

By Frank Hyde
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Ex-Players, Old Friends Greet Hammerstrom At Fete

The organizers were working against the clock, but a hurriedly arranged "Welcome Home" luncheon for Sam Hammerstrom at Ironstone Restaurant yesterday noon developed into a highly successful affair.

Hammerstrom, now superintendent of schools at Campe Verde, Ariz., coached Jamestown High School's undefeated football team in 1949. Ted Olsen, one of his former players, took on the task of rounding up as many as possible of his teammates of 24 years ago and 23 (not all of them players in 1949) showed up for the luncheon and gabfest, some remaining until late in the afternoon to chat with "coach."

One, ex-player, George Kote, drove in from Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio and another, Fred Britain, who was later wounded in World War II, came from Niagara Falls where he is associated with Bell Aerospace. Kote is a Cable TV executive.

Hammerstrom had returned to Jamestown because of a death in the family. His brothers, Art, who operates a farm in Michigan, and Dr. Carl, local physician, were present as were Vince Joy, JHS assistant principal, and Athletic Director Komo Tane.

Both Art and Dr. Carl Hammerstrom once played for Jamestown High as did Sam, who later made Little All-American at Union, where he also coached football.

The "lineup," a few who did not play for Hammerstrom but who dropped in to greet him, included: Olsen, Joy, Tane, Kote, Britain, the three Hammerstrom brothers, Armand Daversa, Don Anderson, John Colander, Jerry DeLong, Harold Johnson, Joe Kulig, Tom Wilson, Sam Guiffreda, Mario Domenici, Tom Galbato, Tony Dolce, Bruce Johnson, "Red" Moran, "Red" Engdahl, and retired coach and teacher at JHS Harold Rubens.

Many recalled Sam Hammerstrom's statement when he took over the coaching Raider reins in 1947: "Give me three years and I'll give you an undefeated team." His 1947 squad finished 3-5, the 1948 team 4-4 and the 1949 club 8-0.

Many short talks lauding the "good old days" and Hammerstrom as a coach and a man, made up the program along with a unique addition, a projector grinding through films of the 1949 team in action.