

= 1920 Canton Bulldogs season =

The 1920 Canton Bulldogs season was the franchise 's sixteenth and its first in the American Professional Football Association (APFA) , which became the National Football League two years later . Jim Thorpe , the APFA 's president , was Canton 's coach and a back who played on the team . The Bulldogs entered the season coming off a 9 ? 0 ? 1 performance as Ohio League champions in 1919 . The team opened the season with a 48 ? 0 victory over the Pitcairn Quakers , and finished with a 7 ? 4 ? 2 record , taking eighth place in the 14 @-@ team APFA . A then @-@ record crowd of 17 @,@ 000 fans watched Canton 's week 12 game against Union AA of Phoenixville .

The 1920 season was Thorpe 's last with the Bulldogs . Thorpe , who was of mixed American Indian ancestry , left after the season to organize and play for an all @-@ Native American team in LaRue , Ohio . Cap Edwards replaced Thorpe as the team 's coach , and Wilbur Henry , Cub Buck , Harrie Dadmun , Joe Guyon , and Pete Calac were named to the All @-@ Pro list . Three 1920 Bulldogs players ? Thorpe , Guyon and Pete Henry ? were later elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame .

= = Offseason = =

Representatives of four Ohio League teams ? the Bulldogs , the Cleveland Tigers , the Dayton Triangles , and the Akron Pros ? called a meeting on August 20 , 1920 to discuss the formation of a new league . At the meeting , they tentatively agreed on a salary cap and pledged not to sign college players or players already under contract with other teams . They also agreed on a name for the circuit : the American Professional Football Conference . They then invited other professional teams to a second meeting on September 17 . At that meeting , held at Bulldogs owner Ralph Hay 's Hupmobile showroom in Canton , representatives of the Rock Island Independents , the Muncie Flyers , the Decatur Staleys , the Racine Cardinals , the Massillon Tigers , the Chicago Cardinals , and the Hammond Pros agreed to join the league . Representatives of the Buffalo All @-@ Americans and Rochester Jeffersons could not attend the meeting , but sent letters to Hay asking to be included in the league . Team representatives changed the league 's name slightly to the American Professional Football Association and elected officers , installing Jim Thorpe as president . Under the new league structure , teams created their schedules dynamically as the season progressed , and representatives of each team voted to determine the winner of the APFA trophy .

= = Schedule = =

= = Game summaries = =

= = = Week 2 : vs. Pitcairn Quakers = = =

October 3 , 1920 at Lakeside Park

The Bulldogs opened the 1920 season against the Pitcairn Quakers . The team got out to a quick lead and was never in danger , scoring 34 points in the first quarter as back Joe Guyon rushed for three touchdowns , tackle Pete Henry caught a 15 @-@ yard touchdown pass from back Tex Grigg , and back Johnny Hendren returned an interception for a touchdown . The Bulldogs were only forced to punt once in the game , and did not attempt to score in the second and third quarters because of the large lead . In the fourth quarter , however , end Bunny Corcoran caught a 35 @-@ yard touchdown pass from Guyon , and back Ike Martin ran for a one @-@ yard touchdown . The final score was 48 ? 0 , and Guyon was the offensive star .

= = = Week 3 : vs. Toledo Maroons = = =

October 10 , 1920 at Lakeside Park

The Bulldogs were scheduled to play their second game against the Rochester Jeffersons , but faced the Toledo Maroons after that match was cancelled . For the second game in a row the Bulldogs scored over 40 points in a shutout as Martin and Guyon dominated on offense . Martin scored the first touchdown of the game with a run in the first quarter . In the second quarter , Hendren scored a rushing touchdown , and end Tom Whelan caught a touchdown pass from Grigg . In the third quarter , Martin caught a touchdown pass from Grigg , and Grigg rushed for another . The Bulldogs ' final score was a rushing touchdown from back Pete Calac in the fourth quarter . The final score was 48 ? 0 . The Maroons never got close to scoring and did not make a single a first down .

= = = Week 4 : vs. Cleveland Tigers = = =

October 17 , 1920 at Lakeside Park

The Bulldogs next faced the Cleveland Tigers , their first APFA opponent , and won 7 ? 0 before a crowd of 7 @, @ 000 people . Despite the Bulldogs ' 15 first downs , the only score of the game came on Martin 's 7 @-@ yard touchdown run in the first quarter . Thorpe made his season debut in the game , coming in as a substitute in the fourth quarter .

= = = Week 5 : at Dayton Triangles = = =

October 24 , 1920 at Triangle Park

Bulldogs battled the Dayton Triangles in week five . The Bulldogs opened the scoring in the first quarter on a two @-@ yard rushing touchdown by Pete Calac . But the Triangles came back in the second quarter , scoring twice : back Frank Bacon had a four @-@ yard rushing touchdown , and end Dave Reese had a 50 @-@ yard receiving touchdown . Guyon scored a 22 @-@ yard rushing touchdown during the corner , but the extra point sailed wide . In the third quarter , the Triangles responded with a 3 @-@ yard rushing touchdown by back Lou Partlow , but Dayton missed the extra point to make the score 20 ? 14 . Thorpe then came into the game , and kicked a 45 @-@ yard field goal to bring his team within three points . In the final minutes , Thorpe kicked another 35 @-@ yard field goal to tie it . The Triangles were the first team to score on the Bulldogs since the opening game of the previous year .

