

THE JETS' FIRST TRAINING CAMP

By John Hogrogian

In 1963, the New York Jets arose from the ashes of their earlier incarnation, the New York Titans. The 1962 Titans were broke, disorganized, and regarded with contempt. After the end of the season, the team wound up in bankruptcy court in Manhattan.

On March 28, 1963, the Gotham Football Club, Inc., purchased the franchise and its assets for one million dollars in a sale approved by the court and by the AFL. The Gotham Football Club was a corporation owned by five wealthy men: David A. (Sonny) Werblin, president of MCA-TV; Donald C. Lillis, partner in a stock brokerage firm; Townsend B. Martin, a banker; Philip H. Iselin, an officer of Monmouth Park racetrack in New Jersey; and Leon Hess, an oil executive.

The new owners believed that they could nurse the Titans back to health. The New York City government had promised the Titans that they would be the autumn tenants of Shea Stadium, a new municipal ballpark under construction near the site of the upcoming 1964 World's Fair in Queens. The new stadium would be the first in the City to offer spacious parking lots for the prosperous and mobile post-World War II fan. The stadium was still being built in the winter of 1962-1963, and the City hoped to open it in the summer of 1963, in time for the Mets to finish their season there. The Titans could move in as soon as the baseball season ended. The new home would impart some sparkle to the Titans' shabby public image.

On April 16, Sonny Werblin presided over a press conference at Toots Shor's restaurant in Manhattan. Werblin made two announcements. One was that the Titans had been renamed the Jets. The new team colors would be green and white, replacing the black and gold of the Titans. The second announcement was that the Jets had hired Weeb Ewbank as head coach and general manager. Ewbank had been fired by the Baltimore Colts on January 8 after nine years as head coach. He had taken that team to NFL championships in 1958 and 1959.

Over the summer, Ewbank began to rebuild the franchise in major-league fashion, backed by the money of the new owners. He arranged to hold the team's pre-season camp at the Peekskill Military Academy in Peekskill, New York. Peekskill was and is a smaller city about forty miles north of mid-town New York City. It is located on the east bank of the Hudson River, with gorgeous river views. The Peekskill Military Academy was an old, selective military high school for boys, with ivy-covered buildings on a picturesque campus. The Academy was nearing the end of its long life and probably needed the money which the Jets would pay for rent in July and August.

Ewbank also assembled a young and talented corps of assistant coaches. Clive Rush was 32 years old and coached the offensive backfield. He had been the head coach at the University of Toledo. Chuck Knox was 31 years old and took charge of the offensive line. He came from an assistant coaching position at Kentucky. Walt Michaels was 34 years old and had been an assistant coach for the Oakland Raiders in 1962. He coached the defensive line. He had played linebacker for the Green Bay Packers in 1951 and for the Cleveland Browns from 1952 through 1961, where he was on two NFL championship squads. Jack Donaldson was responsible for the defensive backfield. He had been an assistant to Rush at the University of Toledo. Helping out during training camp was George Sauer, the team's director of player personnel and one of the few holdovers from the 1962 management staff.

Coming up with players was more of a challenge. The majority of the 1962 Titans would return to the 1963 Jets. Those players had compiled a 5-9 record under Titans coach Bulldog Tumer. Some key players would not return. Wide receiver Art Powell had played through 1962 without signing a contract, thus becoming a free agent. He signed with the Oakland Raiders. Tackle Alex Kroll retired to begin a successful career in advertising. Defensive back Wayne Fontes retired to begin a successful football coaching career.

Little help could be expected from the rookies. The Jets signed none of the players drafted by the Titans at the end of 1962. The NFL signed most AFL draft choices anyway, but the chaotic management situation of the Titans scared even the adventurous away. On June 11, the Jets and Raiders did get to select some players from the other AFL teams in an equalization draft designed to shore up the league's two weakest

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members. The Jets picked up tight end Gene Heeter, the eighth draft pick of the San Diego Chargers. Ewbank filled the rest of the roster with undrafted rookies and free agents.

