

**“The Time Machine”  
Undeclared WHS FB Teams  
Article #14**

This first “Time Machine” football article for the fall of 2023 is about all WHS undefeated teams in the first 80 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are seven, however only five have unblemished records, no losses, and no ties. In chronological order:

## **1910 WHS Football Team (6-0-0)**

**Coach Ed Chestnut**

Wadena High School fielded their first football team in 1903. Seven years later they had assembled one of the best teams in Minnesota. To support that claim, not only did they go 6-0, but no opponent was able to score against them. WHS beat Perham, Staples, Fergus Falls, Brainerd, Little Falls, and Detroit (Detroit Lakes effective 1927). Their largest margin of victory was 50-0 over Perham, while their closest score, 5-0, was against Fergus Falls. Note that touchdowns were worth 5 points at that time.



**WADENA GRID TEAM OF 1910.** Hugh Parker, Wadena, a member of the 1910 unscored upon high school football team identified the team members. Mr. Parker said that probably Bob Marshall, Park Rapids, Ed Chestnut, the coach, Minneapolis, and he are the only survivors. Pictured are front (from left):

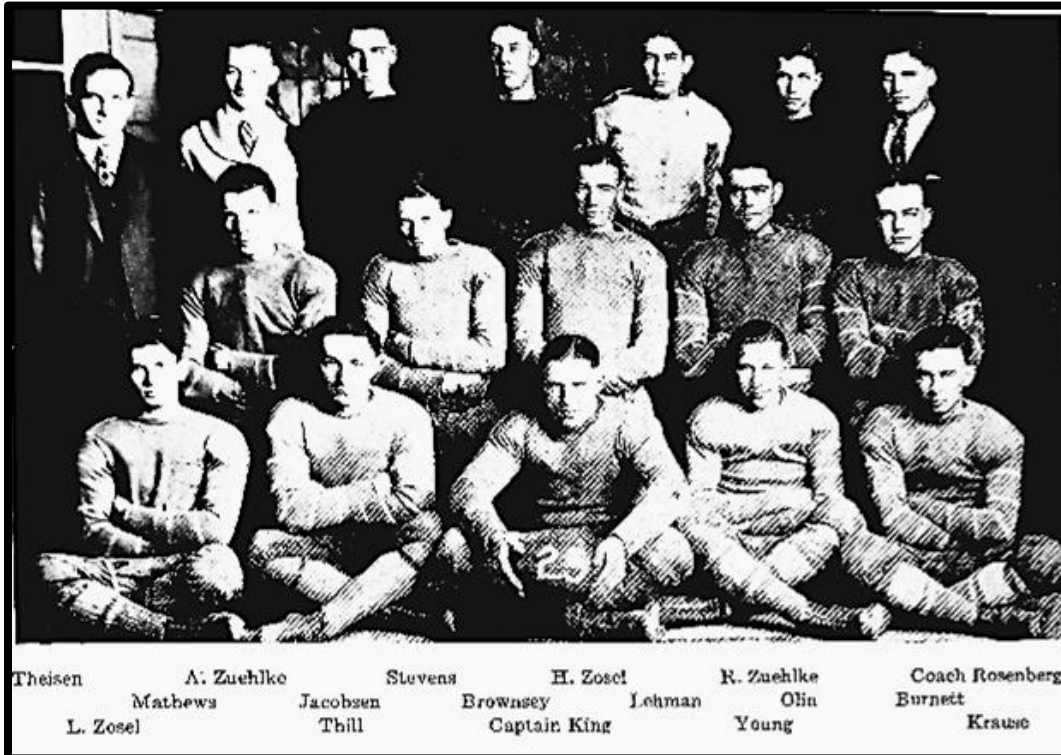
Harry Merickel and Loyal Zimmerman; middle row (from left): Morley Kelly, Robert Marshall, Hugh Parker, Harold Parker, Wilbur Spencer, Arnold Arvidson; back row (from left): Jim Power, Ed Murphy, coach Ed Chestnut, Clarence French, Fred Bordeau and William Hurst.

## 1925 WHS Football Team (5-0-0)

Coach Rosenberger



In the previous year, the 1924 season, WHS's small but speedy gridders got off to a great start beating Brainerd 12-0 in the season opener. Their next opponent, the Moorhead Spuds, were much bigger than the locals. In a pre-game Fargo Forum article, it claimed this would be an easy game for Moorhead, allowing for liberal use of their subs. WHS won 20-13. Unfortunately, a number of WHS players had not been taking care of their academic obligations. With the full support of the school board and the taxpayers, Superintendent Hays declared those players ineligible. For lack of a full roster Wadena's remaining games had to be forfeited. They may have won those three games, if only.... The good news is that many of the 1924 team would be back on this 1925 team, including Verl "Gus" Young. You might recall "The Time Machine" article #12, "Who was Gus Young? With Young, a pair of Zosels, and captain Robert King, the locals beat Osakis, Frazee, Park Rapids, Staples, and Detroit (Detroit Lakes effective 1927) to go 5-0-0. Their largest margin of victory was against Osakis 25-0, their smallest margin was 6-0 against Park Rapids.



