



# Solitaire Illustrated



Official Magazine of the "Solitaire Leagues of the MFCA

Volume 1 Issue 4

April 14, 2013

## Spring Football 2013

**College Football  
"Spring Practice"  
and the  
"Spring Game"**



**A NEW SPRING  
FOOTBALL  
LEAGUE**



**Professional  
Spring Football  
Leagues**



**Solitaire Coaches**



**Points Challenge  
Update**



**From the Locker Room**

**The Offensive Coordinator**

**The Defensive Coordinator**

**Special Teams**



# Solitaire Illustrated



Official Magazine of the "Solitaire Leagues of the MFCA"

## From the desk of the Editor

Chris LeMay



### **Spring Football is a "rite of Spring" on many college campuses across the United States.**

Spring Football Practice for the 125 FBS college football teams begins as early as mid-February and will end with their annual "Spring Scrimmage Games" in April. "Blue and White", "Red and White", "Green and White", "Purple and White", "Blue and Gold", "Red and Blue", "just about every color combination you can think of", these are just a few of the team color games that will officially end the spring practice schedules.

In Tennessee it's the "Orange and White" of the University of Tennessee and the "Black and Gold" of Vanderbilt. These games often highlight the "stars" of the past season, the "star prospects" of the coming season and the new coaches that have been hired to replace the old.

At the University of Tennessee, Butch Jones takes over for fired coach Derrick Dooley. Jones is the former coach of Central Michigan and Cincinnati. Vanderbilt, under James Franklin, has just completed what experts regard as the best recruiting class in the school's history and the finest recruiting effort of any coaching staff in the nation.

I had the opportunity to attend Vanderbilt's "Black and Gold" game last April and plan to do so again this year.

Professional football in the Spring usually revolves around the scouting combines, player drafts, free agency, spring work outs and new coaching staffs.

There have also been several attempts at Spring Leagues in the ranks of professional football. Remember the SFL, RFL, or PSFL? Perhaps the most successful of past spring professional football leagues has been the USFL which played from 1983 to 1986 and produced NFL stars Steve Young, Jim Kelly, Reggie White, Marcus Dupree, and Anthony Carter. Three successive Heisman winners – Herschel Walker, Mike Rozier and Doug Flutie – landed in the USFL.

And then there was the much hyped XFL, brainchild of WWE's Vince McMahon. They did manage to complete one season in 2001.

For the most diehard of fans, football does not end with the College Bowl Games or the Super Bowl which now takes us to the first weekend in February. Football lives on with the "Solitaire Leagues of the MFCA".

We have just reached the halfway point of the "Solitaire Coaches Points Challenge" and by the time this Issue of "Solitaire Illustrated" is published we will have had many more games played and more teams bowl eligible for the "Solitaire Coaches BOWL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES".

So bring on the "April showers and May flowers". **FOOTBALL AIN'T OVER !!!!**

# Solitaire Illustrated

Official Magazine of the



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# Table of Contents

Volume 1 Issue 1

November 22, 2012

Page 2	From the Desk of the Editor
Page 4	College "Spring Practice Rules" and the "Spring Scrimmage Game"
Page 6	Anchor Down!!!
Page 7	The Spring Leagues of Professional Football
Page 14	The SCBCS Bowl Game Picture
Page 18	MPFL and Solitaire Play
Page 19	4 Stop Nation
Page 20	From the Locker Room
Page 21	The Offensive Coordinator The Defensive Coordinator Special Teams

We would love to hear from you. If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, or concerns, please let us know.

You may contact any member of the SCPC Rules Committee or member of the MFCA Board of Directors through the MFCA's website contact page:

<http://miniaturefootball.org/about-the-mfca/contact-the-mfca/>

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# College Football “Spring Practice Rules” and the “Spring Scrimmage Game”

To promote fair play among hundreds of colleges and universities, the NCAA has developed a rule book governing all aspects of play during, before and after the football season. During the spring, all institutions have the right to practice a certain amount of times. To comply with the NCAA, all schools must follow the rules concerning the number of practices and the drills they are allowed to conduct.

## Spring Schedule



A college is allowed to hold 15 spring practices, including a spring game. Schools are also permitted to have separate days during which activities are

limited to required conditioning activities and/or watching film. These 15 practices must be completed within a period of 34 consecutive calendar days. Exceptions to consecutive days are university-sanctioned vacation and examination days, and days with inclement weather, restricting the possibility of practice. Only 12 spring practices may permit physical contact, none earlier than the third practice session. Tackling is allowed in eight of the twelve contact sessions. Up to three of the eight tackling sessions may be devoted to 11-on-11 scrimmages. The optional spring game counts as one of the three scrimmage days.



## Discretionary Time

Between Jan. 1 and the first date of preseason practice, a university conducts its offseason conditioning period. An institution designates eight weeks in this period as discretionary time for the

student-athlete. The eight weeks must be broken up into segments that contain seven consecutive calendar days. The discretionary time period must be placed on file in the school's athletic department before Jan.



1. Mandatory team conditioning, film review and weight training can also be completed outside of the student-athlete discretionary period. These activities are limited to eight hours

per week, with only two hours allowed for film review.

## The Spring Game

The spring game is held at the end of spring practice and is usually open to the public. The team plays an intrasquad scrimmage, and some schools invite alumni and selected students to participate. Depending on the school, the time limit and scoring system vary. The purposes of the game include acclimating new players to game speed and the playbook, familiarizing coaches with their players' skills and boosting the morale of football fans concerning the upcoming season.





# TENNESSEE Orange and White



# VANDERBILT Black and Gold





# ANCHOR DOWN!!!

## Vanderbilt's "Black and Gold" Spring Game 2013

On a recent beautiful Saturday spring afternoon in the South, I was able to attend the annual college football spring game of Vanderbilt University.

Vanderbilt University's Dudley Field, though not one of the premier stadiums of college football (smallest stadium in the SEC – seating capacity of 40,350), does present to the fan of SEC football an atmosphere of "team pride and spirit" that makes college football one of the best "sporting experiences" available.

Under head coach James Franklin, Commodore football has reached a level of expectation that nothing less than a bowl game bid is the measure of a successful season. I can remember when just a win over cross state and SEC rival Tennessee was a measure of success.

This year's game was attended by perhaps the biggest crowd ever to witness this game, an estimated 14,000, further evidence that Vanderbilt football has brought to Nashville the expectation of even greater competition and championship level play.

Vanderbilt's recruiting class of 2013 was considered by many to be one of the best in the nation and the play of freshman quarterback Johnny McCrary, a high school All-American from Decatur, Georgia, made the future look even brighter for the Black and Gold.

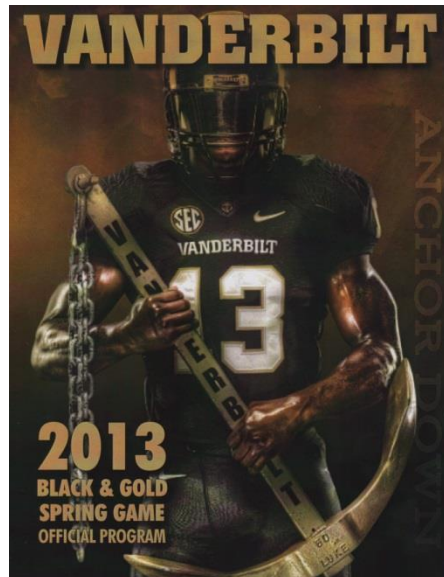
Vanderbilt has one of the leading receiver's in Jordan Matthews and running back Wesley Tate, younger brother of the Seattle Seahawks' Golden Tate and former Vanderbilt star, was impressive carrying the ball.

The Black team, composed mostly of first teamers, took a 14 – 0 lead into the fourth quarter, before the Gold team scored on two successive drives and went for two after the second touchdown to take a 15 – 14 lead. The Black team won the game with a 25 yard field goal on the last play of the game.

Coach Franklin was also honored as the 2013 Tennessean of the Year by the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame's premier honor is presented to an individual or organization that has made significant contributions to our state through sports or other methods, demonstrating outstanding character and leadership. Franklin is the first Vanderbilt coach to receive this award.

