

**Pottsville Maroons (8-2) 31, Green Bay Packers (7-4) 0  
Thursday November 26th 1925 (at Pottsville)**

**POTTSVILLE WALLOPS PACKERS**

**Green Bay Professionals In  
Poor Condition and Unable  
to Play Up to Regular Form**

**GAME RECAP (GREEN BAY PRESS-GAZETTE)**

(POTTSVILLE) - Playing like a bunch of school boys in the first half, the Green Bay Packers continued on their Waterloo march by taking a 31 to 0 whipping at the hands of the Pottsville Maroons here on Thanksgiving Day before about 3,500 fans. The Packers were unable to muster a first class machine as injuries received in the Chicago Bear game last Sunday continued to muss up the proceedings. Cub Buck did not get in the game, while Vergara was not even in uniform. Norton could hardly step around because of an injured ankle. During the last two periods the Green Bay pros seemed to find themselves and held the mighty Pottsville eleven - and this Maroon team is just as good as the Bears - to a lone touchdown. This was made by Mahrt, former Dayton star, who cut through the Packer team for a score after a long run. In the third quarter the Green Bay eleven got its air drive to working and several times it seemed as if they might break the ice, but just when things looked most hopeful, one of those pesky Maroon-sweatered athletes would intercept a pass and another good chance went up in smoke.

**POTTSVILLE HAS STRONG TEAM**

Pottsville sure looked like a million dollars in the first quarter. Berry and company started with a vengeance and it didn't take them three minutes to prance down the field for the first touchdown. Berry kicked goal. A mucky gridiron, which had been cleared of snow, made the going pretty tough and this tended to slow up Green Bay's offensive. The Maroons have a sweet football club and the team that beats them will have a whole lot to say about the professional league championship. The game was well officiated and the Green Bay team was well treated during its stay in Pottsville, both on and off the field. The Pottsville club showed a screen pass attack that was a humdinger, the man shooting the ball being completely covered and it seemed as if he had a dozen receivers available. Between halves the Green Bay eleven solved this formation and the Maroons had trouble connecting in the closing stage of the game. When hostilities were resumed in the third quarter the Badger eleven shifted its backfield, and Eddie Kotal bobbed into the limelight. The former Lawrence college star was here, there and everywhere. Even the Pottsville crowd gave him a big hand. Twice Kotal seemed headed for touchdowns after receiving forward passes, but he was run out of bounds. Hobbled around on one leg Captain Lambeau gave as game an exhibition of football as one could wish. Pottsville did not handle Curley with kid gloves, but he weathered the storm until about the middle of the fourth while protecting Lewellen who was punting. Lambeau went down with a thud, but he got up and when a substitute went on the field, he fought against coming out of the game.

**STORY OF THE GAME**

Pottsville elected to receive and defend the east goal. Woodin kicked off to Hathaway on the 30-yard line who ran it back 10 yards. Latone made 2 yards through the line. Wentz crashed through for 7 yards. Flanagan cut through for 6 yards, making Pottsville's first down. Berry caught a pass from Ernst and put it

**Absence of Buck and Vergara  
Is Keenly Felt as Pennsylvanians  
Score Four Touchdowns and Field Goal.**

<b>Pottsville</b>	<b>Green Bay</b>
Berry, l. e.	l. e., O'Donnell
Hathaway, l. t.	l. t., Jean
Racis, l. g.	l. g., Woodin
H. Stein, c.	c. Larsen
Osborn, r. g.	r. g., Abramson
Saurer, r. t.	r. t., Earpe
Bucher, r. e.	r. e., Wilkins
Ernst, q. b.	q. b., Lambeau
Flanagan, r. h. b.	r. h. b., Llewellyn
Latone, l. h. b.	l. h. b., Harris
Wentz, f. b.	f. b., Basing
Referee, Powell, Buffalo; Umpire, Timlin, Buffalo; Head linesman, Welch, Philadelphia; Time of periods, 15 minutes. Score:	
Pottsville . . . . .10	14 0 7—31
Green Bay . . . . .0	0 0 0—0
Touchdown, Berry 3, Mahrt; goals from touchdowns, Berry 4; field goal, Berry 1; substitutions, Pottsville, Millman for Flanagan, Doyle for Berry, French for Ernst, Mahrt for Latone. Gardner for Woodin, Harris for O'Donnell, Mathys for Lambeau.	

on the Green Bay 28-yard line. Flanagan again ducked around left end for a yard. A Pottsville pass was grounded on the 20-yard line. Flanagan went around the right side of the Blues' line for 3 yards. Berry gathered in a forward pass on the 20-yard line and scored running through the Green Bay team. Berry added the extra point from a placement kick. This touchdown came from a march of 60 yards, the gains being made on straight football and through the air. Perry ran back Woodin's kickoff to the 30-yard line. Flanagan came around left side of the Green Bay line for 3 yards. Latone went crashing through to Pottsville's 40-yard line. The next time he picked up 10 yards, placing the ball in midfield. Wentz made 4 yards through the line, but Pottsville was penalized 5 yards for offside. Wentz placed the ball again on the 50-yard line and Latone hit center for a first down for the Maroons. Bucher let a pass from Ernst slip through his fingers. Flanagan picked up 3 yards at right end. On a reverse play Barney Flanagan waded through to the Green Bay 40-yard line. It was fourth down, with two to go. Ernst punted to Green Bay's 1-yard line, where Stein touched it down.

