

= Everett Strupper =

George Everett Strupper , Jr . (July 26 , 1896 ? February 4 , 1950) , known variously as " Ev " or " Strup " or " Stroop " was an American football player . He played halfback for Georgia Tech from 1915 to 1917 . Strupper overcame deafness resulting from a childhood illness and was selected as an All -@ American in 1917 .

During Strupper 's three years playing for Georgia Tech , the team compiled a record of 24 ? 0 ? 2 and outscored its opponents by a combined score of 1 @ , @ 135 to 61 . In Georgia Tech 's record @ - @ setting 222 ? 0 win over Cumberland College in 1916 , Strupper scored eight touchdowns . For many years , 1917 Georgia Tech was considered the greatest football team the South ever produced . Strupper starred as part of a renowned backfield including also Joe Guyon , Judy Harlan , and Al Hill . Strupper and teammate Walker Carpenter were the first players from the Deep South selected for an All @ - @ America first team .

Sportswriter Morgan Blake called Strupper " probably the greatest running half @ - @ back the South has known . " Bernie McCarty writes " Strupper ranks among the greatest broken @ - @ field gallopers in Southern football history . And he caught and threw passes , returned kicks , blocked well , punted and played a bang @ - @ up defensive game . " He was posthumously inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1972 and the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in 1974 .

= = Early years = =

Strupper was born in Columbus , Georgia , in 1896 . His parents , G. Everett Strupper , Sr. (born 1872) , and Bessie H. (Hatcher) Strupper (born 1875) , were both Georgia natives . As of 1910 , his father was employed as a manager at a cotton oil company . Stupper attended Riverside Military Academy in Gainesville , Georgia . He was the star of the school 's football team in 1913 ; and is a member of the school 's sports hall of fame .

= = Georgia Tech = =

Strupper enrolled at the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) in Atlanta in 1914 . During his freshman year , Strupper became a member of the Georgia Phi chapter of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity . He was a multi @ - @ sport athlete competing for Georgia Tech in basketball , football , and track and field .

In 1914 , Strupper played for the freshman football team at Georgia Tech . He then played halfback for Georgia Tech 's varsity football teams under head coach John Heisman from 1915 to 1917 . Strupper was deaf , and because of his deafness , he called the signals instead of the team 's quarterback . Strupper was a small man , with his height being stated in varying accounts to be between five @ - @ feet seven inches and five @ - @ feet , ten inches . His coach John Heisman later wrote that Strupper was " but 5 feet 7 inches in height , weighed only 148 pounds stripped . " He was sometimes known as " little Everett Strupper . "

Georgia Tech never lost a game in which Strupper played , compiling three consecutive undefeated seasons from 1915 to 1917 . During Strupper 's three years playing for Georgia Tech , the team compiled a record of 24 ? 0 ? 2 . Only two teams managed a tie ? the University of Georgia in 1915 and Washington & Lee in 1916 . In those 26 games , Georgia Tech outscored its opponents by a combined score of 1 @ , @ 135 to 61 .

Georgia Tech coach John Heisman later described Strupper as follows :

" Everett Strupper was a small package of condensed lightning when you turned him loose in an open field with a ball you wanted delivered somewhere in the neighborhood of the enemy 's goal line . He was small , but he was put together like a high @ - @ powered motor . His arms and legs did just what his mind told them to do , and , believe me , his mind worked faster than Ty Cobb 's when he 's running the bases . Dodging and twisting , stiff @ - @ arming and hiping , he 'd run the gauntlet of men big enough , you 'd think , to pick him up and spank him , and most of the time , too , he 'd get away from them , try as hard as they would . "

Heisman also said of Strupper " Were I compelled to risk my head on what one absolutely unaided gridster might accomplish , football under arm and facing eleven ferocious opponents , I would rather choose and chance this man on how he might come through the gauntlet than any ball carrier I have ever seen in action . "

Heisman recalled that , when Strupper first arrived from Riverside Military Academy , Heisman could not imagine Strupper playing on the football team : " Too light for the line , I didn 't see how he could play in the backfield , because he wouldn 't be able to get the signals . He could have played quarterback fine , but his enunciation wasn 't clear enough for him to call the plays . " Heisman recalled how Strupper overcame the obstacle posed by his deafness : " He couldn 't hear anything but a regular shout . But he could read your lips like a flash . No lad that ever stepped on a football field had keener eyes than Everett had . The enemy found this out the minute he began looking for openings through which to run the ball . " He was nominated though not selected for an Associated Press All @-@ Time Southeast 1869 ? 1919 era team .

