

Norman Sas - Tudor Games (1948 - 1988)

In July of 1948, a 23-year-old Norman Sas took over Tudor Metal Products from his father. Founded in 1928 by Elmer Sas, the Brooklyn-based company's major products at the time were metal toys and toy instruments.

At the 1949 Toy Fair, Norman debuted the game that would forever etch Tudor's name into the world of toys - Electric Football.

The game would become Tudor's flagship toy. And in a scenario Norman could never imagine in 1949, his new invention would eventually go on to be the top money earning item for the NFL.

114

TOY NEWS AND NEW TOYS



Joe Tonole

TUDOR METAL PRODUCTS ANNOUNCES NEW OFFICERS

Following the retirement of Eugene Levy and Elmer Sas from the firm, Tudor Metal Products recently announced the election of new officers. Mr. Sas' son, Norman A. Sas, is now president and Joe Tonole, secretary and treasurer.

The combination of young Mr. Sas and

JULY, 1948—PLAYTHINGS

Joe Tonole should bring to the Tudor organization the valuable background of experience and ability. Mr. Sas, who will be in charge of production at the Tudor factory is a mechanical engineer and a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In addition to his technical and engineering education, a degree of A. & E. awarded to him by the Harvard School of Business Administration has given him a noteworthy background in the field of business management. He has had three years practical experience with the General Electric Company.

Joe Tonole should need no introduction to the buying fraternity. He has been actively engaged in toy merchandising for the past 25 years, during which period he has covered the country as representative for several well known toy lines. Joe has been sales manager for Tudor since 1944 and will, of course, continue to be in charge of sales for the firm in the future.

Tudor Metal Products operate a large modern factory in Brooklyn, which is fully equipped with the latest and most modern machinery for the manufacture of metal toys. Their current line includes a



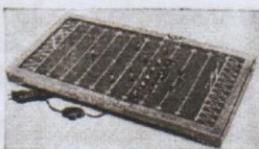
Norman A. Sas

complete variety of toy pianos, xylophones, toy basjos, and last but not least, the well-known Tudor Budget Bunk. Joe states that their newly introduced toy piano to retail at the interesting price of \$1.50, is losing no time in attracting widespread attention. The complete Tudor line is on permanent display in Room 551 of the Fifth Ave. Building.

1949 TUDOR TRU-ACTION No. 500



SEPTEMBER, 1949—PLAYTHINGS



Listed by Underwriters' Laboratories.

TUDOR'S ELECTRIC FOOTBALL GAME

Joe Tonole, sales manager of Tudor Metal Products Corporation, 200 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, reports that stores who have already displayed their new Tudor Electric Football Game are sending in re-orders. In Mr. Tonole's opinion, this is evidence of the encouraging consumer acceptance that is being accorded the initial showing of their new game to the public.

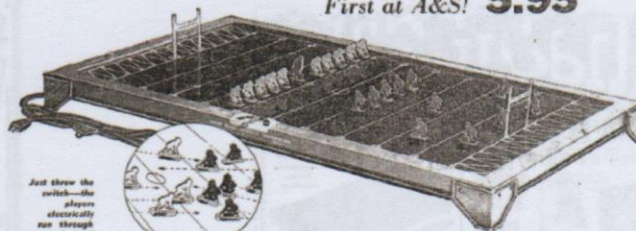
This new Tudor game is designed to enable game fans to play a football game right in their own living room. The players actually move up and down the field and line plays can be run from any formation. The game operates under 110 volts-AC and Mr. Tonole says that it is listed by the Underwriters' Laboratories.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1949. L + 4

Amazingly realistic!

'MEN' ACTUALLY MOVE IN NEW ELECTRIC FOOTBALL GAME!

First at A&S! **5.95**



Actual football thrills for armchair strategists! Amazing Tudor Tru-Action football is played with 22 plastic men, plus a kicker-and-punter. You set up your offense, your opponent sets his defense. Now push the switch—players run, "tackle" and block! Football rules apply. It's a whole of a game for fun from eight to eighty! (AC only. Listed by UL Laboratories, Inc.)

MAIL AND PHONE ORDERS FILLIP within 1 week of receipt of order. Return order date: say one and 25c shipping charge. For each additional unit add only 50c. CALL MAIN 3-6886.

Tudor completely sold out their Electric Football line in 1949. And under Norman's guidance, Tudor Electric Football became an under-the-tree staple during the 1950s, being featured in numerous "Best Toy" magazine and newspaper articles.

By the late 1950s, Tudor Electric Football was advertised as an "Educator Approved Prestige Toy," and popular enough to be offered as a "Lay-Away" item by toy retailers throughout the country.

AGAIN TUDOR ELECTRIC FOOTBALL GAMES!
At Christmas the demand for these true-to-life football games far exceeded our supplies. Now we have received a new shipment. Still the same price. \$5.98

Tudor TRU-ACTION ELECTRIC GAMES

The sensation of 1949!

No. 500
TRU-ACTION ELECTRIC FOOTBALL

We could not supply the demand!