**MAROONS SCORE AGAIN**

Harris was stopped at the line. Lewellen punted from behind his own goal line to Green Bay's 45 yard line. Latone hit a stone wall. Flanagan got a pass from Ernst on a reverse play and was run out of bounds on the Green Bay 22-yard line. Latone got a yard. Ernst failed to gain around left end. Flanagan hit tackle for 4 yards, putting the ball in position for a field goal. Berry made a nice placement from the 28-yard line. Wentz kicked to Lewellen on the 10-yard line. Lew brought the ball back 20 yards. Lewellen was stopped at the line. Berry batted down a pass. A bad pass to Lewellen on a kick formation lost 4 yards for Green Bay, but the Badgers got 5 yards when Pottsville was offside. Lewellen punted to Ernst who ran the ball back to the Packers' 45-yard line. Latone was held without gain. Latone got 4 at center. Wentz ducked through a hole to the 25-yard line for a first down as the period ended. A forward pass, Ernst to Berry, carried the ball over for the second touchdown. Berry kicked goal, making the score: Pottsville, 17; Packers, 0.

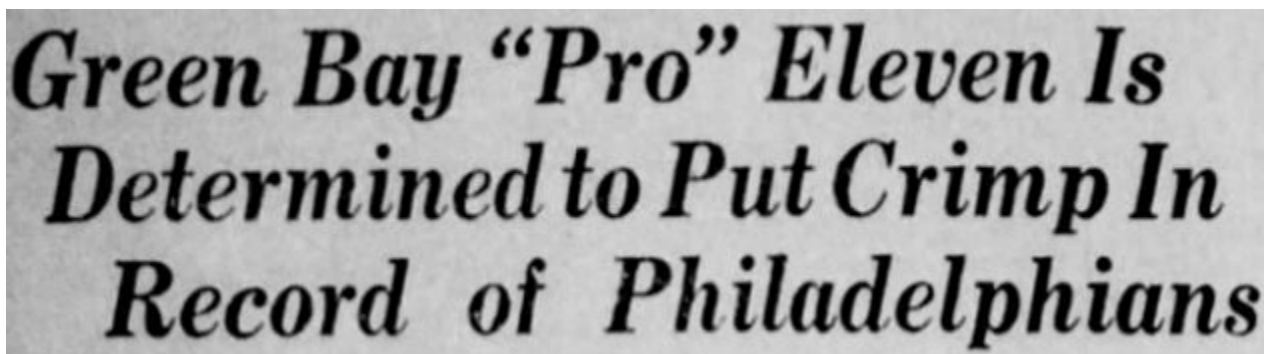
**KICKS OFF TO LEWELLEN**

Wentz kicked off to Lewellen who brought the ball back 10 yards to Green Bay's 30-yard line. Basing gained a yard at left tackle. Lambeau passed to Harris for 5 yards. Osborn threw Basing for a 2-yard loss. Lewellen punted to Ernst who returned the ball to Pottsville's 45-yard line. Line smashes by Latone and Wentz brought the ball to Green Bay's 20-yard line, from where Flanagan crashed through for the third touchdown. Berry kicked goal. Score: Pottsville, 24; Green Bay, 0. The Packers held stubbornly until the half ended and when the third stanza started Green Bay fought desperately and several times threatened to score. Basing played a whale of a game, smashing the Pottsville line time and again for good gains, his longest being 30 yards. Pottsville never threatened in the third, but near the end of the fourth after a series of line plunges and passes, Mahrt galloped 50 yards through the whole Packer team for a touchdown. He was given splendid interference and it was a pretty run. Green Bay threw a flock of passes and some of them connected, but not enough ground was gained to shove over a marker. The final score was Pottsville, 31; Packers, 0. The Packers left Pottsville Thursday evening right after the game for Philadelphia, where they battle the Yellowjackets Saturday afternoon at Frankford Field.

