

The Hawks Nest

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 1

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Lehigh Valley Steelhawks



Steelhawks and Lions Transition to AIF

New League in 2016 Will Create Regional Rivalries

In a joint statement made today, the Lehigh Valley Steelhawks and Columbus Lions, formally of the Professional Indoor Football League, announced their intentions to play the 2016 season as members of the American Indoor Football League (AIF). Both teams were present at this past weekend's AIF league meetings held in Winston-Salem, North Carolina and are committed to bringing almost fifteen years of combined experience in indoor football to the league that has over ten years in existence itself.

Following the 2015 PIFL season the league owners were informed about the departure of one of its league members along with the Trenton Freedom announcing that they would cease operations. With five franchises remaining in the current PIFL, the remaining league owners worked diligently on all options for the future of the league. Within those discussions, and with sensitivity to time and planning for each team, three of the remaining five franchises elected the option to sit the 2016 out instead of playing under a different league affiliation. With no plans to sit out, the Steelhawks and Columbus Lions spent many weeks researching and speaking with other indoor leagues and team owners, and chose the AIF as their

destination for play in 2016.

"There was never an option for the Steelhawks to sit out and not continue to bring this fun and amazing sport to our loyal fans and supporters," stated Steelhawks General Manager Mike Clark. "We take a lot of pride in giving back to this community and providing entertainment to the Lehigh Valley. With our move last season to the brand new PPL Center, and the successes we've built on the field, we are excited to continue our growth and bring our experiences to the AIF. The defending PIFL Champion Columbus Lions making the move with us just adds to the quality of the league and level of competition. I know they share in our commitment to continue all the good our franchises do within our communities."

Columbus Lions Owner Skip Seda added, "We didn't feel that sitting out a year would be fair to our fans, staff and players so we searched and found a very good situation for us. People in Columbus, Phenix City and the Valley, love Lions football and we want to give it to them. The AIF has teams in Savannah, Atlanta, Lakeland FL, Raleigh NC and Winston Salem NC which gives us more natural rivals. I think fans will enjoy that. Our goal is to bring a championship back to Columbus for the third time in franchise history and the 1st back to

back championship. Our fans know Lehigh as a worthy opponent that met us in the regular season but, they are also a highly respected successful organization that has been a longtime ally of the Lions. Having a team like Lehigh make the move with us was just icing on the cake."

The AIF has been in existence for 10 years, and will have a minimum of twelve teams spanning from Michigan to Florida. Steelhawks fans will be excited to learn that there will be many new and regional rivalries for them to enjoy including the ASI Panthers based out of Reading, Pa, the newly formed Philadelphia (PA) Yellow Jackets, and the AIF defending Champion York (PA) Capitals. The Steelhawks will continue to provide a minimum of six (6) home dates inside the PPL Center, with the possibility of additional home playoff contests.

"We are excited to have these two first class organizations join the AIF for the 2016 season," stated AIF Commissioner John Morris. "We have had a long standing relationship with both organizations and when the opportunity presented itself, we were extremely excited. We will also use their experience and knowledge to make us even stronger than we are now. Both the Lehigh Valley Steelhawks and Columbus Lions are professional organizations, on and off of the field."

Upcoming Event:

- ◆ 10/10: First 2016 Open Tryout - 12pm -4pm. Hosted by The Rink at Lehigh Valley (3323 7th St. Whitehall, PA)

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First 2016 Steelhawks Open Tryout



Player Feature: Larry Ford

MEET THE STEELHAWKS

STATS

Position: Defensive Line

Height: 6'4

Weight: 260

College: West Virginia



LARRY FORD 92

**FAVORITE CARTOON CHARACTER...
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS**



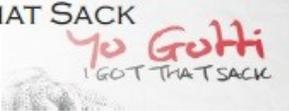
**FAVORITE ATHLETE...
MICHAEL STRAHAN**



**FAVORITE FOOD...
CHINESE**



**FAVORITE SONG...
I GOT THAT SACK**



Featured Program:

Hawks Go Back to School with ESSA Bank & Trust

1st & Goal Program Leads Way To Assist Local Schools Again

The Lehigh Valley Steelhawks and ESSA Bank & Trust have partnered together for the third straight year to bring the 1st & Goal Academic Excellence Program to local schools in and around the Lehigh Valley. The two will partner to reward students for achieving certain pre-set goals including perfect attendance, academic achievement within a marking period, attaining certain PSSA testing scores, or for behavioral support within a classroom.

