THE HEART OF THE GRIDIRON
By John A. Ward.
Out of the middle of that green and white plaid gridiron two teams were engaged in the final moments of a great struggle. For three-quarters of the game the Gold and Maroon Minnesota eleven had outplayed that line-up of Cardinal jerseys representing Wisconsin.

Around that immense open-air stage was packed a seething pyramid of people. The stands to the north and south jutted high in to the blue pastures of the heavens. At the east and west ends of the playing field stands groaned beneath an unaccustomed load.

It was home-coming day at Wisconsin. Twenty thousand people had come to see—Wisconsin defeat Minnesota. From every State in the Union Wisconsin alumni had come to renew acquaintance with the institution which had given them knowledge.

The atmosphere was trembling under a nervous strain which now and then manifested itself in a thunder-clap of cheering from the Wisconsin stands. A hysterical outbreak, which was always answered by a defeatist storm of cheers from the Minnesota section.

Minnesota led, 19 to 7. The game was almost over.

All through the game the Wisconsin rooters had persisted with their college songs and yells. They had poured across the field as a spur to that desperate Badger team down on the gridiron. Each writh of hope brought a new outbreak from the sons and daughters of Wisconsin.

And then—across the field reverberated the sibilant, throbbing bawl of the timekeeper's whistle. The game was over. Minnesota had won. It was overwhelming, crushing, humiliating, unexpected.

As the twilight of a dying October day began to envelop that living amphitheater, a wild, triumphant roar of victory broke out from the 500 Minnesota students who had followed their team to Madison. They stormed onto the field in a jargon of songs and cheers as they rumbled through a snake dance.

From the Wisconsin side of the field there arose another song, feebly at first, but it quickly gathered volume as the assembled thousands stood up to honor their institution with their college anthem.

Here's to the team we love so well—
Here's to the Badger's pride—
We're with you—we're for you

We'll stand by and support you—we're for you.

Strong and firm their voices were now. The college band flared forth with the flame of loyal spirits. Down upon the gridiron the team—Wisconsin's defeated eleven—trudged sadly away. Their heads were bowed, faces solemn. Many of them were crying.

The occupants of the stands stood with hats in hand as they continued:

With a thunder-clap we'll help our team along,
And with a whoop we'll sing her praise in song.
For old Wisconsin and the gridiron,
The soul of the game—college spirit at its best.

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