<b>GREEN BAY</b>	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
<b>POTTSVILLE</b>	-	10	14	0	7	-	31

**SCORING**

- 1ST - POTT - Charlie Berry, 27-yard pass from Jack Ernst (Berry kick) POTTSVILLE 7-0
- 1ST - POTT - Berry, 28-yard field goal POTTSVILLE 10-0
- 2ND - POTT - Berry, 20-yard blocked punt return (Berry kick ) POTTSVILLE 17-0
- 2ND - POTT - Berry, 20-yard pass from Ernst (Berry kick) POTTSVILLE 24-0
- 4TH - POTT - Armin Mahrt, 50-yard run (Berry kick) POTTSVILLE 31-0



**PLAY BY PLAY ON FRANKFORD GAME TO START AT 1:15 PM**

NOV 27 (Green Bay Press-Gazette) - When the Green Bay Packers line up against the Frankford Yellowjackets at Philadelphia Saturday, Jimmie Crowley, one of the famous Four Horsemen of Notre Dame, will be seen in a Packer uniform for the first time. Fans have been looking forward to Crowley's appearance with the Packers all season and there seems to be little doubt that Jimmy will do his "stuff" with a Packer background just as though he were tearing down the field for Notre Dame. So that Green Bay fans, who have watched Jimmie through high school and university with justifiable pride, can "see" him make his debut in professional football, it has been arranged to reproduce the game on the playograph at the Columbus club. The cost of the wire to Philadelphia is practically twice what it has been to Chicago and similar points, but the Green Bay Football corporation has announced that there will be no advance in the price of admission.

It is believed that the crowd will be enough larger on this occasion to make up at least some of the difference in the cost of operation. Adults will be admitted for fifty cents and children for twenty-five and the play-by-play starts at 1:15 o'clock. Doors will open at noon and arrangements have been made to take care of a capacity crowd. Crowley is in perfect physical condition, according to word received by the Packer management and with Lambeau in the game the passing combination should prove interesting to the Yellowjackets. The proceeds of the play-by-play go to the football corporation.

**PACKERS PLAY FRANKFORD YELLOWJACKETS THIS AFTERNOON**

NOV 28 (Philadelphia) - Hopeful of breaking their losing streak, the Packers will take the field this afternoon against the Philadelphia Yellowjackets at Frankford. Despite a drizzling rain, Captain Lambeau put his team through a course of sprouts Friday afternoon at the Yellowjacket stadium in order to get the lay of the land. The Bays are not the only team singing the blues these days as the Yellowjackets have dropped three in a row and Coach Chamberlain has done everything possible but without success to get his team out of the slump. Fans in Frankford have joined the razzberry contingent and they are not making things any too pleasant for Chamberlain & company. With the exception of Buck, every member of the Packer squad participated in Friday's practice but it is a fact that not more than a half dozen members of the squad are in shape for the grueling combat. However, the arrival of Crowley will increase the offensive strength of the Bay machine and the players are determined to go in there this afternoon and make things mighty interesting for the Yellowjackets. Crowell, rated as one of the greatest officials in the east, will handle the game. Two other capable officials have been selected by Jerry Corcoran of Columbus, who has been "pinch hitting" as president in the absence of Joe Carr, who is recuperating from an operation for appendicitis. The way things look now: Harris and Wilkins will start at the ends; Jean and Earpe at the tackles; Abramson and Gardner, guards; Larson, center; Kotal, quarterback, Norton and Lewellen, halfbacks, and Basing, full.

**PRO FOOTBALL GOSSIP**

NOV 29 (Green Bay Press-Gazette) - The Columbus Tigers are billed for an appearance Sunday against the Bears. The Tigers haven't been able to get going this season but Goeble & Co. hope to hand the Halas-Sternaman combination a surprise party this weekend...The hometown folks in Kansas City are not likely to see Doc Andrews and his Cowboys in action this fall. The Blues were

—SEE—  
**Jimmy Crowley**  
 make his pro debut!  
**PACKERS**  
 —vs—  
**PHILADELPHIA**  
 on the Playograph at Colum-  
 bus Club Saturday. Kick-off  
 1:15. Adults, 50c; Children,  
 25c. Doors open at 12:30.

League Standings				
	W.	L.	T.	Pct.
Cardinals	8	1	1	.889
Detroit	8	1	2	.889
Pottsville	8	2	2	.800
Bears	6	2	3	.750
Philadelphia	10	4	0	.714
Rock Island	4	2	3	.667
Akron	4	2	2	.667
Green Bay	7	4	0	.636
Providence	5	3	0	.625
Canton	4	3	0	.571
New York	6	5	0	.545
Cleveland	3	6	0	.333
Hammond	1	3	0	.250
Kansas City	1	5	1	.166
Buffalo	1	7	2	.125
Duluth	0	3	0	.000
Dayton	0	6	1	.000
Rochester	0	6	1	.000
Milwaukee	0	4	0	.000
Columbus	0	8	0	.000

**Saturday Nov. 28**

Green Bay at Philadelphia.

**Sunday Nov. 29**

Columbus at Bears.

Rock Island at Cardinals.

Cleveland at Providence.