= = = 1915 season = = =

In his sophomore year , Strupper proved to be an all @-@ around athlete . As Heisman told it , Strupper " was a star baseball player , a crack at basketball and the best sprint man we had in the school . " Heisman recalled that , despite his small stature , Strupper had a powerful body : " Stripped down in the dressing rooms Everett was a sight to behold . There never was a better set up lad than he ; he was a regular Apollo , beautifully muscled and built and coordinating rhythmically in every movement . "

When Strupper tried out for the team , he noticed that the quarterback would shout the signals every time Strupper was to carry the ball . Realizing the loud signals would be a tip @-@ off to the opposition , Strupper told Heisman , " Coach , those loud signals are absolutely unnecessary . You see when sickness in my kid days brought on this deafness my folks gave me the best instructors obtainable to teach me lip @-@ reading . "

Strupper first starred in a game against Transylvania , scoring four touchdowns . He was injured the next week against LSU , and blamed LSU 's Phillip Cooper .

Tech closed what was then the greatest season in its history with a 7 ? 0 defeat of the Auburn Plainsmen . To begin the second quarter , Strupper had two key plays , the last of which was the game @-@ deciding touchdown . First he made 20 yards around with a pass from Froggie Morrison before being forced out of bounds . Next was the 19 @-@ yard touchdown . Strupper started around left end , then cut back into the center of the field , away from his blockers . He juke and eluded " every man on the Auburn team . " On the last move Strupper faked right and then dove left underneath the outstretched arms of Baby Taylor into the endzone .

At the end of the 1915 season , Strupper received two selections from a composite All @-@ Southern eleven selected by ten sports writers and coaches , including those from Memphis , Nashville , Atlanta , Birmingham , Chattanooga , and New Orleans .

= = = 1916 season = = =

In 1916 , Strupper had a 92 @-@ yard punt return for a touchdown on opening day against Mercer . The next week , Strupper led Georgia Tech in a 222 ? 0 victory over Cumberland College , " the most lopsided game in football history . " The score (compiled on 32 touchdowns and 30 extra points) broke the old record of a 153 ? 0 set by the University of Michigan in 1912 . Strupper scored eight touchdowns in the game , six rushing and two on punt returns . One historic account of the 1916 Cumberland game described Strupper as the " lord high executioner " :

" There were many executioners that crisp early @-@ fall Saturday . Halfback G.E. Strupper scored from 20 yards out on Tech 's first offensive play and went on to be lord high executioner with eight touchdowns and a conversion for a total of 49 points . "

In the first quarter alone , Strupper scored four touchdowns on runs of 20 , 10 , 60 , and 45 yards . Strupper chose to allow others to share in the scoring . With a 42 ? 0 lead midway through the first

quarter , Strupper broke clear and could have scored easily , but he intentionally grounded the ball at the one @-@ yard line to allow Georgia Tech tackle J. Cantey Alexander to score the first touchdown of his career . A teammate later recalled the play as follows :

" Strupper swapped positions with Alexander ... The team didn 't want to make it too easy for Cantey , though . The other boys wouldn 't block for him or help in any way . As soon as the ball was snapped , they ran away from the line and out of the play completely . Leaving poor Cantey to go it alone . Finally , on fourth down , a bruised and weary Alexander managed to get the ball across while his teammates howled with laughter . "

The game was eventually halted after just 44 minutes of play . It was said only one newspaper in all of the South neglected to have Strupper on its All @-@ Southern team for 1916 . He ranked third in the nation in scoring , including 16 touchdowns .

= = = 1917 season = = =

Strupper also played on the 1917 team then considered the greatest the South ever produced , including one of the greatest backfields . According to the Times @-@ Picayune , " Strupper , Guyon , Hill , and Harlan form a backfield with no superiors and few equals in football history " . Tech gave Vanderbilt its worst loss in school history 83 ? 0 . " It was not until 1917 that a Southern team really avenged long @-@ time torment at McGugin 's hands . And it took one of history 's top backfields ? Joe Guyon , Ev Strupper , Al Hill , and Judy Harlan of Georgia Tech ? to do it , " writes Edwin Pope . The team also defeated the University of Pennsylvania , then one of the Eastern powers , 41 ? 0 . It was called by one writer " Strupper 's finest hour . " In a 98 ? 0 win over the Carlisle Indians in 1917 , Strupper drew praise for his performance . The Atlanta Journal wrote :

