

Chapter One

Foundations

"I hold every man a debtor to his profession"

- Francis Bacon. *Maxims of the Law*, 1596

In 1881, athletic training was born into a changing world. Sixteen years after the Civil War, the nation was rapidly industrializing, medicine was undergoing a sea-change, education was being reformed and modern sports were emerging. The combination of these events, and others, would supply the background for the materialization of this new occupation and force many alterations over the years. Professions develop within the historical context of their era and the history of athletic training is intertwined with the history of medicine, education, athletics and the nation as a whole.¹

The world in 1881 would be little recognizable in terms of our modern amenities. For an athletic team travelling, they would take the train to the city which they were visiting and then take an omnibus (where the term "bus" comes from) to the site of their game. Of course, the omnibus was pulled by horses, as it would be five years before the automobile was invented and decades before they became popular. If one could not attend the game, they could read about it in the newspaper the next day. They would use kerosene to provide light for their reading. There may have been periodic telegraph reports sent back to the home city of the visitors and people could gather outside the local newspaper or telegraph office to get updates during the game. The hot new technology of the telephone was only five years old and not readily available. On a positive note, you would never have to watch game film, as there were no motion pictures.

Economically, the nation was emerging from a severe depression which occurred in the 1870's. Average wages in the 1880's and 1890's were around \$500 per year. Although prices were much lower than today, most families had little disposable income to spend on amenities. With 70 hour work weeks being common for ordinary laborers, people had little time to enjoy any extra income they may have had. In many families, children had to work to makes ends meet. The nation was beginning to adjust to the industrialization which was impacting workers in the cities but it is important to note that the nation was still predominately rural. The continued urbanization and the emergence of a strong middle class would have significant effects on athletic training.²

Recreation and organized sport were generally reserved for those with higher incomes, whether as participants or spectators. Americans

Chapter One

Foundations

"I hold every man a debtor to his profession"

- Francis Bacon. *Maxims of the Law*, 1596

In 1881, athletic training was born into a changing world. Sixteen years after the Civil War, the nation was rapidly industrializing, medicine was undergoing a sea-change, education was being reformed and modern sports were emerging. The combination of these events, and others, would supply the background for the materialization of this new occupation and force many alterations over the years. Professions develop within the historical context of their era and the history of athletic training is intertwined with the history of medicine, education, athletics and the nation as a whole.¹

The world in 1881 would be little recognizable in terms of our modern amenities. For an athletic team travelling, they would take the train to the city which they were visiting and then take an omnibus (where the term "bus" comes from) to the site of their game. Of course, the omnibus was pulled by horses, as it would be five years before the automobile was invented and decades before they became popular. If one could not attend the game, they could read about it in the newspaper the next day. They would use kerosene to provide light for their reading. There may have been periodic telegraph reports sent back to the home city of the visitors and people could gather outside the local newspaper or telegraph office to get updates during the game. The hot new technology of the telephone was only five years old and not readily available. On a positive note, you would never have to watch game film, as there were no motion pictures.

Economically, the nation was emerging from a severe depression which occurred in the 1870's. Average wages in the 1880's and 1890's were around \$500 per year. Although prices were much lower than today, most families had little disposable income to spend on amenities. With 70 hour work weeks being common for ordinary laborers, people had little time to enjoy any extra income they may have had. In many families, children had to work to make ends meet. The nation was beginning to adjust to the industrialization which was impacting workers in the cities but it is important to note that the nation was still predominately rural. The continued urbanization and the emergence of a strong middle class would have significant effects on athletic training.²

Recreation and organized sport were generally reserved for those with higher incomes, whether as participants or spectators. Americans had participated in various local games and activities since colonial times, but the benefits of physical activity were discounted prior to the Civil War. In many