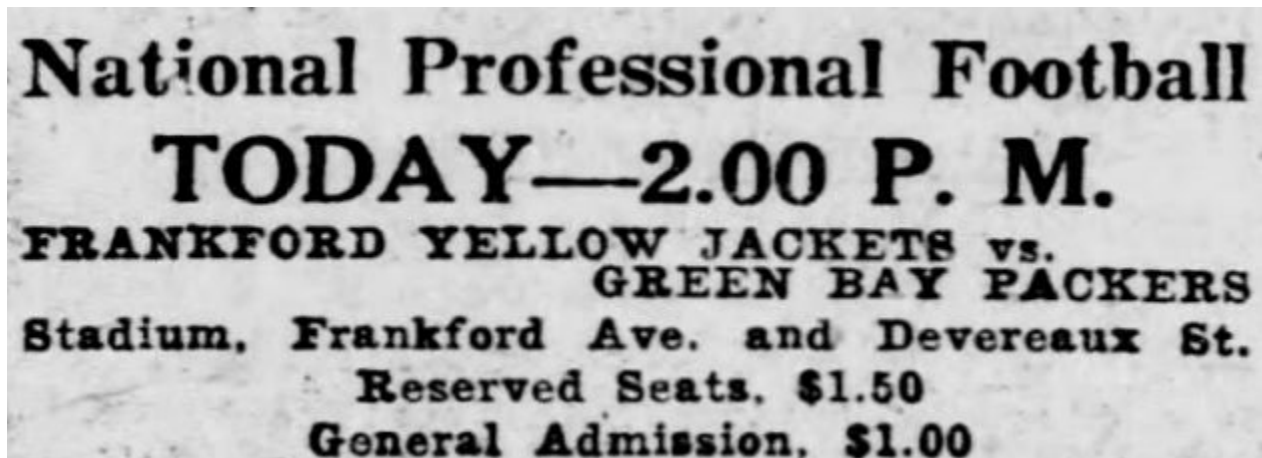
Buffalo at Detroit.

Dayton at New York.

Philadelphia at Pottsville.

booked to perform twice at Kaw Park but one game was rained out and the other switched to Rock Island...Attendance records of pro league games this fall leave no room to doubt the statement that the postgraduate sport is climbing rapidly into public favor. In nearly all the cities, the gate check shows a handsome increase over past years...Although Green Bay is the smallest spoke in the field, the Packers played at home to nearly 30,000 spectators in seven games. This is an average of over 4,000 per contest. The biggest turnout was near 6,000 for the engagement with the Bears...Sportwriters in Gotham who were inclined to scoff at professional football are having their eyes opened by the crowds that are flocking to see the Giants play. Billy Gibson sure did uncover a gold mine right close to dear old Broadway...Reports from N.Y. carry the news that Dutch Hendrian has got down to football and is playing real football. Hendrian didn't go so well for Akron, Canton and Green Bay but he sure is earning his money for Bob Folwell in a quarterback job...A week from Saturday, the Bears will invade Philadelphia for a return game with the Yellowjackets and this is one fray that Chamberlain's aggregation wants to win because they haven't forgot the licking they received in the Windy City recently...Providence is doing pretty well in its first year of pro league football and the Steam Roller management will probably finish without any red ink in the ledger. Providence is due to draw some bumper throngs at its next few gridiron arguments...Bobbie Cahn, one of the best officials in the league, certainly reaps a harvest during the football season. Recently, Cahn worked a high school game on a Friday, handled another Saturday morning, two in the afternoon and officiated on Sunday also...Down Pottsville way, the natives are singing the praises of one Steamer Flanagan, who chases the pigskin for the Maroons. Flanagan is a hard hitting backfielder who is always fighting for that extra yard when given an opportunity to carry the oval...Maloney has been turning in some wonderful football for the Providence club. Teams who have faced him claim he is one of the best ends in the league. Maloney is a slick handler of forward passes, a good man on the defense besides being a fine kicker...The Green Bay Packers are on a four game trip which will keep them on

