

The Score Was 222-0

Most college football fans have heard about the most lopsided game in the history of the sport when the Georgia Tech Engineers beat the Cumberland College Bulldogs at Grant Field in Atlanta 222-0. That happened on Oct. 7, 1916.



Cumberland College (now Cumberland University) is a school located in Lebanon, Tenn., near Nashville. It had discontinued its football program before the 1916 season, but was not allowed to cancel its game against the Engineers.

Some believe the fact that Cumberland's baseball team had crushed Georgia Tech earlier that year by a score of 22-0 probably accounted for Georgia Tech Coach John Heisman (for whom the Heisman Trophy is named) choosing to run up the score on the Bulldogs. Heisman was also the Engineers' baseball coach, and he insisted on Cumberland keeping its scheduling agreement, which required Cumberland to pay \$3,000 (or \$64,358 in today's inflation-adjusted terms) to Tech if its football team failed to show.

As a result, George E. Allen (who was elected to serve as Cumberland's football team student manager after first serving as the baseball team student manager) put together a team of 14 men to travel to Atlanta as Cumberland's football team.

Allen also played halfback on the team. As the score mounted, Cumberland College became more and more demoralized.

On one of the few plays when Allen's team had possession, the ball was snapped to the quarterback, who immediately fumbled it. Tech's linemen were charging in, the ball was bouncing around the backfield, and the quarterback screamed at Allen, "Pick it up! Pick it up!"

Allen took one look at those charging linemen and shouted, "Pick it up yourself! You dropped it!"

That's a human tendency – placing the blame and the responsibility on someone else – we all share, isn't it?

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Another common expression along that line is this: “Well, that’s not in my job description.”

Such an attitude is non-existent in truly successful organizations, whether they be football teams or skilled nursing center staffs.

“I’ll pick it up” should be our declaration and practice.

And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men (Colossians 3:23 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter