

History

Contributed by Mr. Marbles
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In the beginning, tailgaters wandered aimlessly throughout campus landscapes with only the basic necessities for survival. These necessities were found in packs of 24 and were carried up and down Lane Avenue where they were often consumed right in the middle of the street. The word "Kropkogate" had yet to be coined and Satan had yet to initiate her quest to destroy gameday. This would all change during a fateful New Year's Day bowl game in 2002 as a group of tailgating enthusiasts joined together for the first time for a gameday experience. Much like the meeting of Smith and Wesson, this gathering would alter their lives forever.

It all started with the 2002 Outback Bowl. The world had not had such a gathering of fascinating ideology since the Geneva Conventions. The tailgate itself was lame, but the assembly of some of history's most influential gameday drunks set the groundwork for the future of Kropkogate. Stuck in traffic and arriving only an hour before kickoff, the tailgaters were forced to chug a few beers and leave for the game. It was then that they vowed to celebrate all future gamedays to their fullest ability. The origins of Kropkogate would evolve over 3 distinct eras as follows:

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The Primitive Era

The first era of our tailgate commenced in the fall of 2002, as several of today's Kropkogaters began traveling across the Midwest to watch the Buckeyes on the road. These were simple times. Tailgates consisted only of beer and a Weber hibachi grill, with the car stereo blasting Cowboy Mouth and Deadeye Dick. Despite its simplicity, the tailgaters were undoubtedly creating a scene throughout various Big Ten campuses as they endured an undefeated and often heart-stopping Buckeye football season. The tailgaters remained scattered and unaffiliated during most of the home schedule, often only meeting after the games at Hineygate.

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The Norwichian Era

The Norwichian Era featured the beginning of massive home tailgates, hosted upon the grounds of several different locations along Norwich Avenue.

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The 220 Period

The legend of the tailgate spread quickly when kegs began to be tapped early in the morning at 220 E Norwich Avenue, which at that time was home to a group of hooligans including editors of this website: Mr. Marbles and Pizza Hall. Drinking games, heckling, and drunkenness reached new levels every Saturday at this location. The Kropko Plunge was initiated and tailgaters were sure to be treated to the hosts' odd selection of music, most notably the repeated playing of Conway Twitty, Deadeye Dick, and Cowboy Mouth.

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The 101 Period

The folks at 220 moved away after the 2003 season, but the tailgate continued to grow just down the street at 101 E Norwich. This period is celebrated for the level of heckling indecency that ensued from the front porch. Anyone walking down the street was subject to clever shouts, requests and chants--with opposing teams' fans and "walk of shame" pedestrians most often falling victim.

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The Period of Uncertainty

2005 would be the final period of the Norwichian Era. Several different Norwich Avenue locations played host to our shenanigans, with none of the residents appearing overly eager to oblige with hosting duties due to the fact we would arrive hours before they planned to wake up. Most of the tailgating crew had finished school and realized a new home for tailgating had to be established. This would commence the beginning of a new era of tailgating.

The Modern Era

The history of the Modern Era and the struggle among ag-campus tailgating affiliations is a complicated study. Most tailgaters simply show up on Saturdays ignorant of the eternal power struggle that surrounds the bloodied grounds upon which they drink. However, to appreciate the tailgate and to avoid future sufferings of ignorance, it is certainly in one's best interest to examine the current political structure of the tailgating scene and learn its history. For only the enlightened will have the knowledge to thwart the mistakes of the past.

As the Norwichean Era closed, the tailgate moved from the University District to the alumni-centric parking lots surrounding St. John Arena. Life here was brief, just the last half of one season, as the Holbrookian Plague would reach epic proportion and uproot the entire tailgating community the following year. The Great Struggle among tailgaters can be traced directly to the era of Karen Holbrook's "Reign of Terror" during the early part of the new millennium. Under her dictatorial orders, tailgating peasants and laymen were exterminated from their familiar gameday locations. Signs of struggles to come commenced immediately under Holbrook's reign, as many had their possessions seized by the state and others found their gameday religious practices banned. Revolution and reaction between Holbrook's New World Order and counter-parties during that entire era (both bloody and bloodless) eventually led to many being driven from their sacred Saturday gathering posts. The "Trail of Tears" journey of displaced refugees moving across the river started when Holbrook pushed the laymen off Lane Avenue (going so far as sending vehicular traffic through previous drinking grounds in order to run down any revolutionaries). Holbrook then forced thousands from their land in order to install a Handicapped Brotherhood on the most sacred of tailgating lots that surround St. John Arena. Seeking tailgate asylum, thousands of tailgaters migrated across the Olentangy River in hopes of starting a new gameday life.

When tailgating immigrants reached the land of opportunity, they found they were not always welcomed by the natives of ag-campus tailgating community. With the influx of those who previously tailgated in the Hineygate area and the addition of many who had simply grown too old to continue practicing in the off-campus housing community, cultures clashed and land-battles ensued within the limited land available. These happenings have provided us with experience and lessons in class struggle among the gameday masses. These events have had a profound effect in shaping the current tailgate landscape.

Kropkogate established camp between two trees along Woody Hayes Drive. No one knew it at the time, but the stage was set for a historic battle to ensue.

