

Summer 8-1-1962

## Football as an Intramural Sport in the Junior High School

Frank Crimp Jr.  
*Central Washington University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/all\\_gradpapers](https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/all_gradpapers)



Part of the [Health and Physical Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Crimp, Frank Jr., "Football as an Intramural Sport in the Junior High School" (1962). *Graduate Student Research Papers*. 44.

[https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/all\\_gradpapers/44](https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/all_gradpapers/44)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship and Creative Works at ScholarWorks@CWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Student Research Papers by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@CWU. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@cwu.edu](mailto:scholarworks@cwu.edu).

FOOTBALL AS AN INTRAMURAL SPORT  
IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

---

A Research Paper  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education

---

by  
Frank Crimp, Jr.

August 1962

THIS PAPER IS APPROVED AS MEETING THE PLAN 2  
REQUIREMENT FOR THE COMPLETION OF A RESEARCH  
PAPER.

---

Andrew In FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
The Problem . . . . .	1
Statement of the problem . . . . .	1
Importance of the study . . . . .	2
Definitions of Terms Used . . . . .	3
Intramural sports . . . . .	3
Interscholastic sports . . . . .	3
Varsity team . . . . .	3
A Brief History of Intramural Sports in America . . . . .	3
The Objectives of Intramural Sports . . . . .	6
The Value of Football to Youth . . . . .	10
II. CONDUCTING AN INTRAMURAL FOOTBALL ACTIVITY IN A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL . . . . .	15
III. SUMMARY . . . . .	22
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	24

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

For several years many public officials have had great concern for the physical fitness of our people. Much evidence points to the fact that our youth are less physically fit than those of other countries and much less fit than comparable youth of preceding generations. Being a nation of comparably well-fed, well-housed people with the advantages of modern medical attention, this fact became alarming. In recent years most authorities have pointed to the machine age, the automobile, and the fact that we have become a nation of spectators rather than performers to account for this lack of physical well-being.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this paper (1) to study the objectives of intramural sports for youth, (2) to show that football, played as an intramural sport stressing physical conditioning, fundamental skills, and game competition can be of great value to boys who are not qualified for the varsity team, and (3) to suggest methods and plans for operating an intramural football program in a junior high school.

Importance of the study. Realizing a declining fitness in our citizens, President Eisenhower, in his last term of office, appointed a national council on youth fitness. President Kennedy has placed emphasis on physical excellence as one foundation of a vigorous state, pointing out that sports offer wide opportunities for growth in both character and physique. He further expressed appropriate alarm at three evidences that our physical fitness is deplorably low. One is the high rate of rejection for medical reasons under Selective Service. A second is the poor showing of American children on the Kraus-Weber tests of strength, flexibility, and endurance, on which European children showed a marked superiority. Thirdly, Yale freshmen, representing a high advantaged group of young people, have shown a consistent decline in their prowess on annual physical fitness tests. He contends that statistics such as these must be reversed "for vital spirits and tough minds usually inhabit vital and tough bodies" (5:483-484).

More young people should participate in athletics, not fewer, and the program of athletics should be tied to the program of education. Young teenagers need emotional and physical outlets and should be subjected to a wisely directed program of intramural and interscholastic athletics (2:133).

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Intramural sports. This term, meaning "within the wall," refers to athletic activities with or against other youth from the same school.

Interscholastic sports. This term means athletic contests in which one team representing a school competes against a team from another school.

Varsity team. Those boys of superior ability make up the team that competes in the interscholastic contests.

## III. A BRIEF HISTORY OF INTRAMURAL SPORTS IN AMERICA

Intramural activities in the American school had a relatively late beginning but a rapid growth and development. It has withstood the encroachment of varsity or interscholastic athletics and at present is gaining great support from educators, public servants, and the general public as one answer to the declining physical well being and strength of our youth.

In the early days boys and girls undoubtedly engaged in sports activities on a voluntary basis, completely unguided by the school authorities and often openly criticized. Voltmer and Esslinger have

this to say about the origin of sports in America (10:9):

There is ample evidence that boys participated in various sports in early American schools despite the obstacles in the form of hostile teachers and the Puritan philosophy of the sinfulness and foolishness of play. As educational institutions multiplied and the school population increased, informal play activities among students expanded. The haphazard nature of these activities gradually gave way to better organization. The students conducted their activities by themselves. The faculty was indifferent.

From these informal sports and games arose sports clubs within schools. These clubs were the true origin of our present intramural program. However, it was not long until games with clubs from other cities were arranged, and this led to our present day interscholastic competition. School authorities did not promote this inter-club competition between cities or other schools. The students themselves were overwhelmingly in favor of such a program, and for a period of about thirty-five years before 1910 intramural activities grew very little (10:9-10).

