

More losing records followed in 1954 under fresh coaching by Dick Margin and Jim Kercheval, both of whom had served under Rip Engle and in World War II. Almost none of the original Tigers remained. At the season opener “before 516 bored fans,” the team established a new first by tying the Susquehanna Eagles, 0-0, in what the local paper called a “listless” contest. Attempting to perk up attendance for the Alexandria Rams game, the organization recruited “ten curvaceous town beauties” dressed in evening gowns to ride convertibles in a pregame motorcade through town, accompanied by a sound truck. It helped lure a crowd of about 1,100, but the Tigers lost, 25-0, extending their losing streak to four. By this time fans were distracted by the high school team’s 6-0 victory over rival Gettysburg for the first time since 1946 before a crowd of 3,000. With their loss to the Harrisburg Lions on October 9, the Tigers had been scoreless in sixteen periods, another record. Even bolstered by the return of the two Bucks, Sheldon and Royer, for the Chambersburg showdown, the Bengals got thumped, 25-7, before an estimated 1,500 spectators, the lowest ever in the series history. Their final defeat by Car Credit, 41-0, before a dispirited crowd of 500 and a 1-5-2 record for the season were all new low points for the once-mighty Tigers.

In 1955 the team dropped out of the Interstate Football League, and Dick Etter, who had never played for Engle, became head coach. The Tigers opened the season with a victory over New Freedom, a small town in southern York County, and later defeated Mechanicsburg, but their fifth and seventh straight losses to Car Credit (now the Washington Roosters) and Chambersburg respectively proved unbearable. However, it was low attendance (only 750 for the Cardinals game) that was most hurtful to morale and finances. The spirit of Waynesboro now abandoned the Tigers for the high school Indians who defeated the Chambersburg Trojans on November 4 for the first time since Rip Engle’s team did it in 1940. Bold headlines, “Waynesboro Trounces...
Trojans, 14-7,” greeted readers on the front page of the Record Herald the next morning.

This was their finest hour. . . . Joy knew no bounds among the faithful who followed the Indians to Chambersburg. It was the Dodgers winning the “Wurrld Serious,” Nashua beating Swaps and an Army-Navy game all in one. . . . The great accomplishments in the distant past and the disappointing performances of the immediate past were forgotten as all the fans wanted to tell someone that Waynesboro had beaten Chambersburg.54

Civic pride swelled, much in the same way that it had over the previous decade for the Tigers, but it now heralded their collapse.

Yet the spirit of Rip Engle, which was so instrumental in their inception, lived on to the next decade when a few ardent athletes, most notably Lanny Carbaugh and Lowell Taylor, launched an updated version of the Tigers in 1965. After playing “pickup” ball for several years, they staged benefits that enabled them to purchase equipment, rejoin the Interstate Football League, and play at the new high school stadium. “Bring ’em back alive in 65” was their motto. Engle and the achievements of the previous club provided a guiding light, according to Carbaugh, but they were hard put to allay the criticisms of cynics that “there could never be another Tiger team like the old Tiger team.” Although they finished with a 6-4 record in their first season and were 23-22 for the next four, attendance normally did not exceed 500. “We didn’t get the support the old Tigers got,” Carbaugh admits. A Waynesboro gate no longer attracted visiting teams, and the league schedule dictated that home and away games be evenly split. Hence the new Tigers had to depend on fundraisers such as raffles, Christmas tree sales, and car washes to make ends meet. In February 1968 the team had an income of $8,315, just $113 over expenses. There was also patronage in 1969 from 220 individuals and businesses. Unlike their elders, more of these Tigers came from outside Waynesboro, seventeen (45%) of the thirty-eight players on the 1969 roster. There were also defections in the IFL, according to Carbaugh, so much so that it instituted contracts to inhibit players from “jumping teams.” Still, there was lots of camaraderie and community spirit, and team finances even allowed the enterprising leadership to refurbish the old Fairview Avenue stadium for its games and purchase a nearby clubhouse. Nor was the memory of Rip Engle lost. Although he repeatedly declined invitations to speak at
their annual awards banquet, Rip always assured the new generation of Tigers that he was supportive of their efforts and praised the young men for playing the game “because they loved it.”

