

LEAGUE FIELD 1920-1925

In 75 years, Fort Myers has called three different fields home. The first home for the Greenies was located at a place called " League Field ", also known as League Park or Blvd Athletic Field. It ran parallel between the Caloosahatchee River and McGregor Blvd. It was bounded on each end by Clifford Street and Euclid Avenue, which today is Altamont Avenue. Today the field is a parking lot for Boulevard Plaza at Edison Ford Square. In the early 20's there was a combination baseball-football located there. The field consisted of wire grass and lime was put down before each game to mark off the yards and boundaries.

There were no bleachers at "League Field" and the spectators would stand on the sidelines and follow the action up and down the field. If a player broke into the open for a TD the crowd would run down the sideline after him. There were no tickets sold at the games, however, cheerleaders would circulate through-out the crowd seeking donations. If a game was played in inclement weather, fans would sit in their cars and take in the contest. Cars would park in close proximity to the field. No concession stands, restrooms, or locker rooms existed and at halftime players would run to neighboring houses to get a drink. The first game played at "League Field " was a 19-0 loss to Carlstrom Fields on Saturday October 30, 1920. The last game at "League Field " was played before a record crowd on Thanksgiving Day vs St. Petersburg, a 14-7 defeat. "League Field " was home to the Greenies from 1920 through 1924.

TERRY PARK 1925-1947

In 1925 Fort Myers moved their home games to the "Fairgrounds" located at Terry Park. The first field was located across the infield of where the Philadelphia A's trained. It ran from home plate to center field. In 1929 the field ran across the infield parallel to the grandstand. In later years the field was moved to an outlying all grass area bordering the

outfield. In 1935, the "M" club, which was made up of ex-Greenie letter winners, along with other prominent town citizens, purchased poles and lights for the field. Florida, Power and Light along with the help of some of Coach Sidney Ellison's players installed them before the 1935 season. In the season opener vs Punta Gorda, Fort Myers played its first night football game at home and won the contest 13-0. Sidney Ellison's dream had become a reality. The Cleveland Indian's then upgraded the clubhouse and locker rooms in 1939 and 1940. Terry Park was the Greenies home from 1925 through 1947, a 23 year stay that saw some of the Greenies finest moments on a football field. But by 1948 the Greenies and the community wanted and needed a larger, more up to date facility that was closer to downtown and to where the new high school was being built.

The field at Terry Park originally had no bleachers but by 1947 could seat 2750. Although these were not all permanent seats. The Greenies opened their stay at Terry Park in the 1925 season opener vs Mulberry, a 41-0 win and closed their stay before a record overflow crowd of 4,000 in a 20-14 loss to Bradenton-Manatee in 1947.

EDISON STADIUM 1948-PRESENT

When built, Edison Stadium was a modern state of the art facility. It was built at a cost of \$37,846. On the north side, closest to the school, the home side bleachers were constructed. There were 3 sections of 24 rows that sat 672 fans each for a total of 2016 seats. They stretched from the 27 yard line to the 27 yard and were encased in a concrete shell that housed the ticket booth, locker rooms, and storage room underneath. Atop the center section sat the press box. Across the field on the south side, was the visitors stands which stretched from the 35 yard line to the 35 yard line. The 23 row section sat approximately 1200 fans, giving the stadium a seated capacity of 3216. The Coca-Cola bottling company of Fort Myers donated the new scoreboard and the Lions Club the flag pole. Opening night had a festive atmosphere. Jack Craddock of Kinsey Rose Gardens presented coach Jock Sutherland with a wreath of white roses. An incredible fireworks

display provided by: the Arcade Cigar Store, Sears and Roebuck, Graydon Jones, Dr. Pepper, Fort Myers Variety Store, Royal Palm Pharmacy, and Herman Gluckman, was shot off. Edison Stadium was born. The Greenies played their home opener vs Miami Tech on Friday October 8, 1948 in their beautiful new stadium before a sold-out crowd of 3216 fans and defeated Miami Tech 20-19.

On Friday October 29, 1948 Edison stadium was dedicated. Before a crowd of 3,500 fans, Principal Ray Tipton received a gold key from school superintendent and ex-Greenie coach Charles Bevis and then dedicated the stadium saying, "I am accepting the stadium on behalf of the students, on behalf of the Green Wave of the present and future." The Greenies then went out and beat Bartow that night 13-6.

In 1955 the south side bleachers were expanded to 3 sections, 23 rows each, each sitting 1,200 fans for a total of 3,600. They stretched from 2 yard line to 2 yard line. This expanded Edison stadium's permanent seating capacity to 5616. The only change to these bleachers over the years is when they were switched from wood to aluminum. Eventually, due to the south side bleachers' size, the press box was moved over in the early sixties and this became the home side for many seasons until it switched back and then back again.

Edison stadium has been the center of much attention. It has been the home to graduation ceremonies, concerts, 4th of July fireworks displays, the Edison Relays, the Edison Pageant of Light Parade, track, soccer, and lacrosse. And of course, Football.

Three of the largest crowds to attend a football game at Edison Stadium were 7,200 vs Bradenton-Manatee in 1952, 7,000+ vs Tampa-Plant in 1960, and 8,000+ vs Barron Collier in 1992. But the largest crowds on record were the last games of the 1983 season vs undefeated Cypress Lake and the last game of the 1999 season vs an undefeated Estero, as 9,500+ fans crammed into Edison stadium causing standing room only to run rows deep surrounding the field.

The record for consecutive wins at home during the regular season is 29 from 1984-1990. The string was broken by Charlotte 9-7 in a driving rain storm in 1990. The record for most consecutive home wins is 23, from 1984-88, this streak was snapped by Bradenton-Southeast, 35-7, in the 1988 regional playoff game.

The south side once again is the home side and a new press box was installed in 1992. In 1993 the entire south side bleachers were replaced entirely by new modern aluminum bleachers with undersides that seat a total of 3,692 fans including areas for our handicapped fans. This was the first replacement of the old bleachers which had existed since 1952. The old concrete bleachers still remain as they were since 1948 with exception of aluminum replacing the wooden seats. They have been designated a historic site.

Coach Sam Sirianni was the legendary head coach for the Green Wave from 1969-2001, winning 244 games in that span. The first decade of the 21st century saw three major tributes at Edison Stadium to forever continue his legacy. On September 1, 2000 the Field House was officially named the Sam Sirianni Athletic Complex. On September 20, 2002 the football field was proclaimed Sam Sirianni Field at Edison Stadium. And on September 5, 2008 the Sam Sirianni Memorial Entrance on the east side of the stadium was dedicated.

Edison Stadium is still, as it has always been, the largest most picturesque stadium in all of Southwest Florida as it sits gracefully amongst the trees beside meandering Manuel's Branch. Thousands of memories still await this grand ole site.