Theisen	A. Zuehlke	Stevens	H. Zosel	R. Zuehlke	Coach Rosenberger
Mathews	Jacobsen	Brownsey	Lehman	Olin	Burnett
L. Zosel	Thill	Captain King	Young	Krause	

## 1932 WHS Football Team (5-0-0)

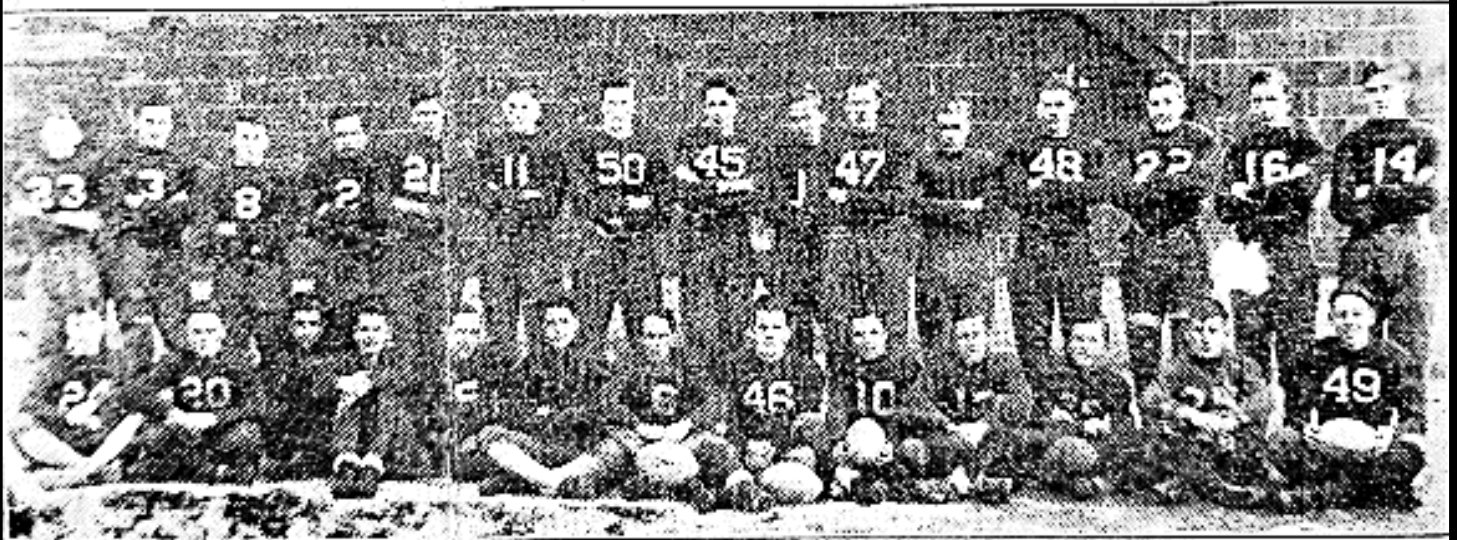
Coach Anton Chermak



Members of this 1932 team include some familiar faces if you have been a regular time traveler. You may recall T. Edison Smith (golfed his age over 3,000 times for world record), Squeak Johnson (Gopher back for Bernie Bierman), and Russ Askew (jump ball after each basket) from "The Time Machine" in articles number 2, 3, and 6 respectively.

This 1932 team went 5-0-0 by defeating Brainerd (13-6), Pelican Rapids, Parkers Prairie, Sauk Rapids (33-0), and Mahnomon. Late season games versus Staples and Sauk Centre were cancelled due to weather. At the end of the season the Wadena Lions Club treated these boys to a trip to Memorial Stadium to watch the Gophers take on the Purdue Boilermakers.

### 1932—WADENA'S UNDEFEATED FOOTBALL SQUAD—1932



Standing, left to right: Roger Williams, Norman Helle, Paul Endres, John Goeden, Ray Ebner, Wallace Smith, Robert D. Anderson, Russell Askew, Ray Nehl, Harry West, Donald Lorentz, Kenneth Meitzel, Ross Currie, Ervin Maurer, Paul Aurzada. Seated, left to right: Robert Quinn, Edison Smith, Lewellyn Robb, Robert Prettyman, Leland Johnson, Elwood Stevens, Russell Johnson, Harper Jung Cassell Johnson, Ed Miller, Robert Boen, Clyde Erchenback, Bob Pierce.