During this era far too few boys were participating in athletic endeavors. However, American youth could not long be satisfied with this conception of recreation, and the idea of a sports program for all was kept alive by the Greek letter fraternities in colleges. By 1914 colleges were realizing that students other than the varsity athlete were demanding a broad base program and that such a program of athletics should rightfully fall under the administration of the school.



Means points out that a great need for coordination of the intramural activities was apparent and that the University of Michigan and Ohio State University were the first to establish departments of intramural athletics, in 1913 (10:11).

From pre-World War I days until the present, the intramural athletic program in colleges and secondary schools has grown both in quality and quantity. Impetus has been given by the demand for physically fit men by our military leaders in both World Wars I and II. The depression period of the middle 1930's added fuel to the growing flame by emphasizing the need for sports and recreation during idle time. Also from this depressed time came federal aid to build facilities such as swimming pools, gymnasiums, and play fields.

Means gives further reasons for the rapid growth of intramurals by stating (10:14):

Beginning in the late 1930's the rapid changes in industrialization, science and invention, pressure of labor unions, and periods of unemployment, brought the American public face to face with much shorter working hours. This in turn placed a strain and responsibility on modern education, demanding that future citizens be taught hobbies, sports, recreation and interests that would prepare them for the new leisure. Intramurals stepped forward to meet this challenge with a feeling of confidence and service.

The above forces, plus the natural desire of students (not good enough to represent their school against other schools) to play and compete against others of like ability are the foundations of our

present intramural program.

The most recent trends have been toward the quality of the program offered, great attention being placed on skills taught to players so that even greater enjoyment may be achieved, medical examinations to help prevent injuries, pre-game conditioning, and closer supervision by trained personnel where the activity is a vigorous one. This trend toward quality and the constant encouragement from students, from parents of youth who see the value of play and recreation, and from our public officers charged with the fitness of youth almost guarantees the continued expansion of intramural athletics.

#### IV. THE OBJECTIVES OF INTRAMURAL SPORTS

In relating the values of intramural athletic competition, many authors have set down objectives for a successful program. As in all other fields of education, a great many objectives have been suggested. No list is considered completely authoritative. Most authors feel that all objectives must be constantly evaluated and adjusted to the changing demands of society.

Six general objectives can be used to condense and categorize all the objectives of the intramural program, according to Means (10:Ch. II):

1. Physical and Mental Health and Efficiency

This connotes better physical health through the avenue of invigorating physical exercise.

It suggests the very draining of surplus energy from the junior and senior high school student is desirable for his growth and eliminates a desire to take part in unhealthy, harmful, and wasteful activities.

It indicates that physical exercise is a safety valve that releases mental and emotional tensions that accompany living in a complex civilization all too full of fears, disappointments, pent-up feelings, and mental anxieties.

2. Recreation--Present and Future

Youth must be introduced to the most valuable ways in which to use leisure time. Lives can be enriched through the proper use of leisure time or degraded by engaging in activities that society feels are objectionable. Also suggested in this objective is the value of building permanent interests that enrich adult living.

3. Social Values--Group Cooperation--Spirit

Many chances are afforded the student who participates

in intramural activities to meet new boys, judge their loyalties and character traits, make new friends, and to join a gang, group, or team.

#### 4. Coordination--Perpetuation of Skills--Bodily Prowess

The intramural field is the laboratory in which the participant tests the fundamental skills he learns in the physical education classes and provides for the further perfection of skills that increase coordination and bodily prowess. This is particularly true in a quality program that emphasizes conditioning and practice sessions as well as game competition.

#### 5. Development of Varsity Material

This objective should be incidental, not construed to mean that the intramural field is the training ground for the varsity squad. However, it is always gratifying to all concerned when some boy progresses through the intramural ranks to become a member of the interscholastic team.

#### 6. Scholarship

To imply that participation in intramural sports is a certain method of improving a student's grade point average would be an exaggeration, but Means does

state (10:29):

No studies to date have sought to prove that such activity has a deleterious effect on scholarship. On the other hand, several studies have been made in recent years to give credence and weight to the unity of mind and body, to the close relationship between wise physical activity and scholastic attainment. Studies conducted at the University of Nebraska show a close correlation between intramural participation and higher scholastic averages.

Irwin (8:Ch.III), in his chapter on the functions of any physical education program, including intramural or interscholastic sports, maintains that the broad objectives of that program should include (1) the physical objective, including the development of skills, health of youth, and physical growth; (2) the social objective; (3) the emotional objective of relaxation from mental anxieties through recreation; (4) the recreational objective, embodying the proper use of leisure time for the student and the formation of habits that will encourage participation in later life; and (5) the objective of citizenship through physical education activities that offer experiences in loyalty, cooperation, fair play, playing by the rules of the game, and student leadership.

