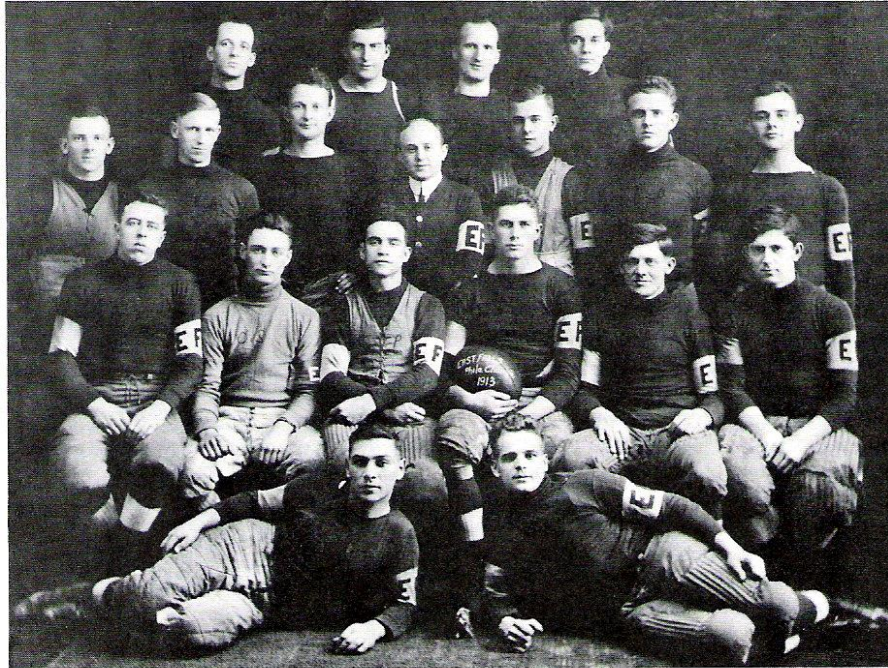


East Falls Past-- East Falls Athletes “East Falls Has Produced Many Prominent Athletes”

The Fallser, March 2008, by Wendy Moody



East Falls Champions, 1913. (Front, right) Walter Jenkinson; (1st row, L-R) Paul Costello, Oscar Stevenson, Joe Prendergast, Jack Kelly, F. Lally, Joe Huber; (2nd row, L-R) not known, John Armitage, Ivan Crooks, Elmer Cook, Buck Weaver, Horatio Denby, not known; (3rd row, L-R) Tom Byrnes, Jim Stonelake, Jim Fiedler, and Matt Lukens.

Below are excerpts from a **1934** *Suburban Press* article highlighting East Falls athletes. Although some names are unfamiliar, the article reveals the popularity, and variety, of sports in East Falls past, as well as the pride our athletes brought.

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In recent years the greatest interest exhibited in sports, in East Falls, has been confined to rowing and golf, with maybe a little championship form being disclosed by the table tennis sharps up around the Queen Lane reservoir section.

It is easy to account for the great amount of rowing talk that one hears, when we remember that three World's Champions, John B. Kelly, Paul Costello, and Charles McIlvaine, make their homes within the community. But there are other oarsmen who won fame for the town, notably John F. Reardon (of the old Chamounix crew), the Harbisons, the Boardmans, Allie Morrow, and other old-timers, as well as the Benny Walkers, Tom Maguires, and the Millers, of later years.

And it is not much of a job to check up on the golfers when such names as Eddie Clarey, Walter Woods, Jack Burke, Joe Brennan, and Jerry Marr are mentioned.

George Kelly, nephew of “Jack”, is East Falls’ contribution to billiard fame, and “Judge” Clarence—Jerry, to you—Walker holds a high position among the table tennis advocates.

Baseball, too proudly boasts of Billy Gray. Benny Beaumont, Jimmy Kelly, the Brill brothers, Harry Clayton, Duggy Walker, Jack Redington, Benham, “Oily” Maguire, and Tommy Murphy, among the older players, with “Henny” Shaw, Griffiths, Pearson, Rube Grill, Babe Calhoun, the Matthews Boys-- holding high the banner of the diamond in later years.

No football history of the Falls would be complete without the names of Jimmy Fiedler, Tiny Scott, Tom Dougherty, Jack Kelly - yes, the Democrat! - Homer Fellows, Art Harrison, John Donnelly, Frank Lally, Tom Maguire, Rammy Norton and scores more who made up once-famed East Falls teams.

The mention of George Kelly as a billardist brings back to memory the name of his father P. H. Kelly, who himself swung a “mean cue” in the old days, finding particular joy in defeating the aspiring Manayunk pool players who thought they were going somewhere.

Shuffleboard, too, has had its top-notchers, probably the best today being Bill Ashton, the storekeeper up at the Queen Lane Pumping Station.

In the old days there were also a number of expert cricketeers, among these being John Smithies, Theodore MacKenzie and men of like years.

Soccer held a high place in the esteem of the sport fans for many years, the name of Leidy being recalled with little difficulty.

Boxing has been represented by a long line of clever pugilists, notably, “Scribb” O’Donnell, Jim Trenwith, Charlie Turner, Frank O’Donnell —and there are still many who recall that one of the country’s most talented amateurs in this sport was none other than the late John Costello, father of Paul, the oarsman. Mr. Costello also held a wide reputation as swimming instructor at the ‘Philadelphia Swimming Club, up at Miquon.

At least one girl, Florence McKee, who is believed to be still teaching swimming at one of Philadelphia’s recreation centers, was one of Mr. Costello’s proteges.