On June 22, the Jets held an open tryout session at Van Cortlandt Park, a large public park in the Bronx. Four hundred players showed up. Five of them were invited to training camp: Bob Lisa, a halfback from Jersey City who played college ball at St. Mary of the Plain; wide receiver John Wardlaw and tackle Jim Toon, two Brooklyn residents who had played at North Carolina A&T; and two non-college players, quarterback Julian Malinsky from East Orange, NJ, and halfback Gene Massa from Kingston, NY. These dreamers were on hand when training camp began.

Week One (July 11-July 14)

The New York Jets took the field for the first time on Thursday, July 11. The 61 players ran out onto the Academy's Depew Field clad in T-shirts and white football pants.

Coach Ewbank began with basics, showing the offense how he wanted them to form a huddle. The team ran light drills for the benefit of newspaper photographers.

The Jets made two announcements that day. One was that they had swapped guard Bob Mischak to the Raiders for guard Dan Ficca. The other was that the City would not complete the construction of Shea Stadium before the start of the 1964 baseball season. The Jets would play in the Polo Grounds in 1963. The team's business manager, John K. Free, called the delay "quite a shock and quite a disheartening thing." The Jets practiced again on Friday and Saturday, leaving Sunday for rest and written exams.

The Jets apparently began training camp with a roster of 63 players. Newly acquired Dan Ficca would still be on active Army duty for a few weeks, and fullback Billy Mathis would be home with his ill father until next week. Four quarterbacks were in camp. Lee Grosscup and Johnny Green had both had good moments for the Titans, but both were also recovering from bad knee injuries. George Wooten was a rookie free agent from Elon College, and Julian Malinski had survived the Van Cortlandt Park try-out. In addition, veteran linebacker Jerry Fields got a chance in practice to play quarterback, his position at Ohio State. The experiment did not make it past the practice sessions.

Three Titans returned at running back. Fullback Billy Mathis was the all-time Titans rushing leader, halfback Dick Christy had led the team in rushing in 1962, and Curly Johnson was a sub who did some of the punting. One veteran addition was Merrill Douglas, who had played with the Bears, Cowboys, and Eagles. The six rookie free agent runners were Frank Robotti of Boston College, Jim Christy of Furman, Bob Lisa and Gene Massa from the open try-out camp, Ernie Velten from Gettysburg, and George Spradlin of "None."

Ewbank brought lots of wide receivers into camp. Don Maynard was already established as an AFL star. The only other veterans, Perry Richards and Bill Shockley, had far less impressive records. Glenfield Knight played at Shaw University, was on the Giants' taxi squad in 1961, and sat out 1962. The rookie free-agents were Calvin Bird from Kentucky, Tom Bolz from Detroit, Norm Butz of Baltimore, John Wardlaw of North Carolina A&T and Van Cortlandt Park, and non-college player Ed Buettner. Only three tight ends were in camp: Titans veterans Thurlow Cooper and Karl Kaimer, and equalization-draft plum Gene Heeter.

At offensive tackle, only Fran Morelli returned from the team that finished 1962. Jack Klotz had started 1962 with the Titans, had gone to San Diego early in that season, and now returned to the Jets. Bruce Tarbox had played with the Los Angeles Rams in 1961. The rookie free agents were Clarence Gadsden of Maryland State, Ray Lardani of Miami, and Jeff Slabaugh of West Chester State.

Eight guards were in camp. Sid Fournet and Roger Ellis returned from last year. John McMullen had played for the Titans in 1960 and 1961 before getting cut in 1962. Dan Ficca was en route from Oakland and the Army. Bill Lopasky had played for the '49ers in 1961, while Bob Butler had played for the Eagles in 1962. The only rookie free agent was Charles Stitch of Louisville. Veteran Mike Hudock was the only full-time center in camp.