" Everett Strupper played like a veritable demon . At one time four Carlisle men pounced on him from all directions , and yet through some superhuman witchery he broke loose and dashed 10 yards further . On another occasion he attempted a wide end run , found that he was completely blocked , then suddenly whirled and ran the other way , gaining something like 25 yards before he was downed . "

Strupper scored five touchdowns against Carlisle , including a 32 @-@ yard fumble return for a touchdown . And in a 68 ? 7 win over rival Auburn , Strupper had a 65 @-@ yard touchdown run that drew the following praise from the Atlanta Journal :

" It was not the length of the run that featured it was the brilliance of it . After getting through the first line , Stroop was tackled squarely by two secondary men , and yet he squirmed and jerked loosed from them , only to face the safety man and another Tiger , coming at him from different angles . Without checking his speed Everett knifed the two men completely , running between them and dashing on to a touchdown . "

Remarkably , two Georgia Tech players led the country in touchdowns for the 1917 season . Quarterback Albert Hill was first with 23 touchdowns , and Strupper was second with 20 touchdowns . Strupper rushed for some 1 @,@ 150 yards on a little over 100 carries .

Strupper has been recognized as a consensus first @-@ team player on the 1917 College Football All @-@ America Team , having received first @-@ team honors from Frank Menke Syndicate , Paul Purman , and Dick Jemison of the Atlanta Constitution . Strupper and team captain Walker Carpenter were the first players from the Deep South selected for an All @-@ America first team . Strupper was named as one of four backs on Georgia Tech 's " All @-@ Era " team for the Heisman era covering the years from 1904 to 1919 .

= = Military football and coaching = =

On December 8 , 1917 , Strupper was elected by his teammates to be the captain of the 1918 Georgia Tech football team . However , Strupper enlisted in the U. S. Army on August 28 , 1918 , and was assigned to the First Replacement Regiment at Camp Gordon in Augusta , Georgia . In October 1918 , Strupper transferred to Camp Hancock and promoted to the rank of sergeant . He played football for Camp Gordon and Camp Hancock teams . In November 1918 , Camp Gordon

played a game in Strupper 's home town of Columbus , Georgia , and the locals held " Strupper Day " in his honor . In a game for Camp Gordon on December 7 , 1918 , he had two runs of 80 yards and scored four touchdowns . At the end of the season , he was picked as a second @-@ team halfback on Walter Camp 's All @-@ America service team .

The war ended in November 1918 , and Strupper was discharged from the Army on December 20 , 1918 , as part of the post @-@ war demobilization . In August 1919 , Strupper accepted a job as the backfield coach for Oglethorpe University . He next led the Columbus High School football team . Strupper was an assistant coach under Josh Cody at Mercer in 1922 .

= = Family and later years = =

Strupper was married in approximately 1920 to his wife , Odelle . As of 1921 , Strupper was living in Columbus , Georgia , working as a salesman for E. F. Gray . From at least 1925 to 1928 , Strupper was living in Columbus with his wife , Odelle , and operating a tire business under the name Everett Strupper , Inc . The business sold Dunlop Tires and also provided vulcanizing , road service , washing , greasing and oil .

By 1930 , Strupper and his wife , Odelle , had moved to Atlanta where he was employed as the sales manager for an automobile accessories business . He was also a contributor to the Atlanta Journal . Although there are competing stories as to the origin of the Red Elephant mascot for the University of Alabama , some sources have cited a story written by Strupper about an October 1930 football game between Alabama and Mississippi . Strupper wrote : " At the end of the quarter , the earth started to tremble , there was a distant rumble that continued to grow . Some excited fan in the stands bellowed , ' Hold your horses , the elephants are coming , ' and out stamped this Alabama varsity . "

By 1934 , he was working as a solicitor for the Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company . He worked with former teammate , Pup Phillips , at Massachusetts Mutual . As of 1941 , Strupper was still living in Atlanta and employed by Massachusetts Mutual . His spouse , apparently a second wife , was identified as Frances C. Strupper .

Strupper later became a general agent for the Volunteer State Life Insurance Company , and by 1948 , he became the president of the Piedmont Life Insurance Co. based in Atlanta .

Strupper died at his home in Atlanta 's Georgian Terrace Hotel in February 1950 from thrombosis . He was age 57 at the time of his death . He was survived by a wife and a step @-@ daughter , Gwyneth Oliver . He was buried in Columbus , Georgia .

In 1972 , the National Football Foundation named Strupper and nine others players who played before 1920 to the " Pioneer " section of the College Football Hall of Fame . He was also inducted into the Georgia Tech Athletics Hall of Fame in 1956 and the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in 1974 .