Tiger teams of the 1970s, however, were hard put to live up to Rip’s high ideals, partially because of societal changes. In 1970 the fortunes of the Tigers plummeted. In addition to a 0-14 season, the Tigers lost twice to Chambersburg, 41-0 each time, once to the Schuylkill Coalcrackers, 67-0, and carried a twenty-game losing streak into the next season. Recovery ensued, but the team could barely break even, and fan support remained disappointing. The 1972 team roster featured twenty (65%) of thirty-one players from outside Waynesboro, including one from Virginia and six from Chambersburg, hardly a homogeneous ensemble. Many of these players were baby-boomers who exhibited a nontraditional lifestyle. Although most were decent and hard-working, Carbaugh admits “we had a reputation of being a tough football team” with some “outlaw elements” who “would scrap with anybody. You give it to us, and we’ll give it back to you.” One player threatened his coach and even bit a referee. There was also more drinking at team functions than for the old Tigers, and even isolated drug use. A team statement, likely for 1975, took players to task for lack of spirit and discipline, foul language, laziness, and disrespect—“playing dirty and thinking it funny.” That year “did us in,” according to Carbaugh, “not just on the field but in the pocketbook.”

The team struggled on for two more years, despite losses of facilities, fans, finances, players, and games. When the Chambersburg Cardinals ceased to be a viable entity in 1975, the Cumberland Colts of Boiling Springs became the Tigers’ new rival, a team and town few fans could relate to. A resurgence of the Waynesboro Indians after an undefeated season in 1974 further eroded the Tiger fan base. Still, every effort was made to cling to a proud tradition. In 1972 the organization produced twenty-fifth-anniversary plates that traced the Tigers back to the glory days of Rip’s 1947 protégés. “We just wanted to emulate the old Tigers and not embarrass them,” observed Carbaugh. Though never so awe-inspiring, they did outlast their elders by four years, and “not a bill went unpaid.”

The Tigers ended play in 1977 with an overall 45-75 record. Not until 2009 did another Tiger team take the field, but by then only memories invoked by periodic alumni breakfasts at the Parlor House Restaurant in Waynesboro remained. At a 2008 meeting, Josh Leininger, grandson of a former player, was inspired by the Tigers’ reputation to renew the tradition.
But Leininger was a Chambersburg High School graduate who played for the Cardinals and lived in Fayetteville. His 2009 team had almost no players from Waynesboro, wore blue and orange jerseys, and played its games in Chambersburg in the spring. In stark contrast to previous versions, the new Tigers started with an 84-0 loss to the Frederick Outlaws and by the end of the season had a losing streak of nine games, its only win being a forfeit. Admonished by Carbaugh and others that “you can’t be the Waynesboro Tigers and not be organized and play in Waynesboro,” it metamorphosed into the Franklin County Waynesboro Tigers, still refusing to part with magic of its historic name.59

A more sustained version of the spirit emanating from Waynesboro was Engle’s college coaching experiences. As Brown University head coach from 1944 to 1949, he compiled a 28-20-4 record, including marks of 7-2 and 8-1 his two final seasons and an amazing come-from-behind victory over Colgate in his last game. In large measure this success was due to the relationship Rip developed with Joe Paterno, a young quarterback from Brooklyn who shared his ideals. Engle described him as an “opportunist” and, although he was not endowed with “the greatest physique in the world,” Paterno was the “the kind of person that made use of everything he had.” As sportswriter Stanley Woodward once put it: “He can’t run and he can’t pass. All he can do is think and win.” A Brown teammate concurs. “He got it all from Rip.” For Engle, Paterno was like “having a coach on the field” during a game.

But Joe was also learning lessons about the game of life from his mentor—that “football should be fun” and that there is more to college life than playing football. He also found reinforcement for views instilled in him during his Catholic prep school days that a balance between athletics and academics provided an ideal preparation for life. Indeed the identity Joe derived from his early life and years at Brown was not so much that of an athlete but a student of literature and ancient philosophy. “If Paterno has told me once, he has told me fifteen times that he was an English major in college,” notes journalist J. M. Laskas from a 2007 interview. “He has done . . . a lot with his life, and yet this is the definition he chooses.” That he also chose to marry an English major (Sue Pohland) and would quote from Byron, Shelley, and Keats in locker room talks further underscores this passion.60

When Engle moved to Penn State in 1950, Paterno became his quarterback coach, but he had to learn more lessons of life. Paterno admits to being a “whippersnapper” at first. “I was argumentative, cocky, frustrated. I wanted him to get rid of people, make new things happen faster. While I moaned and

59

A more sustained version of the spirit emanating from Waynesboro was Engle’s college coaching experiences. As Brown University head coach from 1944 to 1949, he compiled a 28-20-4 record, including marks of 7-2 and 8-1 his two final seasons and an amazing come-from-behind victory over Colgate in his last game. In large measure this success was due to the relationship Rip developed with Joe Paterno, a young quarterback from Brooklyn who shared his ideals. Engle described him as an “opportunist” and, although he was not endowed with “the greatest physique in the world,” Paterno was the “the kind of person that made use of everything he had.” As sportswriter Stanley Woodward once put it: “He can’t run and he can’t pass. All he can do is think and win.” A Brown teammate concurs. “He got it all from Rip.” For Engle, Paterno was like “having a coach on the field” during a game.