In this age when competition has been a much debated word, it is important to note that Havel and Seymour (6:270) write that any soundly administered intramural program should include activities that engage the student in wholesome competition, thereby providing lessons in the "give and take" of life.

If the above objectives of intramurals are met and the participant can receive benefits in relation to these aims, then that program has a rightful place in the educational institutions of modern America.

## V. THE VALUE OF FOOTBALL TO YOUTH

The preceding sections of this paper gave a short history of intramural sports and affirmed the value of an intramural activities program. The paper will now produce arguments for adding football to that program and then suggest possible methods of conducting a satisfactory and sound football activity for all interested boys on the junior high school level.

Basic to any intramural activity is that it be a game, one that boys or girls enjoy. Because of the great public interest in football and the subsequent desire that schools produce winning teams, oftentimes people forget that football is a game. However, boys playing it, even in view of defeat, very seldom view it other than as a game. And boys enjoy football, whether it is played on the school field against a school rival, in the backyard against the neighborhood gang, or under the supervision of a competent instructor on the intramural field. Bobby Dodd states, "I believe it is important to keep always in mind,

under all conditions and circumstances, that football is a 'game'. Permit your players to have as much fun as possible, and at the same time give them adequate supervision" (3:10-13).

The value of football to the player has been pointed out repeatedly by observers of the game. Opportunities for lessons in self control and self discipline are many. Boys must observe ethical standards of conduct, play the game fairly, and obey the rules of the game. These experiences have a carry-over value and produce characteristics valued by our citizens.

Ross Shaw (11:8-9) emphasizes the value of football to boys in two categories--mental and physical. It is obvious, he says, that physical qualities of speed, strength, balance, and agility are increased by training and conditioning. Most important, though, is the growth football players show in such mental characteristics as respect, loyalty, confidence, and aggressiveness. He further states, "Reliability and dependability are characteristics needed on the athletic field. Are there any tools more needed for meeting life than these?"

Dana X. Bible, in his book "Championship Football," devotes a section to the values of football. He contends that the game is worth the playing, even though its importance to the public and to the school is often exaggerated. He points out that these excesses are neither permanent nor basic to football, that they are not faults of the game. He

further states (1:260-61):

Football in its rightful place, is the most wholesome and valuable sport in schools and colleges today. As no other sport or pastime, it teaches the boy in his formative years to control and command his own powers; to focus them on a single end, and to mobilize them quickly and completely. Football teaches him to think fast and realistically, to disregard pain in pursuit of a desired end, to subordinate his interests to those of the group. At the same time he learns to observe the rules of the game, regard the rights of others, and stay within the limits dictated by decency and sportsmanship.

Football not only teaches the boy the will to win and the way to win, but something else--it teaches him how to meet defeat. . . . In football he will learn to consider defeat merely as a temporary setback.

This is training, it seems to us, that turns a young man toward good and useful citizenship. We reiterate that football is a game worth the playing.

The value of football to boys can be debated from a developmental task viewpoint as written by Havighurst (7:Ch. V), who defines these tasks to be a general mode of behavior which ordinarily occurs at certain points of individual development. Failure of or deviation from these modes of behavior causes unfavorable reactions of other people toward the individual and unpleasant feelings within the individual. Developmental tasks of adolescence include those of accepting one's physique and accepting the masculine role, achieving new relations with age mates, and achieving emotional independence and control. Football most certainly offers opportunities and experiences related to the



completion of these tasks.

Additional arguments for the inclusion of football in the intramural program are that football in many ways contributes to and satisfies many objectives of a good intramural program. Few would debate and most would contend that a quality program designed around conditioning, teaching of fundamental skills, drills, and game experiences would surely enhance the player's physical efficiency.

Football in the junior high school also meets the objective of recreation, both present and future. Time spent on the gridiron is certainly worthy use of leisure time; the experiences gained in an intramural sport can be carried forward to high school and college days. In adult life few will continue to play football, but having played the game as a youth, the adult will enjoy the game more as a spectator.

The social values of football to the participant are many. The boy has an opportunity to meet and play with all members of a squad, join a team of his own where he must produce for the good of the team effort or compete against a single opponent in a tackling or blocking drill. This social contact and the very belonging to a team or gang, of utmost importance to the junior high student, is made possible in football, for here, more than in many other sports, teamwork is vital to success (9:9-17).

