

JIM C – SPORTS TERMS

MONDAY - 09/12/2011

HOW DID THE TERM “*IVY LEAGUE*” ORIGINATE?

Definition: The Ivy League, a legal entity was founded in 1954, and the name was officially adopted in 1956.

Dictionary of Word and Phrase Origins (1988): During the 1930s, the **Fordham University** football team was running roughshod over all its opponents. One day in the sports room at the *Tribune*, the merits of Fordham's football team were being compared to those of Princeton and Columbia, who were referred to as “only Ivy League”. The term was coined in 1937 by the New York Tribune sportswriter, Caswell Adams.

The Straight Dope: In 1936 the schools' undergraduate newspapers ran an editorial advocating the formation of an “Ivy League.”

Another unsubstantiated theory says the term evolved years before from an interscholastic athletic league between Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and Princeton. As was the academic tradition of the time, the IV (four) League was shown in roman numerals. Over time, the “IV League” nomenclature changed to the “Ivy League.”

C. W.: Ivy League = Elite Private Universities In The Northeast

Zen: Ivy League institutions - more than just academic excellence