The ball is actually kicked and passed — the players run until tackled — plays can be run from any formation — line plays — end runs — forward passes — field goals — real TRU-ACTION Football right on the living room table!



1950 Toy Fair

TRU-ACTION ELECTRIC GAMES

Wednesday, November 18, 1950
BATTLESOME BONES! JAWBROKERS!
LAY-IT-AWAY NOW!
New Electric Football Game



AUTO-ELECTRIC STORE
1000 N. 1st St.
Minneapolis, Minn.

THE WASHINGTON POST and TIMES HERALD
25
Friday, August 5, 1952

A Preview for Santa

Toys Are 'Real McCoy'

By Joan Cook
A week before the arrival of Yuletide, the children's world is in a state of excitement. The children's world is a world of wonder and excitement. The children's world is a world of wonder and excitement.

the wish of an epidemic. What is the wish of an epidemic? The wish of an epidemic is to have a child who is a "Real McCoy".

track handover is prepared for the children's world. The track handover is prepared for the children's world.



FRIDAY LITTLE HOFFERER is this young lady, whose toy shopping habits are as "hot" as the weather. The walking doll is one of the many new trends in toys for kids this year.



WALK THAT LINE shows the young lady on the left, who is playing with the game. The game is a "Real McCoy" and is a "Lay-Away" item.

For their Merriest Christmas!

W. B. GREENE CO. is Offering Over—
2000 TOYS FOR SANTA'S SELECTION!
\$1.00 Down Holds Any Purchase On LAY-AWAY!
No Payments Necessary Until Next January!
Big Savings All Over Our Store During Our 20th ANNIVERSARY SELL-A-BRATION!



Holiday Sales

TOYLAND IS OPEN! LAY-AWAY NOW!



Tudor TRU-ACTION ELECTRIC GAMES 1953

No. 500 TRU-ACTION ELECTRIC FOOTBALL

RUN PLAYS FROM ANY FORMATION



The Most Realistic FOOTBALL GAME ever created!

The ball is actually kicked and passed — the players run until tackled — plays can be run from any formation — line plays — end runs — forward passes — field goals — real TRU-ACTION Football right on the living room table!

PLAYERS ACTUALLY BLOCK and TACKLE

BALL CAN BE KICKED or PASSED

ACTION GAMES

FOOTBALL GAME \$6.95

RUN PLAYS FROM ANY FORMATION



PLAYERS ACTUALLY BLOCK and TACKLE

BALL CAN BE KICKED or PASSED

ELECTRIC BASEBALL \$6.95

A Baseball Game You Can Really Enjoy

ELECTRIC FOOTBALL GAME \$6.95

The ball is actually kicked and passed — the players run until tackled — plays can be run from any formation — line plays — end runs — forward passes — field goals — real TRU-ACTION Football right on the living room table!

ELECTRIC HORSE RACE \$6.95

The Most Realistic Horse Race Game Ever Made

IDEAL FOR THE GAME ROOM

BARDEEN'S

242 EAST GENESEE STREET

TOYLAND

HEY SANTA'S HEADQUARTER

Open Friday and Saturday 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.



Build a Model House or Town with Plastic "Block City"

2.95

15

Electric Football Game — A Thrill for the Little Family

6.95

All kinds of New Games for Families and Children

THE STORE WITH THE CUSTOMER'S POINT OF VIEW

In the 1960s, the true "Golden Age" of the toy industry, Tudor Electric Football became a fixture in the Christmas catalogs of major retailers like Montgomery Ward.

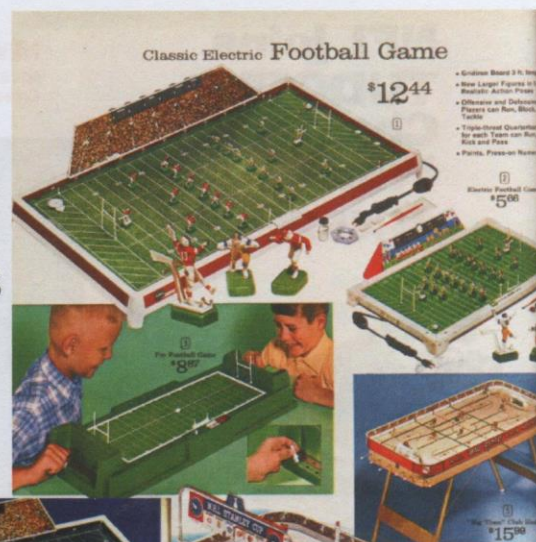
And not only was Electric Football a Christmas catalog staple, it was usually featured as the main item on a beautifully designed full-color page of sports games.

(Color pages were expensive to print at the time - retailers were picky about which items warranted color.)

Norman expanded Tudor's line of games to other sports (baseball, hockey, racing, and even track and field). Often there were multiple Tudor games offered on a single full-color page. The 1965 First Distributors Co. Christmas catalog included an entire color page of Tudor's games (below).

