

# Aiken's Past a Great Pigskin Legend

## Duck Coach Rose To Fame With W&J Rose Bowl Eleven

By BOB KAROLEVITZ

It was in the fall of 1918 that a young man, fresh out of Martins Ferry, Ohio, high school, reported for football drills with the West Virginia U. Mountaineers.

According to the records, the laddie wouldn't weigh 150 pounds with his pockets full of lead shot, yet he was trying out for an assignment as a lineman on a pretty good-sized football club. Like so many little men, the youngster was lost amongst the more healthy-looking specimens who cavorted on the Morgantown practice field. Once the coach got big-hearted and let him perform for a little while on the third team.

That's when the hero of Martins Ferry high got sick of the whole thing and walked out, leaving the University of West Virginia to regret that it had so lightly regarded the proffered services of one "Jimmy" Aiken.

That's the storybook beginning of the collegiate grid career of the man President Harry K. Newburn of the University publicly calls "the finest and best football coach in the country."

But if you're like us you'd enjoy knowing more about what happened to the tousle-haired Aiken when he doffed the Blue-and-Gold of West Virginia and left Morgantown in a mild huff. Then let's take a quick trip through the beat and battered Aiken scrapbooks to find out.

Next stop for the youngster was Washington, Pa., where the Washington & Jefferson Presidents were just starting football sessions.

Things weren't so rosy there, and the coach wasn't overlooking anything regardless of size. He saw that the boy from Ohio was fast and knew what the game was about, so he gave him a chance in the season's opener against Indiana Normal. That's when he learned that Aiken hadn't won all-scholastic honors in the upper Ohio Valley conference for nothing.

The paperweight end made good with a vengeance, earning a first team berth and starring against Pitt a few weeks later. From that time on the name of Aiken was a fixture at W & J.

Aiken didn't devote his college career entirely to football. His scrapbooks denote that he was "one of the boys" in the Alpha Tau Omega frat, got himself elected senior class president, played a little basketball, ran the hurdles and held down second base on the W & J diamond nine.

As a sidelight to his baseball career, he and some of the Presidents organized the Infielder's Club at a distressing point during the season. Their motto was "Never field one clean." Dues were "two errors a game."

We got the "regular fella" idea from a clipping out of the W & J paper which said: "James Aiken, all-around athlete, social hound and philanthropist, gave a highly successful theater party at the Capitol last week for all the boys in school who cared to attend. A good time was enjoyed by all, it being the biggest event of the school year." It later came out that the "party" consisted of 500 fellows rushing the theater under the able guidance of the "Mighty."

In 1922 Wash-Jeff came up with a crackerjack football team. They whipped Bethany, Bucknell, West Virginia Wesleyan, Carnegie Tech, Lehigh, Syracuse, Westminster, Pitt, West Virginia (who had spurned Aiken) and Detroit.

That record was good enough for a Rose Bowl bid, so Coach Creasy Neale and his squad of 20 headed for Pasadena to meet the California University "wonder team" on January 2.

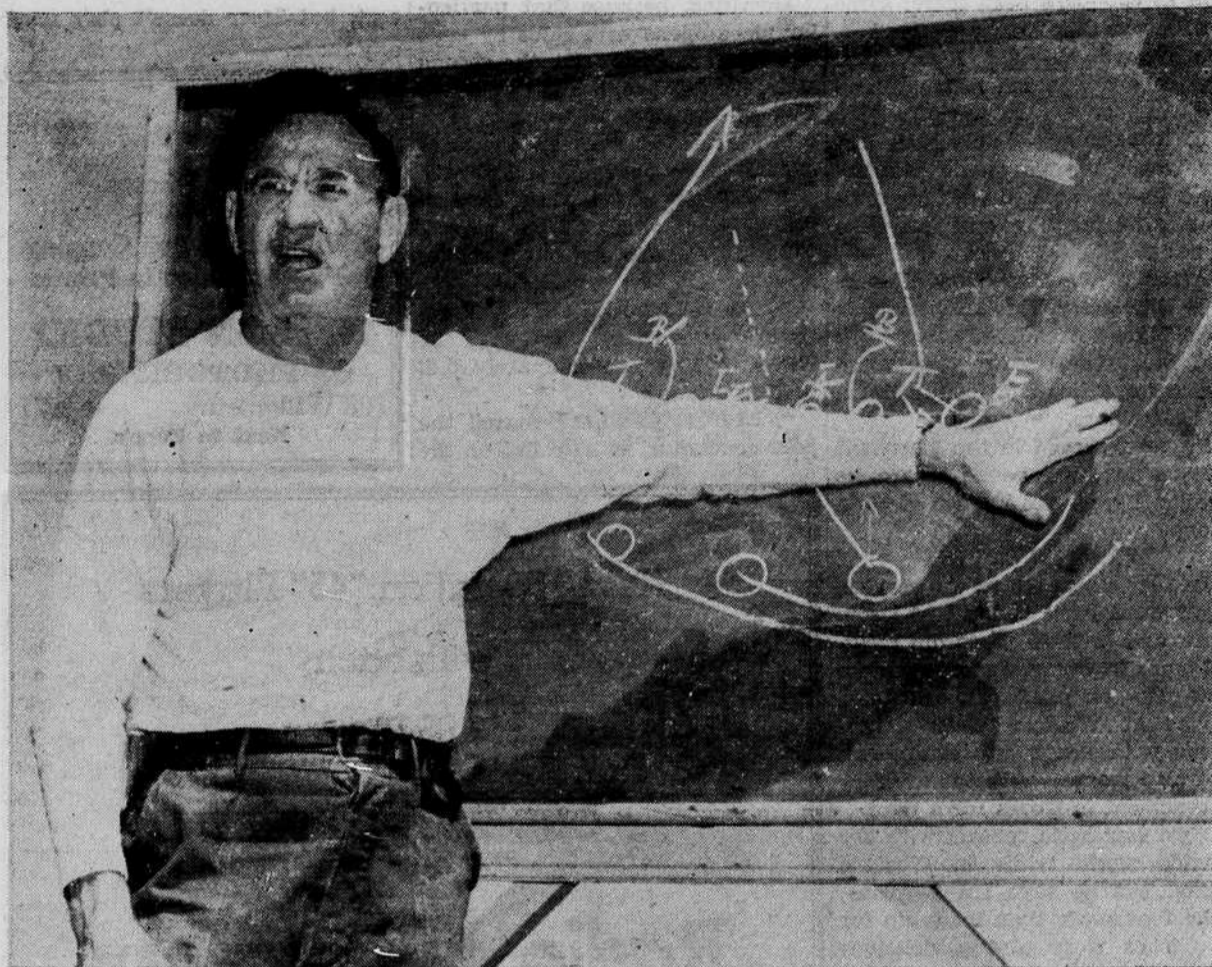
It was on this trip that Aiken earned the nickname which has trailed him wherever he has gone. On the Pullman enroute to Pasadena, Jim discovered that in the rush he had forgotten his pajamas. Always a showman (and probably in shorts or long-handles) he leaped from the upper berth, pounded his chest and yelled, "Yo ho, the mighty Aiken."

