

# MEMBER LIBRARY

## CASPAR W. WHITNEY — The All-American Sportsman



Theodore J. Holsten  
EMERITUS MEMBER  
Boone and Crockett Club

During the 1890s and early 1900s a debate raged in the public press and in educational, literary, and sporting journals over the game of football, which had become

increasingly violent and brutal. The principal culprits were the flying wedge, football's major offense at the time, and the mass formations and gang tackling that had resulted in numerous injuries and deaths. There was a movement to abolish the game of football.

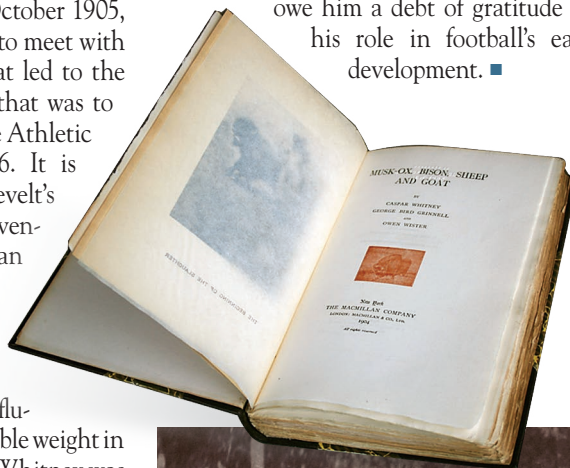
President Theodore Roosevelt believed strongly that football helped develop character and virility in young men. He realized that the abolitionist spirit could prevail if the rules of the game were not changed to eliminate brutal contests and to encourage sportsmanship. In October 1905, he invited a number of schools to meet with him, a crucial intervention that led to the formation of the organization that was to become the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in 1906. It is strongly believed that Roosevelt's timely and constructive intervention saved the day for American football.

Caspar Whitney, the leading sportswriter during this time, was a friend of Theodore Roosevelt, and his influential position carried considerable weight in the football reform movement. Whitney was the originator of the term "All-American" when in 1889 he listed the first All-America team that he had selected in the sporting magazine that he owned. This became an annual selection by Whitney over many years, during which he often collaborated with Walter Camp. Whitney is also credited with originating the nickname for Camp as "the father of American football."

Whitney went on to found the *Outing* magazine that was the premier sporting publication of the time, and he continued selecting All-America teams until 1908. He was one of the founders of the American Olympic Committee and he served as its president, presiding over the Third Olympiad in 1904. He also served as a war correspondent in Cuba, Mexico, and France.

Born in 1862, Whitney was an avid hunter and was one of the earliest Boone and Crockett Club members. In the midst of his many activities, he traveled to the barren lands of northern Canada, and he sought tiger and other big game in India and the Far East. He explored the remote rivers of South America on five expeditions to South America. He wrote several books on his experiences, and he was editor of a series of sporting books known as "The American Sportsman's Library." In one of the books in this series, *Musk-Ox, Bison, Sheep and Goat*, he wrote a detailed section on the natural history and hunting of musk oxen and he illustrated it with several Carl Rungius paintings. He also wrote an article on "The Cougar" for one of the early Boone and Crockett Club publications.

Caspar Whitney died in 1929, having packed a lot of adventure into his 67 years. Considering how important football has become in America, today's fans owe him a debt of gratitude for his role in football's early development. ■



### Sporting and Exploration Books by Caspar Whitney

*On Snow-Shoes to the Barren Grounds* (1896)

*Musk-Ox, Bison, Sheep and Goat* (1904) →

*Jungle Trails and Jungle People* (1905)

*The Flowing Road* (1912)



Considering how important football has become in America, today's fans owe him a debt of gratitude for his role in football's early development.



**ABOVE: JUNGLE TRAILS AND JUNGLE PEOPLE** — Three Siamese hunters dressed to meet the thorns and the jungle — Thee, Nuam, Wan. **TOP:** Indians of Lake Maracaibo showing style of bow common to all Venezuela.