



The Fan-atic



Flyer

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Club News and Notes

Times, they are a changin’

Joe Cooper

The battle cry last season for the Atlanta Falcons was like a bad Rodney Dangerfield movie. No Respect. No one believed the Falcons would one make it to the playoffs or two make it deep into the playoffs. But what did the Falcons do? They countered with an 11- 5 record, a first round bye in the playoffs and an appearance in the NFC championship game. Not bad for a team no one respected.

But as Bob Dylan once sang, the times, they are a changing. The NFL released the 2005 season schedule and if you are like me, you still find it hard to believe. The Falcons didn’t get one Monday night game. They didn’t get two Monday night games. The Falcons got three Monday night games and all at home. Toss in a Sunday night ESPN game and the Thanksgiving Day game and you have a new meaning for NFL, the National Falcon League.

Granted our larger than life quarterback has a lot to do with the schedule but that doesn’t necessarily translate into all of the Monday night games being held at the Georgia Dome. For you see, the times are a changing all over. The Georgia Dome is actually turning into a home field advantage for the

Falcons. Gone are the days of the opposing teams’ fans making more noise than the Falcon fans. Gone are the days of the living room mentality of the Georgia Dome. Now are the days of ear shattering noise that has opposing offenses in total disarray.

It is my opinion that you, you the Atlanta Falcon fan are a vital part of the phenomenon that is the changing view of Atlanta and its sport teams and fans. Too long have we heard that the Atlanta fans are the worse in the league. Too long have we had to endure the laughter of opposing teams and their fans at having outdrawn us in our own stadium.

Times are a changing. Jump on the bandwagon. If you are a new comer, welcome aboard. Just scream and shout and support the team through thick and thin. We’ll make room for the new fans. All we ask is that you still support the Falcons even if the record is 3 – 13. You see the team is committed to winning. We as fans should commit to support the team. Times are a changing and with the changes comes championships.

Parking

The Fan-atics will once again be parking and partying in the gravel lot across from Gate D this year. Come out and join us for a plate of food and a chance at one of our raffles and most of socializing with fellow Fan-atics.

The cost for Parking will be \$300 per vehicle. Let Joe Cooper know if you are interested in parking with us this year. We will be collecting the fees until July 31st so reserve your spot today.

As information, parking passes will not be given out by the parking company this year. Your name must be on the list to park.

May's Fan-atic's Meeting

We will have a meeting in May and it will be at Corky's near Gwinnett Place Mall on March 10th at 7:00 p.m. No guest speaker has been announced.

Directions to Corky's:

Phone Number: 770-564-8666
From I-85N

- I-85N to Exit 104 (Pleasant Hill Road.
- Take a right and proceed approx. 6/10th of a mile.
- Turn right onto Sweetwater Road.
- Corky's will be on the right From I-85S
- I-85S to Exit 104 (Pleasant Hill Road.
- Take a left and proceed approx. 6/10th of a mile.
- Turn right onto Sweetwater Road.

Corky's will be on the right

Let's Get Digital

Joe Cooper

Ever received your newsletter late? Was it ever damaged by the Post Office? Did you ever not receive your copy of the Fan-Atic Flyer?

Well, worry no more about receiving your copy. Sign up today and start receiving your newsletter through e-mail. All you need is an e-mail address and Microsoft Word on your PC. You will receive your newsletter the same day it is released to the printers. No more annoying staples to remove. No damaged pages. Better quality photos. And you can print out as many copies as you want for your own use and to give to friends and co-workers. Additionally, receiving your newsletter via e-mail will help reduce the club's expenses, and the more money we save running the club translates into more money will can put into the Atlanta Falcons Youth Foundation and other selected charities.

Sign up today and receive your next issue electronically. Send an e-mail with the subject "Sign Me Up" to falcon_fanatics@yahoo.com. That's all you have to do. The newsletter will be sent to the e-mail address on your sign up notice.

Moving/Change of Address or E-mail

If any member has a change of address or e-mail or is planning to have a change of address, please let Joe Cooper know so he can update the records so that he can make sure you continue to get your newsletter. Thank you.

Minutes of the April Meeting

At 7:12pm Joe Cooper called the meeting to order. Gail Clancy read the minutes for March and Ray Brown gave the treasurer's report.

It was agreed we would keep the golf shirt prices the same for another year.

