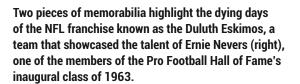
## The Last Stand of the DULUTH **ESKIMOS**



Michael Moran

here are many kinds of artifacts that fall into the category of football memorabilia. If you were at a game and purchased a pennant or a program or even saved your ticket stub and brought it home, you would be a collector of football memorabilia. Football cards from the National Chicle Company, Topps, Bowman or modern set producers are probably the most collected form of memorabilia. Some people collect equipment and jerseys (or little swatches of jerseys embedded like holy relics in limited edition modern cards), while others stick to autographs or, even more selectively, Hall of Fame autographs.

Many collectors of early NFL material are eclectic in their taste because the pickings can sometimes feel very slim and you're happy just to find something anything—that gives you a hands-on feeling for the early years of the league. Such was the case with the contract between the Chicago Bears and the Duluth Eskimos for a game on December 11, 1927—a game that turned out to be the last ever played by the Eskimos.

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## The National Football League GAME CONTRACT

This copy to be held by the party of the first part.	
Secretary and Treasurer	
Secretary and Treasurer	-
Approved by: THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE DULUTH ESKIMOS FOOTBALL CLUB,	
By Hawli Sterman	100
of December 192.7 CHICAGO BEARS FOOTBALL CLUB,	
In Witness Whereof, the said parties have hereunto set their hands and seals this	
Party of <b>first</b> part shall issue passes and party of <b>second</b> part shall receive passes.	
That if both teams have arrived on the field of play, and it is found that said field is questionable for play, the question of cancellation of said game shall rest solely with the manager of the home team.	
weather only, by giving notice to party of thesecond part at least five hours before departure ofsecond party's train. In the eventfirst party shall fail to give such notice of cancellation tosecond party, as above provided, and no game is played, party of thesecond part shall receive only actual expenses (railroad fair, hotel and meals for twenty [20] men).	97
That party of the first part shall have the right to cancel said game in case of inclement	100
	TX.
	To the same of
Special Provisions:	
That in case of any dispute regarding plays made during the game,Spalding's Official Football Guide shall govern, and the decision of the President shall be final.	
of the first part shall pay all officials for said game, except that party of second part shall pay one-half of official's traveling expenses.  That the eligibility of all officials and players participating in said game shall have the approval of the officials of The National Football League.	The second second
That party of the_secondpart, for the game aforesaid, shall bear their own expense, and party	
per cent of the entire gross receipts after 15 per cent thereof has been deducted for park rental, not including war tax, to be paid at the conclusion of the game.	100000000000000000000000000000000000000
of \$4000.00 , present exerxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
That the party of the second part shall receive as consideration for said game, the guaranteed sum	
between the hours of 2 P. M. and 6 P. M.  That the length of each quarter period of said game shall be	The same
furnished by the party of the First part, on the date of lec. 11 1927	
both being members in good standing in <b>The National Football League</b> , hereby agree as follows:  That a game of football shall be played in the city of	
For the purpose of playing a game of football, CHICAGO BEARS FOOTBALL CLUB, Inc., party of the first part, and DULUTH ESKIMOS TO OTBALL CLUB, with ERNIE NEVERS party of the second part,	
TO A 1 . A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A	

That a game of feetball shall be placed in the city of Children Co.
That a game of football shall be played in the city of
furnished by the party of the party of the part, on the date of 1927, between the hours of 2 P. M. and 6 P. M.
between the hours of 2 P. M. and 6 P. M.
That the length of each quarter period of said game shall be
That the length of each quarter period of ball game than so-
That the party of the second part shall receive as consideration for said game, the guaranteed sum
of \$4000.00 , seere resexxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
bravel, with the option of taking40per cent of the entire gross receipts after 15 per cent thereof has been deducted for park rental, not including war tax, to be paid at the conclusion of the game.

In the contract the Bears made a \$4,000 guarantee to the Eskimos for the game. NFL records show that 2,500 people attended. It's safe to say that an attendance of 2,500 at Wrigley Field did not generate \$4,000 in receipts, so the Bears must have been backed into a corner—financially speaking. No doubt it was part of the reason the Bears ended the 1927 season \$3,488.35 in the red.

For autographs you have Dutch Sternaman and George Halas, co-owners of the Bears until Halas bought out Sternaman in 1933. For the Eskimos you have Ole Haugsrud, the man who brought Ernie Nevers into professional football and who supposedly paid \$1 to purchase the team from the players, who had been running it as a cooperative venture. When Haugsrud sold the Duluth franchise to a team in Orange, New Jersey in 1929, it was with an agreement that he would receive a percentage of the next NFL franchise in Minnesota—thirty years later he became a part owner of the Minnesota Vikings.

A companion piece is the letter on Eskimo stationary from 1929 seen on the next page. It is collectible for the letterhead, the autograph and the historical content. It shows that prior to the Duluth franchise being sold to Orange there was a final attempt to field an Eskimos NFL team. The date of the letter, July 22, is interesting because both Haugsrud and Scanlon were at the same time in negotiations with Dr. David Jones, who became the new owner of the Chicago Cardinals four days prior, to manage and coach that team—and to bring Ernie Nevers along with them. Maybe when Johnny Blood McNally signed with the Packers they gave in to the pressure at the owners meeting to sell their franchise to Newark, but the letter shows they struggled to the bitter end to keep the Eskimos alive.

MICHAEL MORAN is the senior pastor of the First Congregational Church in New Milford, Connecticut. His research and collecting interests focus on his father, Hap Moran, who played in the NFL from 1926 to 1933, and the game of that era.

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CHICAGO BEARS FOOTBALL CLUB,	16
By Edw C. Stermannan	
By Fro I Halas	
DULUTH ESKIMOS FOOTBALL CLUB,	
BY Blefffuggund	
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OLUF HAUGSRUD BOX NO. 297 DULUTH MINN.

PHONE. CALUMET 499-W



DEWEY D. SCANLON
MANAGER
5811 CODY STREET WEST DULUTH, MINN.

PHONE. CALUMET 499-W

Duluth, Minn., July 22nd, 1929

Mr. John McNally, New Richmond, Wisconsin.

14 Th 1

to state track.

Dear John:-

We are going to operate a Club in the National Pro Football League this coming season. I am writing you at this time, to ask if you would be interested in a contract with this Team. The Schedule meeting takes place at Atlantic City, July 27th and 28th, after which time we will be able to give full information as to terms and schedule.

Expecting am early reply, we are

Very truly yours

DULUTH FOOTBALL CLUB

MEMBER NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE