

Carl Fellows - 1931



During the long history of Fitchburg High School athletics, there may have been no greater period of success than the period from September 1930 through June 1931. This was the mighty Class of 1931 with athletes like Rollie Blake, Donald Allan, Al Secino and Carl Fellows along with terrific underclassmen like Bill Whelan, Paavo Lathi, "Duke" Savitt, Ray Belliveau, Norman Morin and Reino Fillback. The Fitchburg High School Hall of Fame is filled with the names of many of those outstanding athletes.

Carl Fellows was sort of born with a silver spoon in his mouth. After all, his father John had been the Mayor of Fitchburg for two terms during the mid-1920. But young Carl would need none of his family's political stature to achieve a record of athletic achievement, which would be second to none during his four years at Fitchburg High School. Carl was blessed with a very large physical body, which allowed him to excel on the tennis court, football gridiron and basketball court. He was a big guy for the 1920's and 1930's,

standing well over six feet tall and weighing close to 190 pounds. He was extremely imposing to all opponents who ventured into Fitchburg to take on the Red and Gray of this era.

As might be expected Carl made his first athletic impression on the basketball court at B.F. Brown as a solid contributor to the Red and Gray basketball squad which competed against the very best in the state. Eastern Massachusetts' powerhouses like Malden, Medford, and Brockton as well as out of state squads like Woonsocket, RI were found on the Red and Gray schedule. The tall sophomore, Fellows, acquitted himself quite well against these basketball powerhouses, and Coach Amiott was pleased with his efforts and felt that Carl would be a major force in future basketball campaigns. When the warmer temperatures of springtime arrived, Carl would be found on Crocker Field beautiful tennis courts hitting wonderful overhand smashes and blinding forehands. His immense size would make Carl a formidable force for the Red and Gray tennis squad throughout his high school career.

When Carl's junior year arrived, he was found once again on the basketball court with outstanding players like Tavno Saminen, James Chalmers, Donald Allan and young sophomore giant Bill Whelan. This core group led Red and Gray to an excellent season with solid victories over the likes of Malden, Gardner and Madison Park. For his excellent effort in his junior campaign Carl Fellows was selected as the team captain for the 1930-1931 basketball season. Carl and his fellow teammates eagerly awaited the upcoming 1931 season hoping that they could return to the Tech Tournament and take down their nemesis, Brockton High which had dominated the Red and Gray during the late 1920's. Despite his superior size Carl Fellows had never undertaken the sport of football, but in the late spring and summer of 1930 that would all change. Carl had a change of heart regarding football or had his friends and classmates on the football squad just talked this great athlete into giving football a try? Or was it Coach Amiott? Whatever the reason, it was an extreme wise and beneficial choice for both Carl and the Red and Gray football squad.

Within weeks the Fitchburg Sentinel was reporting that Al Secino had returned to the squad after missing a few practices so he could work at his father's tailor shop, and that basketball captain Carl Fellows was looking very good at the end position in the early season practices. Then as the opening game against Worcester South approached, the Fitchburg Sentinel announced that Coach Amiott had selected Fellows as one of his two starting ends. The Red and Gray began the season with

a burst of energy with a brilliant offense which features a dazzling backfield trio of Rollie Blake, Secino and Donald Allan's razzle-dazzle which sometimes culminated with short accurate passes to the new comer Carl Fellows.

In week five of the 1930 campaign, the Red and Gray traveled east to face Waltham High, a perennial Boston area powerhouse. The Boston press questioned the credentials the "uplanders" from the west, but on October 18th, the Red and Gray showed the Watch City gang that they were the real deal. When the final whistle sounded, Fitchburg stood atop Waltham 21-0 and the next day Boston's newspaper shouted to one and all that FHS' Blake, Secino, Allan, Charlie Kaddy and Carl Fellows were All-State stars. This was Carl Fellows fifth football game! Simply amazing! The Fitchburg machine rolled onward into early November where they would confront Brockton. They had outscored their opponents 148 to 13 with seven shut outs. Carl Fellows was fine on offensive, but in those days of two-way football players he was leading the defensive line with stout play.

Nearly nine thousand fans packed into Crocker Field for the huge clash against mighty Brockton. In a contest, which the Fitchburg Sentinel called, "The finest ever played at Mr. Crocker's gift since the field was opened in 1919." Brockton edged FHS 20 to 13 in which all the players covered themselves with glory. Fitchburg's dreams of an undefeated season were shattered, but that did not deter the Red and Gray, as they rolled through their final three opponents without allowing a point to finish the season 10-1. The Raiders had a fabulous squad and colleges all along the East Coast were watching the players as potential recruits. Certainly the huge end who had only played one year of high school football was an intriguing player.

But now it was onto basketball for Carl Fellows, and for the third year varsity starter and captain, the basketball season would be as fulfilling as the football season had been. The Red and Gray hoop squad in 1931 was talented with stars like Carl Fellows and fellow three year starter Donald Allan and junior Bill Whelan, but their season seem to take a very strange turn at midseason. Carl Fellows and Don Allan were playing very well but losses to Medford and Lynn Classical and a so-so effort against Gardner caused Coach Clarence Amriott to spring into action. Sophomores Reino Fillback and Ray Belliveau were inserted into the starting lineup. Their wonderful outside shooting opened up the court, and Carl Fellows was given room to finesse under the basket. The Red and Gray began to play excellently and they rolled into the Tech Tournament with great victories over Salem, New Bedford and Lynn English to capture the State Championship. Captain Carl Fellows was able to hold the championship trophy above his head to complete a magical year on both the gridiron and basketball court.

After a post-graduate year at FHS, Carl Fellows was accepted into the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland, where he had a distinguished career in the area of athletics. Carl would play football for the Navy and received his varsity letter. Remember this was wartime when Navy football was amongst the nation's highest ranked football teams. He continued his basketball career at Navy, and was selected team captain in his senior year. Finally, Carl took up the sport of lacrosse and earned a varsity letter for that sport. For his athletic efforts Carl was awarded the Thompson Sword, which is annually awarded to the finest athlete in the senior class at Annapolis. That was quite an achievement for the big guy from Fitchburg.

He returned to Fitchburg and took a job at Fitchburg Paper rising to the position of senior sales representative and later took a job as executive vice president of the St. Lawrence, LTD of Canada in the 1950's. Like many of his generation Carl Fellows served four years as a naval commander in World War II. He would be placed in command of two destroyers during the conflict, which was only fitting for an Annapolis graduate. Today we feel great pride in inducting Carl Fellows into the FHS Hall of Fame. He was truly one of the greatest generations for the United States of America and one of FHS very greatest athletes.