

John Rooney

[John Rooney](#) was our first-ever Sports Director. We weren't the first place he worked, however, nor the last.

The roots of Learfield Sports go back to the first newscasts of the Missouri Tigers in January, 1975. The 7:05 a.m. feed to affiliates was an extended newscast that included weather, sports, and things that had happened that day in history.



In the first few years when the company broadcast Missouri Tiger football games, we followed each game with a 90-minute scoreboard show presided over by News Director Bob Priddy, former Jefferson City sports writer Jim Vieth --who was then with the state high school activities association-- and Jack Guthrie, from the Jefferson City News-Tribune. Bob handled the college scores. Jim reviewed high school football. Jack looked ahead to the NFL games on Sunday with special emphasis on the Chiefs and the football Cardinals.

In time, our income picture improved enough that we could begin offering stand-alone sportscasts. By then we had heard from a young man in Pittsburg, Kansas who had been one of our first affiliate correspondents when he worked at a station in Lexington, Missouri. Bob Priddy took John Rooney's application to Clyde Lear one day and told him, "When we start doing sports, this is the guy we should hire." The time finally came.



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(missing 12 min MP3)