



The Man Who Built the National Football League: Joe F. Carr

Chris Willis

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Founded in 1920, the National Football League chose famed athlete Jim Thorpe as its first president, a position he held briefly until a successor was elected. From 1921 to 1939, Joe F. Carr guided the sport of professional football with intelligence, hard work, and a passion that built the foundation of what the NFL has become: the number one sports organization in the world. During his eighteen-year tenure as NFL President, Carr created the organization's first Constitution & By-Laws; implemented the standard player's contract; wrote the NFL's first-ever Record and Fact Book; helped split the NFL into two divisions and establish the NFL's World Championship Game; started keeping league statistics; and developed the NFL Draft. But Carr's greatest achievement was creating a vision for the NFL as a big-city sport. By skillfully recruiting financially capable owners to operate NFL franchises in big market cities, he created the solid foundation for the league's successful future.

While the sport has grown to unheard of heights, Carr's name and accomplishments have been lost and forgotten. *The Man Who Built the National Football League: Joe F. Carr* captures the life and career of this pivotal figure in professional sports, chronicling the many achievements of a man whose vision helped shaped what the NFL is today. With unlimited access and complete cooperation from the Carr family—including family interviews, personal letters, and family photos—as well as NFL League Minutes, Willis recounts the fascinating life and career of a man dedicated to the game.

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