The Jets had only eight defensive linemen in camp. Laveme Torczon, Bob Watters, Dick Guesman, and George Strugar returned from last year's Titans. Will Renfro had played for the Redskins, Steelers, and Eagles from 1957 through 1961. John Kapele had played for the Steelers and Eagles between 1960 and 1962. Carmen Cavalli had seen action with the Oakland Raiders in 1960. Jim Toon was a rookie free agent from North Carolina A&T and Van Cortlandt Park.

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At linebacker, Larry Grantham, Ed Cooke, Hubert Bobo, and quarterback aspirant Jerry Fields returned from the 1962 Titans. Jack Laraway had played for Buffalo in 1960 and Houston in 1961. Bob Smith was a rookie free agent from Toledo.

Nine defensive backs were in camp. Dainard Paulson, Lee Riley, Paul Hynes, Billy Atkins, and Ed Kovac were returning veterans. Riley had led the 1962 AFL with 11 interceptions. Atkins had knee surgery just two weeks ago, so he was restricted to punting and light duty at the start of camp. Clyde Washington had played with the Patriots in 1960 and 1961. Rookie free agents were Tony Stricker of Colorado, Marshall Starks of Illinois and Dave West of Central State of Ohio.

These 63 players would compete for 33 roster spots. The only ex-Colt was Ed Kovac, who had played for Ewbank in 1960.

Week Two (July 15-21)

The workouts continued for the first full week of the pre-season. On Wednesday, AFL public relations director Jack Horrigan visited the camp. He left his young son Joe, today the curator/historian at the Pro Football Hall of Fame, at home.

On Friday, the Peekskill Evening Star reported that coach Ewbank had developed a routine of teaching the offense a running play every morning and a passing play every afternoon. The Star stated that "to date the Jets have teamed eight running plays and four pass plays with variations since they started actual drills last Friday."

Also on Friday, the New York Herald Tribune printed a story about the five survivors of the Van Cortlandt Park tryout session. Julian Malinsky and Gene Massa had been cut, but the other three were still on the team. Bob Lisa was apparently doing well at halfback. The Herald Tribune referred to the two other players as Mr. X and Mr. Y, allegedly at their request. They were quoted as saying "Please don't use our names, we're on a phony emergency leave from our jobs. We'll probably be bounced if they find out." This secrecy was puzzling, in that the New York Times had named the players as John Wardlaw and Jim Toon in its article on the start of training camp.

The Herald Tribune story on Friday also stated that the Jets had cut ten players since camp opened. Seven of those cuts apparently were quarterback George Wooten, fullback George Spradlin, receivers Tom Bolz, Norm Butz, and Ed Buettner, and offensive linemen Ray Lardani and Charles Stitch. The Trib also noted that the offensive line was hampered by John McMullan's pulled leg muscle, Fran Morelli's pulled leg muscle, Bruce Tarbox's bruised shoulder, and Sid Fournet's bad ankle.

On Saturday, the Jets had their first contact scrimmage. Ewbank singled out rookies Gene Heeter and Tony Stricker for praise.

Week Three (July 22-28)

The Jets made little news this week. They cut offensive tackle Jeff Slabaugh on Monday. On Saturday, they held another scrimmage. Dick Christy scored on a run, and Don Maynard scored on a pass from Johnny Green. Ewbank praised offensive linemen Mike Hudock and Roger Ellis and tight end Gene Heeter. Lee Grosseup sat out the scrimmage with a bad shoulder, as did Billy Mathis with a bad ankle.

Week Four (July 29-August 4)

The highlight of the week was the intrasquad game on Saturday. There was some news, however, during the week. AFL Commissioner Joe Foss dropped into camp on Wednesday for a visit. Accompanying him was John McGrady, chief of the league's game officials. The Peekskill Evening Star printed a picture of Foss and McGrady explaining rules changes to the Jet quarterbacks: Lee Grosscup, Johnny Green, and linebacker convert Jerry Fields. On Thursday, the Jets purchased rookie center Charlie Theokas from the Patriots and signed free-agent rookie defensive back Bill Wood.

On Friday, the College All-Stars beat the Green Bay Packers 20-17 before 65,000 fans in Chicago. The Jets had no players on the All-Star squad.