## 1936 WHS Football Team (5-0-1)

Coach: Anton Chermak

Wadena's school spirit was likely quite high going into the 1936 football season. Last year's basketball team played in the Minnesota State High School basketball tournament championship game against Bemidji, losing 26-20. Last year's basketball team and this year's football team shared the same head coach, Anton Chermak.

But for a 6-6 tie against Fergus Falls, WHS would have had a perfect record. The last game of the season, against Alexandria, was canceled due to weather.



1936 Wadena High School undefeated football team: Front, L/R: Bob Davis, Bob Weyrauch, Bill Jung, Roy Ireland, Tom Kinney, Bill Anderson, Cyril Winkels, Bill Weyrauch, Tom Davis, ??, Hugh Parker, Wayne Garr. 2<sup>nd</sup> row, L/R: Ray Bennett, manager, George Nehl, Monroe Balkenol, Wayne Kopp, Gordon Askew, Dick Prettyman, Duane Frost, John Wasche, Jim Tabery, Don Browne, Vince Bretz, Sam Dower, 3<sup>rd</sup> row, L/R: Asst. Coach James Schunert, Eugene Hotz, Henry Colson, Bill Browne, Donald Finney, Harry Walker, ??, Robert Parker, Bill Breid, Joe Bennett, ??, Paul Schiller, Coach Tony Chermak. 4<sup>th</sup> row, L/R: Norman Barr, Charles Swanson, Maurice Richter, Philip Schiller, Richard Boyer, Leland Thompson, William Prettyman, William Askew.



# 1943 WHS Football Team (6-0-0)

Coach: Robert Mauer



## Wadena Squad Ends Undefeated Season

	Opponents	W.H.S.		Opponents	W.H.S.
Sebeka .....	0	12	Detroit Lakes .....	13	20
Staples .....	0	27	Long Prairie .....	0	12
Park Rapids .....	0	12	Brainerd .....	13	32



*Back Row*—Mr. Kermit Anderson, Clyde Robb, Clement Neuerberg, Harold Wilcox, Thomas Robb, Alfred Hassler, Edmund Bretz, Benjamin Larson, Donald Jordahl, Franklin Burch, student manager; Mr. Robert Mower. *Second Row*—Robert Hall, Lowell Vogel, Harland Skalisky, Bruce Wilcox, William Parker, Paul Meckel, Cleon Erkenbrack, William Davis, Robert Aaberg, James Ireland. *Front Row*—Franklin Jung, Thomas Nyberg, John Larson, Rodney Leaders, Dick Schmitz, Charles Pierce, Lynton Williams, Robert Becker, Edmund Richter.



Dick Schmitz, team leader, team captain. Brainerd's legendary basketball and football coach, Fred Kellett, once referred to Schmitz as "The Rock of Gibraltar."