the road until December 6. Last Sunday, they played in Chicago with the Bears, Turkey Day they meet Pottsville. Philadelphia and Providence are still to be played...Swanson's career with the Rock Island Independents was cut short on a ruling from President Carr who decided he was the property of the Chicago Cardinals following a deal put through between Chris O'Brien and Barney McGurk...Dame Rumor has it that two of the western division clubs, the Racine Legion and Minneapolis Marines, will be back in the going next year. It is said that fans in these two cities are already carrying for professional football again...A number of the pro gridders are going to reap a harvest in Dixieland during the holiday season and in January. Many of the southern summer resorts are going in for football and the towns are offering big money to the postgraduate players...President Joe Carr hasn't had any soft picking with the officials this fall and the league executive has been flooded with complaints about the homers. Some action will probably be taken in regard to this at the next league meeting...The fur will fly at Pottsville Sunday when the Maroons play their revenge game with the Yellowjackets. A few weeks ago, the Yellowjackets put over a 20 to 0 win and Coach Rauch's team is more than determined to even the count. It will be a thriller...The Chicago Cardinals, with visions of a national championship, expect to take Rock Island into camp Sunday afternoon. Chris O'Brien's hospital list is beginning to clear up and he will have all of his regulars, except McNulty, in moleskins...The Elks in Rock Island rallied splendidly to the support of pro football and their action in helping over the fray with Milwaukee just about saved the postgraduate sport in Independentville for another gridiron season...Cleveland is going to travel for the remainder of the season. Peggy Parrott and his associates in Cleveland ran afoul of the weatherman and he rained them out on several games which would have replenished the fast wilting money bag...Hogan, former University of Detroit star, who started the season playing freelance football with the Toronto club, has more than made good with the Canton Bulldogs. He has been at top form for the Kennell, playing a superb brand of football...Four years of pro football hasn't slowed up Duke Slater at all. The ex-Iowan, who was an All-American in his day, still continues to more than hold his own with any player who faces him. Slater is one of the bulwarks on the Rock Island line.



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### THE POTTSVILLE MAROONS

The Pottsville Maroons were an American football team based in Pottsville, Pennsylvania. Founded in 1920, they played in the National Football League (NFL) from 1925 to 1928. In 1929 they relocated to Boston, where they played one season as the Boston Bulldogs. Originally known as the Pottsville Eleven, the team was initially an independent team playing in the local eastern Pennsylvania circuit. Home games were played at Minersville Park, a high school stadium in nearby Minersville. They joined the local Anthracite League in 1924, the same year they adopted the "Maroons" nickname, and clinched the league title. The next season they joined the NFL under owner John G. Streigel. Though dominant on the field, a controversial suspension cost them the 1925 NFL Championship. They were reinstated the following year, but after two successive losing seasons in 1927 and 1928, Streigel sold the Maroons to a group in Boston, where they played one season before folding. 1925 was their best season. The 1928 roster included three future Pro Football Hall of Fame members – Johnny "Blood" McNally, Walt Kiesling, and coach Wilbur "Pete" Henry – but posted the worst record in franchise history. Writer John O'Hara, who would go on to become a world-famous novelist with Appointment in Samarra, covered the team for the local newspaper.

# POTTSVILLE MAROONS

Like other coal towns in eastern Pennsylvania, Pottsville had been fielding football teams from at least the 1910s. The team that became the Maroons was established in 1920 as the Pottsville Eleven, and had a roster mostly made up of firemen from the Yorkville Hose Company. The team was initially unaffiliated with any league, playing on the independent circuit against other teams from the coal mining towns of eastern

Pennsylvania. In 1922 the team attracted the sponsorship of area businessmen Harold Kingsbury, Irvin Heinz and Frank Schoeneman, who brought in talented professional players such as Carl Beck, Benny Boynton and Stan Cofall. Still, the team maintained a strong local presence by recruiting many Pottsville natives to its roster. The result was a team with consistent winning records and strong crowds.

In 1924 local surgeon John G. "Doc" Striegel purchased the Pottsville Eleven for \$1,500. That year teams in the local circuit decided to form an official league, which became known as the Anthracite League. This was also the year the team adopted the Maroons name; according to legend, the team placed an order for new football jerseys with local sporting goods supplier Joe Zacko, telling him that the color was not important. Zacko sent them twenty-five maroon jerseys, giving birth to the name. During the 1924 Anthracite League season, the Maroons added three members of the NFL's 1923 Canton Bulldogs championship team to their roster. These players were Larry Conover, Harry Robb and future Hall of Fame inductee Wilbur "Pete" Henry. NFL President Joseph Carr was not pleased to see stars like Henry deserting the league to play for an independent coal region team, but there was little he could do about it unless Pottsville joined the league. A suit filed by Henry's former NFL team was thrown out on a technicality by a Pennsylvania judge. The Maroons then posted a 6–0–1 record against Anthracite League teams and clinched the league title that November with a victory over Coaldale. Immediately after winning the Anthracite League title, the Maroons issued challenges to both the NFL champion Cleveland Bulldogs and the Frankford Yellow Jackets, who claimed the Eastern professional championship. When neither team accepted, Striegel scheduled a game with the NFL's Rochester Jeffersons, who had not beaten an NFL opponent since 1921. These two teams met in a season finale on the last Sunday of November. Rochester managed to defeat Pottsville 10–7, giving the Maroons their only loss of the season. However Pottsville ended its 1924 season with an overall record of 12–1–1, scoring 288 points and allowing only 17 while capturing the Anthracite League title.

