

The 1972 fall season ruggers had a very mediocre record to show for their efforts, due principally to the small turn-out of contestants for the team, as periodically happened when John Gagliardi's football players, who also formed the major part of the spring teams, were unavailable for rugby in the fall. The experience gained, however, along with the arrival of key veterans, spelled good things for the spring team of 1973. The Johnnies left the field victorious in all but two of their eight matches—both losses being sustained at the Mid-America Cup Tournament held in Chicago. Highlight of the season was the defeat of the University of Minnesota, the Big Ten rugby champions, by a score of 21-4.

Results of the year are the following: wins—Carleton 8-4, Northfield 8-0, Minneapolis Rugby Club 18-0; at the Mid-America Cup: Lincoln Park 8-6 and the University of Minnesota 21-4. Losses: both sustained in the Mid-America tournament, were to the University of Chicago 12-16, and Northern Illinois 3-18.

Members of the 1973 squad: Michael Bonacci, James Berg, Mark Caven, Marty Cella, Eric Dierkhising, Gary Eustice, James Fahrenkrug, Michael Fitzgerald, Peter Harriman, Joseph Hays, Richard Howard, Colin Mackenzie, Steve Merz (captain), Steve Pollock, William Schmeling, Thomas Sloan, David Van Landschoot, Michael "Montana" Stergios, Thomas Weber, Gregory Wells.

The 1974 spring season sparkled with enthusiasm and confidence. Many new players had been initiated in the fall and, combined with the tried veterans, they comprised the largest squad up to that time, almost fifty ruggers. From this season on, the club was able to field two and even three teams (called sides), the A group calling themselves the Rats, and the B team the Mice, the C team, the Lemmings.

One of the reasons for the exuberance of the team was the bailing out of the club by the administration in a difficult financial situation, and the acquisition of a full set of new team uniforms, the support of the athletic department, and the possibility of securing the good will of the Athletic Allocations Board (*Record*, April 15, 1974). A printed program of the games had also been composed by John Forsythe and Jim Berg, with the art design by Daniel Keiser.

The 1974 spring highlights were a four-game Easter-break trip through Iowa, and the Mid-America Cup tournament, held in Green Bay. The St. John's ruggers fared well on both trips, especially at the Mid-America Cup. Beating Notre Dame 4-3 and Lincoln Park 20-4, the Johnnies were edged out in the semi-finals by the Big Ten champions, the University of Wisconsin, 13-10. St. John's again took third place against the Midwest's finest opposition. The Notre Dame match

was reported as the most colorful, though not the best game of the tournament. Mike Black, one of the leaders of the team, writes: "The Notre Dame-SJU game was the talk of the tournament, with everyone wondering whom the Pope would root for. The answer was obvious, as a pre-game prayer by the Irish was cancelled out by expletives uttered by Notre Dame during the match" (*Record*, May 10, 1974).

Squad members were James Anderson, James Berg, Michael Black, Mark Caven, Mike Bonacci, Marty and Jack Cella, Tom Doran, Michael Dory, Brad Eustice, Fuzzy Fashant, James Fergle, John Forsythe, Gerard Fredella, Peter Hill, Daniel Keiser, Mike Kelly, Greg Lee, Steve Merz, Larry Osterhaus, Edward Poniewaz, Scott Sahli, Bill Schmeling, John Scherer, Tom Sloan, Michael Stergios, Seni Tufele, Barry Vinyard, Tom Weber, and Daniel Whalen.

1975 was not one of the best years of the St. John's Rugby Club. The hard luck had started already in the 1974 fall season in which the Johnnies won five matches and lost six. Team philosopher Mike Black settled the problem, however. "The success of any season is not judged so much by the team's accomplishments as by the satisfaction they enjoyed. So even with a record of 5-6, the entire club will acknowledge that they had a successful season—and a good time" (*Record*, November 18, 1974).

