



**HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA  
INTERSCHOLASTIC FEDERATION  
SOUTHERN SECTION  
(CIFSS)**



46<sup>th</sup> historical “tidbit.”

**THE HAND GRENADE THROW**

**(Substituted for the javelin throw in the 1919 CIFSS Track Meet)**

The CIFSS always had concerns about the insurance liabilities of certain sports or events. Their main concern was the javelin throw in track and field which had been contested from the first meet in 1913 and also was an event at the State Track Meet. World War I was coming to an end and there remained a very patriotic fervor in the community. At the November 18, 1918 CIFSS Council Meeting the following motion was made and unanimously approved:

“Upon the motion, the throwing of the hand grenade shall be substituted

for the javelin throw and the rules governing the same shall be those adopted by the Western Intercollegiate Conference Athletic Association, with the exception that it shall be an individual instead of a team event. Standard rules and grenades may be secured from A. G. Spalding Co.”



The A. G. Spalding Company at that time wrote most of the rules and guide books for sports throughout the United States. These guides were published by the American Sports Publishing Company in New York.

The State CIF followed the CIFSS with somewhat a similar motion (from the CIF State Federated Council Meeting Minutes of March 8, 1919):

“Mr. Moore, on behalf of the committee appointed to consider the substitution of some other event for the javelin throw, reported in favor of eliminating the javelin this year and making no substitution at present, but recommended that the grenade be introduced in school sport with the expectation that it may be introduced as a field event in 1920. Upon motion duly made, seconded, and carried, this report was adopted.”

On March 17, 1919, the CIFSS issued the following statement (from the CIFSS Council Minutes):

“The throwing of the hand grenade will be an exhibition event, medals being awarded, but points will not count in the Southern California Track Meet. Schools desiring information regarding the hand grenade rules will write H. J. Moore, Inglewood High School.”

The CIFSS track meet was held at Los Angeles High School on April 20, 1919 at Los Angeles High School and the winner of the grenade throw was Tyson from Huntington Park High School with “11 puts.” This meant that he was probably throwing the grenades into a circle some distance away in an accuracy event.



HUNTINGTON PARK HIGH SCHOOL TRACK TEAM



TRACK

## SOUTHLAND FIELD MEET.

*The Los Angeles Times (1886-Current File); Mar 25, 1919; ProQuest Historical Newspapers Los Angeles Times pg. III2*

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# SOUTHLAND FIELD MEET.

The Southern California inter-scholastic track and field meet will be held on April 19 on the athletic field of the Los Angeles High School. There will be fourteen events this year, the track and field events occurring simultaneously. The programme is as follows: Track events 880-yard run; 100-yard dash; 440-yard dash, 120-yard hurdles; 220-yard dash, 220-yard hurdles, 1 mile run; one-half-mile relay (4 men; Field events, high jump, pole vault, broad jump, discus throw; shot put and hand grenade throw.

\* The throwing of the hand grenade is substituted this year for the javelin throw. Any schools desir-

ing to be represented in this event are advised to communicate with H. G. Mooren vice-principal of the Inglewood High School, for drawings and specifications regarding it. The grenade throw is an exhibition affair and though medals will be awarded place winners, the points will not count toward the winning of the meet.

Present indications are that all competitions will be keen and that the meet will be fully up to the standard of former years. It is hoped that every high school will put the best team possible in the field as only those who win points on April 19 will be allowed to compete in the State meet which will be held in Southern California on April 26.

## Manual Arts High School Romps Away with Southern California Prep Honors.

### PURPLE TEAM SURPRISES.

#### Local High School Teams Win First Four Places in Sensational Meet.

Los Angeles high schools took the first four places in the annual Southern California interscholastic track and field meet at Los Angeles High yesterday. Manual Arts won by many lengths. Los Angeles High was second, Lincoln third and Harvard fourth. The Southern California high school record for the discus throw was broken by "Husky" Gustafson of Harvard, who hurled the disc 117 feet 7 1/2 inches. The former record of 115 feet 11 1/2 inches was held by Busby of Los Angeles High. Records in both hurdles were tied by Suggs, the Claremont 4.41 and 5.11.

