

Town shut down for IU-Purdue game

"Merchants and business men this morning responded enthusiastically and unanimously to the appeal of the Indiana University Alumni to close their places of business from 1:45 p.m. to the close of the game on Saturday, Nov. 20, during the Indiana-Purdue football game."

—Bloomington Weekly Courier,
Nov. 12, 1915.

One hundred Bloomington merchants agreed to sign the agreement to close up their businesses during the game. Perhaps it was due to the persuasive power of the committee made up of Joseph K. Barclay, John Huntington and Walter Hottell and others.

Explained the *Courier*, "It is being explained to those who are not familiar with the closing moment that this is the first time in the history of Bloomington when the citizens as a whole are cooperating with the University alumni and student body in celebrating the Indiana-Purdue football fame, the biggest athletic event in the college year, and making it the most enthu-



Looking back

By Rose McIlveen

siastic affair of its kind which has ever been staged here."

Tickets were selling well. On Nov. 19, the newspaper reported that the \$2 tickets were gone, but that \$1 ones were still available. In fact, reported the *Courier*, "Scores of farmers and admirers and well-wishers of the university in every section of the county have purchased tickets for the game or have indicated their intention of doing so."

Closing on Saturday could have posed a problem for the merchants. It was the day the farmers brought their produce into town for sale, and their wives did weekly shopping. The solution was simple — to

turn Friday into Saturday for the rural people.

If the farmers couldn't do that, they would still have the opportunity to come into town early on Saturday and do their shopping before the game. Joe Barclay explained the reason for the unprecedented move. "What we're all pulling for is for a big and prosperous university. We want big games here during the football season, because a reputation as a successful athletic college means more students here next year."

That, in turn, he said would lead to better business for all merchants and farmers in the county. Some of those businessmen saw the partial holiday as an opportunity to make even more money than usual. On Nov. 19, 30 of them announced that they would have their November Bargain Day on the Friday before the game.

That IU would beat Purdue was never doubted by the promoters of the closing. Recounting IU's season to date, the *Courier* reported that IU had won three games, lost

two and tied one. "Everything will be opened up for this contest", nothing will be held back, and the entire repertoire of plays will be divulged. To say the least, it is thought here that the Indiana team this year had been greatly underrated."

During the football season, apparently IU's performance had been rather "spotty." Added the *Courier*, "It would appear that the cracking of Indiana's defense in the first quarter of several games has been very costly. Chicago put over two touchdowns in the Indiana-Chicago game before Indiana had hardly known that the game had started. It remains for Indiana to allow Purdue to get the jump in the final contest, and coach Childs, with all the finishing touches to put on the team, is not likely to neglect taking steps to prevent such an occurrence."

And did he? In spite of all of the enthusiasm of the merchants and local alumni, IU lost to Purdue in 1915. The score was Purdue 7, IU 0.

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