

Mount Clemens Jugs

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For a short time in the early post-war era, Mount Clemens had its own semi-pro football team called the **Mount Clemens Jugs**. The "**Juggle-Up Club**," a local organization dedicated to the promotion of sports in Mount Clemens, was responsible for initiating the team in July of 1948. A Juggle-Up committee of **Homer Van Hollenbeck, Juke VandeVelde, Mart Murphy, George Glefke, Bill Held, Floyd Frederick** and **Al Sahrow** issued the call for all prospective team members to attend a series of organizational meetings at the Medea Hotel during the late summer of 1948.

Start-up financing for the team was raised through a cash subscription plan, and the team was dubbed the "Jugs" in honor of the sponsoring Juggle Up Club. **Lee Hart**, former football coach at **St. Mary's**, was named Jugs coach and set about drilling his team. Club promoters decided to play independent of any organized league, and set a schedule of ten games to be played at **Memorial Stadium**.

Before the first game was played, Coach Hart was replaced by **Roy "Stubby" Quinn**, former head coach of the **Mount Clemens High School Bathers**. Coach Hart had found it difficult to attend practices because of his business responsibilities, and therefore relinquished the reins to Coach Quinn.

The 1948 inaugural Jugs team included: **Jimmy Charbeneau, Wes Carlos, Ozzie Stevens, Jack Sierens, Dick Fox, George Daluskey, Bob Manning, Gordon Trombley, Vinnie Petitpren, Roger Forton, Bob Wright, John Rostek, Joe Banks, Herb Listenbee, John Rondo, Barney Calka, Dick Kolp, Don Kolp, Bernie Voght, Norm Bobcean, Bill Nicolai, Homer Van Hollenbeck, Ralph Siewert, Clink Schroeder, Bob White, Arnold Thoel, Paul Pointer, Fran D'Luge, Lorne D'Luge** and **Ralph Rosso**. The first game of the season was played on September 26, 1948, against Hamtramck. The Jugs scored a 15-0 win before a crowd of 1,200 spectators. The remainder of the Jugs'

inaugural season was equally impressive, and ended with an overall season record of 7 wins, 1 tie and 1 loss.

The Jugs opened the 1949 season under the leadership of Coach Hart. The season record was 9 wins, 3 losses, and concluded with a 6-0 win against the Richmond Eagles in the Thanksgiving Day match. Despite a driving snowstorm, the Jugs managed to post the lone touchdown with only two minutes remaining in the game.

In 1950 the team's head coach was Homer Van Hollenbeck, and the Jugs participated in the newly-formed **Southern Michigan Football League**. The SMFL included such semi-pro clubs as the **Windsor Bulldogs, Oakwood Bluejackets, Coldwater Comets** and **Bay City All-Stars**. The Jugs had a very successful season, with their only loss to the Bay City All-Stars in the league championship game.

The 1951 Jugs, again under Coach Van Hollenbeck, posted an impressive 7-1 season record, and this time captured the league championship with a decisive 18-0 victory over the **Dearborn All-Stars**.

In 1952, the team equipment was purchased from the Juggle-Up Club by a four-man partnership made up of Bill Nicolai, Bernie Voght, Ken Voght, and Juke VandeVelde. The new owners set about establishing a schedule and appointed veteran Jack Sierens as coach, but 1952 would prove to be a difficult year for the Jugs. They collected only 3 wins on the season, but most devastating to the team was a broken neck suffered by lineman and coach Ken Voght during the November 3 game against **North Branch**. Proceeds from the remaining games in the Jugs' schedule were earmarked for Voght's hospital expenses, as he had not been covered by the team's insurance. During the final game of the season against the **Toledo All-Stars**, halfback Wes Carlos suffered a broken nose and tackle Bill Nicolai suffered a broken jaw.

Perhaps the serious injuries to key personnel were too much for the Jugs, as 1952 appears to have been the last season for the team. No mention of them appears in the *Monitor-Leader's* sports page in 1953.

For more information about the Mount Clemens Jugs, we recommend:

- "Plan to Organize Semi-Pro Grid Team Gains Momentum," *Mount Clemens Daily Monitor-Leader*, August 3, 1948, p.12, col.3.
- "Semi-Pro Gridders Open Drills Tomorrow Night at St. Mary's," *Mount Clemens Daily Monitor-Leader*, August 24, 1948, p.12, col.3.
- "Jugs Impressive in 15-0 Win: Hamtramck First Victim," *Mount Clemens Daily Monitor-Leader*, September 27, 1948, p.10.
- "MC Jugs End Pre-Season Drills; Meet Trojans in 1949 Inaugural Tilt at Memorial Stadium," *Mount Clemens Daily Monitor-Leader*, September 8, 1949, p.20, col.1.
- "MC Jugs Whip Dearborn, 18-0, in Loop Finale," *Mount Clemens Daily Monitor-Leader*, November 5, 1951, p.10, col.5.
- "Quartet Buys Jugs Football Aggregation," *Mount Clemens Daily Monitor-Leader*, September 16, 1952, p.12, col.4.
- "Ken Voght Suffers Broken Neck in Football Game," *Mount Clemens Daily Monitor-Leader*, November 4, 1952, p.12, col.7.