Joe suggested we change the membership fees to \$24.00 per year and pro-rate the membership fees for new members who sign up in the middle or near the end of the year. A motion made and seconded and the new pricing plan passed.

Larry Winter said he would get us the dates that the Braves 400 Club would be tailgating. We need to let them know which date we want to tailgate with them. It will cost \$13.00 per person to go to the tailgate party. If you are interested let Joe know by email by the end of May.

Dan Mahan volunteered to do the future Falcon Fanatic Newsletters. Please email any articles you would like Dan to include in the newsletter to DanMahan@charter.net as he will be doing the Falcon Fanatics newsletter from now on.

We had to decide the amount we were going to donate to the Falcon player who won our vote for "favorite player of the year." Also, we are going to give a donation to the Cheerleaders this year. It was noted that we had \$2,900.00 in the treasury. Last year we gave \$250.00 per player. It was suggested we give \$400.00 per player charity and \$400.00 to the Cheerleader's charity as well. A motion was made and seconded and the vote

was passed. We will also have the “Rod Beard Memorial Falcon Fanatic of the year award.”

Matt Winklejohn of the AJC is writing a book about the history of the Falcons. He is doing a chapter on fan clubs. He wanted people to write an 800 word, or less, story about their most memorable moments with the Falcons. If interested, email Joe by April 14th 2005 and he will forward it to Matt.

Larry Winter reminded us that Tommy Obis would be inducted into the Atlanta Sports Hall of Fame at the Induction Ceremony on June 10th at the Cobb Galleria. Tickets will be \$75.00 per person. The program will be: cocktails at 6:00pm, dinner at 7:00pm and the Induction Ceremony at 8:00pm.

We held the Atlanta Force ticket drawing, and Dick Clancy won. The tickets are for Friday night April 15th vs. Grand Rapids. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm.

Fan-Atics Banquet at Lake Lanier

The Fan-Atics banquet will be held sometime in July at Lake Lanier Islands at the Emerald Point resort. Details on date, time and other information will be coming soon.

Fan Day at the Falcons Complex

Fan Day was great. The weather was abnormally cool for late April. Moreover, after the heavy rain that made the Falcons move inside for morning practice, and threatened the afternoon session to do the same. We were told at the beginning of the week if inclement weather had forced the team indoors, we the fans would miss the first mini camp of the season due to space. However, it went off without a hitch.

We got to see Vick and the rest of the team run a light practice. The highlight of the day was scrimmage with throwing the long bombs and watching our new and regular

receivers grab the passes out of the air.

We were treated with a long autograph session; if you wanted any players’ autographs, you got them that day.

First looks, I think we are going to the Superbowl this year!

Fan Day pictures by Chuck Ruffino (right) are:

- (1) Autograph line, (2) Minicamp at Fan Day, (3) Member Byron Deaton



I'm back!

I was appointed (drafted) by president Joe Cooper to be the new Newsletter Editor. You may remember me as the president of this fine organization in 1998-1999. After trying to master MSWord and gathering articles, I will be putting this bay out from now until I get tired of it. Selinda has graciously put this month's newsletter together since I was way too busy going to school and working. I will try to get future issues out in a timely fashion starting next month.

I would like to take this opportunity to request content from members and other readers. Please email stories, funny comments, pictures or even full length articles (i.e. blogs). You will be published in this newsletter if you wish to be. Just keep it clean and relevant to the Fan-atics.

Dan Mahan, editor
danmahan@charter.net
678-482-0856

Atlanta Sports Hall of Fame

Inaugural Class Announcement Party

Finally, we have an Atlanta Sports Hall of Fame. Finally, one of our favorite sports heroes, Tommy Nobis, number 60 with the Atlanta Falcons was nominated and he will be inducted into the Atlanta Hall of Fame on June 10th along with other famous sports figures at the Cobb Galleria.

The Atlanta Sports Hall of Fame had their Announcement Party for the inaugural class of 2005 at the ESPN Zone in Buckhead on March 23rd. Larry Winter, the president of the Atlanta Sports Hall of Fame opened the

festivities. He has done a fabulous job putting the program together. Larry has worked very hard to bring us what we here in Atlanta have wanted for a long time-our own sports hall of fame.