The highest achievement of the spring season was the decision to establish an annual St. John's Rugby Invitational in which the Johnnies hoped to win first place and a trophy. But things did not work out as well as they anticipated because of the pesky Minneapolis Rugby Club which, though defeated 6-4 by St. John's in the first match of the year, in the tournament fought savagely and defeated the Johnnies in a 4-3 thriller. The parties for the two-day tournament were held at five o'clock on the Watab picnic grounds with an astoundingly successful finishing party.

Perhaps the highlight of the traveling season was the February trip to Louisiana for the Mardi Gras Rugby Tournament. Out of practice (and shape) after a long trip by car, the Johnnies did not do as well as they expected, though they managed to win three of their five games.

In the Mid-America Cup Tournament St. John's failed to do as well as usual. The team moved into the semi-finals to find themselves facing St. Olaf. Having played one more game than the Oles, and running out of players because of injuries, the Johnnies were defeated by St. Olaf by a score of 12-7.

Team members mentioned in the game reports for 1975 were Mike Stergios, David Trnka, Michael Dory, Mike Kelly, Edward Miller,

Tim Nolan, Scott Sahli, Kenneth Worm, Michael Black, John Forsythe. 1975 marks the final year of Mike Black at the head of St. John's Rugby Club. He was a one-man dynamo in terms of organization, promotion, enthusiasm and knowledge of rugby. While not a super-star on the field, he did more for the game than any other individual connected with the sport.

— 1976-77 —

The 1976 rugby season found the Johnnies logging an impressive, undefeated season of thirteen victories and no losses. It was the best record in the eight-year career of rugby at St. John's. Under the leadership of co-captains John Forsythe and Scott Sahli, the St. John's rugger melded into a cohesive unit that did not permit an opponent to score until the ninth game. Highlight of the season was a hard fought battle with the team's arch-rival, the Minneapolis Rugby Club, in which the Johnnies regained the championship they had lost in 1975. St. John's followed up the championship game with a close victory over the powerful Tommies by a score of 10-9 (*Record*, May 14, 1976, p. 13).

Since the St. John's mediocre record of 1975 had rendered the team ineligible for the 1976 Mid-America Tournament, it was a tremendous uplift to the squad to have paved the way for participation in the 1977 tournament.

The starting team for 1976 and the positions played by the Johnnies were as follows: hooker: Scott Sahli; props: Mike Dory and Dave Trnka; 2nd row: James Zrust and Greg Lee; eighth man: Ken Worm; wing forwards: Thomas Sinner and Greg Palen; scrum half: Timothy Nolan; fly half: Bill Schmeling; inside center: John Scherer; outside center: Mike Scully; wings: Jamie Anderson and Peter Hill; fullback: John Forsythe.

Over the nine years of its existence the St. John's Rugby Club had been gradually improving until in 1976 it had become the top college organization in the state. The fall version of the 1976-77 team was an immediate success. During the summer it had engaged in a tournament at Faribault in which it had emerged in fourth place—a warning that was observed in the opening of the fall season by first beating St. Cloud State 44-4, St. Paul Pigs 9-3, Carleton 14-0, North Dakota State 11-0, the University of Minnesota 8-0 and Duluth (UMD) 18-0. At this point the Johnnies fell victim to the Minneapolis Club by a score of 3-24.

The defeat by the Minneapolis Club had not been unexpected. A fierce rivalry had sprung up between the two teams, and the Minne-

apolis Club had trained hard and seriously, fully determined to hold their own against the madcap collegians.

Despite the loss, the St. John's Club was again invited to compete in the Mid-America Cup Tournament to be held in Indianapolis in May 1977.

The Jays emerged from the tournament with a record of two wins and two losses. The powerful Ohio State entry easily defeated the Johnnies 21-11, and in the semi-finals the Minneapolis club, also invited, eked out a 10-9 victory over the Johnnies. St. John's defeated the West Side Harlicians 22-4 and Louisville 18-9. The 1977 *Sagatagan* reporter rejoiced that although the Johnnies had lost the rugby meet "they came away with the most important victory. They won the party" (*Sagatagan*, 1977, pp. 152-153).

