

## Strange Events Marked Return Of Gridiron Game

The post-war boom in sport is on. For local fandom that means the start of the football season at Lansdowne Park this afternoon when Ottawa Trojans and Toronto Indians pry the lid off in the opening clash of the Ontario Rugby Football Union's 63rd consecutive campaign.

Primarily a guessing game to the very last moment—due to the unprecedented commuting of players between clubs and even leagues—the peacetime gridiron scramble should take on some semblance of order with today's inaugural but don't count on it.

In every Eastern town where big-time football is played, the story has been the same. It got so bad in Toronto at one stage that Coach Ted Reeve of the Beaches found one of his backs apologizing for setting a reciprocal course because "Argos have a play like that but it goes the other way."

### Confused Picture.

With only one rule-change to offer, it was up to the players to confuse the issue and this they have managed to do in noble style. But sharing the pre-season spotlight with the day-to-day changes in club rosters has been the share-the-wealth project of Toronto's enterprising Frank Stukus; the return of Windsor to the ORFU and, of course, the reopening of Big Four competition with the resulting two-team setup locally.

The picture is far too confused to even attempt to predict the outcome but that can wait. The important thing is the official kick-off which Mayor Stanley Lewis is scheduled to make this afternoon.

The peacetime scene will bring many new players before the fans, some to win stardom and others oblivion. Many of the veterans of pre-war years have called it a day, many more are still in the services and sadly too, many will never return for they gave everything in the fight for freedom.

And so, full-scale football comes back and with much the same code that governed it previously. Only

major change occurs in the kickoff which will no longer be made from center field but from the 45-yard line of the team electing to kick, and this rule holds for starting the game; on the resumption of play after the rest period, and following a major score. The change also allows the defending team to line-up at center field and then advance to meet oncoming attackers instead of waiting to block them along the line.

### Defensive or Offensive?

Reasoning behind the change was undoubtedly defensive minded for it means that the defending team on kick-off will not find itself trapped by a long kick which would automatically demand a return kick on the first play to move the ball out of the danger zone. With the extra ten yards and increased territory for blocking, fast-moving fullbacks should be able to run the ball out of danger before being tackled. In fact the new ruling may prove offensive after all for there is nothing like a good run-back to start a team rolling.

At Windsor today, the untried Rockets, bolstered by acquisition this week of barging Jimmy Farmer and Lineman Bernard (Trip) Trepanier, meet the 1944 champion Wildcats in Kennedy Stadium. Wildcats have lost such stars as Joe Krol and plunging Paul Peterson but Coach Eddie McLean hopes newcomers from high-school ranks and pre-war stars like George (Scotty) Wright will help offset the loss.

Only other game billed for today is an exhibition clash at Toronto between the ORFU Beaches and Big Four Argos. Balmý Beach strength has been described as uncertain by Coach Ted Reeve, but the word is out the club shortly will acquire Al Lenard, longtime ORFU leading scorer before he joined the navy. Argos, returning to the grid for the first time since 1941 under new Coach Ted Morris, have one of the strongest lines on paper in any league and one of the brightest halfback prospects in navy's swift young Royal Copeland.