

The Forgotten Story of Football: How Jim Thorpe, Dwight Eisenhower, and Pop Warner Revolutionized the Game Forever

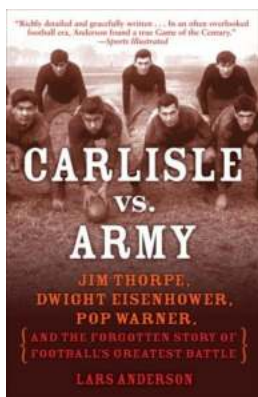


Football, without a doubt, is one of the most popular sports in the United States today. From the iconic Super Bowl to the intense college rivalries, football has

become deeply ingrained in American culture. But do you know the forgotten story of how football as we know it was shaped? In this article, we delve into the fascinating tale of how Jim Thorpe, Dwight Eisenhower, and Pop Warner played pivotal roles in revolutionizing the game forever.

1. Jim Thorpe: The Superstar Athlete

Long before he became an Olympic legend, Jim Thorpe was making waves in the world of football. Born in 1888 to Native American and European ancestry, Thorpe possessed exceptional athletic abilities. While attending the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, under the guidance of coach "Pop" Warner, Thorpe emerged as an unmatched force on the gridiron.



Carlisle vs. Army: Jim Thorpe, Dwight Eisenhower, Pop Warner, and the Forgotten Story of Football's Greatest Battle by Lars Anderson (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1196 KB
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Item Weight	: 5.4 ounces
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Thorpe's incredible speed, agility, and raw talent made him the star of the Carlisle football team. He was a versatile player who excelled in multiple positions,

including running back, defensive back, and kicker. His dominance on the field was so astounding that he quickly became a household name in American sports.

Thorpe's impact extended beyond his on-field performances. As a Native American athlete in a time of racial prejudice, he shattered stereotypes and became a symbol of pride for Native American communities across the country. Thorpe's success in football set the stage for his future triumphs and the evolution of the game itself.

2. Dwight Eisenhower: The Gridiron Strategist

Before embarking on his political career as the President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower was a key figure in the football world. As a student at West Point Military Academy in the early 1910s, Eisenhower played and coached football, immersing himself in the strategic elements of the game.

Eisenhower's analytical mind and leadership skills made him a natural on the gridiron. He understood the importance of discipline, teamwork, and careful planning. After graduating from West Point, Eisenhower implemented these principles in his military career, ultimately leading to his prominent role as Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces in World War II.

While Eisenhower didn't directly revolutionize football like some of the other figures in this story, his contributions to the game were significant. His strategic mindset and team-oriented approach laid the foundation for future coaches, enhancing the sport's focus on tactics and strategy.

3. Pop Warner: The Innovator

Leonard "Pop" Warner was a pioneering figure in American football. As the head coach at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, Warner played a crucial role in

developing the game's early strategies and techniques. Collaborating closely with Jim Thorpe, Warner pushed the boundaries of the sport's possibilities.

One of Warner's most revolutionary innovations was the invention of the "single wing" formation. This formation, with its unbalanced line and a fullback positioned directly behind the center, allowed for greater versatility and deception. The single wing became a dominant offensive strategy in the early 20th century and laid the groundwork for many modern offensive philosophies.

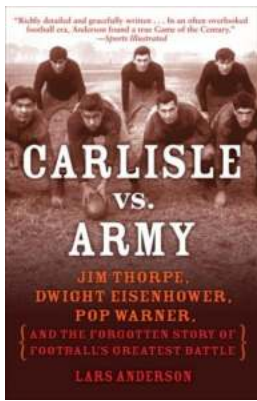
Warner's emphasis on innovation and adaptability revolutionized football. He introduced new plays, formations, and training methods that propelled the sport forward. Warner's impact extended far beyond his coaching career, as he influenced numerous future coaches who would go on to shape the game in their own ways.

4. United by Legacy

Jim Thorpe, Dwight Eisenhower, and Pop Warner may have had vastly different roles in the football world, but their legacies are intertwined. These three influential figures served as catalysts for the sport's growth and transformation.

Their contributions paved the way for future stars, coaches, and strategists to take football to new heights. The game we know today would not be the same without their groundbreaking achievements and influence.

The story of football is not confined to the legends that grace the playing field. Behind the scenes, individuals like Jim Thorpe, Dwight Eisenhower, and Pop Warner shaped the destiny of the sport. Through their extraordinary talents, strategic minds, and innovations, they forever changed the landscape of football, creating a legacy that continues to inspire generations of athletes and fans to this day.



