

# Christmas on Crutches



At this time of year I find myself looking back with fondness to Christmases of old. Some of the most memorable for me occurred during those transitional college years when Christmas became a true homecoming. On break between semesters, I would travel back to my parents' home to be reunited with family and friends from whom I had been separated for the first time in my life.

One of the traditions (short-lived) became an annual football game played with my old high school chums who, like me, had returned to our hometown for the holidays. We would gather at a field and, as this was a time where our development was more brawn than brain, we would opt to play a no-pads, full-on tackle game. And this we did faithfully for four years, in snow, rain, mud, or bitter cold... until life sent us in so many different directions we began losing track of each other. Or perhaps it was just that our brains finally caught up to our brawn. But for a time, it was a holiday tradition we looked to with great anticipation.

All the regular rules of the game were in place with one exception. We didn't bother with a clock. We played until it got dark or until someone got hurt.. and as I don't remember ever playing till dark, someone always got hurt. And that someone was usually me.

Which is why, for the next four years, you would find me on

Christmas Day sprawled out on a day bed in our family “rec” room, crutches at the ready, unsuccessfully trying to fight through the brain fog brought on by whatever pain pill was being prescribed in the 70s. Ah, those were the days.

Merry Christmas all and Happy Memories!

*Michael Ondrasik and Home Video Studio specialize in the preservation of family memories through the digitalization of film, videotapes, audio recordings, photos, negatives and slides. For more information, call 352-735-8550 or visit our [website](#). And please take a look at our [TEDxEustis talk](#) and let us know what you think.*