Manual clinched the meet by taking the relay after a close finish with Redlands. Harvard taking third, and Los Angeles fourth. Manual Arts is now the only school which has won the handsome relay cup twice, the other winning schools being Long Beach, Redlands, Pasadena, and Pomona.

Wright of Lincoln, who took first in both the 100 and 200 and баскет, the winner of both hurdles, were tied for individual honors.

The point results were as follows: Manual Arts, 2; Los Angeles, 1 1/2; Lincoln, 1 1/2; Harvard, 1; Claremont, 10; Polytechnic, 2; Redlands, 3; Santa Paula, 3; San Bernardino, 6; Pomona, 5; Monrovia, 5; Huntington Park, 2; Compton, 2; Venice, 1; San Diego, 1; Fillmore, 2; Santa Monica, 2; Lancaster, 2; Pasadena, 2; Hollywood, 2.

Pole vault—Fanning and Leadbeater (Los Angeles) tied for first, Galloway (Birmingham) third, Johnson (Santa Monica) fourth, Nelson, 11 ft 1 in.

100 yd relay—Won by Sherman (Los Angeles) 16.5; Collins (San Diego) second, 18.0; (Los Angeles) third; Anderson (Pomona) fourth, 18.5.

100 yd relay—Won by Gustafson (Harvard) 16.5; Manual Arts second, Weaver (Highland Park) third, Dale (Larchmont) fourth, 17.5.

Shot put—Won by Gault (Manual Arts) 40.0; Hartman (Pomona) second, 38.0; (Los Angeles) third, Weaver (Highland Park) fourth, 37.0.

Hand grenade (points not counted)—Won by Tyson (Highland Park), Gast (Highland Park) second, Willey (Lincoln) third, 11 puts.

Relay—Won by Manual Arts, second, Harvard, third, Los Angeles, fourth, 11.0.

100 yd relay by schools—Manual Arts 16.5; Los Angeles 17.5; Lincoln 17; Harvard 17.5; Claremont 18; Redlands 18; Santa Paula 18; San Bernardino 18; Hollywood 18; Monrovia 18; Huntington Park 18; San Diego 18; Venice 18; Compton 18; Santa Monica 18; Pasadena 18; Fillmore 18.



Tough to read, but says:

“Hand grenade (points not counted) won by Tyson (Highland Park)  
 (it should be Huntington Park) Gast, (Highland Park) second, Willey (Lincoln)  
 third, 11 puts”

The grenade throw was not used at the CIF State Meet that year along with the javelin throw which was not contested again until four years later. The hand grenade throw was just a one year event as was evident from the February 16, 1920 CIFSS Council Meeting Minutes:

“...The javelin and hand grenade throws are to be eliminated as events beginning this year.”

As early as 1917, the Big Ten Conference discussed adding the grenade throw to their track meets and believed it was just as pretty to watch as the hammer throw, discus, or the javelin throw. They wanted the grenade throw to cover three tests for distance, accuracy, and how many throws could be accomplished throwing into a trench while dropping to the ground in-between each throw. This would simulate battle conditions.

The Inter-Allied games of 1919, held in Paris, also included as one of their track and field contest the hand grenade throw for service men that had just finished fighting in World War I. In fact, they even considered the idea of a *bayonet competition*, but feared there would be no easy way to score it and were concerned about safety conditions.



The Inter-Allied competition used the French F-1 field grenade and threw it for distance. Most of the throwers used the stiff-arm approach, but the American soldiers threw the grenade like a baseball and won the top three spots led by the Thompson brothers who were from Southern California. Chaplain Fred Thompson won the event with a throw of 245' 11".



THE GAMES COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
INTER-ALLIED GAMES



This is to certify that *Chaplain Fred C. Thompson*  
representing *United States* was the winner of *First* place  
in *the Hand Grenade Throw* in the  
Inter-Allied Games at Pershing Stadium, Paris, France, 22<sup>nd</sup> June to 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1919.

The American Expeditionary Forces

The Games Committee

*John J. Pershing*

General, United States Army  
Commander in Chief

*W. S. Thompson*  
Colonel, General Staff Corps  
Chairman



The Army record for the grenade throw was set by Al Blozis in 1944 with a throw of 284.54 feet.