But Joe was also learning lessons about the game of life from his mentor—that “football should be fun” and that there is more to college life than playing football. He also found reinforcement for views instilled in him during his Catholic prep school days that a balance between athletics and academics provided an ideal preparation for life. Indeed the identity Joe derived from his early life and years at Brown was not so much that of an athlete but a student of literature and ancient philosophy. “If Paterno has told me once, he has told me fifteen times that he was an English major in college,” notes journalist J. M. Laskas from a 2007 interview. “He has done . . . a lot with his life, and yet this is the definition he chooses.” That he also chose to marry an English major (Sue Pohland) and would quote from Byron, Shelley, and Keats in locker room talks further underscores this passion.60

When Engle moved to Penn State in 1950, Paterno became his quarterback coach, but he had to learn more lessons of life. Paterno admits to being a “whippersnapper” at first. “I was argumentative, cocky, frustrated. I wanted him to get rid of people, make new things happen faster. While I moaned and
“RIP” ENGLE, THE TIGERS, AND THE SPIRIT OF WAYNESBORO

complained, Rip held to his own way . . . which proved to be the right way.” Once, according to a Penn State faculty member, Paterno “was brought into the athletic director’s office and told that if he ever went to professors again to try to influence the grade of a football player, he would be gone.” Among many of life’s lessons, Paterno “learned a great deal from Rip about how to handle people” and eventually became his “alter ego.” During a sixteen-year apprenticeship he shared many of his mentor’s views. Most satisfying to Rip was “seeing athletes I have coached achieve success in many walks of life.” Likewise Paterno, observes Laskas,

was building not just a team but a bunch of individuals who would one day leave it. He was making the world better. . . . Make a college football team that was as much about college as it was about football. . . . Put the student back in student athlete and you might just be molding responsible members of society.

The pursuit of excellence in education and life became the basis for Paterno’s “Grand Experiment.” To him, “Penn State’s tradition of clean and aggressive football, deepened by Rip Engle, seemed the right place to bring off ‘the grand experiment.’” Paterno wanted his players to “enjoy football, but we also want them to enjoy college.” Ethics played a major role. “The most important thing is for a coach to be fair,” he advises, and “he can’t look for an unfair advantage or a way to beat the rules of the game.” These convictions coincided with those of Engle who, according to former Penn State President Eric Walker, should be remembered as “a molder of men.” What mattered was not just how his boys played the game of football but how they played “the game of life,” which Rip believed was “a much bigger and more important game. It is probably the Syracuse, the Pitt, the Ohio State and the U.C.L.A. games all rolled into one . . . because it is the big game for all of us.” Respect for his mentor’s values is no less evident in Paterno’s approach. “There are not more than five or six coaches who could be in Rip’s league. Every place he went, he won with dignity,” remarks Paterno. “People talk to me about what I have done for Penn State. I got it all from Rip.”

What came eventually came to fruition at Brown and Penn State was nurtured in part by the rigors of Engle’s upbringing, his exposure to Dick Harlow, and his eleven years as a high school coach. But the spirit of Rip’s contribution to the game of football and life, arguably in its purist form, was most evident in the postwar Waynesboro Tigers with whom Rip had

193
little physical contact, but it was no less potent for being a residual source of inspiration. For Joe Newman, Engle’s greatest legacy was his high school “training” that “carried on to the Tigers. He made us play hard and he made us remember all of our plays all of the time.” Most memorable to other Tigers was Rip’s adage: “God gave you two knees and two elbows. If you play football for me, you gotta use ‘em.” For virtually all the Tigers, however, it was the morality of the game, traceable to the strictures of Rip’s mother, which was embedded in their collective psyche. Even over a half century later, they reminisce about the lessons of life they had learned from their coach.