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On Saturday afternoon, Ewbank split his roster for an intrasquad contest under regular game conditions. A crowd of about 2,000 fans bought tickets for two dollars, with proceeds to go to Peekskill Community Hospital's building fund, under the sponsorship of the local Rotary Club. The Green squad beat the White squad 14-7. Glen Knight caught a touchdown pass for the Green team, Don Maynard caught a touchdown for the White team, and linebacker Ed Cooke returned an interception all the way for the decisive score. Center Mike Hudock of the White team was voted the game MVP by newspaper writers in attendance. As a prize, Hudock would receive a tropical-weight suit from Rosoff's Men's and Boys' store. At 6'2" and 245 pounds, Hudock presumably selected from the big and tall men's department.

The White team had the Jets' first-string offense. Johnny Green played quarterback in the first half, Lee Grosscup in the second half. Billy Mathis, Curly Johnson, and Dick Christy shared the two running back slots. Don Maynard and Perry Richards started at wide receiver, backed by Bill Shockley and John Wardlaw. Thurlow Cooper was at tight end, Jack Klotz and Roger Ellis at tackle, Sid Fournet and Bill Lopasky at guard, and Mike Hudock at center.

The Green team fielded the offensive reserves. Grosscup played quarterback the first half, then switched with Green. Merrill Douglas, Ernie Velten, and Bob Lisa were the running backs, while Glen Knight and Calvin Bird were the wide receivers. Gene Heeter was at tight end, Karl Kaimer and Clarence Gadsden at tackle, Dan Ficca (just discharged from the Army) and Bob Butler at guard, and Charlie Theokas at center.

The Green team had the first-string defense. Titans veterans Bob Watters, Laverne Torczon, George Strugar, and Dick Guesman played the line. Linebackers Ed Cooke, Hubert Bobo, and Larry Grantham were also returnees from 1962, as were safeties Lee Riley and Dainard Paulson. Rookie Tony Stricker and ex-Patriot Clyde Washington started at cornerback, with Bill Wood in reserve. Billy Atkins punted for the Green but stayed out of the defensive backfield because of his tender knee.

The White defense had Will Renfro, Carmen Cavalli, John Kapele, and Jim Toon up front, with Jerry Fields, Frank Robotti, and Jack Laraway at linebacker. The secondary consisted of Dave West, Marshall Starks, Ed Kovac, and Bob Smith. The Peekskill Evening Star also listed George Kustuch as a sub for the White defense. No paper had mentioned him before, and none would mention him again. Was he real or a typo?

Sitting out the intrasquad game with injuries were Bruce Tarbox, Fran Morelli, John McMullen, Jim Christy, and Paul Hynes. Counting Kustuch, the Jets roster now included 55 players.

Week Five (August 5-11)

Momentum picked up this week, as the Jets aimed at their first pre-season game on Friday. Ewbank reviewed the films of the intrasquad game and cut five players: Jim Christy, Clarence Gadsden, Bob Smith, Jim Toon, and Bob Lisa. With the departure of the Toon and Lisa, only John Wardlaw remained from the Van Cortlandt Park tryout camp. Within the next week, he, too, would be cut. On Wednesday, the Jets made a significant move, purchasing offensive tackle Sherman Plunkett from San Diego. Plunkett had been a sub for Ewbank in Baltimore from 1958 through 1960, then had played for the Chargers in 1961 and 1962. The 300-pound Tank had always had a weight problem, but Ewbank was willing to take another chance on the talented pass blocker. He would report on Sunday, after the Friday game.

The local NBC television station, WNBC, sent a camera crew to the Jets camp on Tuesday and Wednesday. They gathered footage for a special show to be broadcast next week about the reborn AFL team. Ozzie Nelson, star of the Ozzie and Harriet television show, was in camp on Wednesday and made his way into the NBC filming. Ozzie had been a classmate of Sonny Werblin at Rutgers several years earlier.