Montgomery Ward Christmas Catalogs

1963



Deluxe Electric FOOTBALL GAME

- Playing Board over 3 feet long
- 3-dimensional "snap action" players simulate real game action
- Offensive and defensive players run, block, and tackle
- Electric Power for each team
- Kick with foot, pass with arm
- Points and Press-on Numbers



1964



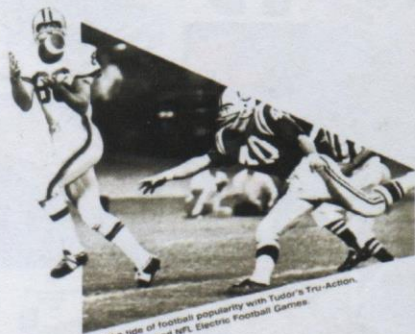
1966



1967

NFL joins TUDOR's Champions-- Watch 'em go!

tudor. NFL



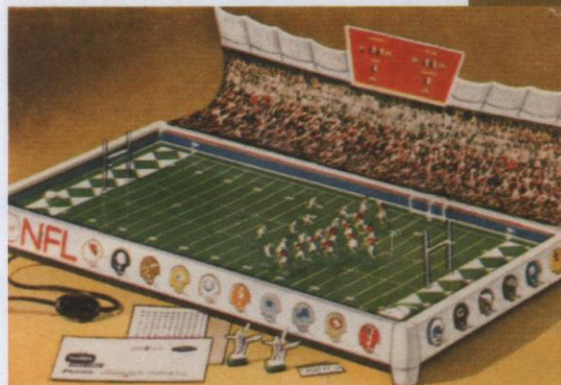
Ride the tide of football popularity with Tudor's Tru-Action, Sports Classic and NFL Electric Football Games.

NEW NFL TEAMS IN OFFICIAL UNIFORMS!

All 16 NFL Teams will be available.

Consumer may order favorite teams in both light and dark jerseys.

tudor. NFL



NFL ELECTRIC FOOTBALL

32x18-inch vibrating gridiron.

Game includes all key plays of
NFL teams, two 3-D teams.

\$9.99

Now you can put your Monday morning quarterbacking into practice, manage two NFL teams in official, numbered uniforms. Ends, tackles, guards, offensive and defensive backs are posed in 3-D, plus 2 quarterbacks that kick, pass, and run. All steel game board has automatic timer, grandstand with scoreboard, yard and down markers, 6 felt footballs. UL listed, 110-120-v., 60-c., AC.

79 N 6551L—Shipping weight 8 pounds. ...\$9.99

Outstanding Toy Buys at Sears Low Prices

Sears

Skill Games Provide Family Fun for Years—Sears Has Them

Pro Electric Football or Automatic Pinball Game

Your Choice

9.97 Each

Exercise a cross back, screen pass, and around end runner. With plays and instructions. 115V. UL listed. Reg. Price \$12.99.

You need your skill to win this challenge game. With moving trigger ball shooter. Score appears on backboard. Reg. price \$11.99.

Arnold Palmer 20-Piece Golf Sets

Sears Price 6.99

All the excitement of a pro golf world! 10 in. overall. Metal fairway, felt green.

Tight Squeeze Frantic Antic Game

Sears Price 4.99

Tight Squeeze includes 2 complete for games in giant connecting balls. Opponent drives 1 different without for players to toggle through.

Sears uses Tudor's NFL game in its Christmas advertising.



DKM **Sears** 461

MONTGOMERY WARD

Christmas Catalog

Wards NFL electric football

WITH 3-FT. GRANDSTAND
... SCOREBOARD

12.88

You're part of a vast crowd cheering, cheering football. Set up your favorite NFL team. Triple threat quarterbacks only, pass, kick, ... offensive, defensive players, kick, tackle ... 24 players and all the game action.

Automatic timer, speed control. Stop-action down and full marker with clock. Four interlocking goal posts in official NFL style. Team uniforms are hand-painted replicas of Cleveland Browns and New York Giants. Grandstand folds easily for storage. Game also playable in 11-in. ball.

48 MT 1485 A—9/11, 11 in. 12 in. 12.88

See pg. 340 for shipping information.

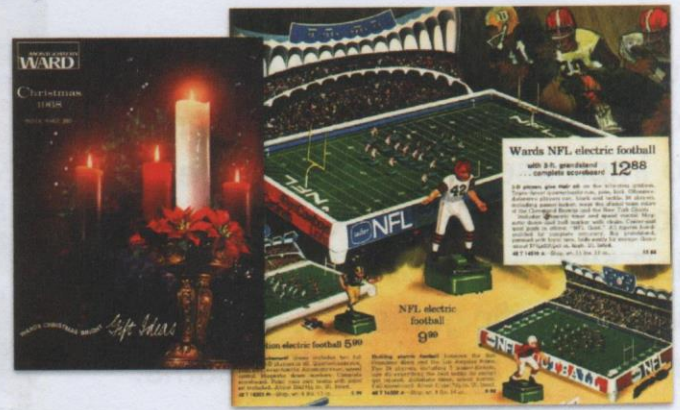
In a move that almost 60 years on can only be described as visionary, Norman signed a licensing agreement with the NFL in 1967. Tudor then began selling officially licensed NFL Electric Football games - with miniature painted NFL teams - through Sears and Montgomery Ward. Tudor even made individual NFL teams available by mail. (It was a boy's rite of passage to send a \$1.50 to 176 Johnson Street in Brooklyn.)