The squad is pictured in the *Sag* as follows: Michael Zahler, James Zrust, Brad Eustice, John Scherer, Thomas Sinner, Gregory Palen, Ken Worm, Kevin Daly, Michael Scully, Christopher Boyd, Matthew Martin, Timothy Nolan, Richard Battiola, Francis Fitzgerald, David Trnka, Jeff Feldmeier, Scott Sahli, Thomas Wicks, Arthur Thelemann (*Sagatagan*, 1977, pp. 152-53).

— 1977-78 —

Under the leadership of co-captains Rick Battiola and Valentine "Beano" Kraljic, the fall and spring seasons of 1977 and 1978 were distinct successes, reminiscent of the great rugby team of 1976. In the fall season the team went through a series of eight games without defeat, five of the victories being shut-outs: the University of Minnesota 18-3, St. Thomas 8-0, St. Olaf 1-0, the Banshees 11-0, Duluth 8-0, St. Cloud State 12-6, St. Paul 4-3, and Gary Owen 13-0.

In the spring season the triumphant Johnnies continued their victorious ways by winning eight games of a twelve-game schedule and again taking first place in the St. John's Invitational. The only loss to a college team was to St. Thomas, 4-6, on one of the St. John's "bad days." In the Mid-America Cup Tournament, however, the youthful Johnnies were pitted against the older veteran clubs of Akron, Ohio, and Cleveland, to whom St. John's lost by scores of 6-21 and 6-18 respectively. The Johnnies defeated Illinois State 9-7 and St. Cloud State 9-3, again demonstrating that when pitted against college teams the Jays were among the top college teams in the entire Midwest. Other scores are the following: University of Minnesota 12-0, St. Paul Club 12-6, Carleton 12-9, Waconia 21-6, Le Sueur 16-7, Waconia 10-0, Minneapolis Club 0-12, a loss.

The A squad of the 1978 rugby team was made up of Daniel Roth, Glen Steinhoff, Beano Kraljic, Martin Case, John Bodick, Timothy Miller, Joseph Sullivan, Richard Murphy, Gregory Feldmeier, Richard Battiola, Richard Robel, Mike Scully, Timothy Travis, Mike Madden, Thomas Klint, Harpo St. Clair, David Rothbauer, Steven Pfefferle, James Meyer and Daniel Murphy.

Conclusion

Thus is concluded this short history of rugby on the St. John's campus. Opinions had been expressed that it is a brutal game. Actually, the ruggers themselves in their many articles in the *Record* and *Saga-tagan* aimed to convey the impression of supermen engaged in an exhilarating physical sport, followed by a rousing good party. Timothy Nolan, one of the Rugby Club presidents, wrote: "To some naive bystanders it's a form of masochism. Most will agree, though, that it is a unique social phenomenon. Where else can one observe an athletic activity, governed by strict rules and strategy, that exhibits competitive physical violence between two opposing forces and ends with a cheer for all participants! This is all part of the rugby spirit, the social brotherhood where all participants are pretty much accepted for what they are and what they have to contribute to the group" (*Record*, April 29, 1977, p. 8).

John Forsythe, in a brief summary of the first eight years of St. John's rugby, makes the point that rugby is a game played for the sheer fun of good sportsmanship. "I hesitate to single out individual players. The spirit of rugby as I know it does not promote individual recognition of a 'public nature.' A warm handshake, a hearty slap on the back, or a 'Hey, you played a hell of a game today' are lauds enough. It will be a sad day indeed when we have a leading scorer and a most valuable player."

Possibly lured by wild tales of the St. John's ruggers, Don Riley of the St. Paul *Pioneer Press* reported a match between the Johnnies and the St. Paul Banshees that ended 11-0 in favor of St. John's: "As unruly as a thornbush. As disciplined as a riot. . . . Delightful as a fresh breeze over a garbage pit. Yah, baby, I love the Rugby men." (The "garbage pit" was probably a reference to over thirty human bodies reeking of sweat after eighty minutes of controlled violence—a phrase dear to the ruggers.