The writer would be remiss if in writing about the values of

football to a boy some statement was not included concerning the dangers of football. Accidents do happen in all games, and injuries can be serious. However, under proper supervision, and through the use of good protective equipment and lengthy periods of conditioning, the chance of injuries is lessened. In a good intramural activity boys will be competing against others of equal age, size, and experience. Compare this to the neighborhood gang playing with little or no protective equipment, no supervision, and in gangs of boys irrespective of age or size and one can readily see why many more injuries are sustained on the sandlot than on the school playing field.

The editor of Athletic Journal (4:16) states, "Research on football injuries prove conclusively that use of proper equipment and good supervision reduces injuries materially." A. A. Schabinger (4:16), Chairman of the National Federation of Football Statistical Committee, writes that far less injuries occur in the last part of the season, this being evidence that proper conditioning is the best method of preventing injuries.

These statements plus the knowledge that boys will play football some place, under some conditions, should support the proposition that the game should be played as an intramural activity on the junior high school field rather than on sand lots.

## CHAPTER II

### CONDUCTING AN INTRAMURAL FOOTBALL ACTIVITY IN A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

In starting an intramural football program in the junior high school, much time and effort must go into proper planning of the activity. Planning must be complete and thorough; the results of the program depend directly upon the quality of the plans set forth. These plans should be dual in nature, one emphasizing administration of such items as medical examinations for the participants, insurance, procurement of equipment, financing of the entire activity, and assignment of competent supervisors. The other field of planning involves practice sessions with drills, calisthenics, selection of teams, execution of plays, and actual game experiences, which necessitate scheduling, officiating, and procurement of satisfactory fields.

The concluding portion of this paper will deal with planning a program for a junior high school that can attract approximately ninety boys to turn out and enjoy football, sixty of whom will be playing in the intramural activity.

Due to the vigorous nature of football, each boy participating should first be cleared by his family medical doctor as being physically fit and ready for this body contact sport.

Parents should be completely informed that their boy is planning to participate in the football activity. This can best be done through a parental consent slip, dated, signed, and filed in the school office. At the same time parents should be urged to help their sons comply with certain training rules that both make for success on the athletic field and produce stronger and healthier youth. These three administrative details--physical examination, parents' consent, and explanation of training rules can readily be completed by a single letter divided into three portions.

Accident insurance should be a prerequisite of all participants in football. Students of the junior high schools often purchase insurance that insures against injuries sustained in all activities occurring on the school grounds and in going to and from school. At present this insurance costs the student three dollars per annum and does cover accidents that might occur on the intramural football field.

Financing of the intramural program differs from that of the interscholastic activity in that the former is considered by state authorities to be a portion of the general education curriculum and monies can be expended from the general fund of a school district for its operation. The interscholastic, or varsity team, in contrast, must be supported by student body funds and ticket sales.

Procurement of equipment will necessitate a heavy outlay of money during the first years of a program. However, some assistance may be received by using some equipment that is being replaced for the varsity team. The intramural teams should never be considered the dumping ground for worn out equipment, but in first starting a program any suitable equipment that can be obtained in this manner will surely help defray the initial costs. The equipment must be in satisfactory condition and fit the boy to whom it is issued.

New protective equipment, purchased through reputable sporting goods firms, manufactured by houses of recognized quality, and suitable for use by a junior high school boy, will cost approximately thirty-five dollars per player. This may be broken down into the following items:

Plastic helmet with double face and teeth bar	\$11.00
Hip and body pads	4.00
Thigh pads	3.00
Pants	5.00
Knee pads	2.00
Shoulder pads	10.00

With proper use, care, storage, and repair, equipment of this quality should be completely serviceable for about seven seasons of football activity.

In selecting personnel to supervise the intramural football program, qualities similar to those required for the varsity coach are desirable. Major emphasis must be placed on teaching fundamentals of the game; therefore, a coach well versed in fundamentals is a requirement. However, since play execution is not so refined and the number of plays presented must be limited, the expert coach is not needed so much as is a supervisor highly interested in the participation of all boys in game experiences. The successful intramural coach should have a real dedication to the sports-for-all ideal, ability to teach fundamentals of the game, and a background in youth development that will enable him to recognize abilities and limitations in the youth with whom he is working (9:13).

The actual operation of an intramural football activity, once administrative details have been taken care of, involves regular practice sessions, playing of scheduled games, and the promotion of the activity to insure its success and growth.

Practice sessions should be held daily during the school week for periods not to exceed one and one half hours. During the first two weeks of the season, these sessions should be devoted primarily to conditioning calisthenics, teaching of fundamental skills, and drills that lead up to actual football play conditions and experiences. A third week can be used for further conditioning and the introduction

of team plays and their execution. At the end of fifteen days' practice, participants should be in a state of physical condition that would enable them to play a game with fewer chances of injury. They should also have developed skills and tactics well enough to get considerable success and pleasure from a game.