The Commodores, taking a 7 game winning streak into the 2013 season, will open the season at home before a nationally televised audience against the University of Mississippi "Ole Miss" Rebels on

August 29th.





# The Spring Leagues of Professional Football

In the history of professional football there have been several attempts to fill the void between the Super Bowl and the start of the following NFL season with Spring Football Leagues. There have been both very successful attempts and not so successful attempts.

In the world of miniature football and especially solitaire play, many coaches have recreated these teams and leagues.

This article is a review of some of these leagues and a brief history of these leagues for the solitaire coach who may want to incorporate some of the teams into their solitaire game play.



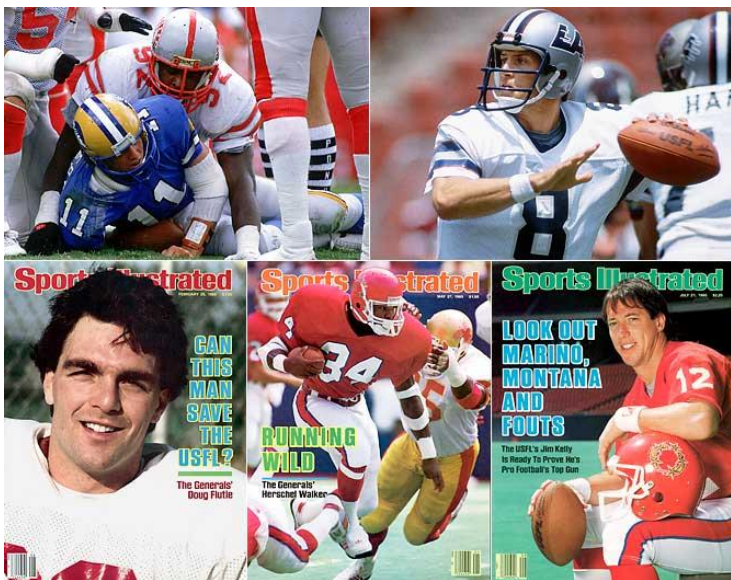
© 1982 USFL

Probably the most successful of the spring leagues and the only one to give the NFL any serious competition in attracting star players to their rosters.

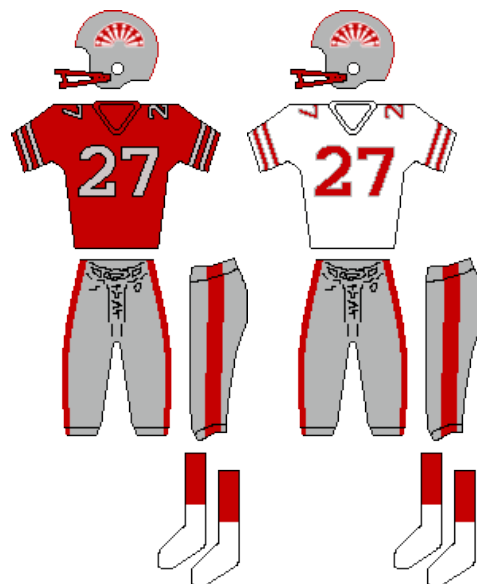
The USFL operated and completed 3 full seasons 1983 – 1985 and then folded in 1987 after winning an anti-trust lawsuit against the NFL and deciding to move to a fall schedule.

The USFL began the 1983 season with 12 teams divided into 3 – 4 team divisions. in 1984 it expanded to 18 teams divided into 2 conferences and 4 divisions (2 in each conference) In 1985 with only 14 teams they were placed in 2 conferences of 7 teams each.

The USFL was successful in signing 3 consecutive Heisman Trophy winners, Hershel Walker, Doug Flutie and Mike Rozier. Pro Football Hall of Famers Reggie White, Jim Kelly and Steve Young all began their professional careers with the USFL. Other notable Hall of Famers include coaches Marv Levy and George Allen.



Helmets of the USFL



The Memphis Showboats Uniforms

Visit the website [Remember the USFL](http://Remember the USFL) for all you need to know to recreate your own USFL Solitaire League.



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BALL!!