Riley ended his impressionistic appraisal of the Johnnies in an exchange with another appreciative onlooker: "As a delightful St. Bene-

dict coed cooed to me Sunday, 'Aren't they the greatest? All covered with mud and so virile. They make the soccer and baseball players look like little boys.' " And Riley, his mind filled with images of bodies strewn over the field and his ears deafened by the shrieks of two ambulances, gently conceded the point. "That they do, honey. That they do" (St. Paul *Pioneer Press*, Wednesday, April 26, 1978: "The Eye Opener").



CHAPTER XIII

Swimming

Swimming is the most recent sport to come of age on the St. John's campus. The reason for this tardiness is obvious. Although beautiful Lake Sagatagan provided opportunities for spring and fall swimming, St. John's lacked the facilities for the long winter months during which the other MIAC colleges for years had been competing with one another in swimming and diving. It was the completion of the Warner Palaestra pool in 1973 that finally made intercollegiate swimming possible. It opened up the sport for the student body, and—as in all other sports when the students were given the facilities—the students of the early 1970's virtually swept St. John's into intercollegiate competition.

— 1971 —

The Swimming Club

It was a courageous group of students, therefore, who, even before the Palaestra, undertook to develop a swimming team which could compete with other Minnesota colleges, all of which enjoyed the advantage of regulation swimming pools. This crusade was led by David Van Landschoot, '72, and Steve Smith, '74, who cooperated as coaches and coordinators of the newly organized club. The immediate reason for promoting a swim team was to earn points toward the All Sports Award, which allows no points for the sport in which a school has no entry.

Lacking a pool on campus, the twelve mermen, led by Tim Phenow, Kevin Murphy, Mike White, Pete Petrini, and the coaches, trav-

elled to surrounding communities—especially Cold Spring, Albany, and St. Cloud State “to get wet.” Although this was their first year of intercollegiate competition, the team was able to compete in four dual meets. They lost all four, but finished in sixth place in the MIAC with 85 points, thus contributing six points to the All Sports Award total. They also gained valuable experience.

— 1972-73 —

This season was much the same, although there was a significant increase in the number of candidates and in raw talent. Peter Johnson, a St. Cloud broker, worked with the club as coach and manager for part of the season and got them off to a good start. Records show that the club competed in six dual meets, again losing all six but coming very close to beating both Gustavus and Duluth. The team's performance in the MIAC final meet resulted in another sixth place finish in the conference with a total of 108 points. The top place winners were the following: fourth place in the 800 free-style relay composed of Jeremy and Tim Rathes (sons of Phil, '40), Clancy McCarthy, and Pat Strothers; fifth place in the 200 backstroke by Gary Gerst.

— 1973-74 —

The year 1973 saw the completion of the Warner Palaestra and its “fast” swimming pool. This magnificent new facility revolutionized the swimming program both recreationally and for intercollegiate competition. The club officially became a team under its first full-time coach, Pat Haws, who still holds that position. The swim team this year included an ex-track man, an injured hockey player, an ex-wrestler/weight-lifter, and a sprinkling of experienced swimmers. The Palaestra pool was properly inaugurated with a 68-45 victory over Gustavus, which was not only the first home meet, but also the first swimming victory for the Johnnie club.

The MIAC championship meet saw the Johnnies with a 1-9 dual rating for the season, finishing in third place, a mere 7½ points out of second. This meet, which was held in the new Palaestra, was acclaimed by the other colleges as the best MIAC meet in recent years. The Johnnies finished with four third-place winners: Bill Flynn, John Maguire, Tom Dwyer, and Jeremy and Tim Rathes in the 400 and 800 free-style relays; John Maguire in the 400 individual medley; and Clancy McCarthy in the 1650 free-style. Overall, the Johnnies had 17 finishes in the top six events. The team's production of 304½ points was its best up to that time.