The Anthracite League collapsed after the season, but Striegel and the Maroons were undeterred. They applied for, and received, a franchise in the NFL. This was somewhat unusual, as the team's Minersville Park was a relatively small high school field; the league administration may have been attracted by the favorable logistics of a second team near the Frankford Yellow Jackets in Philadelphia. Pennsylvania's blue laws, which prohibited football on Sundays in Philadelphia, were simply not followed in Pottsville, allowing traveling teams to play the Yellowjackets on a Saturday and then head to Pottsville on Sunday. Since many Maroons players moved back to their NFL teams in 1925, the Maroons recruited several talented players to replace them. These included former Army great Walter French and Jack Ernst, a quarterback from Lafayette College. Another Army recruit, end Eddie Doyle, later served in World War II and was the first American killed in the landings in North Africa. Topping this collection of stars was Charlie Berry, possibly the best athlete on the team; after a spectacular athletic career at Lafayette College, he signed both pro baseball and pro football contracts. However, this strong talent was expensive, and difficult to make up even with sellout crowds at little Minersville Park. "The Pottsville Maroons were the most ferocious and most respected players I have ever faced. "You know, I always believed the Maroons won the NFL championship in 1925 ... but were robbed of the honor." During this time the Maroons insisted that their players live in the Pottsville area. During the 1920s most players had to travel great distances from their homes and only joined their teams on game day. By having the players live in Pottsville, coach and former Colgate University assistant Dick Rauch instituted regular practices for his players. This helped the Maroons to a 28–0 win over the Buffalo Bisons in their first NFL game. When not practicing, the Maroons spent their days hanging around the fire house, drinking Yuengling, playing cards and tossing footballs in the street.[5] The Maroons then jumped out to a 9–1–1 record. However some believe that having visiting teams play Frankford the day before the Maroons benefited the team. Pottsville was 5–1–0 in their six games against teams that played the Yellow Jackets the previous day. On the first snap of the game against the Chicago Bears, the Pottsville players knocked football legend Red Grange out cold. Grange soon recovered from the hit, only to be knocked out again. Immediately Grange said "The hell with (the \$500 owed to him for the one game), it ain't worth it." He then proceeded to walk off the field. The team's only loss in 1925 came from a 20–0 upset to the Yellow Jackets. However, in the second meeting of the two teams, the Maroons beat Frankford 49–0. By this point in the season, Pottsville and the Chicago Cardinals (now the Arizona Cardinals) were the two top teams in the league, having comparable records. At the time, the NFL Championship went to the team with the best record against other NFL teams. As such, the match-up between the two was of great importance. The Maroons met the Cardinals in late November near the end of the season for a game at Chicago's Comiskey Park, under snowy conditions. The Maroons won the game 21–7, thereby putting them ahead of the Cardinals in the championship race.

Before the season ended, however, the Maroons were suspended by NFL commissioner Joseph Carr, thus denying them the championship title. This has been the subject of controversy ever since. Earlier in the year, the Frankford Yellow Jackets had scheduled an exhibition game between a team of former University of Notre Dame stars and the best NFL team in the east. As the NFL's dominant eastern team at the time, they believed they themselves would get to play the potentially lucrative match against the "Notre Dame All-Stars". However, when Pottsville later pulled ahead in the standings, they won the right to play the All-Stars. As Pottsville's Minersville Park was a high school stadium with a capacity of only around 6,000, team owner John Streigel booked the much larger Shibe Park in Philadelphia for the big game. Philadelphia, though, was within the Yellow Jackets' designated territory, and Frankford complained to the league. Commissioner Carr warned Streigel several times that Pottsville's franchise would be suspended if they played in Philadelphia. Not wanting to give up on a potential financial windfall for his team, Streigel went ahead with the game. He would later claim he had received verbal permission from the NFL by telephone, though he gave inconsistent responses as to which official he had spoken to. The

