

Newsletter316

Keith's Corner/McGill News

May 23, 2025

McGill Football 1909-?

McGill has been known for its great baseball teams, but not much is known about its great football teams. It is time to change that.

McGill arose from the sagebrush and brought forth a great place to grow up in and live. The rest of the world considers McGill a tiny town in the middle of 'nowhere'. We McGill heathens think differently. We are grateful that we are in the middle of 'nowhere'. It means we don't have to put up with the noise, pollution and congestion of the rat race in the cities.

We were more physically active in that we had a great swimming pool, a terrific baseball/football field and plenty of mountains to hike. Since McGill was built on a sloping hillside we were always going uphill. At least it seemed like that. All this activity made McGill kids strong and good at most sports.

Thus, it didn't take McGill long to develop baseball/football/basketball teams.

During September 1909, potential football players were having meetings about organizing a McGill Team. A Captain Burns was chosen and he started the men practicing on the pastures at the McGill ranch that were used by the McGill Baseball Team.

Things moved rapidly and on Oct.14, 1909 the McGill team chose C. E. Fagan as their coach. The new Nye Bros. Store ordered uniforms from the Spaulding House in San Francisco.

Later that week a meeting was held with the Ely Football group and several games were scheduled.

The McGill team was established with the name, Steptoe Valley Football. A dance was held at the Stone Amusement Theater (later the McGill Rec Hall/Copper Kettle).

Proceeds of the dance went toward the purchase of the new football uniforms.

The uniforms arrived in record time, thanks to the efforts of Morris Flowers, the manager of the Nye Bros. store in McGill.

The new suits were enjoyed by the following team members—QBs-Hogan and Burns-Fullback-Dunkle, Halfbacks-Houghton and Robbins, Ends-Graham, Knapp, Kilene and Fry, Linemen-Curtis, Rice, Hilton, Tibbetts, Watkins, McMurray, McDonald, Conway and Scott.

Tex Hall, the manager of the Copper Club in McGill, had some lockers built for the team to store their uniforms and provided a large changing room for them.

The people and business establishments in McGill were enthusiastic about helping the team.

The players practiced every night at the McGill ranch and it was noted that the Ely team was practicing on Aultman Street in Ely.

The first game was scheduled for late October.

NOTE-The players names war very hard to read in the old newspapers, so I had to guess a lot. I just hope I am close.

McGill News



Last month, after a moderate snowstorm, I noticed that the canopy was sagging on the ends. Upon closer examination it was apparent that the whole thing needed to be fixed. The base against the building was pulling away and a heavy snow fall might bring the whole canopy down. We removed all the aluminum slats and found that the frame was rusty. The struts are not adequate for the snow fall in this area and they will be replaced. Instead of 4 in the middle, we will have four. The rust is being wire brushed off and a metal primer will be painted on and then a nice new coat of white. These things will ensure the canopy has a lot longer life span.

Old Photo



I get a lot of questions about the empty space next to the Drugstore. Here is a photo in the early 1950s. I remember it being open during my freshman year at WPHS in 1950. Many years before that it was called, "The Browning".