The XFL or X Football League existed for one season. X never officially stood for anything. Founded by Vince McMahon of the World Wrestling Federation, now World Wrestling Entertainment. Vince McMahon promised this would be 100% football. The XFL would be different bringing the viewer where it has never been. Cameras would be in the huddles and on the sidelines. Coaches would be hooked up with live microphone. Locker rooms would be wired for sound and video before and after the game. The networks bought into the hype. NBC, TNN, and UPN would show games live on Saturday and Sundays. Players would all be paid the same base salary and the winning team receiving more money.

Originally, six teams were announced and two teams would be announced at a later date. Los Angeles, Miami, Orlando, New York, San Francisco, and Washington were all awarded teams. The XFL, switched, Miami and Washington to Birmingham and Memphis. Chicago, and Las Vegas brought the team total to eight.

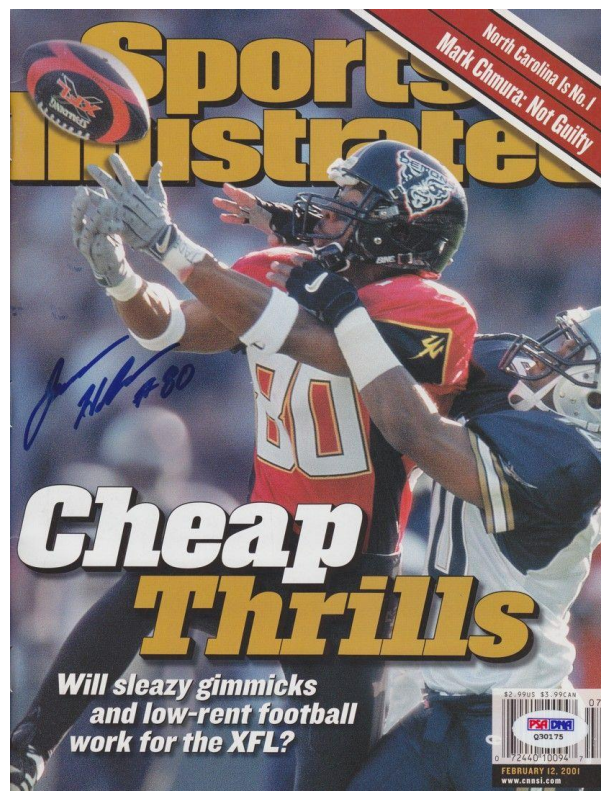
The XFL debuted on February 3, 2001 in Las Vegas and Orlando. The world was eager to find out about the XFL. Ratings were high but interest died quickly in the league. The biggest surprise anyone received was the nicknames on the back of players' jerseys. The name "He Hate Me" would be the end of most late night talk shows. The sloppy play, boring announcers, and wrestling kind of feeling would soon doom the league. Attendance and merchandise sales were extremely successful. In what could be the most exciting football game, Los Angeles would beat Chicago in college football style overtime.

The Orlando Rage had the best regular seasons record. Cruising to 8-2 record, and hosting a home playoff game. The San Francisco Demons would upset Orlando and the Los Angeles Xtreme defeated the Chicago Enforcers. Los Angeles would easily defeat San Francisco, in the Million Dollar Championship Game.



Tommy Maddox, Jose Cortez, John Avery, and Stepfret Williams were among the XFL's top players.

The 2001 season never made it past the water cooler. The announcement of NBC not being able to handle the XFL games and UPN not taking NBC's place put the nail in the coffin. On, May 10, 2001 the XFL officially ceased operations. However, the XFL will always be remembered for their unique brand of football.



#### THE MEMPHIS MANIAX UNIFORMS

For more about the XFL visit

[all-xfl.com](http://all-xfl.com)

**Solitaire Illustrated page 8**



## THE WORLD LEAGUE OF AMERICAN FOOTBALL



The World League of American Football (WLAF) was founded in 1990 with support from the National Football League to play professional American football in North America, Europe and later possibly Asia. This came after the NFL had played popular American Bowls in London's Wembley Stadium and elsewhere since 1986.

The WLAF played two seasons with 10 teams in the spring of 1991 and 1992, with the World Bowl as championship games. Rules unique to WLAF included assigning increasing point value to field goals based on distance, and a requirement that at least one player of non-US nationality participate in at least every other series of downs.

