

Lehigh-Lafayette Legacy



Segment Three Run Time: 19:24

Overview

In 1977, after finishing with a regular season record of 9-2, Lehigh University won its first and only National Football Title. Since then, each team has had years of dominance, but nothing comes close to the Mountain Hawks' title year. However, even without national titles, each school has had displays of greatness. Lafayette, for example, turned out two of their all-time rushing leaders within a span of three years. Tom Costello, a 1992 graduate of the college, recorded two 1,000 rushing yards seasons until a shoulder injury cut his career short. Showing amazing unselfishness, Costello responded by throwing himself headlong into the recruitment of Erik Marsh, who went on to break the rushing records for both Lafayette College and the Patriot League.



Spotlight: The History of Football

On November 6, 1869 in New Brunswick, New Jersey, Rutgers University and Princeton University made history, participating in the first college football game. However, the set of agreed upon guidelines were more similar to soccer than American football, in that they were drawn from the London Association Football rules. In this game, the ball could be handled by hand, but running and throwing the ball was outlawed; this ball was rounded as well, decidedly unlike the pointed oval used today. In this first game, each team was made up of twenty-five players, and the first team to earn six points, Rutgers won.

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Discussion/Questions

1. After watching this video, what do you think makes a great rivalry?
2. Do you ever think people take rivalries too far? If so, come up with a real-life example. Do you think people seem to take the Lehigh-Lafayette rivalry too seriously?

Activities

1. Do you think football is too violent a sport? Research the number and degree of injuries in both college and the NFL and compare them to the statistics from other sports, such as the National Hockey League. Be ready to discuss the issue as a class, using your research as supporting evidence.

Spotlight: The History of Football

Harvard University continued to change the game, and in 1871, early football players were allowed to hold and run with the ball. This culminated in an 1874 game between Harvard University and McGill University, which was far closer to the game of football as we know it today, though probably more reminiscent of the game of rugby.

Two years later, a number of teams, including Princeton and Columbia, created the Intercollegiate Football Association. With this new organization, the Walter Chauncey Camp at Yale altered the game further, and the number of players dropped to eleven.

Positions were also implemented such as quarterback, lineman, halfback, and fullback. The concepts of downs and yardage became a part of the game, and in the 1880s, touchdowns, tackling, field goals, and safeties were added to the rules. Despite the regulations, the brutality of American football led to eighteen deaths in 1905, forcing President Roosevelt to intervene. Five years later, the Intercollegiate Football Association became the Intercollegiate College Athletic Association, which was later renamed the National Collegiate Athletic Association, or NCAA.

The change in name marked a change in rules. The forward pass was legalized and the goal posts were moved back ten yards in the late 1920s in order to reduce the risk of players running into the uprights. In 1937 the NCAA reformed its method of recording statistics to include pass reception yardage and kickoff return yardage. As of the late 1990s, there were 595 teams in the NCAA. Today, the league is comprised of divisions and conferences within each division playing for the Heisman Trophy, Bowl championships, or simply the love of American football.



More information

www.ncaa.org/about/history.html

Academic Standards

The Lehigh-Lafayette Legacy is specifically designed to address the Academic Standards for History as set forth by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This program supports the successful achievement of standards 8.2 Pennsylvania History, as defined under grade 12 measurement criteria:

8.2.12.

A. Evaluate the political and cultural contributions of individuals and groups to Pennsylvania history from 1890 to Present.

