

Undefeated!

The 1947 Broncos Football Team

By Ray Geselbracht



In the fall of 1947, Bronxville School's varsity football team—the Broncos—not only defeated every team it faced, it also held the opposing teams to 12 points—total—for the season, while itself scoring 106 points. It was a magnificent season for the Bronxville School players.

The quarterback for the team was Conrad Frey. He passed seldom, tried always to maintain possession of the ball, and relied on the offensive line to make openings for rushing plays.

Frey lived in Bronxville from the time he was born in 1930 until he graduated from college in 1952.



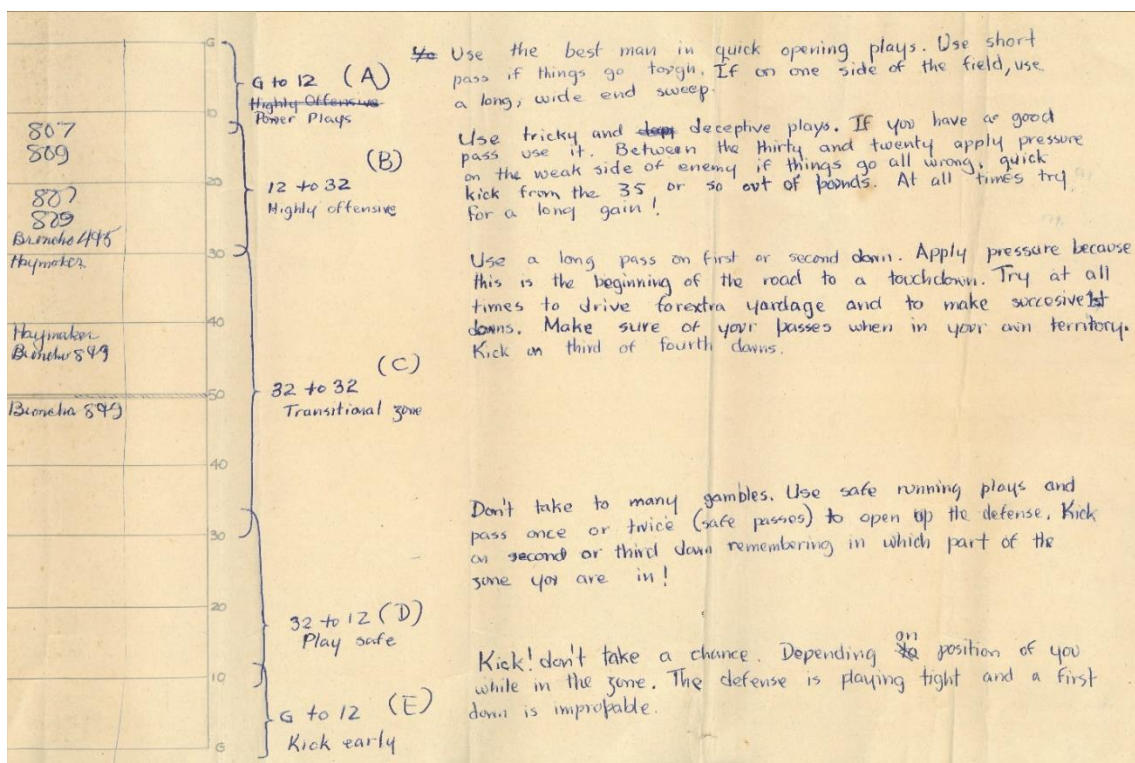


The Broncos' coach was Dan Mattheai, a physical education teacher at Bronxville School from 1927 to 1955.

Conrad Frey described the coach in a 2018 oral history interview: "Coach was very well respected and liked by the players on his teams, and many of his players continued to visit him well after they graduated from Bronxville School. He was ahead of many of his peers as he started using the T formation earlier than many other teams in the area."

"[Coach Mattheai] would have the quarterback come to see him every year before the football season started, and they would go over the plays and...[indicate] what was best to do under various circumstances. He divided the field into zones. Besides the standard plays, he had made up a number of tricky plays."

"...This document shows the special plays we put on the field. I wrote down here what coach Mattheai said to me."



“The reason we only had two touchdowns scored against us [during the 1947 season],” Frey said, “was because we had such a good line—defensive and offensive both. So you can pick out the players on that line—Bob Williams at one end, and Lenny Lyons at the other end; and the two tackles—Woody Ames was outstanding, and Nev Fuleihan; and the guards, Evie Howell and Joshua Davies. These players made up the line that on offense, opened the holes and protected the passer and, on defense, stopped the other team. Those are the players on the team I give credit to.”

*The
Bronco's front
line in their
game against
Saunders
High School
in Yonkers,
October 18,
1947.*



Bronxville Ends Perfect Season With 14-0 Win Over Scarsdale

The Mount Vernon *Daily Argus* reported on Bronxville's victory over traditional rival Scarsdale High School in its final game of the 1947 season. “Again it was the brilliant line play of the Broncos which threw an otherwise even match in...[their favor].” The perfect record for the season, the article noted, came despite the loss of many of the key offensive players from the 1946 team. “Coach Matthaei's sparkling record for the season was

compiled despite the loss of every backfield man from last year's great team which was featured by a powerful offense. Lacking lettermen to run in the backfield, Matthaei built a magnificent line for the '47 campaign which has been responsible for most of the victories."

The undefeated 1947 Broncos team was one of several excellent teams fielded by Bronxville School in the mid-1940s. The 1945 team lost only one game of eight, and tied another, and it outscored its opponents by almost three to one. The 1946 team won seven of its games and tied one—almost a perfect record. But it remained for the 1947 team to make that perfect record, probably, as Frey said, because of its remarkable front line, which created the openings that made the team's rushing-centered strategy successful, and which held the opposing teams to an average of less than two points a game.

<u>1945</u> - 6 won - 1 lost - 1 tied		
Blessed Sacrament	26 - 0	
Gorton	0 - 0	
Saunders Trade	38 - 0	
Albert Leonard	46 - 7	
North Tarrytown	20 - 13	
Washington Irving	7 - 19	
East Rockaway	26 - 13	
Scarsdale	19 - 13	
(22.75) (8.125)		182 - 65
<u>1946</u> - 7 won - 0 lost - 1 tied		
Ossining	21 - 7	
Gorton	6 - 0	
Pelham Memorial	41 - 6	
Saunders Trade	26 - 0	
Albert Leonard	24 - 14	
North Tarrytown	13 - 13	
East Rockaway	41 - 6	
Scarsdale	14 - 6	
(23.25) (6.50)		186 - 52
<u>1947</u> won - 7 lost - 0 tied - 0		
Lynbrook	20 - 13	2 - 0
Gorton	13 - 6	13 - 6
Pelham Memorial	21 - 7	9 - 6
Saunders Trade	27 - 6	13 - 0
Albert Leonard	21 - 14	19 - 0
North Tarrytown	14 - 13	
Horace Greely	26 - 7	31 - 0
Scarsdale	19 - 13	14 - 0
(15.4) (1.71)		106 - 12



Conrad Frey never forgot his friends and his experiences at Bronxville High School in the 1940s. "We didn't have television, we didn't have cell phones. We couldn't go anywhere, we had rationing, and we had the depression before the war. So everything was very tightly knit.... It was an era when we were so close.... Bronxville High School was a small school. Everybody knew everybody, a lot of us had been together since kindergarten, right up through senior year. That made for a very memorable experience, and for me a lasting experience. Throughout my life, the teamwork and team spirit I experienced at Bronxville High School has influenced everything I've done."