— 1974-75 —

The 1974-75 team had its first "big-time" recruits in Bobby Greelis, Paul Cleeremans, Joe Tucker, Mark Tracy, Don Olson and Jim McGough. The team made its first Christmas trip to Florida for accelerated training and returned to put together a dual meet record of 5-1 in the MIAC, and 6-6 overall. They then took third place in the MIAC championship meet, with a new point total record of 344. The highlights of the meet were 18 top six-place winners with team records in all 18 events; and St. John's first NAIA qualifiers—Tom Dwyer (100 free-style), and the 400 free-style relay executed by Dwyer, Jeremy Rath, Dave Scanlan, and Bobby Greelis.

— 1975-76 —

The 1975-76 team finished for the first time above the .500 mark in the dual meets, with a 5-1 MIAC record and 8-5 overall. In the MIAC championship meet the team improved its standing by advancing to second place with a total of 438 points. The Big Red enthusiasm on campus brought St. John's its first MIAC swimming champions: Jon Habben in the 50 and 100 free-style; Habben, Dwyer, Mark Tracy, and Joe Ehlert in the 400 free-style relay, and Joe Tucker in the 200 breaststroke. Joe also established the MIAC record by breaking a nine-year-old mark. The team had 28 top six-place winners, broke 16 of 18 team records, and qualified ten people in ten events for the NAIA championship meet, as also six people in four events for the NCAA Division III national championships.

— 1976-77 —

In 1976-77 the team came up with a 3-2 MIAC record in the duals and 9-5 overall. The team held its own invitational, squeaking by the crack Grinnell team 362-356. "Skosh" Wenner defeated an NCAA III champion diver on the three meter board by seven-tenths of a point to produce the winning margin.

The conference meet ended with St. John's again in second place with 483 points, only 27 points behind the new champions, St. Olaf. The Johnnies' Jon Habben increased his stature in the sprints by setting new MIAC records in the 50 free-style (21.86) and the 100 free-style (48.44). The 400 free-style relay team, composed of Habben, Dwyer, Ehlert, and Mike Salchert, also retained its title. Thirty-three Johnnies finished in the top six. The diving squad of Jeff Eastman, "Skosh" Wenner, and Steve Remole established itself by finishing 2-3-4 on both the one meter and three meter boards. Ten swimmers qualified in sixteen events for the NAIA national meet, and nine in eight events for the NCAA Division III nationals.

— 1977-78 —

The 1977-78 season had its ups and downs. The early season record was fair—4-1 in the MIAC duals and 7-5 overall. The ups also included the first win over Hamline in dual competition—the first Hamline loss in six years—and a convincing victory over Grinnell in the St. John's Invitational by a margin of 155 points. The downs were injuries to Jeff Eastman the day after qualifying for the nationals in the NAIA and NCAA Division III, as also to Skosh Wenner, who suffered a punctured eardrum. In addition, almost the entire team was wracked with illness as the time for the MIAC championship meet rolled around. Only three of the 18 entrants had been in good health in the preceding week, and the top diver, Skosh Wenner, had had only three days of practice prior to the meet. Eastman was still in a cast and Steve Remole, the Johnnies' three-meter specialist, grimaced with pain from a badly sprained ankle every time he left the board.

However, the team swam well enough to capture second place for the third straight year, with a total of 432 points (150 points behind defending champion St. Olaf). Eleven swimmers qualified in all 18 events for the NAIA championships, and nine qualified in seven events for the NCAA III nationals. St. John's had previously participated in the NAIA national championship meets, but for various reasons, chose to compete in the NCAA Division III meet in 1978. The change proved to be a brilliant move. St. John's swimmers won their first All-American awards in the national NCAA Division III meet. Jon Habben won individual honors in the 500 free-style (tenth) and in the 100 free-style (eleventh). The healthy Steve Remole finished fifth in the three meter board dive; the 400 free-style relay team of Habben, Tracy, Schwietz, Greg Krenik, and Mike Salchert captured twelfth place. In all, St. John's had six All-Americans and placed twenty-second with 17 points, finishing higher than any other MIAC team.

