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NEWS

FOR RELEASE AFTER 4 PM TUESDAY

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WINGS SIGN ROUGHNECK STAR EARLE

WICHITA, Kan. (Oct. 7, 1980) -- The Wichita Wings announced today the signing of Tulsa Roughneck star Steve Earle to a contract for the coming Major Indoor Soccer League season.

Earle, a 34-year-old forward, led the North American Soccer League in assists last winter in the NASL's indoor season. In a brilliant indoor season for the Roughnecks he scored 10 goals and had a league-leading 18 assists for a total of 38 points to rank as the fifth-highest scorer in the NASL's Western Division.

The 5-foot-9, 165-pound Earle is the 17th player signed by the Wings for the coming season and the second Tulsa player to come to the Wings this week. NASL All-Star Jorgan (YOUR-gan) Kristensen (KRIS-chen-sin) signed with the Wings Sunday.

TURNER ON STEVE EARLE...

Wichita Wings Coach Roy Turner has had an eye on Earle since he became head coach at Wichita over a year ago.

"I tried to sign Steve Earle last year," Turner noted in making the announcement of Earle's signing. "I once played against him indoors while I was still at Dallas (with the Tornado) and I was impressed by him then. He's an experienced professional. His indoor statistics last year speak for themselves."

Earle has helped Tulsa to the NASL playoffs the past three seasons straight. He joined the Roughnecks in July of 1978, coming from the NASL's Detroit Express, and scored three goals and had one assist in Tulsa's late-season drive for the playoffs.

MORE

MORE ON EARLE...

Earle was born in Feltham, England and signed with the Fulham Football Club of the English League at age 15. He scored over 100 goals in his career with Fulham, one of only six players in the club's history to do so.

His career ended at Fulham when he was purchased by Leicester (pronounced LESS-ter) City for a \$200,000 transfer fee. He went on to become Leicester City's leading scorer with 13 goals in his first season with the team.

Earle came to the United States in 1978 to play for Detroit. He has been most impressive indoors in the NASL but has played key roles for the Roughnecks outdoors as well.

Earle and wife Jacqueline have two children, Steven, age 11, and James, age 8. He will arrive in Wichita later this month for the Wings official training camp.

PLAYERS SIGNED BY THE WINGS

Steve Earle is the 17th player to sign with the Wichita Wings for the coming season. Wings Coach Roy Turner expects to sign as many as three more players and anticipates having his roster filled in the next two weeks.

Following are the 17 players now under contract with the Wichita Wings.

FORWARDS

Jimmy Ryan
Andy Chapman
Mike Custer
Mike Hobgood
Steve Earle

MIDFIELDERS

Kevin Kewley
Norman Piper
Don Tobin
Mike Powers
Jorgen Kristensen

DEFENDERS

George Ley
Joe Howarth
Helmut Dudek
Keith Gehling
Hank Liotart

GOALKEEPERS

Keith Van Eron
Brad Higgs

WINGTIPS...

Of the 17 players signed by the Wings, 10 are already in Wichita and three more are expected this week. In Wichita are Ryan, Custer, Hobgood, Kewley, Piper, Tobin, Ley, Howarth, Liotart and Van Eron. Dudek and Higgs are due in by Wednesday. Chapman is expected by this weekend. Powers and Gehling, both from the St. Louis area, have been in Wichita already but are currently visiting their families. Earle is in Tulsa; Kristensen is in Denmark.

The Wings will have their shot-on-goal board in operation this weekend at the Oktoberfest celebration at Lawrence-Dumont Stadium. The Wings are also scheduled to put on a demonstration Saturday afternoon at the event.

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