

St. Louis BattleHawks Fly Into Riverbender Community Center on Jan. 31

by Jeff Allsman, Executive Director
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ALTON – Be one of the first in the area to see and hear about St. Louis’ new professional football team when the St. Louis BattleHawks fly into the Riverbender Community Center January 31.

Members of the BattleHawks front office will be on hand for a Red Carpet Event meet and greet during Friday Open Play at the Center. Open Play is open from 6-10 p.m. Admission is \$5 for members, \$10 for nonmembers, and for this event there is a \$15 family admission.

From 7:00-7:45 p.m., attendees can meet the BattleHawks representatives, get autographed posters and schedules, see the new jerseys and helmets and register for a drawing for free tickets to a BattleHawks game and other giveaways. At 7:45, the event

will move into the movie theater for a Q&A session, as the team unveils its family-friendly business strategy, provides a season overview and explains the recently announced new league rules. This is the first visit to the Alton area by the BattleHawks.

The BattleHawks are part of the XFL, and are the first modern professional football team founded in St. Louis. The league describes itself as fan-first, re-imagining the game of football and offering fans an opportunity to experience more action, access and fun. According to the team's website "We're evolving things just a bit. Less stall, more ball is how we describe it: a fast-paced game with fewer play stoppages. We've made timing changes, common sense rules changes, and created five gameplay innovations that will raise the excitement level and minimize the downtime. We're staying true to the foundations of football. With input from our coaches, players and fans, we're creating a game that is totally familiar – 11 on 11, 100-yard football – with a few twists."

The BattleHawks will compete in the XFL East division and begin play in February. The 10-game schedule will feature five home games at The Dome at America's Center, beginning with Feb 23rd against New York.

The St. Louis BattleHawks are lead by Head Coach/General Manager Jonathan Hayes. Hayes played college football for Iowa from 1982-1984, and was drafted in the 2nd round of the 1985 NFL Draft. He played tight end for the Kansas City Chiefs (1985–1993) and the Pittsburgh Steelers (1994–1996). He scored 13 receiving touchdowns in his career.

Hayes's coaching career began at Oklahoma under Bob Stoops. While coaching tight ends and special teams in Norman, the 2000 Oklahoma Sooners football team won the BCS National Championship Game. He joined Marvin Lewis' Cincinnati Bengals staff as a tight ends coach and won four AFC North titles on the way to seven NFL playoff berths. Hayes also coached during several Pro Bowls and in January 2018, Hayes was the head coach of the East team in the 2018 East–West Shrine Game. On April 18, 2019, Hayes was announced as the first head coach of the St. Louis franchise in the revived XFL.

For more information, visit <https://www.xfl.com/en-US/teams/st-louis> and follow @XFLBattleHawks on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.