

Football's boys of summer; Beefed up Oilers are pumped for season

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Randolph-

The Randolph Oilers had a difficult season last year but with almost twice as many players as last season and a confident coach, hopes are running high. The Oilers play their Eastern Football League home games at Randolph High School. Last season, the team struggled with a 1-9 record, finishing in the league cellar.

"Last year we only had 26 players," said sixth-year head coach Ed Penn, a former EFL player himself. "This weekend I hope to have 58 dressed, and over a hundred players for this season." It's been 13 years since the Oilers reigned as Super Bowl champs. Penn was on that team and he'd like to celebrate a championship as a coach. "I have done a lot of recruiting and I am happy with the talent I have," said Penn. "I have surrounded myself with a coaching staff that really knows the league. They are good coaches and I am very confident about their knowledge of the game." The Oilers are made up of a diverse group of players, but they all have one common goal: to play football and win the Super Bowl. "They could be family men, businessmen or computer buffs," said Penn, "but when they come onto the field to play, they are gladiators." "This is a working man's league," said Penn. "Players often show up to the field coming back from work, and some of them bring their kids to the field." Back with the Oilers this season is leading tackler Larry Taggart, 37, who has played 12 years for the team.

Other top players include defensive lineman Sam Pearson III, a nephew of former Dallas Cowboy star Drew Pearson; 6-6, 330-pound offensive lineman Jerome Penn, brother of the coach; offensive lineman Jamie Hamilton, defensive lineman Tony Banaria and cornerback Charles Williams.

The Oilers open their season on the road 3 p.m. Saturday against the Middlesex Mayhem at North Reading High.

A key game for them this season is their 30th anniversary game at home against the Roxbury Panthers next Friday at 8 p.m.

RANDOLPH OILERS

Home field: Memorial Field

2002 record: 1-9

Opening game:

Saturday at Middlesex, 3 p.m.

Coach: Ed Penn

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