

# Heart of blue and gold

By Claire Arnstein

Randolph Herald

Posted Jul 28, 2009 @ 02:09 PM



Wicked Local Staff Photo by Jacob Belcher

*A photo of Oilers equipment manager John Carman, who passed away last week, stands on the ticket counter as Eddie Nye waits for spectators at Sundays game against Brockton. The Oilers dedicated the game to Carmen's memory, and beat Brockton 24-6.*

---

Randolph —

It was a rare sight to see John Carman without his Oilers “gear.”

He constantly wore his Oilers hat and jacket. Carman would even talk about the colors – blue and gold -- when there wasn't a game.

Doing so even helped out the team. One night, Carman walked into a Chinese restaurant sporting his blue and gold. He struck up a conversation with Kevin Boyle, who had never heard of the Oilers and hadn't played football in 31 years.

Undeterred, Carman gave Boyle head coach Ed Penn's phone number.

“Well, what are the odds?” Boyle asked him.

“Slim to none, but give him a call,” Carman answered.

Unfortunately, Carman never had the opportunity to see Boyle play.

He died July 21. He was 63.

The offensive lineman visited Carman at the VA Medical Center in Brockton the Saturday before he passed away.

He wore his game uniform from head to toe so Carman could see it.

Boyle looked at Carman and said, “I made it this far John and I haven't got in a game yet.”

“Sooner or later,” Carman replied. It was the only clear thing he said all day.

Raised in Lincoln, Mass., Carman moved to Albany, N.Y. where he enjoyed playing goalie for the soccer and hockey teams at Albany Academy. He later played catcher when he participated in the amateur softball league.

Although he never played football, Carman immediately latched onto Randolph's semiprofessional football team after receiving tickets to a game after he had moved back to Massachusetts and began living in Randolph.

He showed up as a stranger to his first Oilers game and immediately became a family member. With his outgoing and helpful personality, Carman asked the coaching staff if he could contribute in any way that very first game and for the next twenty years created a great relationship.

John painted all the helmets, set up the refreshment stand, assigned people to handle the game clock, helped the trainer with taping ankles and wrists, and was the first one on the scene and the last one off the scene. He was extremely dependable.

"You didn't realize how much of the little things he did until now," Oilers General Manager Peter O'Kane said. "He was wonderful with the equipment and did a lot that we took for granted John was a guy that made the team a family. He truly bled Blue and Gold."

John Carman was a huge part of the Eastern Football League Organization. Bob Kalinyak, the President of the EFL, said he attended every single meeting and was, "(a) heck of a guy." He was one-of-a-kind with his raspy voice and facial hair, Oilers Head Coach Ed Penn said. "(He even thought) he was the head coach at times, telling me to run plays they ran in 1928," Penn said.

"He was his own person. He was John. We are gonna win it for him."

The Oilers dedicated their second game of the season, a home field matchup against the Brockton Buccaneers on Sunday to Carman's memory.

They won 24-6.

The team plans to create an award in memory of Carman's dedication, hard work and loyalty throughout the years.

"Everyone knew John in the whole league...at least when they played Randolph. We're going to be missing him," Kalinyak said.