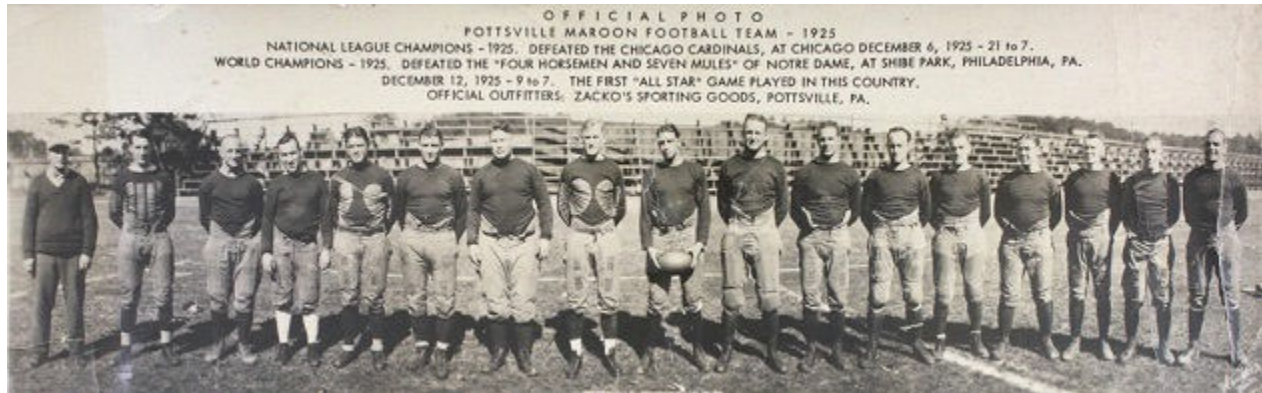
Maroons won the game 9–7, which was considered a major win for professional football, but the match only attracted about 8,000 fans, a major financial disappointment. As threatened, Carr suspended Pottsville and removed them from the NFL, preventing them from finishing their schedule. Meanwhile, Chicago Cardinals owner Chris O'Brien hastily scheduled two games against the Hammond Pros and the Milwaukee Badgers, both of whom had already disbanded for the season. O'Brien's intention appears not to have been to secure the championship, but to improve their record so as to entice the Chicago Bears and their star Red Grange into one last game. The game against the Badgers spurred a scandal of its own, when the Badgers filled out their roster with four high school players, in contravention of NFL rules. Both teams were sanctioned by the league. Regardless, with Pottsville out of the league, the Cardinals had the best record, and were awarded the championship by the league. For his part, O'Brien refused to accept the title, and afterward the league never officially awarded it at all. Later both the franchise and the NFL would claim the Cardinals as the 1925 champions. The Cardinals did not attempt to publicly take credit for the title until 1933, when it was acquired by Charles Bidwill whose descendants still own the modern-day franchise (since relocated to St. Louis and now Arizona). The Cardinals have won only one further NFL title, in 1947, leading to discussion that the franchise is "cursed" as a result of the debacle.

The NFL reinstated the Maroons the very next season. The league feared that the Maroons would jump to the threatening American Football League. In 1926 Red Grange and his manager C. C. Pyle wanted an NFL franchise in New York City. However, that move would have infringed on the territorial rights of the New York Giants. Pyle and Grange were turned down, so they decided to start their own league, the AFL. To keep independent teams from joining Grange's league, the NFL hastily expanded to 22 franchises. The Maroons were one of the teams added, or in this case reinstated. That year the Maroons were once again in the thick of title contention until late in the season. Pottsville's shutout victories over the Buffalo Rangers and Akron Indians led to the team finishing with a 10–2–1 record and third place in the final standings. 1926 also saw the signing of George Kenneally, a rookie out of St. Bonaventure University, who earned all-pro status and was named team captain in just his second season, and would later become part owner of the club. However, towards the end of the season, the Maroons management struggled to meet its financial obligations, and there were published reports of a strike among the team's players. The 1927 season saw a decline in the team's on-field performance. Pottsville lost several of its stars, and others were growing older, and finished the season with a disappointing 5–8–0 record. Doc Striegel relinquished operational control of the team for the 1928 season by "loaning" it to a group of three players: Herb Stein, Pete Henry and Duke Osborn. Henry took over the coaching reigns but the downward spiral continued. The Maroons ended what turned out to be their final season in Pottsville with a dismal 2–8–0 record. At the end of the season the players were given a small football made of anthracite coal, a memento of the last season played in Pottsville.


Striegel finally sold the club during the off season to a New England-based partnership that included Maroons' standout George Kenneally. The new owners relocated the franchise to Boston prior to the 1929 season, where it was renamed the Bulldogs. Six veteran Maroons players made the move with the team. Dick Rauch also returned to the fold, resuming his position as head coach. Based at Boston's Braves Field, the Bulldogs nonetheless had a two-game swan song in their old stomping grounds, defeating both the Buffalo Bison on October 27 at Minersville Park and the Newark Tornadoes on October 29 at Mitchell Field. Unfortunately the franchise relocation and name change had done little to improve the club's on-field record. The team finally folded that year, ending the franchise's final season with a 4–4–0 record. Because the Washington Redskins began in 1932 as the Boston Braves, some Pottsville backers, with help from a few writers, have suggested that the Redskins descended from the Maroons by way of the Boston Bulldogs. The 1932 Boston franchise, however, had no relationship to the 1929 Bulldogs (that team instead descended from the Tornadoes, by way of the 1931 Cleveland Indians).