On Friday evening, the Jets played the Houston Oilers in Shreveport, Louisiana. That city had strict segregation laws governing hotel accommodations. To avoid those laws, the Jets flew out of Idlewild Airport in Queens on a chartered flight on Friday at 11:00 a.m., arriving in Shreveport after a three hour flight. After the game, they flew directly back to New York, arriving at 6:00 a.m. on Saturday.

In the game, the Oilers beat the Jets 17-0. Johnny Green started at quarterback, with Lee Grosscup taking over in the second half. The Jets threatened to score four times, but Bill Shockley missed on three field goal attempts, and another drive died on the four-yard-line. Larry Grantham won praise for his play at linebacker. The Oilers scored on touchdowns by Charlie Tolar and Charlie Hennigan and on George Blanda's kicks.

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Week Six (August 12-18)

On Monday, Ewbank cut Ed Kovac, Fran Morelli, and Frank Robotti. Kovac and Morelli had been 1962 Titans. At 10:30 p.m., NBC telecast its thirty-minute special on the Jets, entitled "Pigskin Phoenix: The New York Jets." The Peekskill Evening Star described the show in some detail. The narrator was Lou Boda, NBC's sports director. There were lots of scenes of the Military Academy and of downtown Peekskill. Sonny Werblin and Weeb Ewbank spoke confidently about the fupm. Ozzie Nelson was shown sitting under an oak tree, speaking with Lee Grosscup, Lee Riley, Billy Atkins, and George Strugar.

On Tuesday, the Jets signed two players recently cut by the Colts, running back Bob Clemens and rookie offensive tackle Winston Hill. On Wednesday, defensive lineman Carmen Cavalli and Titans defensive back Paul Hynes were cut. On Thursday, Ewbank signed another Baltimore cut, second-year linebacker Dave Yohn.

On Friday morning, the Jets flew out of Idlewild Airport to Buffalo for that night's game against the Bills. The Jets roster appears to have numbered 48 players. Lee Grosscup would start at quarterback, with Johnny Green taking over in the second half. Coach Ewbank made some changes in the offense, promoting four players to the first unit. Glenfield Knight started at wide receiver instead of Perry Richards, Gene Heeter moved ahead of Thurlow Cooper at tight end, Sherman Plunkett replaced Roger Ellis at tackle, and Dan Ficca took Bill Lopasky's starting job. The changes were a natural result of last week's shutout at the hands of the Oilers in Shreveport.

An audience of 19,142 fans watched the contest in War Memorial Stadium. The Jets defense scored two minutes into the game when middle linebacker Jack Laraway sacked Jack Kemp in the end zone. The Jets offense, meanwhile, was ineffective. Grosscup completed 5 of 12 passes, with two interceptions. Booker Edgerton returned one of the interceptions for a touchdown. Cookie Gilchrist gained 64 yards on the ground and 36 yards on catches in the first half. At the break, Buffalo led 20-2. Gilchrist sat out the second half, and the Bills could add only Mack Yoho's third field goal. With Green at quarterback, the Jets scored their first touchdown ever. Curly Johnson plunged over from the two yard line in the third quarter. Buffalo won 23-8, outgaining New York 338 yards to 209 yards. Green was 8 of 16 in the second half. Billy Mathis, Billy Atkins, and Jerry Fields sat the game out with injuries.

Week Seven (August 19-25)

The Jets were scheduled to play their third pre-season game on Friday against the Oakland Raiders in Mobile, Alabama. Controversy arose because seating at Ladd Memorial Stadium was racially segregated. Four members of the Raiders refused to play if seating was indeed segregated. Those four players were Clemon Daniels, Art Powell, Bo Roberson, and Fred Williamson. On Monday, Sonny Werblin stated that he expected no trouble in Mobile. He said that "we have been assured by the promoters that there is no problem. The crowd is not segregated, and neither is the housing for the players. The team will stay together Thursday night at Spring Hill College in Mobile. "

On Tuesday, however, the game was shifted from Friday in Mobile to Sunday in Oakland. The Peekskill Evening Star reported that Werblin initiated the shift. Werblin said that "while the cancellation may have far-reaching implications both financially as well as in player development, I nevertheless could not reconcile my or the Jets' part in a game so conducted." Both Weeb Ewbank and freshman Oakland coach Al Davis expressed their agreement with the decision.

