

## **A Little Bit of History....**

### **Team Browncrofts**

The “Browncrofts”, known as the “Brownies” for short, was the name for a series of Rochester amateur sport teams representing the eastside of Rochester that played in area leagues starting in 1918 with baseball. At least one manager was listed as living on Croydon.

In the mid 1920s the Browncrofts expanded into 11 man tackle football. In the 1930s they moved on to basketball. The team played at local schools such as Ben Franklin.

The football team played into the 1930s in the Rochester Football League (senior amateur class) on fields with names like: Gas Tank, Stromberg, University, Baseball Park, Happy Don Park, Ellison Park, Lower Maplewood Park, and Edgerton Park.

The football team of 1928 was the Rochester Football League Champions playing against teams with the names of Invincibles (which won the cup in 1927), the Kingstons, 10<sup>th</sup> Ward, Reservoir Jrs., Senecas, Clermonts (noted as the only Jewish aggregation in the league), Groh A. C. (from Dutchtown); and Lyellhursts (from Lyell Avenue). As the 1928 amateur football champions they played a series of games with the Syracuse and Buffalo champs, and also traveled to Binghamton for games.

There are over 150 articles in an archive database for the Rochester D&C covering these amateur teams through the 3 decades of the Browncrofts with game results, practice times, request for opponents to contact them for games, injury reports, and box scores. Amateur sports were heavily covered on the sports pages of the Rochester D&C.

As a little side note, according to a Webster ‘Round the Town article in March 1951, Les Harrison, coach of the Rochester Royals, shared the program at a Webster Chamber of Commerce dinner meeting and among the membership were William Wolgast, Harrison’s principal at East High School back in 1923, and Elmer Smith who played basketball with Les on the old Browncrofts. Yes Les Harrison, of NBA fame, was a Brownie.

-- Bob Genthner, History Committee