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A stunning work of narrative nonfiction, *Carlisle vs. Army* recounts the fateful 1912 gridiron clash that pitted one of America's finest athletes, Jim Thorpe, against the man who would become one of the nation's greatest heroes, Dwight D. Eisenhower. But beyond telling the tale of this momentous event, Lars Anderson also reveals the broader social and historical context of the match, lending it his unique perspectives on sports and culture at the dawn of the twentieth century.

This story begins with the infamous massacre of the Sioux at Wounded Knee, in 1890, then moves to rural Pennsylvania and the Carlisle Indian School, an institution designed to "elevate" Indians by uprooting their youths and immersing them in the white man's ways. Foremost among those ways was the burgeoning sport of football. In 1903 came the man who would mold the Carlisle Indians into a juggernaut: Glenn "Pop" Warner, the son of a former Union Army captain.

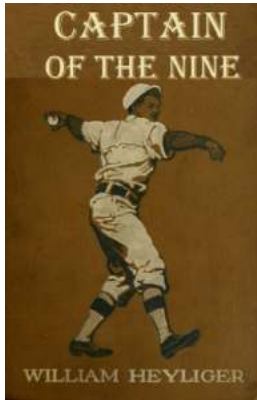
Guided by Warner, a tireless innovator and skilled manager, the Carlisle eleven barnstormed the country, using superior team speed, disciplined play, and tactical mastery to humiliate such traditional powerhouses as Harvard, Yale, Michigan, and Wisconsin—and to, along the way, lay waste American prejudices against Indians. When a troubled young Sac and Fox Indian from Oklahoma named Jim Thorpe arrived at Carlisle, Warner sensed that he was in the presence of greatness. While still in his teens, Thorpe dazzled his opponents and gained fans across the nation. In 1912 the coach and the Carlisle team could feel the national championship within their grasp.

Among the obstacles in Carlisle's path to dominance were the Cadets of Army, led by a hardnosed Kansan back named Dwight Eisenhower. In Thorpe, Eisenhower saw a legitimate target; knocking the Carlisle great out of the game would bring glory both to the Cadets and to Eisenhower. The symbolism of this matchup was lost on neither Carlisle's footballers nor on Indians across the country who followed their exploits. Less than a quarter century after Wounded Knee, the Indians would confront, on the playing field, an emblem of the very institution that had slaughtered their ancestors on the field of battle and, in defeating them, possibly regain a measure of lost honor.

Filled with colorful period detail and fascinating insights into American history and popular culture, *Carlisle vs. Army* gives a thrilling, authoritative account of the events of an epic afternoon whose reverberations would be felt for generations.

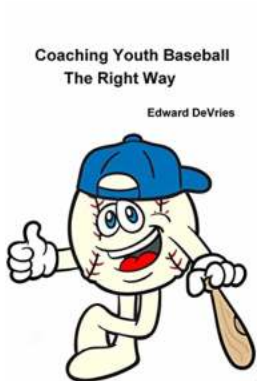
"*Carlisle vs. Army* is about football the way that *The Natural* is about baseball."

—Jeremy Schaap, author of *I*



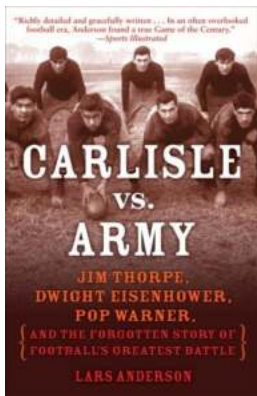
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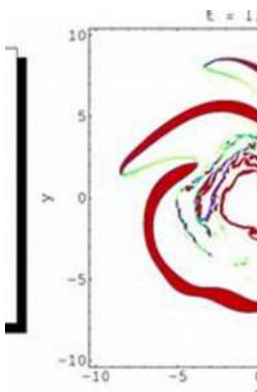
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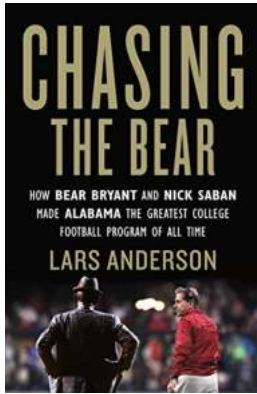
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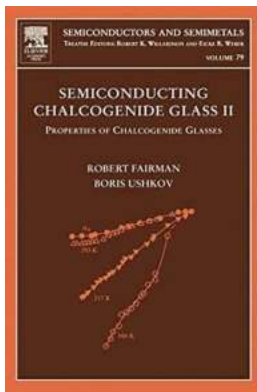
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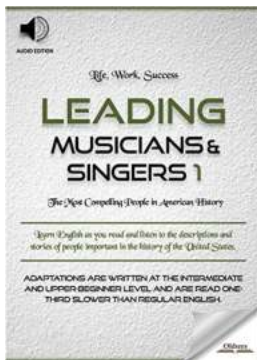
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