In 1967, the NFL created a special committee to investigate the 1925 controversy. The committee brought the Maroons' claim to a team owners meeting that year, where the owners voted 12–2 in favor of keeping the championship with the Cardinals. That same year, the surviving members of the Maroons carved their own championship trophy out of coal and presented it to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, where it can be seen today. The 1925 Maroons have since been immortalized in Pottsville, where there are bars and establishments bearing the team's name and an inspirational picture of the 1925 "World Champion" team displayed in the high school football team's locker room. In 2003, the NFL briefly decided to address via a vote during an owners meeting on whether the league should re-examine the case regarding the 1925 championship. But in October, the NFL voted 30–2 not to reopen the case. Thus the Cardinals are still listed as the 1925 NFL champions. Today the people of Pottsville still embrace to the legacy of the Maroons. The town contains the headquarters of the Pottsville Maroons Memorial Committee, whose job it is to keep alive the spirit of Pottsville's only big-league sports franchise. In Pottsville, there was a major push led by Mayor John D.W. Reiley to restore the Maroons' 1925 title. The owner of a local embroidery shop still makes Maroons T-shirts and distributes them to residents and fans. In 2003 Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell got involved in the Pottsville-NFL debate by lobbying NFL owners and asking city and borough councils across the state to lobby the league to restore the Maroons' title. Despite the long-time backing of Bears founder George Halas, Steelers founder Art Rooney and, more recently, Steelers chairman Dan Rooney, Philadelphia Eagles owner Jeff Lurie, the Pennsylvania General Assembly, and former commissioner Paul Tagliabue, the NFL's other owners, led, not surprisingly, by the Cardinals, still continue to vote it down (30–2). Also in 2003, U.S. President George W. Bush spoke on the subject. According to an article in ESPN the Magazine, Bush sent a handwritten note to ESPN calling the Maroons' case "illuminating." After a 2003 vote in favor of keeping the 1925 title with the Cardinals, Rendell

wrote an angry letter to Tagliabue calling the NFL owners a group of "cowardly barons". Rendell berated the National Football League and declared he would have no more communication with league officials until they grant the Pottsville Maroons the 1925 title. The governor ended the letter saying, "I am closing with the wish that every NFL franchise except for the Eagles and the Steelers lose large quantities of money". In 2006 David Fleming authored the book Breaker Boys: The NFL's Greatest Team and the Stolen 1925 Championship. In 2008, to determine which was the better team in 1925, USA Today statistician Jeff Sagarin analyzed the two teams' statistics, including considerations for strength of schedule. The results showed the Maroons as the better team to the second-place Cardinals. (SOURCE: Wikipedia) PICTURED BELOW: The 1925 Pottsville Maroons



# Pottsville Maroons



 The year 1925 was perhaps the most confusing and controversial in the history of the National Football League, and right there in the middle of it, stirring the pot, were the Pottsville Maroons.

Pottsville, which played its home games in Minersville Park under coach Dick Rauch, had been awarded an NFL franchise prior to the 1925 season, after establishing itself as one of the best football teams in eastern Pennsylvania and winning the Anthracite League title in 1924.

To this day, citizens of this small Pennsylvania town 30 miles north of Reading believe their professional football team was unfairly denied the 1925 NFL championship. The league, however, still says it belongs to the Chicago Cardinals (now based in Arizona).

The claim is made principally on the basis of a hard-fought 21-7 victory over the Cardinals in Chicago on December 6, 1925, which gave the Maroons a 10-2-0 record, one half game ahead of the Cardinals' 9-2-1 mark.

Some newspapers referred to Pottsville — led by a powerful, grind-it-out running attack featuring Tony Latone, Barney Wentz, Hoot Flanagan and Walt French — as the league champion after the win. But prior to the season, NFL owners had

voted to include all league games through December 20th in the final standings. In order to regain the league lead and entice the Chicago Bears and sensational running back Red Grange into a December 20th contest, Cardinals owner Chris O'Brien quickly scheduled games against the Milwaukee Badgers (December 10th) and the Hammond Pros (December 12th), both of which had already disbanded for the season.

The Cardinals won both affairs, including a 59-0 farce against a Milwaukee team which fielded four high school players, to move one-half game ahead of Pottsville. The Maroons hoped to move back into a tie for the league leadership with a triumph over a mediocre Providence team on December 13th, but had other matters to attend to first.

Pottsville owner Dr. J.G. Striegel had signed a contract for a non-league game against a team of former Notre Dame players on December 12th which figured to result in a big payday. The Frankford (Pennsylvania) Yellow Jackets protested to Commissioner Joe Carr, who threatened the Maroons with suspension since the game at Shibe Park in Philadelphia would clearly be in Frankford's protected territory.

Striegel went ahead with the game, which the Maroons won 9-7, and the consequences were severe. Not only did Striegel's game draw a disappointing

continued on reverse...

**Pottsville Maroons Fact**

In the interest of fielding a sharp looking team in 1924, manager Dr. J.G. Striegel ordered 25 matching jerseys from local sporting goods store owner Joseph Zacko, telling him to pick out a color. Zacko produced maroon-colored jerseys, and the team had its nickname.