

Basic Detail Report

Knightimes

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THE HARTFORD KNIGHTS — WINNERS ALL THE WAY



Knight owner Pete Savin hands over a check for the team's lease on Dillon Stadium to City Manager Elisha C. Freedman. On the right is G.M. Joe Fenton.



General Manager Joe Fenton, Head Coach Fred Wallner, and Knight's secretary Sandy Kshera admire the Atlantic Coast Football League franchise charter granted to the Knights.

Saturday night will be action night this fall in Hartford, as the new Hartford Knights take the field at Dillon Stadium to begin championship play in the Atlantic Coast Football League, the top minor-league in the country.

The winning tradition will be strongly accentuated, as the Knights tackle a tough 12-game schedule which will begin September 7th and end late in November. The winning tradition is already well instilled throughout the Knights' organization, beginning, most significantly, with the major league affiliate.

The Knights are affiliated with no less a team than the World Champion Green Bay Packers, for whom they will serve as a constant source of available talent. Likewise, the Knights will benefit, as Green Bay will send numerous rookies to Hartford for needed experience and regular play. Packers General Manager Vince Lombardi, along with assistants Tom Miller and Pat Peplert, will be in close touch with the Knights and a successful coalition is assured. In addition, the Packers will send an assistant coach to Hartford to assist in installing the Green Bay system.

The Knight are owned by Hartford contractors Peter and Herb Savin, both former athletes and active sportsmen. It has long been their dream to see top quality football played in Hartford, and they have taken every measure necessary, from the hiring of a top notch coach and general manager to planned improvements at Dillon Stadium.

General Manager Joe Fenton is typical of the young, energetic, and talented men in the Savin organization. As Assistant General Manager of the Roger Sherman Rigging Company, the 1961 Cornell grad is well versed in the managerial and administrative duties and responsibilities of his newest task.

Winning football games will be nothing new to Head Coach Fred Wallner; he's been doing it for years. An alumnus of Notre Dame and a former All-Pro guard and linebacker for the Chicago Cardinals, he has never experienced a losing season in his four years as a minor league football coach.

But the most important ingredient of a football team is the men who go out and actually make the tackles, catch the passes, and score the touchdowns: the players. At this time, the Knights are busy signing many top quality prospects, many of whom will be familiar to Hartford fans. In addition to the present signings, an open tryout camp will be held in July, and other players will join the club after the NFL and AFL teams start their summer training camps. And of course, the Packers will be sending a healthy share of prospects to the Knights, many of them with national reputations and impressive backgrounds. The Knights will serve as a stepping stone for many young men to make it to the big time with the champion Packers. Indeed, three present Packers, defensive tackles Jim Weatherwax and Bob Brown, and linebacker Dick Capp of Boston College got their starts in minor league ball, and fullback Chuck Mercein of Yale was playing for the Westchester Bulls of the ACFL before joining Green Bay late in the season and contributing heavily to the Packers' championship run.

And finally there are the fans. The people of Hartford can look forward to exciting wide-open football this fall. All eight teams in the ACFL are affiliated with an AFL or NFL team, so the caliber of play promises to be excellent. The teams and their affiliations are: Lowell Giants (Boston Patriots), Hartford Knights (Green Bay Packers), Bridgeport Jets (New York Jets), Westchester Bulls (New York Giants), Pottstown Firebirds (Philadelphia Eagles), Harrisburg Capitols (Baltimore Colts), Virginia Sallors (Washington Redskins) and the Richmond Roadrunners (New Orleans Saints).

At the present time, season ticket sales are going very nicely, but many choice locations are still available. With Hartford being the good football town that it is, the Knights look forward to some packed houses at Dillon Stadium this season. Plans are already under way for renovation of the stadium press box and more adequate lighting facilities for practice sessions. The opening exhibition kickoff is coming in August.

This fall in Hartford, Saturday night will certainly be the liveliest Knight of the week!

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