The games and teams were an immediate hit, with Tudor becoming one of NFL Properties most important licensees.

Tudor then designed a special Super Bowl model for Sears in 1969, recreating in miniature the game where Joe Namath and the upstart AFL Jets beat the Baltimore Colts. It would be one of the most important pro football games ever played, as the AFL finally achieved parity with the NFL.

And Tudor recreated the event in a toy, right down to the detailed markings that were on the actual field in Miami. Sears sold out of its new Super Bowl model long before Christmas morning.

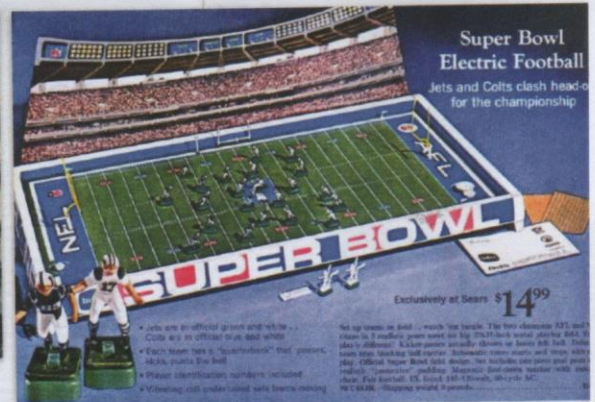
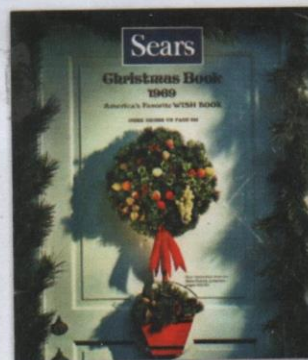
The game was such a success that it earned Tudor its first Sears Symbol of Excellence Award. This was a much coveted honor that meant Sears viewed Tudor as a major toy manufacturer, as vital to Sears as Mattel, Hasbro, and Ideal.



Tudor was well represented in the Ward Christmas catalog (above) and in Sears' Christmas advertising (left).



Below: Christmas morning 1968 - Tudor and Santa both delivered plenty of smiles.



Tudor's Electric Football success continued into the 1970s. Ward was so impressed by Tudor's Super Bowl model that it asked for its own "special" NFL game. So Tudor created a Ward-specific game with an oversized grandstand and three NFL teams.

Tudor went on to win **four** consecutive Excellence Awards from Sears. NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle was an attendee when Tudor and Norman received these awards, because at the time, **Tudor NFL Electric Football was NFL Properties' top money making item.** (NFL Properties revealed this amazing fact in a 1971 *Sports Illustrated* article - see below.)

Super Bowl Electric Football
Vikings and Chiefs battle for the professional championship.
\$15.99

NFL Electric Football
Wards exclusive... thoroughly lab tested.
\$14.99

Electric Baseball
NFL electric baseball has players that hit and run the bases.
\$6.97

Skittle pool
\$11.00

Match Point Tennis
\$4.97

NFL Electric Football with 22-inch grandstand
\$8.97

Electric Baseball
\$3.97

Skittle pool
\$11.00

Match Point Tennis
\$4.97

TOY & HOBBY WORLD, December, 1971 11

Tudor Wins 2nd Sears 'Symbol of Excellence'

NEW YORK — Tudor Metal Products Corp. received its second consecutive "Symbol of Excellence" Award from Sears, Roebuck & Co. recently when John Waddle, Sears national merchandise manager, made the presentation to Norman A. Sas, Tudor's president, at a 21 Club luncheon. Pete Rozelle, Commissioner of the National Football League, was a special guest at the luncheon.

The award, one of a select few presented by Sears' Toy and Game Division in 1971, was won by Tudor for the quality and excellence of supply of its Electric Super Bowl game and NFL Electric Football game.

Saul Waring and Joe LaRosa, principals of Tudor's ad agency; Bob Carey, president of NFL Properties, Inc., and several Tudor executives including Gregory Kane, national sales manager.

Tudor, the largest NFL licensed toy and game producer, entered the action sports game field in 1948 after making musical toys and games since its founding in 1929.

The company's products include Tudor Bowl (also sold in England), Pro Tennis, Major League Electric Baseball, NBA Hockey, All Star Basketball, Pro Hockey, NHLPA All Star Hockey, and the recently introduced football game series called NFL Strategy geared for the sophisticated football enthusiast.

Brooklyn-based, Tudor maintains offices and showrooms at 200 Fifth Ave., New York City. Its products are sold direct to major chains, discount stores, jobbers and sporting goods dealers.



