

# Ex-Giant at Knights for Jets game, kids' competition

**BY FRAIDY REISS**

STAFF WRITER

**JACKSON** — There's no question which team Keith Elias will be rooting for Sunday, when the Jets take on the Giants.

The former Giants running back will watch the game here in town, as a special guest at the Knights of Columbus' second annual Punt, Pass & Kick Competition and Tailgate Party. However, his plans involve more than cheering for his former team.

"I will watch as much of the game as possible, but the kids are my priority that day," said Elias, 35, of Lacey.

Sunday's event will give children the chance to show Elias their skills in punting, passing and kicking competitions. Prizes will be awarded to boys and girls in three age groups: 5 to 7, 8 to 10, and 11 to 13.

The event also will give children a chance to meet and talk to Elias, who now works as a motivational speaker.

"I challenge kids of all ages to make a choice to be the voice in their generation and not the echo," he said.

And, of course, the event will allow children and their parents to sit with Elias and watch the Jets play the Giants, said Knights of Columbus Council 6201 member Peter Grandich.

"This is a big rivalry of the Jets playing the Giants, so the kids and their dads will be rooting for their particular team," he said.

Grandich owns Trinity Financial, Sports and Entertainment Management Company, which is sponsoring the event.

Through Trinity, he works with many Giants players, but he grew up a "diehard Jets fan," he said. So which team will he be cheering for?

"I'm rooting for a tie," Grandich said. "That's the politically correct

way I'm going."

The party and competition will raise money for various local charities, said Bill Mitchell, of the council. But it is not only a fundraiser, he said.

"It's more to get the kids involved," Mitchell said. "They'll get to speak to an ex-NFL player — or listen to him, at least — and it will get them out on a nice day, hopefully."

Mitchell said he does not care what happens to the Jets or the Giants.

"I gotta get up and go to work the next day no matter who wins," he said.

Knights of Columbus Council 6201, based in Jackson, has about 600 members, mostly from Jackson and Howell. It is one of more than 13,000 councils around the world — with a combined 1.7 million members — that form the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic fraternal benefit society that also offers life

insurance, annuity and long-term care programs, according to its Web site.

**ON THE WEB:** Visit our Web site, [www.app.com/reporters](http://www.app.com/reporters), and click on this story in the Jackson-Howell Reporter for a link to: Knights of Columbus Council 6201.

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