The star-studded night started with guest speakers, Steak Shapiro of 790 The Zone, I. J. Rosenberg of Score Atlanta, and Cory Kessier of Fox Sports South recognizing the 18 candidates for the Class of 2005. Just to name a few they are: John Heismann, Dale Murphy, Phil Niekro, Walt Frazier, Dominique Wilkins, and of course our favorite, Tommy Nobis.

There were 6 announced that night. The first was Hank Aaron. Then Bobby Cox and Bobby Jones. George Morris stepped up to the podium and announced the Bobby Dodd induction. Keith Brooking gave a great speech, and announced the induction of Tommy Nobis. And last, Kevin Willis who still plays with the Atlanta Hawks introduced Dominique Wilkins.

George Morris, Tommy Nobis, Keith Brooking, Kevin Willis, and Dominique Wilkins sat on stage and posed for pictures and talked about their favorites times in their sport. Tommy Nobis talked about the 1973 game against Minnesota and Dominique talked about playing with Larry Bird. They were all asked what were some of their best memories. George Morris, who had introduced Bobby Dodd said it was when they beat Alabama. Tommy Nobis said it was when he was at the University of Texas in 1965 when they played Alabama in the Orange Bowl. Keith Brooking said it was when he played Minnesota in the 1998-championship game and won. Kevin Willis said it was when the Hawks won the Division Championship. Dominique Wilkins had a little bit of a different story. He told us the

story of how during one game he had torn a tendon in his foot and had to go to the hospital. Instead of going home after his foot was bandaged he went back to the game and sat on the sidelines. He said he would never forget how all the player's eyes lit up when he came back to watch them play.

Some of the Falcon Fanatics attended and we had a fantastic time chatting, eating and drinking while all the festivities were going on around us. Chuck and April Ruffino, Byron Deaton, Joe Cooper, and Dick and Gail Clancy were there to cheer for Tommy Nobis.

There was a raffle drawing and April Ruffino won an autographed 8 x 10 picture of D. J. Duckett, and Byron Deaton won a Dominique Wilkins autographed basketball card.

Larry Winter gave the closing remarks and announced that the Induction Ceremonies will be held at the Cobb Galleria on June 10th.

After the program ended everyone lined up for autographs and pictures. We all went up and congratulated Tommy Nobis. I can't think of a more deserving person than Tommy. He certainly warranted the recognition.

What a wonderful evening, Larry. Thank you again for the Atlanta Hall of Fame!

By Gail F. Clancy

If you are interested in getting involved with the Atlanta Hall of Fame:

Phone: 404-531-3216

Email: www-.atlantasportshalloffame-@yahoo.com

Website: www-.atlantasportshalloffame.com

Thanks, Gail! (ed.)

Spotlight on a Falcon Fan-atic

Although Larry Hammond is one of the newer Falcon Fan-atics, he also has credentials as one of the most tenured Atlanta Falcon fans. Born in Augusta, Georgia Larry said that later, after moving to Chattanooga in '66, he became a big fan of the Falcons and listened to the Falcon games on the radio. Then in '67, Larry moved to Atlanta and began seeing the Falcon games in person.

Larry remembers, "One of the most exciting years during the many seasons was the '73 season, The Monday night win over the Vikings that year was unforgettable. Both teams were 7-0 going in. Atlanta still was a

small town in those days and the electricity in the air, before, during and after the game was extraordinary and after a week of pre-game hype, people talked of little else. This was a Norm Van Brocklin coached team featuring cast off LSU fullback Eddie Ray and lead by QB Bob Lee. Claude Humphrey was a leading pass rusher on defense and he helped to shut down the legendary UGA QB and Athen native, Fran Tarkenton. I never experienced anything as exciting since."

Larry had been a season ticket holder for many years and he still attends many games. He worked for an insurance adjusting firm when he relocated to Atlanta in '67. A few years ago he retired and now works part-time for a financial planning firm providing long

term care. His wife Jean is a teacher in DeKalb County and his daughter lives in Marietta and is a dress designer. Football and baseball are his main hobbies.

After hearing about the Falcon Fan-atics from Dick and Gail Clancy, Larry decided to join and he is looking forward to an '05 season that rivals the excitement and drama of that week in '73.

A thank you to Dick and Gail Clancy for this feature (ed.)

Falcon Fan-Atics
Newsletter
301 Meadow Lane
Auburn, GA 30011