On Wednesday, Ewbank reduced the roster by four. He cut linebacker Jack Laraway, rookie offensive tackle Winston Hill, and rookie defensive backs Bill Wood and Dave West. Laraway had sacked Jack Kemp for a safety in Buffalo, but that wasn't enough to keep his job. The three cut rookies would stay in touch, and each would rejoin the Jets during the season. Ewbank also put fullback Merrill Douglas on injured reserve with bruised ribs and signed quarterback Ed Chlebek, who spent 1962 with Grand Rapids of the United Football League. The coach also promoted Dave Yohn to first-string middle linebacker.

On Sunday, the Jets offense drove to a first-quarter touchdown plunge by Billy Mathis. Unfortunately, the offense then dried up. The only other New York touchdown on this afternoon was on a fumble recovery by defensive back Lee Riley. The score was tied at 16-16 after three quarters, but the Raiders stormed to 27 points in the final quarter for a 43-16 victory. A modest audience of 8,317 fans attended the hastily-arranged game. For the Raiders, Clem Daniels scored two touchdowns, Mike Mercer kicked five field goals,

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and Tom Flores threw two touchdown passes. The Jets completed only 8 of 26 passes for 83 yards and 5 interceptions. Center Mike Hudock sat out with a sore knee.

Week Eight (August 26-September 1)

On Monday evening, the Jets coaches and players were guests at a dinner in their honor by the Peekskill Elks Lodge. The mayor and various clergymen spoke to the Jets and the audience of 200 diners. Week Ewbank gave a speech in which he praised the City of Peekskill for its efforts in making the Jets welcome this summer. Ewbank also praised the Boy Scouts and stated that "the boy, or man, who does not do something for his church, his school, his organization, or his team is cheating himself and his community."

At the time of that dinner, the Jets had 44 active players and one, fullback Merril Douglas, on injured reserve. Lee Grosscup, Johnny Green, and Ed Chlebek were the quarterbacks. The running backs were Billy Mathis, Dick Christy, Curly Johnson, Bob Clemens, and Ernie Velten. The wide receivers were Don Maynard, Glenfield Knight, Perry Richards, Bill Shockley, and Calvin Bird. The tight ends were Gene Heeter, Thurlow Cooper, and Karl Kaimer. The offensive tackles were Jack Klotz, Sherman Plunkett, Bruce Tarbox, and Roger Ellis. The guards were Sid Fournet, Dan Ficca, John McMullen, Bill Lopasky, and Bob Butler. The centers were Mike Hudock and Charlie Theokas.

The defensive ends on the Jets roster were Bob Watters, Laverne Torczon, Will Renfro, and John Kapele. The defensive tackles were Dick Guesman and George Strugar. The linebackers were Larry Grantham, Dave Yohn, Ed Cooke, Jerry Fields, and Hubert Bobo. The defensive backs were Dainard Paulson, Lee Riley, Billy Atkins, Tony Stricker, Clyde Washington, and Marshall Starks. Shockley and Guesman were the place kickers, Johnson and Atkins the punters, and Christy and Starks the main kick returners. This squad had compiled an 0-3 pre-season record, had scored a total of 24 points, and would face the Boston Patriots in New Brunswick, New Jersey, on Sunday in the final pre-season game.

Tuesday was a cutdown day for both NFL and AFL teams. The NFL squads had to get down to 43 players, the AFL squads to 38 players. The Jets cut Hubert Bobo, Bill Lopasky, Calvin Bird, Charlie Theokas, and Ernie Velten. Bobo had been a three-year starter at middle linebacker for the Titans, but ex-Colt Dave Yohn had moved ahead of him. Lopasky had been a first-string guard earlier in camp, but Dan Ficca took that job after coming off active ArTny duty. The Jets also placed Bill Shockley on injured reserve. Ewbank now pored over the list of players cut by NFL teams.