Summary of Swimming Records, 1973-78

MIAC Duals.....	18-9
Overall Duals	31-30
MIAC Individual Championships.....	10
MIAC Relay Champs	3
MIAC Records.....	3
NAIA National Championship Qualifiers....	35
NCAA III Championship Qualifiers.....	24
NCAA III All-Americans.....	6



CHAPTER XIV

Gymnastics

From the year 1903 until 1920 one of the most favored sports reported upon in the *Record* was gymnastics. Sometime during the nineteenth century, physical culture, combined with gymnastics, had become a popular activity among the followers of all those who were interested in maintaining their physical well-being. For the growing youths in private schools and in many public high schools it had been made an obligatory subject almost indispensable for the development of a balanced, well-coordinated body. St. John's was not an exception. As an early writer in the *Record* put it, "... the progress of physiology and psychology have brought this dependence (of mind on the well-being of the body) into stronger light and induced us to do more for the development of the body than was done some centuries ago."

That St. John's, when it was decided to build a new gymnasium, had this in mind becomes apparent when we learn that the gymnasium planners saw to it, first of all, that among its furnishings were all the items necessary for gymnastics according to the current conception of physical culture.

Moreover, when in 1903 the authorities secured the services of its first St. John's coach, he was not a baseball, football or basketball specialist but a physical culture expert, one whose qualifications included excellence in gymnastic exercises. Peter Boquel, the first coach and physical culture instructor, was primarily interested in gymnastics and only reluctantly assumed the task of coaching football. In carrying

out his duties he acted almost entirely as a physical trainer and left to student managers the teaching of football techniques and strategy.

Peter Boquel was succeeded in 1905 by Harry Comeau, a highly qualified gymnast, fencer, and all-around physical culture expert from Connecticut. Over and above his classes in physical culture he coached fencing, boxing and wrestling and at intervals arranged meets to show the results of proficiency and skill in training. One of the first things he did when he came to St. John's was to write an article on physical training, published in the *Record*. An expert performer himself, he capitalized on the opportunity to turn out excellent gymnastic teams that distinguished St. John's above the other Minnesota colleges in this particular art.

Frank Cassidy, another Easterner, this time from New York, continued the work of Comeau in 1907-09. He, in turn, was succeeded by Edward Flynn who for the next ten years, from 1910 to 1920, guided the athletic destinies of St. John's in all sports.

During the first nine years, from 1903 to 1911, gymnastic teams had no other objectives than the physical development of its members and, more or less as a by-product, the entertainment of the student body and the faculty. The exhibitions, some of them strikingly good, were the result of long practice and native skill polished off for beauty of form and action by the instructors. Events were equally divided between work on the flying rings, the parallel and horizontal bars, the side horse and the long horse, wrestling and boxing matches of five or six minutes, fencing, Indian club swinging, etc. The top teams put on exhibitions, sometimes before basketball games, sometimes during the halves. They were particularly appreciated on the major feast days such as Thanksgiving Day or Washington's birthday. Occasionally they worked with the university orchestra. Select accompaniments on the piano were given to each event, thereby adding a special attraction to the performance. Comeau several times fenced with crack swordsmen from the Minneapolis-St. Paul areas. Once during his first year at St. John's Coach Flynn gave a solo exhibition with Indian clubs and balancing exercises.

Attendance at the physical culture classes was compulsory for the first three academic years. For those who loved the exercise the classes were a delight; for those who did not they were a special form of torture. There was no exemption from the "torture" class, however. One irate parent who listened to the complaints of his son wrote to the rector of the college, Fr. Alcuin Deutsch, O.S.B., that he had no money to squander on the gymnastic pants that students were required to wear for the exercises. He received a cool reply from the rector stating

that "we have our good reasons for making any study or exercise a part of our course . . . and the necessity of preserving discipline makes it very disagreeable for us to have parents ask that an exception be made in favor of their sons. But if you feel that you cannot provide your son with gymnasium pants—they cost \$1.75 a pair—why, I will permit him to take the exercises without them, but in tennis shoes." There was no further correspondence on this point.

