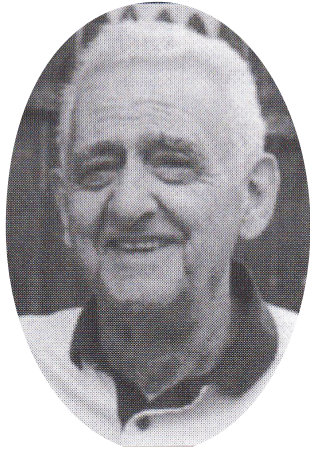


Vinny Santagate



When it came to protecting the quarterback or opening holes for running backs, not many football players back in the 1930s did it better than **Vinny Santagate**.

In short, Santagate was one of the best offensive lineman not only in Norwalk, but in Fairfield County and in the entire state.

Born in Spokane, WA in 1916, Santagate moved to Norwalk with his family when he was five years old. Growing up in the Springwood area of town, he attended St. Joseph's Parochial School, Benjamin Franklin Jr. High, and Norwalk High School.

It was while at NHS that Santagate earned his reputation as a standout lineman, playing guard on the football team from 1931-'33 for coaches Perry Bean and Mike Wilson. He impressed opposing coaches enough to be named to the All-

Fairfield County team and nominated for the All-State team.

Even after his high school career was over, however, Santagate continued to excel on the gridiron. He enjoyed three more successful seasons playing guard for the Laurel AC football team from 1934-'36. Then in 1937, Santagate played one season at guard for the newly formed Norwalk Pros football team.

When his playing career was over, Santagate still stayed close to the sport he loved and excelled in as a local youth league football official. He also coached a peewee football league team at Winnipauk School for one year, followed by two years as coach of the Top Hat football team in the City League. Football was not the only sport Santagate got involved in locally. An avid baseball fan, Santagate was an umpire in the Norwalk National Little League the year it started and continued for over 30 years until 1984. He was also a scorekeeper for the Sons of Italy senior baseball team.

Now retired, the 81-year-old Santagate was a letter carrier for 35 years with the Norwalk post office. He and his wife, the former Mary Toni, have two children and three grandchildren.



*We do not stop playing because we are old;
we grow old because we stop playing.*