On Thursday, Ewbank signed tackle Charlie Janerette, cut by the New York Giants. After appearing in the 1961 and 1962 NFL championship games, Janerette now joined the Jets defensive unit. On Friday, the Jets signed linebacker Bob Butts, a rookie from Ohio State whom the Browns had cut. The Jets also cut tight end Karl Kaimer. On Saturday, Ewbank signed wide receiver Bake Turner, a second-year player cut by the Colts.

On Sunday, Turner introduced himself by catching the opening kickoff and running 95 yards for a touchdown. In the fourth quarter, he scored on a 78-yard pass play from Johnny Green. Janerette led the defensive line with several tackles, a sack, and strong pass rushing. The Jets beat the Patriots 22-20 before 12,500 fans in Rutgers Stadium. Dick Guesman kicked three field goals for New York. The injury-weakened Pats scored on two Gino Cappelletti field goals and touchdown runs by Harry Crump and Jim Crawford. Lee Grosscup was 7 of 14 passing in the first half, Green 9 of 13 in the second.

Opening Week (September 2-8)

On Sunday, the Jets would open their season by again facing the Patriots, this time in Boston. On Tuesday, Ewbank cut his squad from 40 to 31 active players, two below the roster limit of 33 players. He cut 12 players from the roster, including both players then on injured reserve. He put two other men onto injured reserve. He also signed three players recently cut by other teams.

The most media attention went to the release of starting quarterback Lee Grosscup. He had been the Giants' number one draft pick in 1959, he had made a splash with the 1962 Titans, and he had a touch of charisma. Ewbank said, "I'm sorry we had to let Lee go. I was certain last spring he would be our quarterback. But he didn't move the team well enough in the exhibition games." Also cut was Ed Chlebek, who would stick around as the taxi squad quarterback. Only Johnny Green among the passers survived the pre-season. Ewbank signed Dick Wood, recently cut loose by the San Diego Chargers. Wood was 6'5", had a strong arm, and had bad knees which made him immobile. He had been on the Baltimore taxi squad

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under Ewbank. Wood was immediately written in as the starting quarterback on Sunday. He spent the rest of this week cramming for that test.

Besides Grosscup and Chlebek, the Jets released running backs Merrill Douglas and Bob Clemens, receivers Perry Richards and Bill Shockley, tight end Thurlow Cooper, offensive linemen John McMullen and Bruce Tarbox, defensive lineman John Kapele, linebacker Bob Butts, and defensive back Lee Riley. Cooper had been a three-year starter for the Titans. Riley had led the AFL in interceptions last year with eleven. Shockley had led the 1962 Titans with 68 points scored, all on his place kicking. Defensive tackle Dick Guesman, however, had won the job as place kicker with his three field goals against the Patriots.

Ewbank also placed linebacker Ed Cooke and defensive lineman Will Renfro on injured reserve. In addition to Wood, Ewbank signed two other recent cuts from the Colts. Fullback Mark Smolinski and tight end Dee Mackey were reinforcements for the anemic New York offense. All this Tuesday shuffling left the Jets with 31 active players, two below the roster limit.

On Wednesday, Ewbank signed linebacker Jim Price, whom the Dallas Cowboys had cut. He had been the Cowboys' third draft pick. On Thursday, the Jets further bolstered their linebacking corps by activating assistant coach Walt Michaels. The 34-year-old Michaels had last played in 1961 for the Browns. The Jets also signed two more former Colts, third-year wide receiver Ken Gregory and rookie defensive back Bill Baird. To get down to the 33-man roster limit, Ewbank put linebacker Jerry Fields on injured reserve and cut wide receiver Glenfield Knight.

Saturday was a big day. The brand new Pro Football Hall of Fame was dedicated in Canton, Ohio. The seventeen charter inductees included Sammy Baugh, the first coach of the Titans. Also that day, Lee Grosseup signed with the Saskatchewan Roughriders of the Canadian Football League. The Jets left Peekskill that day, travelling to Boston for tomorrow's opening game. From now on, the players were on their own as to housing. The Jets would work out at Hunter College in the Bronx until the Mets finished their season at the Polo Grounds later in September.