Covered Sears "Symbol of Excellence" was garnered by Tudor Metal Products Corp. for the second successive year for quality and excellence of supply of its Electric Super Bowl and NFL Electric Football games. On hand for award presentation were (l-r) Clyde Peterson, Sears toy buyer; Pete Rozelle, National Football League commissioner; John Waddle, Sears national merchandise manager and Norman Sas, Tudor president.



Norman Sas (center) with NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle in 1973, accepting Tudor's Sears Award of Excellence.

TRAVEL
SHOPWALK
NFL Properties can help you out with an autograph session but not a new teepee.

The good life at Sea Island.
Happy active days and evenings. You even get 27 minutes of rest. Sea Island is a beautiful resort on 12 miles of beach. Free ride to the beach. Free ride to the beach. Free ride to the beach.

SPORT always a great reason to go places

SPORT always a great reason to go places

1974 Christmas Catalogs

This vaulted position within the NFL was something no other toy maker - of any size - had ever achieved.

Tudor completely dominated the sports action game market in the mid-1970s, earning full-feature Electric Football pages in Sears, Ward, and JC Penney. By 1976, after an oil crisis and an economic recession, Tudor not only survived, but now had the sports action game category pretty much to itself. Longtime competitors Gotham and Munro were bankrupt, while Coleco had shifted its focus to electronic game consoles (Telstar).

Thanks to Norman's steady hand, 1977 was a banner year for Tudor. They completely sold out their redesigned Super Bowl game, and won another Sears Excellence Award (No. 5). In early 1978, *Playthings* interviewed Norman about Tudor hitting its 50th year in the toy industry. An upbeat Norman finished the interview by saying that "electronic games are not for us."

Unfortunately, 1978 would be the year that electronic games, especially hand-held ones, would change the toy industry forever. By the end of the year, Mattel's Electronic Football game would beep and whistle its way to being biggest selling item in **toy history**. In what seemed the blink of an eye, Tudor Electric Football had become "old-fashioned."

You're the head coach with these Electric Football Games

• You select in sport great 3-team action Total Team Control Program that "tegs" 10 fast sweeps, shifts or up the middle.

• Single choice quarterback on each team (see rule, page 6 or 6A).

Only at Sears! SUPERBOWL

Stunning and vintage design
in a 21 1/2 x 17 1/2 inch playing field

\$14.94

Two NFL teams collide on a 21 1/2 x 17 1/2 inch playing field **\$12.99**

Two NFL teams collide on a 21 1/2 x 17 1/2 inch playing field **\$12.99**

Two NFL teams collide on a 21 1/2 x 17 1/2 inch playing field **\$12.99**

Sears

NFL Electric Football with Total Team Control

The new leader in the sports action game category. Features 10 fast sweeps, shifts or up the middle.

\$17.97

Ward

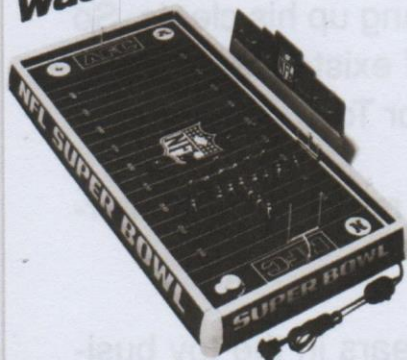
Deluxe Electric Football

17.99

Two NFL teams collide on a 21 1/2 x 17 1/2 inch playing field **\$12.99**

JC Penney

Our Super Bowl was Sold Out!!



For 1977 we produced more Super Bowls than ever before and we sold them all. With this as a background we expect our 50th Anniversary year to be a big winner. Please plan to see us at Toy Fair and get your orders in early.

TUDOR GAMES

The Company that turns a game into a sporting event

Playthings 1978

Tudor Games hitting 50 and looking ahead

The firm has been a leader in the action sport game category for many years; it is committed to remain in that forefront

When Elmer Sas opened his doors in 1928, the firm was basically an engineering consulting company. In the mid-1930s, Tudor began manufacturing its own products, including the first American harmonica, xylophones, toy pianos, and banks.

The strategy game business all the possible defense and offense moves that can be made on the playing field.

NFL Quarterback is the current, fastest football strategy game ever. It teaches kids the game. It's new, it's exciting, it's fun.

The game is the most up-to-date play and rules.

The sport of football was not only changed the direction of the firm, when it brought out Electric Football in 1938, it became exclusively an action sport game manufacturer.

The company has been the great winner of four consecutive Bears trophies of Excellence Awards.

In looking at the future, Sas concluded: "We're keeping our eyes open for what's happening in the market; however, electronic games are not for us."

On the topic of success as a business partner, he felt that "if it becomes popular to such, it will be one of the existing features that has been well known to Europe for many years."

one of our mainstays - will be around long after I'm gone. The main game in 20 years old.

Looking at the future, Sas concluded: "We're keeping our eyes open for what's happening in the market; however, electronic games are not for us."

On the topic of success as a business partner, he felt that "if it becomes popular to such, it will be one of the existing features that has been well known to Europe for many years."

one of our mainstays - will be around long after I'm gone. The main game in 20 years old.