That's all it took. His 200-pound teammates, who probably wondered how so much bone could play football against beef and brawn the way Aiken did, got a large charge out of the performance and immediately took up the nickname. From then on Jim had two names on the campus—his informal name, "Mighty," and his formal one, "Mighty Jim."

Incidentally, Aiken and his cohorts won a notable moral victory by tying the great California team 0-0.

Next stop for "Mighty" was pro ball with the Steubenville, O., Ex-Collegians. That club tied the "world champion" Canton, O., pros 10-10 and one sports writer had this to say about Aiken: "He is one of the best men ever developed at Washington & Jefferson. Although tipping the scales at just 145 pounds ... his work stands out with that of the All-Americans."

### 'Yo Ho! The Mighty Aiken'



JIM "MIGHTY" AIKEN, head coach of the Webfoots, is shown above in the familiar setting of his daily chore, the chalk talk. A preserved remark from Aiken's scrap book says, "If you haven't heard 'Mighty' make a speech, you just haven't lived."

By then Jim must have been certain that football was his "calling," for he turned eagerly to the coaching field. His successes at such schools as East Washington, Pa., Steubenville, Findlay, Scott of Toledo and McKinley of Canton were phenomenal. He brought undefeated teams to each of them and ran up a prep record of 121 wins, 16 losses and a pair of ties. No wonder Akron U. was happy to pick him up as head coach in 1936.

In the meantime Aiken wrote a book called "Ball Carrying Made Easy" which was published in 1935 and has been out of print so long that Jim himself has but a single patched-up copy. These and his scrapbooks he entrusted in our care, but only after we swore on a stack of reserve tackles and ends to safeguard until death. After reading the book, we're ready to go

along with the idea that "Mighty" write another and another.

That's the story of the Duck coach up until the time he moved to Nevada to rejuvenate the grid game there.

Next step, of course, was Oregon.

We've read the records, the Aiken book and the "Mighty's" press clippings (which Jim apologized for having saved). After that, we'll go

along with President Newburn's remark. Move over, Leahy, Little, Bierman, Bell, et al—you've got company!

### Campbell Club Wins Cross-Country Race

Clustering three of its four-man team among the first ten to cross the finish line, Campbell Club scored a low team total of 30 points yesterday to capture the Ralph Hill cup in its first year offered for competition.

Although they were held out of the first three berths, the Clubbers took fourth, sixth, seventh, and thirteenth for the team low.

Bob Stansbury returned to his number one spot for the victors as he grabbed fourth while his teammates Elvin Riddle, Jack Loftis, and Don Jacobson followed him in that respective order.

Beta Theta Pi, with Olympian Jack Hutchins burning up the cinders on a tremendous stretch drive, was the only real contender to Campbell's souped-up speedsters.

**DIAL**  
5-4312  
**TERMINAL TAXI COMPANY**  
450 Willamette

Just a couple steps from Willamette  
● OPEN TILL 2:00 a. m.  
● EXCELLENT FOOD  
**BILL & RALPHS CAFE**  
33 E. 16th 5-9318

Fellows, Look Your Smoothest for that Portland Weekend with a "NIFTY CLIPPY" Elliott's Barber Shop 1239 Alder

This Christmas, scare the wig off your old maiden aunt, the false teeth out of your doddering uncle, and the diapers off your new nephew with a portrait of yourself. These portraits sell for \$3,798.00 each, but we offer them at prices less than five dollars for the first two million calls. Set your Ameche reading at 5-5774...  
*Sandy*

**STRADIVARI**  
Sport Shirt  
\$7.95 to \$14.95  
Individual Sleeve Lengths  
**JOE RICHARDS**  
MEN'S CLOTHING AND FURNISHINGS  
Eugene 873 Willamette Springfield Post Office Bldg.