The map above shows the geographic structure of the major powers that ruled the ag-campus tailgate landscape after Holbrook forbid the able-bodied from parking in the St. John parking lot. As you can see, the strategic location of our plot of land was sought for its proximity to Ohio Stadium, the Ag building restroom facilities, and ease of access to the expressway (Route 315).

This historic map outlines the power structure of Ag Campus Tailgating, circa 2009

Total war enraged when the tailgate first migrated from Norwich Avenue and clashed with the now extinct tribe of Old, Bitter, Boring Natives, who may or may not actually be the founders of the group still setting up just to the west of us. Unlike Kropkogate's modern Cold War arms-race with Stoley-Gate, battles with the Old, Bitter, Boring Natives (OBBNs) were direct, as each side battled over a small claim of land. The OBBNs would send a representative at an extremely early hour to hold claim to a strategic plot of grass. They only had one canopy and a handful of tailgaters--all of whom would just sit soberly in lawn chairs and watch people walk down Woody Hayes Drive.

As Kropkogate expanded, the narrow area between two trees could no longer accommodate the entire Kropkogate Enterprise. However, just east of one of those trees laid OBBN's vast and fertile tailgating grounds. These grounds were grossly under-utilized by the OBBNs, which led to Kropkogate's desire to conquer the land. The OBBNs were not a fan of our drunken shenanigans and repeated playing of "Chad Henne is a Bitch." At one point, they became so angered that they started packing up their tailgate. Kropkogaters stormed the territory and laid claim to the land before they could even finish packing.

The battle continued as the two camps would arrive earlier and earlier to lay claim to the ground. The turning point in the war occurred in 2006 before the 3:30 pm game against Penn State. Unlike today--when land grabs often begin the night before the game--in these early days of the Modern Era, one could usually arrive at 6 am and find the parking lot uninhabited. Mr. Marbles and Pizza Hall arrived this particular morning at 4:00 am to claim the land under the cover of darkness. About 30 minutes later, the OBBNs arrived--assumingly with the belief that they'd be the first in the lot--only to find two Kropkogaters already drinking upon the land. The OBBNs immediately left the lot in anger, even though all other parking and tailgating spots were still available at that time. They were never heard from again, as soon after they all died from typhoid...or perhaps they found another spot right next to us...it really isn't clear.

Kropkogate quickly expanded and flourished on their new plot of land after the OBBNs surrendered, but soon a Cold War would develop as another power strengthened across the Woody-Hayes Line: Kamp Stoley-Gate.

Stoleygate

For over 2000 years, Apocalyptic Christian theologians have feared the fulfillment of prophecies regarding the Bible's indication of "End Time." According to Wikipedia, they assert that human and demonic agents of the Devil are involved in a primordial plot to deceive humanity into accepting a satanic world theocracy that has the Unholy Trinity--Satan, the Anti-Christ and the False Prophet--at the core of an imperial cult. It is in my journalistic opinion that this Unholy Trinity is already lurking among us in one conglomerated form, and it goes by the name of Stoley-Gate.

Kamp Stoley-Gate sits upon a grassy plain directly south across Woody Hayes Drive from Kropkogate. As the "Power Struggle" map featured earlier displays, they are always looming and threatening potential war with the fine folks of Kropkogate. Though no casualties have been suffered as a result of the war, an arms-race between the two powers initiated in "Cold War" fashion in 2006. The two tailgates represent the biggest and most noticeable camps in the ag-campus area, so the struggle was inevitable as each strives for its own Manifest Destiny. It's a history of action and reaction, as each tailgate competed to build an arsenal of canopies and tailgating equipment in a never-ending battle for tailgating supremacy.

Even their sign is inferior

Kropkogate - America's Tailgate

During the 2009 season, Kropkogate clearly took the lead in its battle with Stoleygate with the addition of the Kropkodome. Kropkogate's Kropkodome was clearly visible from space, which is not something Stoleygaters could dream to claim about their own tailgate. Stoley-Gate quietly abandoned the arms race, yet it remains lurking ominously on the other side of the street, covertly plotting its rise to power again.

The last Great Threat to emerge was the sudden arrival of Jim and Sue, who caused quite a stir early one morning when they unknowingly set up their camp upon grounds God intended for Kropkogate's debauchery. An emergency pre-sunrise conference call was held among Kropkogate power brokers to debate the merits of diplomatic talks versus complete annihilation by means of simply burning their camp to the ground. After a vote, diplomatic efforts were chosen by the narrowest of margins. They exist as a friendly ally next to us today, often generous with their food and Fireball.

Another recent development is the emergence of the apparent Clown College on the western theatre. For the last couple years, a collection of face painting super fans have been gathering at a tailgate at the footsteps of our camp. They seem to be breeding superfans, but at this time do not appear to be a threat to the Kropkogate way of life.

The Modern era at Kropkogate brought forth the privilege of tailgating luxury. Industrial-sized heat lamps, the availability to watch games on Kropko-Vision via Direct TV satellite access, high quality sound systems, and our own private shitter, otherwise known as the Kropko-Jon. New traditions added to the old, as coning beers became a sport and having relations in the ag building became worthy of merit badges. The Kropkodome came and went, nearly falling into the heat lamp and burning everyone underneath alive in its final years. But with each passing season, the tailgate has expanded and is now renowned as the best tailgate west of the Olentangy.