On the positive side of things, Tudor was the only company left making Electric Football games. But by the end of 1979, Tudor was selling its own Electronic Football game to compete with Mattel - and about a dozen other hand-held Electronic Football games.

Sales of NFL Electric Football games declined as the 1980s began. It wasn't much of a secret as to why Electric Football was struggling. The toy world had been entirely overtaken by electronic games, with the very expensive Atari 2600 and Mattel Intellivision models being surprising best-sellers.

Norman knew that Tudor had to move in a different direction. In 1983, with the help of NFL Properties Mike Gaines, Tudor began selling a line of soft-bodied NFL mascots called Huddles. The Huddles became a hit, and were often featured in Christmas catalogs - more prominently than Electric Football. Incredibly, by 1985, Tudor again sat at the top of the NFL Properties earnings list, thanks to the Huddles.

The success of the Huddles, which was helped by the Cabbage Patch doll craze, kept Tudor going in the mid-1980s. Yet Norman began to feel that the time had come to hang up his cleats. So in 1988, Tudor's 60th year of existence, Norman sold the company to Superior Toys of Chicago.

"It was time to go," Norman recalled in an interview. "Nothing lasts forever."

It could be argued that 40 years in the toy business comes pretty close.



1984 Ward

Logos mean big bucks for NFL

(Continued from Page C-6)

inception 13 years ago under Commissioner Pete Rozelle.

While NFL Properties remains the lone institution of its kind in professional sports, other leagues now have ventures along the lines of NFL Properties, NFL Properties, however, remains No. 1, and the role model for all.

And, while quality control remains possibly its most important aspect, the goal has been re-stated slightly for a more all-encompassing theme. "Our No. 1 objective," says Rusty Martin, NFL's director of club operations, "is to promote and enhance the NFL

are already licensed."

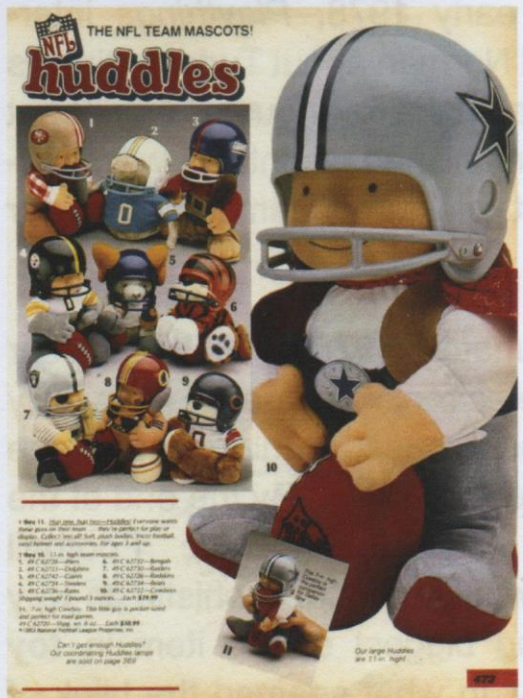
The hottest current item is a line of Huddles, the brainchild of NFL's Mike Gaines. Huddles are described as "whimsical team mascot characters that add spirit and entertainment to NFL games." They appeal mainly to children and have such names as Freddie Falcon, Ramsey Ram and Rip Raider.

They may be corny. But they are also profitable. Not only can you see these characters racing up and down the sidelines on Sundays, but now you can buy Huddle dolls for your children and dress them in Huddle apparel.

formation. Included in the packet is a letter from the team's president, a decal, league schedule, a helmet map that shows all NFL franchises and a montage of top players on the team.

Along that line, NFL also has developed the NFL SuperPro Club. It costs \$7 to join and a member gets a membership certificate signed by Rozelle, a calendar, posterbox and other items.

The success of NFL Properties led Rozelle's idea to create NFL Properties. If NFL was making millions it never had occurred on, even as it promoted itself in such positive manner that one out of every 10



1985 Sears



December 28, 1977

Mr. Norman A. Sas, President
Tudor Games, Inc.
176 Johnson Street
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201

Dear Norm:

Following is a summary of your official service with TMA:

Member of the board of directors:

Two terms; 1956 thru 1958 and 1962 thru 1964

Vice-President:

1964

Treasurer:

1958

Assistant Treasurer:

1957 and 1963

Chairman, Safety Standards Committee:

1956

Chairman, Membership Committee:

1957

Chairman, Annual & Summer Meeting Committee:

1958

Chairman, Tariff & Trade Relations Committee:

1962 thru 1964

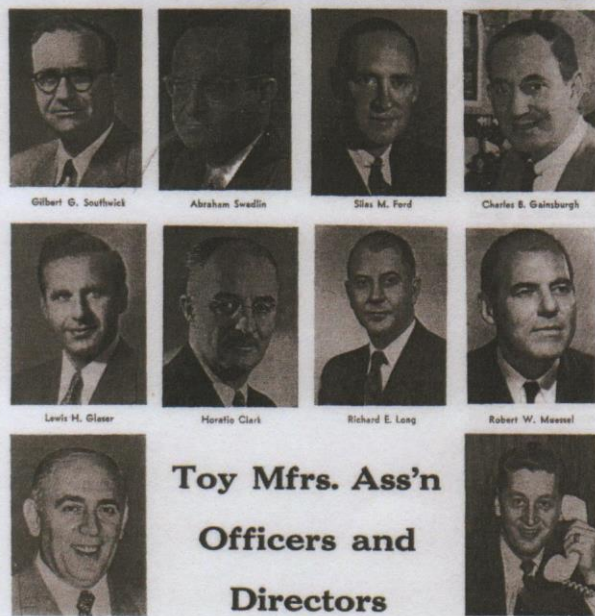
Please let me know if you require any other information.

Sincerely,

Walter W. Armatys
Walter W. Armatys
Executive Director

WHA:fj

200 FIFTH AVENUE/NEW YORK, N.Y. 10010/PHONE (212) 675-1141



Gilbert G. Southwick

Abraham Swedlin

Silas M. Ford

Charles B. Gainsburgh

Lewis H. Glaser

Horatio Clark

Richard E. Long

Robert W. Muesel

Toy Mfrs. Ass'n Officers and Directors

E. M. Pressner

Norman A. Sas

PRESIDENT

Gilbert G. Southwick, Childhood Interests, Inc.

Secretary

Horatio D. Clark

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Term Expires 1956

Vice-Presidents
Abraham Swedlin, Gund Manufacturing Company
Silas M. Ford, Sifo Company

Silas M. Ford, Sifo Company
Lewis H. Glaser, Revell, Inc.

James M. Prentice, The Electric Game Company, Inc.
Abraham Swedlin, Gund Manufacturing Company

Term Expires 1957

Treasurer
Charles B. Gainsburgh, Esquire Novelty Company

Herman G. Fisher, Fisher-Price Toys, Inc.

Assistant Treasurer

Lewis H. Glaser, Revell, Inc.

Charles B. Gainsburgh, Esquire Novelty Company
Alfred C. Gilbert, Jr., The A. C. Gilbert Company
Howard W. Winzeler, The Ohio Art Company

Term Expires 1958

Richard E. Long, Eagle Rubber Company

Robert W. Muesel, South Bend Toy Mfg. Company

E. M. Pressner, Banner Plastics Corporation

Norman A. Sas, Tudor Metal Products Corporation.

Toy Mfrs. of U. S. A., Inc.

Officers and Directors

PRESIDENT

L. John Swedlin, Gund Mfg. Company

Vice-Presidents

Norman A. Sas, Tudor Metal Products Corp.
Edwin W. Nelson, Jr., Vogue Dolls, Incorporated

Treasurer

Jerome M. Fryer, Gabriel Industries, Inc.

Assistant Treasurer

James R. Nesbit, Nesbit Industries, Inc.

Executive Secretary

Stuart Hoover

Term Expires 1964

Cass S. Hough, Daisy Manufacturing Company
James R. Nesbit, Nesbit Industries, Inc.
John W. McRoskey, Wen-Mac Corp.
Norman A. Sas, Tudor Metal Products Corp.
Joseph L. Steiner, Kenner Products Co.

Term Expires 1965

Joseph S. McVicker, Rainbow Crafts, Inc.
Merrill L. Hassenfeld, Hassenfeld Brothers, Inc.
Jerome M. Fryer, Gabriel Industries, Inc.
Russell L. Wenkstern, Tonka Toys, Inc.
Edwin W. Nelson, Jr., Vogue Dolls, Inc.

Term Expires 1966

Robert Gottlieb, Argo Industries Corp.
Joseph B. Heller, Skil Craft Playthings, Inc.
Mrs. Min Horowitz, Universal Manufacturing Co., Inc.
Clifford W. Jacobs, Mattel, Inc.
Robert L. Long, Fairchild Variety Products, Inc.



L. John Swedlin



Norman A. Sas



Edwin W. Nelson, Jr.



Jerome M. Fryer

JANUARY, 1964—PLAYTHINGS

55

With Tributes from Ron Howard, Katie Couric, Jim Lovell, Big Bird and Others



LIFE Farewell

REMEMBERING THE FRIENDS WE LOST IN 2012



Steve Van Buren

A native of Honduras who had been orphaned as a child and raised by relatives in New Orleans, Van Buren (seen above in 1947) was noticed by coaches at Louisiana State University and went on to become one of the best running backs in history. His career statistics with the NFL's Philadelphia Eagles tell some of the tale, but two particular games tell more. In 1948 the Eagles were to play the Chicago Cardinals for the NFL championship when a raging blizzard swept in. Van Buren thought the game would be canceled, but then decided to go just in case. After rides on a trolley, a bus and a subway, followed by a seven-block trudge through knee-deep snow, he arrived at Shibe Park, where he scored the day's only touchdown and led the Eagles to their first title. A year later, in a driving rain in L.A. Memorial Coliseum, he ran for 196 yards as the Eagles beat the Rams for a second crown. Van Buren was 51 when he died in Pennsylvania.