## 1944 WHS Football Team (8-0-0)

Coach: Robert Mauer

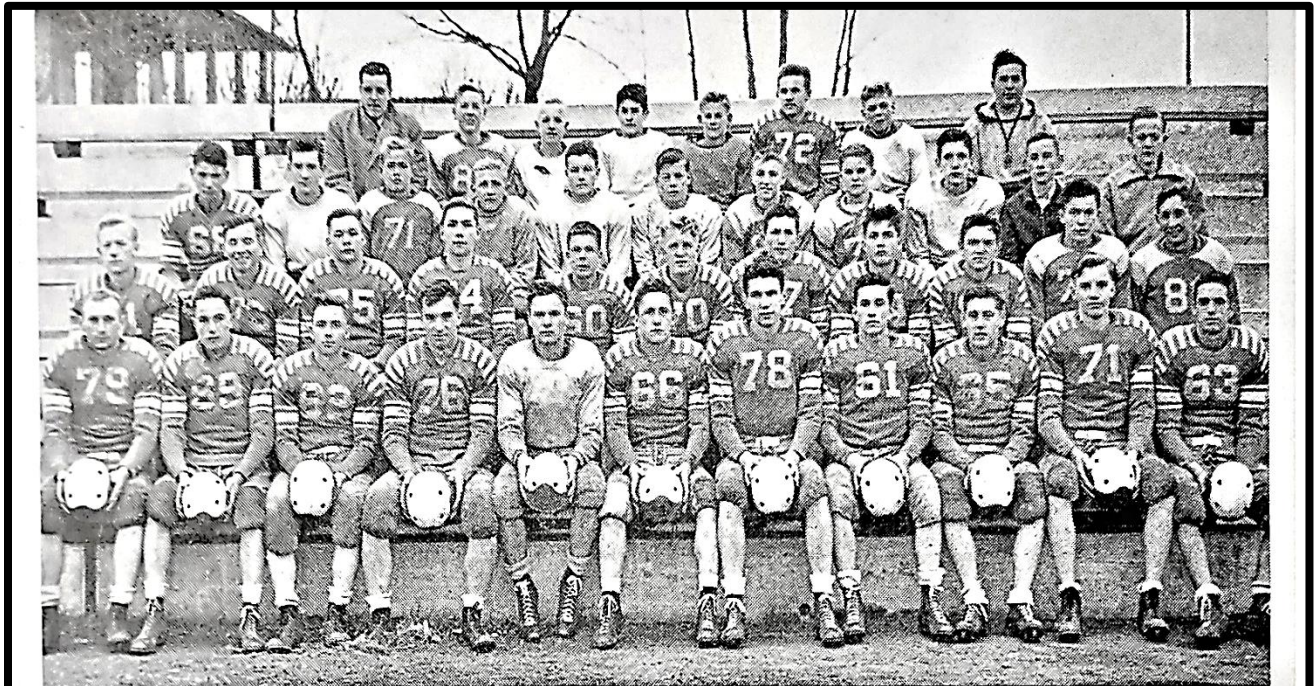


W. H. S.	OPPONENTS	W. H. S.	OPPONENTS
37	Sebeka 0	12	Alexandria 6
20	Long Prairie 14	38	Detroit Lakes 6
14	Staples 6	19	Brainerd 7
13	Park Rapids 6	13	Bemidji 7

By season's end the WHS football team was riding a two-year, 14-game winning streak. These were the sophomore and junior years of Cleon Erckenbrack (see article #4, "The Courage of Cleon").

Next year, the 1945 season, would start with a 6-0 win over Sebeka, extending the streak to fifteen in a row. The following week Long Prairie put an end to the longest winning streak in WHS football's history. A record that still stands today.

For the 1945-46 school year Mower took a one-year leave to enlist in the U.S. Navy. Upon discharge Mower returned to Wadena where he continued to teach and coach.



BOTTOM ROW (left to right)—Harland Skalisky, Bob Becker, Ed. Richter, Adrian Snell, Pat Frost, Cleon Erckenbrack, Bruce Wilcox, Frank Jung, Ed. Bretz, Tom Nyberg, Dale Besett; SECOND ROW (left to right)—Bill Fulton, Clement Neuerberg, Bob Aaberg, Dave Storvick, Jim Ireland, Don Jordahl, Ben Meckel, Tom Robb, Bob Schiller, Don Maxson, John Hills; THIRD ROW (left to right)—Clyde Robb, Lawrence Rebischke, Bill Kennedy, Don Schloeder, Ben Larson, Jack Schneider, Bob Hall, Bob Hedstrom, Harold Wilcox, Verle Blaha, Frank Burch; FOURTH ROW (left to right)—Mr. Kermit Anderson, Lee Lamson, Keith Engh, Jim Zosel, Maynard Tarum, Gordon Blair, Don Marquardt, Mr. Robert Mower



## 1961 WHS Football Team (8-0-1)

Coach: John Conzemius



### Conference Champions



ROW 1: D. Jarvela, C. Sartell, T. Deline, S. Askew, D. Zosel, J. Geiser, R. Ferris, W. Heather, C. Beckman, J. Dale, J. Jovonovich, M. Mericke  
ROW 2: S. Sundby, W. Herzog, T. Fahey, H. Crocker, R. Sundahl, R. Johnson, M. Sather, G. Kersien, R. Tofte, T. Lynk, J. Jovonovich, R. Stofer  
D. Bried, J. Klien, N. Gregerson. ROW 3: Coaches Willis, Hettwer, Larson, Conzemius, G. Newstrom, T. Ferris, D. Stonemen, J. Walz, J. Zeta, S. Taggart, G. Thomas, B. Uselmen, D. Tubandt, L. Geiser. ROW 4: J. Ugland, D. Erckenbrack, K. Young, W. Deline, T. Clark, J. Silver, P. Ristvedt, D. Larson, Trainers--G. Heltemes, D. Thomas, L. Overmoen, S. Willwock.

## WHS Football Team Gets 5th Place Ranking

At the conclusion of the 1961 football season WHS was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the state. One class, no playoffs, ranked fifth!

Wadena's first five wins each resulted in shutouts. Except for a 25-25 tie against Detroit Lakes, this 1961 WHS football team was perfect. Their largest margin of victory was in the last game of the year, against Park Rapids, 41-14.

## **Your Assignment**

Dear time traveler, your assignment, should you choose to accept it, is to pick the team(s) that you think deserve(s) the WHS football “Best of the Best” all-time (1900-80) recognition. I believe I can make a case for 3-4 teams. Each one has something unique about it’s season. So tell me your pick(s) and why. My email is listed below. Vote early and vote often. Final report pending.

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