Woodring: I have one thing to say. We played hard, clean football.
Sheldon: Yep.
Woodring: We really did. We were a bunch of dedicated kids, and we played hard.
Sheldon: Well, I think what helped the Tigers a lot, in the way they did things, was the kids. You didn’t do anything not right in front of the kids.
Woodring: Right, because they were right there looking at ya.
Shindle: Right.
Sheldon: And the kids ran up and down the sidelines. Remember that?
Shindle: Okay, yeah, just run up and down. And when we tackled, and when we got knocked down, ya know, get up, and maybe patted the guy on the back and say, “Hey, good block” or “Good tackle.” And that’s the way we played the game. We played it clean.
Sheldon: Yeah. That was after Rip. Rip taught that.
Shindle: We played clean and played hard.63

It is in these amateur players, World War II veterans, hard-working, honest, law-abiding, church-going folk that were closest to Engle’s rural roots in southern Pennsylvania. Virtually none of them ever became doctors, lawyers, or professional people, but they contributed in the most wholesome way by instilling a sense of pride in their community.

From a broader perspective, the Tiger experience coincides with a basic twentieth-century American need for identity in the face of modernism. According to Michael Oriard, author of King Football, one of the sport’s deepest functions was to provide millions of Americans with moments of an emotionally satisfying reconciliation of their conflicting desires
“RIP” Engle, the Tigers, and the Spirit of Waynesboro

for a local connection and a place in the modern world. . . . More simply, citizens bonded over games against teams from rival towns and through talking and reading about the home team.64

For small towns football “provided a source of identity and defiant pride in the face of marginalization” and its impact “tended to be inversely proportional to the community’s size and status.” What made Waynesboro unique was an intensification of these societal forces, catalyzed by an extraordinary coach and a spectacular record. To Jay Heefner, whose father served as a team vice-president, the Tiger phenomenon was “the best thing that ever happened to Waynesboro.” “I don’t believe it has an equal,” observes Leroy Maxwell. “Nothing that lasted as long as the Tigers.” But this spirit would have had far less impact had Engle stayed in Waynesboro and never been connected with making Penn State into a national power and Joe Paterno into a national icon. The spirit has also been memorialized. Kenton Broyles, a Waynesboro teacher who grew up in the shadow of Rip Engle and became an avid supporter of Penn State football, helped create the Charles A. “Rip’ Engle Sports Complex at Waynesboro High School in 1995. “What started back in 1930 had a great impact on Penn State and Joe Paterno,” he observed at its dedication. “It all started here.”65

NOTES


2. Aside from newspaper and magazine articles, little has been published on Engle. The exception is an essay entitled “The Coaching Life of Charles A. ‘Rip’ Engle” by Joseph Kugler and Robert...


See Thompson, *Around Waynesboro*, 8, and Barlup, *Waynesboro Journey*, 62. While the Geiser plant was sold in 1912 and burned down in 1940, the town’s other three major industries were absorbed by outside interests during the 1960s.


Ed Mulford to Engle, February 21, 1969, Correspondence, M-P, 1948–69, Engle Papers, Paterno/GST/AN/05.20, 8/1/61; *B.R.C. Reflector*, November 1, 1927, Brown Correspondence, ibid., 5.22, 2/5/55; and Western Maryland College transcript.

*Western Maryland College Bulletin* 10 (February 7, 1930): 4; *The Aloha, 1930*: 191; and Western Maryland College transcript.

“RIP” Engle, The Tigers, and the Spirit of Waynesboro


15. Joe Newman, interview with author, July 24, 2009, Waynesboro (hereafter Newman interview); Leroy Maxwell Sr., telephone interview with author, December 23, 2009 (hereafter Maxwell interview); Wahian, 1936, 86; 1937, 82; and 1938, 92; Ringer interview; and Rip Engle, interview with Jay Barry, August 12, 1980, Brown University Archives, Providence, RI.

16. Western Maryland College transcript; The Gold Bug, September 18, 1941; and Wahian, 1941, 88, and 1940, 88.

17. Hovis interview; Newman interview; Ringer interview; Record Herald, November 21 and 23, 1935, October 3 and 26, and November 11, 17, and 27, 1936.

18. Record Herald, November 23 and 25, September 26, and October 17, 1938; November 20, 1939; and November 26, and December 6 and 9, 1940.

19. Ibid., November 21, 1946.

20. Ibid., November 22, 23, and 29, and December 29, 1946.

21. Woodring, Waynesboro Tigers, 3; Record Herald, April 12 and 16, 1947; and Ringer interview.


23. Record Herald, October 20, 28, and 31, November 7, 12, and 24, and December 13, 1947.


25. The first high school games on the new field were played in 1934 with lights following on September 21, 1938. This was “the first night football game in the Cumberland Valley.” Wahian, 1935 and 1939.


29. Eldon Sheldon, interview with author, July 21, 2009, Waynesboro (hereafter Sheldon interview). For George Beam, an Army Air Corps veteran, it filled a void. “We needed to do things to fill those

1,97

This content downloaded from 128.118.152.206 on Fri, 10 Mar 2017 14:16:01 UTC
All use subject to http://about.jstor.org/terms
years of growing boys that we lost. To be kids again. . . . To be with buddies, friends, comrades, a
member of a team.” Record Herald, March 4, 1994.
31. Waynesboro Tigers, 1947; and Henicle to Engle, May 17, 1944, Engle Papers, 8/1/55. Dubbed
“Bruiser,” Henicle was described as “by far the hardest running back that we have seen” and capa-
bile of going “through the line whether there was or wasn’t a hole.” The loss to Harrisburg likely
occurred on October 6, 1934, during Henicle’s sophomore year. Wabian, 1935, 1936, and 1937.
32. Record Herald, June 30, 1948; Woolridge to Kugler, July 11, 1948, and newspaper clippings in
Tiger Scrapbook, 1948, Ringer Papers, Waynesboro.
33. Hovis interview; and Record Herald, February 22, 1995. That Engle was also instrumental in
Steve Suhey, an All-American at Penn State under his predecessor, becoming the football coach at
Waynesboro High School from 1951 to 1953 seems likely. Suhey became a graduate assistant for
Rip soon after he arrived at State College in 1950, and Joe Paterno rented a bedroom in Suhey’s
apartment. Joe Paterno with Bernard Asbell, Paterno: By the Book (New York: Random House,
1989), 68.
34. Barlup interview; Tiger Scrapbook, 1948.
35. Record Herald, September 5 and 7, October 9, 21, and 25, and November 1, 1948; Woodring,
Waynesboro Tigers, 32; Tiger Scrapbook, 1948.
37. Sheldon and Woodring interviews.
38. Record Herald, October 3 and 17, 1949, and Newman interview.
40. Record Herald, October 31, 1949
41. Sheldon and Newman interviews.
42. Record Herald, August 29 and October 2, 1950.
43. Ibid., October 21, 23 and 30, and November 13 and 22, 1950; Sheldon interview; response to
Tiger questionnaire by Louis Barlup, n.d., in possession of the author; and personal reminiscence
of the author.
44. Record Herald, September 17 and October 5, 1951.
45. Ibid., October 19, 20, and 22, and November 1, 1951.
46. Ibid., November 2 and 12, 1951; Breakfast interviews; and Sheldon interview.
47. Record Herald, August 30, September 11 and 18, and October 16 and 20, 1952; and Sheldon
interview.
48. Record Herald, October 20, and November 8 and 24, 1952; and Sheldon interview.
49. Record Herald, December 6, 1952; Woodring, Waynesboro Tigers, 60, 75.
50. Woodring, Waynesboro Tigers, 60; Record Herald, November 29, 1952, and Woodring, Newman,
and Shindle interviews. In 1951 the Dumont network (available from Washington, DC) televised five
regular season NFL games. By 1954 it increased its coverage to twelve. Benjamin G. Rader, In Its
51. Woodring interview; Woodring newspaper clipping file for 1953 in possession of the author; and
Woodring, Waynesboro Tigers, 8.
52. Record Herald, September 8, October 5, and November 20, 23, and 27, 1953.
“RIP” Engle, The Tigers, and The Spirit of Waynesboro

53. Ibid., September 20, 25, and 27, October 11, and November 8, 15, and 22, 1954.
54. Ibid., September 10, October 10, 24, and 31, and November 5, 1955.
56. Todd Gitlin’s The Sixties, Years of Hope, Days of Rage (New York: Bantam Books, 1987) remains the most frequently cited of the many books on this cultural watershed.
57. Record Herald, October 19, November 2, 9, and 16, 1970, and October 15 and 29, 1973; and Waynesboro Tigers Roster, September 24, 1972, and undated memorandum in the Carbaugh Papers; and Carbaugh interview.
58. These figures were drawn from Record Herald reports. They are somewhat at variance, particularly after 1970, with those drawn up by Lanny Carbaugh who calculates an overall win/loss/tie record of 59-80-1. Part of the discrepancy lies in the fact that he includes all games played by team members. Mine excludes exhibition games and two games played in 1976 when the team was not formally organized. Both summaries include the 1975 season when the team played under the rubric of the Tri-State Tigers. Carbaugh, letters to the author, March 11 and 12, 2010.
61. Paterno, Paterno: By the Book, 72; Ronald Smith, letter to the author, December 23, 2009; and Hyman and White, Joe Paterno, 82.
63. Newman interview; Breakfast interviews.
64. Oriard, King Football.