Coach Flynn was very proud of his gymnasts and in 1912 secured administrative approval of his request to bring the team to the Northwestern Gymnastic Society meet in the University of Minnesota armory in March, 1912. The competition in the Northwestern Society was not intercollegiate, but it was the only thing of its kind in the state. The only other college competing was St. Olaf, which in later years was outstanding in the quality of its gymnastic teams.

— 1912 —

It was only in 1912, therefore, that St. John's entered into formal competition with other gymnastic groups. Coach Flynn was acquainted with the officials of the Northwestern Gymnastic Society in Minneapolis, and in 1912 took his team to Minneapolis to participate in the gymnastic meet of the society. The Northwestern Gymnastic Society was then in its fourth year of existence. It had been organized in 1909 with the objective of stimulating interest in gymnastics at all levels, and therefore divided contestants into three groups, A, B, C, according to the varying abilities of the gymnasts.

At the 1912 gymnastic meeting, which was more an introduction of St. John's to the society than anything else, Coach Flynn's athletes failed to place in any of the events. They distinguished themselves as a coming organization, however, and in the 1913 meet they were awarded fourth place among the fifteen teams that had entered. Bronze medal winners in Class B were two St. John's contestants: Arthur Long, who won first place in the parallel bars and side horse events for a total ranking in Class B; James Stroeder won seventh place for "all-around" proficiency in Class B. The other members of the team who competed in Class C were John Sinner, eleventh place; Anthony Froehlingsdorf, fourteenth place; and Alphonse Borgerding, seventeenth place. Bernard Karels, the future basketball star who was still a student in the Prep School, tied for first place in club swinging.

— 1914 —

The 1914 gymnastic team ranked as one of the best teams in the state, taking fifth place among the sixteen teams that contested. James

Stroeder moved from Class B to Class A and was awarded a bronze medal for fourth place. Anthony "Tony" Froehlingsdorf advanced into Class B and won the seventh place bronze medal for all-around proficiency. In club swinging he took fourth place. Alphonse Borgerding placed number 13 in all-around Class B work and won third place in club swinging. Most remarkable at this meet was the work of Thomas Lindsay, who in Class C was awarded second place in a field of more than 100 contestants.

— 1915 —

The team of 1915 has gone down in the history of St. John's gymnastics as winners of the highest grand average award for the meet. The award was a fine brass shield that the reporter predicted would decorate the gymnasium and perpetuate the memory of their achievement forever. It is a fine award, it is true, but for many years it was lost sight of until, in 1976, Bro. David Manahan, O.S.B., while rummaging around in the attic of the carpenter shop, found it, neglected and dust-covered, but still intact. "Thus passes the glory of the world," the old Romans used to say.

The award of highest grand average represents the individual merits of each of the contestants and, as such, was virtually the premier honor, for the team also brought back their individual laurels. Five of the seven gymnasts who entered the meet—Anthony Froehlingsdorf, Alphonse Borgerding, Julius Johnson, Edward Borgerding and Roman Schaefer—won bronze medals for places among the first ten competitors in Classes A, B, and C.

— 1916 —

Outstanding as was the achievement of the 1915 gymnastic team, that of the year following was even more remarkable. It was a team that achieved its objectives despite the hand injury incurred by team captain James Stroeder and the illness of two other top performers, none of whom could take part in the gymnastic exercises. Several had suggested that the team should not enter the meet, since the best they could do would be far below the level St. John's had maintained in the past. The team, Coach Flynn and the authorities thought otherwise, however. "And did they succeed!" was the rhetorical question of the *Record* reporter. "Here are the results. Judge for yourselves.

"I. Among nineteen competing teams our boys captured second place and, with it, a brass shield two times as large as any so far won by any of our teams.