To help students aspire to achieve these goals, players, coaches, precious metal dancers, and Talon (team mascot) will be visiting the participant schools to talk to students about the importance of education. They will be a part of assemblies aimed to inspire students to do well in everyday classes, on their PSSA's, as part of an Anti-Bullying

campaign, or other reading or academic campaigns.

“We are thrilled to be working with ESSA Bank & Trust again on this great academic initiative for the third consecutive year and for our exciting return to the awesome PPL Center. Since starting this program prior to the 2014 season, we have seen steady growth and participation with so many elementary and middle schools and are looking forward to expanding on that again,” stated Coach Thompson. “We take a lot of pride in giving back to the community and so do our wonderful partners and that’s why we couldn’t be happier that ESSA Bank & Trust is partnering with us again on this great educational initiative.” If you would like to learn more about the opportunities



contact Program Creator and Head Coach Chris Thompson, cthompson@lvsteelhawks.com.



available, please



Lehigh Valley Steelhawks 2016 Current Roster (as of 9/29)

OL/FB John Alvarez (6'2, 315) - Del Val
 WR Terrill Barnes (6'3, 215) - IUP
 DL Tahir Basil (6'2, 285) - Lafayette
 QB Clay Belton (6'6, 230) - University of Findlay
 OL Jeff Braun (6'5, 320) - West Virginia
 WR Gregory Edwards (6'1, 195) - North Carolina Wesleyan
 DB Orlando Fisher (5'11, 205) - Syracuse
 DL Larry Ford (6'4, 260) - West Virginia
 L/LB Tim Hume (6'2, 265) - Cheyney

FB/OL Josh Kamenas (6'4, 305)
 DL Abe Koroma (6'4, 300) - Penn State
 OL/FB Darrin Love (6'2, 290) - Kean
 OL Rustin Mayorga (6', 190) - Concordia
 OL Lloyd Morrison (6'3, 330) - Fordham
 DB James Pitts (6', 190) - Villanova
 WR Brandon Renford (5'9, 185) - Niagara CC
 DB Tristan Simms (6', 200) - Western Arizona
 LB Herschel Thornton (6'2, 215) - East

Stroudsburg
 WR Norman White Jr. (6'4, 220) - Villanova
 DB John Williams (5'10, 185) - Tabor
 WR Rob Wright (6'3, 220) - Del State
 WR Jerrell Young (5'10, 190) - University of St. Mary

Steelhawks to Hold 1st 2016 Open Tryout

The Lehigh Valley Steelhawks professional arena football team, members of the American Indoor Football League, will be holding their first 2016 season open tryout on Saturday, October 10th at The Rink at Lehigh Valley. Located at 3323 7th Street, Whitehall, PA. Registration will begin at noon. Cost will be \$40 if a player pre-registers via the Steelhawks website, or \$60 the day of. Player

evaluations will begin at 1pm. Cost includes evaluation, drills, and testing by the Steelhawks Professional Coaching Staff, as well as a Steelhawks t-shirt.

Registration is now available online, at the Steelhawks website, www.lvsteelhawks.com. The tryout will be in conjunction with the Steel City Stampede of the MIFL who will

also be evaluating talent. The Steelhawks have had recent success finding talent at open tryouts, including last year's PIFL Defensive Rookie of the Year Joe Powell who burst onto the scene setting a league record of 11 interceptions on the season.



www.lvsteelhawks.com
 Facebook: Lehigh Valley Steelhawks
 Twitter: SteelhawksLV
 Instagram: SteelhawksLV

COME FLY WITH
 US!

The Greatest Show on Turf returns to the Lehigh Valley! The Lehigh Valley Steelhawks, founded in 2010 are a professional indoor football team that plays in the American Football League (AIF). The season runs from February all the way through June.

We hope to see you at the PPL Center to cheer on your hometown team this season, as they strive to bring a Championship to the Valley.

Our mission is "To consistently serve our Guests [Ticket Holders], Partners [Sponsors], and our Homes [Teams Cities] at the highest possible level and to do so with integrity, kindness, affordability, and passion on the field, in our front offices, and around the communities in which we play."

Season Ticket Packages will be on sale soon!!! Call 610-282-3100 to reserve yours today!