

The Season's Final Road Trip

The Trip, The Tape, The Huddle, The Game

Photo Series by MacLean



PACKING—John Eichenauer and Jerry Egley load their pads and uniforms into traveling bags.



LOADING UP—Players board the bus, ready for the long ride to the Kendallville field.



DETAILS—Coach Wally Yeoman and fullback Sam Blythe go over plans for the evening's attack.

JACK ELY
(The Stats Man)

by Mike Thoele

If you've noticed — and wondered about — that tall guy who wanders up and down the sidelines at Yellow Jacket football games and spends more time writing on his clipboard than watching the action, then wonder no more.

His name is Jack Ely — manager of the Decatur office of Local Loan company and keeper of Yellow Jacket statistics for the Decatur Daily Democrat sports department.

Ely, a former Hartford City high school athlete, has worked in Decatur for two years and comes well qualified for statistical endeavors — for two years he was a top-ranking football statistician for the United States Army in Europe.

Besides maintaining records for the coaches, he prepared reports for Seventh Army athletic headquarters and the army newspaper, Stars and Stripes. The tallies he kept at all games included individual and team rushing yardage, passing attempts, completions, interceptions and yardage, scoring, kickoff yardage and return yardage, punt yardage and return yardage, number of carries, and fumbles, all on a play-by-play record. These figures were then recorded on standard army athletic record sheets, which were maintained for each team.

Into Army

After graduation Ely joined the army, taking his boot training at Fort Knox, Ky. and attending camera repair school at Ft. Monmouth, N. J. before being assigned to a permanent duty station with the Seventh Army in Mannheim, Germany. After a few months he made the base football team, the Mannheim Barons. A service athlete's life is a good one, and his selection for the team ruled out many of the more boring aspects of doing "straight duty."

But an injury removed him from the football lineup and seemed to destined him for a return to normal duty. Preferring the gridiron to KP, he volunteered for the job of football statistician and was selected for the post.

A full-time Army athletic supervisor taught him the complicated records-keeping system

which is used to plot all the statistical aspects of the game while it is in progress. His job included supplying halftime summaries to the coaching staffs.

Receives Honor

Army football in Europe is played in several highly-contested leagues and numbers thousands of servicemen and a good number of European civilians among its followers. After one season as statistician for the Barons Ely's record-keeping efforts merited him recognition and he was selected as head statistician for the European playoffs. In the championship game, played in a huge stadium between Munich and Bonn with "all the generals in Europe" present, he kept statistics for both teams.

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Besides his duties as statistician, Ely's army athletic record included a stint as boxing trainer, a term as coach of a Little League team and a season as leading scorer in the Ft. Hood, Tex. flag football league.

His statistics for the Yellow Jacket contests are based on the system he learned in the service. He often works until well past midnight on the night of each Decatur game, tallying team and individual statistics for the next day's paper.



REINFORCEMENT—Coach Phil Miller tapes halfback Max Elliott's ankles.



A VICTOR—Halfback Bill Blythe, hero of the evening's activities by virtue of a 97 yard runback of an intercepted pass, relaxes after the game.



ADJUSTMENTS—Managers Bill Crone and Andy Crider make adjustments and repairs on helmets just before game time.



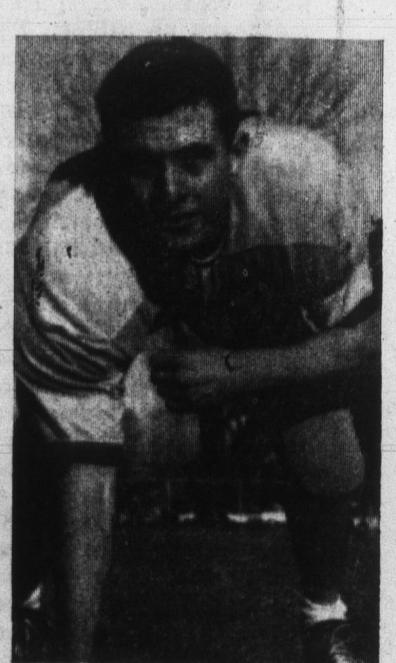
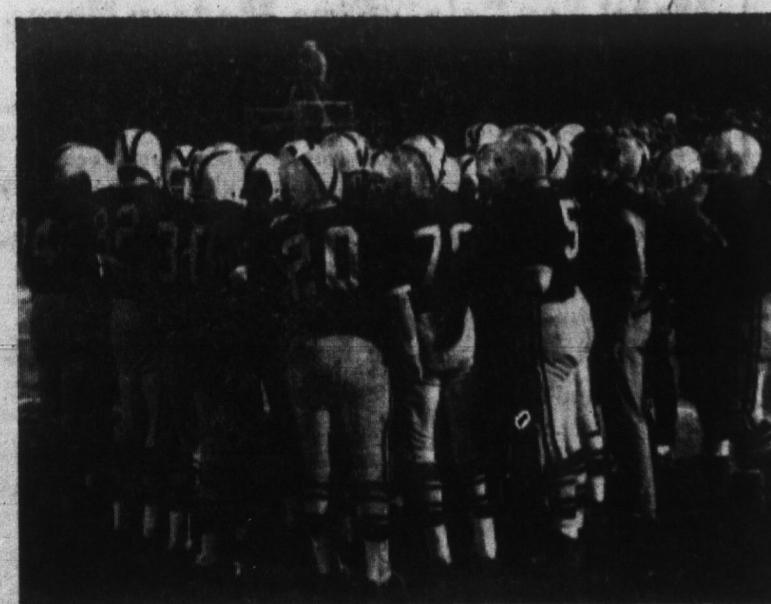
SUITING UP—The last few minutes in the locker room — pads on, shoelaces tied, ready to go.



ON THE BENCH, watching the action and awaiting their turn to go in, left to right, Steve Beavers, Sam Blythe, Max Elliott and Dave Smith.



STRATEGY—Coach Wally Yeoman gives final instructions to the Yellow Jackets before they go on field.

JERRY EGLEY
(19 Big Tackles).

THE HUDDLE — Last minute instructions are given shortly before kickoff.

From Beginning To End - - - A Long Evening

The story of a football game does not all lie between the opening kickoff and the final gun.

It's a story of preparation, of details, of work, often of travel, always of many people.

For a road game, it's a story that starts early. Players, coaches, and managers meet early. They go over strategy.

After the preparation the buses are loaded. Sometimes it's a long

trip, sometimes short.

On arrival there is equipment to unload, ankles to tape and more talk, more strategy as players suit up. Then warm-up, the return to the dressing room, the pre-

game talk, the charge out to the field, the final sideline huddle and the kickoff.

After the game the undressing, the untaping, the showers, the repeat of the loading process, a meal and the long trip home.