The Saturday edition of the Peekskill Evening Star reported that players and coaches hoped to return to Peekskill for training camp next year. Coach Ewbank said that "we will continue to serve as an arm of your Chamber of Commerce." Sherman Plunkett was heard raving about the nice apartment he was renting for \$300 per month. When Larry Grantham asked Walt Michaels why he was coming back as a player, Michaels said, "I'd like to play on a championship team in the AFL." Grantham replied, "me, too."

Mike Hudock showed off the new suit he was awarded by Rosoff's haberdashery for being MVP of the scrimmage for the Rotary hospital fund. Hudock said, "This was more than just a wonderful gift. Getting that honor gave me a tremendous lift. Tell the Rosoff boys I feel great and this suit looks great." The Star reported that "Jack Klotz was the last to leave the brick-faced dormitory and stood under the historic oak to reminisce a bit with Dainard Paulson, Sid Fournet, and Dan Ficca. Clyde Washington called, and that broke up the last batch of Jets on the PMA campus. "

On opening day, Dick Wood was the starting quarterback, with Johnny Green in reserve. Because Wood's knees were bad, Ewbank started two fullbacks, Billy Mathis and Mark Smolinski. Dick Christy was dropped to the second unit because he was not as good a pass blocker as was Smolinski. Curly Johnson was the other reserve running back. Don Maynard and Bake Turner started at wide receiver, with Ken Gregory as back-up. Gene Heeter and Dee Mackey shared the tight end position. The starting offensive linemen were Sherman Plunkett, Jack Klotz, Dan Ficca, Sid Fournet, and Mike Hudock, with Roger Ellis and Bob Butler as understudies.

On defense, Bob Watters, Laveme Torczon, Charlie Janerette, George Strugar, and Dick Guesman all saw substantial time on the front four. Walt Michaels and Larry Grantham started at outside linebacker, with Dave Yohn in the middle. Jim Price substituted for all three linebackers. Billy Atkins, Dainard Paulson, Clyde Washington, and Tony Stricker started in the secondary, with Bill Baird and Marshall Starks in reserve. Defenders Will Renfro, Ed Cooke, and Jerry Fields began the season on injured reserve.

On July 11, there had been 63 players on the Jets roster. Of them, 22 were on the opening day active roster, with three more on injured reserve. Nine players (including Walt Michaels) had been on the roster less than two weeks. Sixteen Titans were on the roster, with two more on injured reserve. Eleven Titans had been cut since the start of training camp. Eight players on the active roster had played for or been in camp with the Colts at one time. Gene Heeter, Jim Price, Tony Stricken and Bill Baird were rookies, with

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Marshall Starks making his pro debut after failing to make the Cardinals squad in 1962. Of the three players on injured reserve, only Ed Cooke would ever play a regular season game for the Jets. Of the many players who had been cut, Ed Chlebek, Winston Hill, Dave West, and Bill Wood would reemerge as Jets during the 1963 season. Don Maynard, Sherman Plunkett, Sid Fournet, Charlie Janerette, and Walt Michaels had all played in NFL championship games.

On Sunday, the Jets debuted before 24,120 fans in Alumni Stadium on the campus of Boston College. The score was tied at 14-14 at the half, but the Patriots ran away to a 38-14 victory. Babe Parilli dissected the New York secondary with 19 completions in 35 passes for 268 yards. The Jets scored their first touchdown on a blocked punt which Larry Grantham returned for 20 yards. They drove 80 yards to another touchdown in the second quarter, with Bake Turner scoring on a short pass from Dick Wood. The Patriots intercepted five passes, four thrown by Wood and one by Johnny Green. Wood completed 16 of 37, Green 2 of 6, for a combined total of 165 passing yards. Ewbank said, "Wood will do a better job of throwing once he gets to know the receivers."