Norman Sas

From left, we see here, in 1971, Norman Anders Sas, NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle and John Waddle of Sears. The object of their affection is a Super-up version of Electric Football, the tabletop game invented by M.I.T. grad Sas back in 1948 that had soared in popularity after Sas signed a partnership deal with NFL Properties in 1967. Sas, impressed by a vibrating horse-racing toy he had seen, figured shakin' and quakin' football players would be even more exciting: Line up your players, put the ball in the QB's hand, flip a switch and watch as the energized metal field caused mayhem—players skittering every which way. For about a decade, Electric Football was a winner, "then the [video] games came out," Sas lamented to *The Washington Post* in 1999, "and that was the beginning of the end." Norman Sas was 87 when he died in June in Florida.

The New York Times - July 12, 2012



Norman Sas, far right, in 1971 with electric football fans, including Pete Rozelle, second from left.

Norman Sas, 87, Inventor of Electric Football

By WILLIAM YARDLEY

Norman Sas, a toy maker who transformed a vibrating sheet of metal into a thrilling and sometimes exasperating tabletop game called electric football, winning the devotion of boys from the late 1940s until stunted on-field action arrived on video screens in the 1980s, died on June 28 at his home in Vero Beach, Fla. He was 87.

His daughter Wendy Jones confirmed his death.

In the 1930s, an employee at a New York metal products company run by Mr. Sas's father developed a device that propelled figures across a metal surface using vibrations created by a small motor. The company, Tudor Metal Products, first used the technology for car and horse racing games. But when Norman Sas bought the company with a partner shortly after World War II, he saw potential in applying the technology to football, which had become increasingly popular and was beginning to be televised in the New York region.

"He was looking for something to pick the company up because it was struggling," said Earl Shores, a writer who interviewed Mr. Sas several times for a book he and a colleague, Roddy Garcia, are writing about electric football, titled "The Unforgettable Buzz."

Mr. Shores said Mr. Sas may have also been drawn to football because of one of the frustrations of the technology: the vibrations tended to steer figures unpredictably, often into clumps that resembled a pileup at the end of a football play. The unpredictability—and the effort to mitigate it—came to define electric football

as much as its tiny felt footballs, which were easily lost between sofa cushions.

"I'm sure there were many of the little guys thrown against the wall," Irene Sas, Mr. Sas's wife, said in an interview on Tuesday. "The little figures had their own lives. Getting them so they'd run faster or turn, it was all the techniques of the player. It wasn't just something you turned on and it vibrated. It was something you did with your little men."

Early versions of the game included figures that bore little resemblance to real players. But in the 1960s, Mr. Sas began working with an industrial designer, Lee

A game that frustrated, but thrilled, for decades.

Payne, who had played a year of college football at the University of Georgia. Mr. Payne helped him improve the aesthetics of the game, making the figures more lifelike, with specific team colors; giving the players some degree of directional control and adding a cardboard representation of a stadium, which was mounted to the side of the frame.

The National Football League began licensing the product in 1967, and it became a fixture in the toy section in the Sears catalog.

The company, which Mr. Sas renamed Tudor Games, thrived into the 1980s, until new handheld games, and later video and computer games, made it seem quaint to a new generation of children.

"Norman predicted that," Mrs. Sas said. "He said: 'Listen, this is it now. We're making a killing on it, and it's going to end as soon as the electronic versions come

acquired this year by Ballpark Classics, a Seattle company, which makes tabletop baseball games licensed by Major League Baseball; it recently renamed itself Tudor Games.

Norman Anders Sas was born in Manhattan on March 29, 1925. He attended the Bronx High School of Science and earned a degree in mechanical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as part of a Navy program. He later became a commissioned officer and served full time in the Navy before returning to M.I.T. and earning a second bachelor's degree, in business administration. He became president of Tudor Metal Products in 1948. For more than 30 years he lived in Alpine, N.J., where he served on the borough council.

In addition to his wife and his daughter Ms. Jones, he is survived by another daughter, Martha O'Connor, and seven grandchildren. A son, Wayne, died in 1984, and an infant son died shortly after birth.

Next month Mr. Sas will be inducted into the Miniature Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame, said Lynn Schmidt, a board member of the hobbyist group. Mr. Schmidt (who is familiar to many football fans as Weir Wolf for leading cheers in the stands at Kansas City Chiefs games) said the association, based in Parkville, Mo., has about 300 core members who are devoted to playing electric football. Many now make their own vibrating fields and customized figures, which they say move more reliably than the old ones.

"You were so thrilled that the men moved, but you were so aggravated that the guy would be running down the field toward the end zone and suddenly run out of bounds," said Mr. Schmidt, 51, recalling the game he knew as a child. "That's a rule we haven't changed: if your man is running

ONLINE: ARCHIVES

Obituaries from the archives, including those of Thomas Edison, Edna St. Vincent Millay