= = = Week 6 : vs. Akron Pros = = =

October 31 , 1920 at Lakeside Park

The Bulldogs ' next opponent was the Akron Pros , who were undefeated at the time and were gaining attention around the league . The game was the first of a two @-@ game series between the Bulldogs and Pros , considered to be two of the best teams in the country . In the first quarter , after an exchange of punts , Pros tackle Charlie Copley kicked a 38 @-@ yard field goal . On a Bulldog possession at midfield , a Gilroy pass was tipped by the Pros ' Copley and Bob Nash . Pros tackle Pike Johnson caught the ball before it landed and ran 55 yards for a touchdown . In the third quarter , Jim Thorpe came into the game but could not get the Bulldogs back into the game .

= = = Week 7 : at Cleveland Tigers = = =

November 7 , 1920 at Dunn Field

Coming off their first loss , the Bulldogs faced the Cleveland Tigers in week seven . Neither team scored in the first quarter , but the Bulldogs ran for two touchdowns in the second . Calac and Grigg had 6- and 15 @-@ yard rushing touchdowns . The Bulldogs ' defense forced two safeties ? one in the third and one in the fourth quarter ? to win the game 18 ? 0 .

= = = Week 8 : vs. Chicago Tigers = = =

November 14 , 1920 at Lakeside Park

The Bulldogs ' next matchup was against the Chicago Tigers . The first scoring came in the second quarter , when Higgins recovered a fumble and ran it back for a touchdown . In the same quarter , Henry caught an interception and ran it back 50 yards for a touchdown . Calac then ran for a one @-@ yard touchdown in the third quarter to seal the 21 ? 0 win .

= = = Week 9 : at Buffalo All @-@ Americans = = =

November 21 , 1920 at Buffalo Baseball Park

In week nine , the Bulldogs played the Buffalo All @-@ Americans , who were undefeated at the time . Thorpe started the game but came out at halftime because he believed it would end in a tie . Both teams were slowed by a muddy field , and the football became soggy after three quarters . The lone score of the game came with under four minutes to play : a field goal from the Bulldogs ' Feeney . The game was the only loss of the season for the All @-@ Americans .

= = = Week 10 : at Akron Pros = = =

November 25 , 1920 at League Park

In week ten , the Bulldogs played the Pros for the second time in the season . In the first quarter , a fumbled punt by the Bulldogs gave the Pros the ball at their 32 @-@ yard line . On the ensuing drive , the Pros passed for the game 's lone score , a touchdown from King to Nash . The Bulldogs lost 7 ? 0 in the first professional game played on Thanksgiving Day , which launched a yearly tradition .

= = = Week 11 : at Buffalo All @-@ Americans = = =

December 4 , 1920 at Polo Grounds

The following week , the Bulldogs played their second game against the All @-@ Americans , losing 7 ? 3 . The Bulldogs did not get a first down or complete a pass during the game , but Thorpe kicked a field goal in the third quarter after a fumble recovery for the team 's only score . In the fourth quarter , All @-@ Americans tackle Youngstrom blocked a Thorpe punt and returned it for a touchdown . The Sunday Chronicle named Thorpe , Henry and Lowe as the Bulldogs ' stars , while Anderson , Youngstrom , and Miller were the standouts for the All @-@ Americans .

= = = Week 11 : at Washington Glee Club = = =

December 5 , 1920 in Weiss Park

The following day , the Bulldogs played the non @-@ APFA Washington Glee Club . Coming into the game , the Glee Club allowed just seven points all season . The teams tied 0 ? 0 before a crowd of 3 @, @ 000 people .

= = = Week 12 : at Union AA of Phoenixville = = =

December 11 , 1920 at Phillies Park

In their third game in seven days , the Bulldogs played Union AA of Phoenixville , who came into the game undefeated . Before the largest recorded crowd of the season , the Bulldogs lost to Union AA 13 ? 7 . Neither team scored in the first quarter , but each scored a touchdown in the second . The Bulldogs ' Calac had a six @-@ yard rushing touchdown , and Union AA 's , Hayes caught a six @-@ yard pass from Scott for a touchdown . In the third quarter , Union AA 's Hayes blocked a punt and ran it back for a touchdown , sealing the win . Despite not being part of the APFA , AA of Phoenixville after the season called themselves the " US Professional Champions " .

= = = Week 13 : at Richmond AC = = =

December 18 , 1920 at Boulevard Field

The Bulldogs beat Richmond AC 39 ? 0 in the final game of the season . Richmond AC was not part of the APFA , and this was the team 's only game in 1920 . The Bulldogs scored 13 points in the first , third , and fourth quarter to win in the shutout . Guyon scored two rushing touchdowns , while Jim Thorpe threw touchdown passes to Corcoran and Lowe . The other two touchdowns came on runs by Whelen and Grigg . Guyon made two field goals , and Thorpe added a third .

= = Standings = =

Awarded the Brunswick @-@ Balke Collender Cup and named APFA Champions.Note : Tie games were not officially counted in the standings until 1972 .

= = Post @-@ season = =

Hurt by losses to the Akron Pros and Buffalo All @-@ Americans , the Bulldogs did not contend for the APFA trophy in 1920 . Following the season , Thorpe left to start a new club composed of Native Americans in LaRue , Ohio and Cap Edwards took over as head coach . Sportswriter Bruce Copeland compiled the All @-@ Pro list for the 1920 season , naming the Bulldogs ' Wilbur Henry to the first team . Cub Buck , Harry Dadmun , and Joe Guyon were on the second team , and Pete Calac was on the third team . Three men who played for the 1920 Canton Bulldogs were later inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame : Thorpe and Pete Henry in 1963 and Guyon in 1966 .

= = Roster = =