In forming teams for the program, the supervisor may well consider eight man football rather than the conventional eleven man teams. More teams can be formed from the same number of personnel, and this is conducive to a more interesting game schedule. Another advantage of the eight man game is that each team can have several substitutes available, insuring that boys are played only to a point of healthful fatigue rather than to harmful exhaustion. Still another advantage is that most boys of junior high school age desire to play positions that entail ball handling and running with the ball. In the eight man variety, six of the team (two ends, three backs, and the center) are used in this manner. Two boys who are heavier, less agile, and who realize their physical limitations of running with the ball can then be picked to play the interior lineman positions. Still another valid reason for using an eight man team can be found in the simplification of plays. Blocking assignments can be made less complicated, and the actual play execution is simplified to a point that junior high school boys can perform them with success.

In selecting teams for the season's games, extreme care must be taken by the coach to maintain as much equality as possible. This can best be done through selection of players by the coach rather than by the players or appointed captains. Another decision that should be made by competent supervisors is to determine ages and sizes of boys to compete against each other. If the intramural program is to be conducted with reasonable safety, caution must be exercised to be certain boys of too great a size and age differential do not compete against each other. The coach's good judgement is recommended, or the age-weight-height classification can be used as formulated in the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association Handbook (12:96), thereby placing boys in "B" or "C" divisions. Larger and older boys will make up the varsity team.

In scheduling games for the season, a round robin schedule is suggested, with games played once each week. In a school in which four teams of similar age and size classifications are available, three games would be played by each team with a final game pitting the two top teams against each other and another between the two lower teams.

Fields should be well marked. Competent officials, properly dressed, should be used. Means (10:388), in his chapter on motivation and promotion of the intramural program, states, "The wise



administrator will provide the best contest arrangements to give character to intramural games, thus creating greater desire to participate in them." He further mentions that score boards should be used, and all other simple arrangements should be made that will make the game important to the competitor and the spectator. Furnishing the minor details stated above, announcing games to be played and results of previous games, plus a bulletin board in the school hall complete with league standings--all add to the importance of the intramural program and help insure its success.

## CHAPTER III

### SUMMARY

Conclusive evidence has been presented to the public that the physical fitness of United States youth is not satisfactory for the present demands of our society. Lack of vigorous physical exercise appears to be the cause of this condition rather than lack of a proper diet or poor medical care.

Intramural sports activities have long been one method by which many boys could receive satisfactory experiences in competitive athletics. However, varsity competition has received greater emphasis, thereby promoting a group of spectators along with championship teams at the expense of the sports-for-all ideal that produces physical fitness for the masses.

Adding football to the intramural program will help vitalize that program and give boys a chance to play a game they love. And in playing football, boys will have experiences that will enhance their physical, social, and mental growth. Football produces in its players many character traits considered essential in good citizens.

Finally, an intramural football program in the junior high school is very feasible and can be a success if headed by an enthusiastic and competent supervisor who makes careful plans for the

prevention of injuries, sees the advantages of play, and is convinced that the sports-for-all ideal can be of great service to boys and to the nation.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Bible, Dana X. Championship Football. New York: Prentice-Hall, Incorporated, 1947.
2. Daniels, Gordon E. "What Kind of an Athletic Program in the Junior High School?" Bulletin of National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 42:133, April, 1958.
3. Dodd, Robert L. "Bobby," Bobby Dodd on Football. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Incorporated, 1957.
4. Editor. "Research on Football Injuries," Athletic Journal, 36:16, February, 1956.
5. Editor. "More Athletes Not Fewer," Teachers College Record, 62:483-484, March, 1961.
6. Havel, Richard C., and Emory W. Seymour. Administration of Health, Physical Education and Recreation for Schools. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1961.
7. Havighurst, Robert J. Developmental Tasks and Education. Second Edition. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1952.
8. Irwin, Leslie W. The Curriculum in Health and Physical Education. St. Louis: The C. V. Mosby Company, 1951.
9. Mather, Charles V. Winning High School Football. New York: Prentice-Hall, Incorporated, 1955.
10. Means, Louis E. The Organization and Administration of Intramural Sports. Second Edition. St. Louis: The C. V. Mosby Company, 1952.
11. Shaw, Ross. "Football Has Definite Educational Values," Texas Outlook, 39:8-9, October, 1955.
12. Washington Interscholastic Activities Association. Official Handbook. Seattle, 1961-62.