

## FOOTBALL

By Leon Hawker

It was football practice in the fall of 1955 at G.W. High School involving a scrimmage with Hargrave Military Academy. During this time, Freshmen were not allowed to play varsity football in college. As a result athlete would attend Military Academies to play sports before they attended college as a sophomore.

Max Campbell, a Junior in High School was the starting center and linebacker on the team. He had been unable to practice with the team due to an operation on his hand. Coach Wilson had told Max he could not play offense in the scrimmage. Max kept begging Coach Wilson to play. Coach relented toward the end of the scrimmage allowing Max to play defense.

During the scrimmage, a fullback for Hargrave ran around end. I was playing defensive back with Max at linebacker. We tackled the fullback who was 6'2" 190 pounds. The fullback and I were able to get up but Max did not. As he was laying on his stomach. Coach Gurtis rolled Max over not knowing the seriousness of the injury. Max was transported to the hospital by the EMT.

At that time, we wore bucket helmets with no face mask. Max's helmet afterwards was inspected. A dent was in the front from the impact with the fullbacks' knee.

Max was diagnosed with a fractured neck. They operated on him placing weights from his skull. As Max lay in the hospital bed, he could look into a mirror to see us when we visited him. Max died after fifteen days in the hospital. He a fine Christian young man, only 16 years old.