

DMA Minutes for January 7, 2015

Attendees: 97 Guests: 2

Speaker: Jack Cavanaugh, arranged by Alex Garnett, talked about the renowned U.S. Army Heisman Trophy winners Glenn Davis and “Doc” Blanchard, aka Mr. Inside and Mr. Outside. These two were the best-known college football players in the country in the war years of 1944-46 and were coached by the legendary Earl “Red” Blaik.

Jack is a Stamford, Ct. resident and still writes a sports column for the Stamford Advocate. He was a news reporter for ABC and CBS, an interviewer of a number of American presidents and has written five books in eight years to the amazement of his agent. His latest tome on Davis and Blanchard is the only one written about these two. For research, he combed old newspaper accounts and a multitude of libraries.

In addition to various anecdotes about these two “supermen” and heroes, Jack also discussed World War II’s impact on Army’s success on the football field and how it translated to the concept that a dominant sports team such as Army’s was from 1941 to 1946 promoted the notion of our nation’s dominance and invincibility. Both Eisenhower and MacArthur believed that a strong team put forth a positive image and boosted troop morale during the dark times of war. These teams were the real “America’s Team” contradicting the inane notion that the moniker belongs to the Dallas Cowboys.

Davis and Blanchard were American icons, rivaling the popularity of Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams. In his new novel, Mr. Cavanaugh devotes a chapter to Bob Woods, the only running back ever to play football at both West Point and Annapolis. He played with Davis and Blanchard. During the presentation, Mr. Woods who was present courtesy of Kent Haydock, added personal anecdotes supporting Mr. Cavanaugh’s recollections of the times. By the way, Bob Woods was the first captain of the cadets, one of the most prestigious honors a cadet can achieve.

All told, a fine reminiscence of a bygone era.

This date in history:

1952- The “Today Show” premiered featuring Dave Garroway and Jack Lescoulie on NBC-TV.

1954- The aforementioned Joe DiMaggio married Norma Jean Baker in San Francisco. You might remember her better as the sultry vixen of stage and screen, Marilyn Monroe.