New ideas were successfully tested, like using the two-point conversion rule also on the professional field before adopting it in the NFL in 1994. Other minor tweaks in gameplay, such as a shorter kickoff tee, were also first used in the WLAF. Several technical innovations, such as helmet mounted cameras and one-way radios, enabling coaches to tell plays directly to quarterbacks, were also developed.

In 1995, games in Europe were resumed as the World League, in 1998 as NFL Europe and in 2007 as NFL Europa. The league ceased operations on 29 June 2007.



The original 1991 teams were the Birmingham Fire, San Antonio Riders, Sacramento Surge, New York/New Jersey Knights, Orlando Thunder, Raleigh-Durham Skyhawks in the United States, the Montreal Machine in Canada, and the Barcelona Dragons, Frankfurt Galaxy, and London Monarchs in Europe. The Ohio Glory replaced the Raleigh-Durham team in 1992.

### THE ORIGINAL WLAF TEAM HELMETS



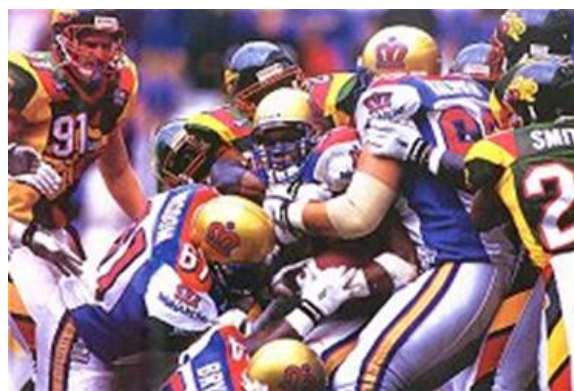
In 1995, the World League had 6 teams in Europe, the Barcelona Dragons, Frankfurt Galaxy, Rhein Fire, Scottish Claymores, Amsterdam Admirals, and London Monarchs who would become the England Monarchs in 1997.

NFL Europe became the official name of the league in 1998. The England Monarchs were replaced by the Berlin Thunder. The Barcelona Dragons were replaced by the Cologne Centurions in 2004 and the Scottish Claymores were replaced by the Hamburg Sea Devils in 2005.

After the 2006 season, the league was re-branded as NFL Europa and played only one more season.

### UNIFORMS

The 1995 WLAF relaunch featured uniforms with a significantly different look to what is traditionally associated with American football. Instead of the full-size numbers centered on the front of the jersey, the team logos took precedence, with a smaller number over the right collarbone area. The Monarchs reverted to the traditional look in 1997 and the rest of the league followed a year later.



[The World League of American Football](#) is a fan's site of the WLAF and NFL Europe featuring many photos, news articles, and memorabilia.



The Regional Football League (RFL) was formed to be the self-styled "major league of spring football." The RFL season was designed for spring-summer play with the weekend prior to the Fourth of July designated as the annual date for its championship game.

The inaugural (and only) season began in March, 1999 and was scheduled to consist of 14 regular season games, preceded by a three-week training camp and a preseason game. The teams of the '99 RFL season played through a shortened eight-week regular season (Ohio only played seven of those eight weeks). Only one game was ever televised—the May 8, 1999, New Orleans Thunder at Mobile Admirals game on WHNO, a mainly-religious television station in New Orleans. Four teams qualified for the moved-up playoffs which followed the shortened regular season. On June 13, 1999, the Mobile Admirals defeated the Houston Outlaws in the only championship (RFL Bowl I) held at Ladd-Peebles Stadium in Mobile, Alabama, 14–12.

RFL rosters were limited to 37 active players and five taxi-squad members with salaries in the range of \$30,000 to \$65,000 per player and team salary caps of \$1,500,000. Former college standouts such as Josh Booty (LSU), Stewart Patridge (Ole Miss), Andre Ware (Houston), and Dameyune Craig (Auburn) were signed to RFL teams in the hopes that fans would turn out to see former local stars. Patridge, playing for the Mississippi Pride, was the all-RFL quarterback in 1999.

The commissioner of the league was John "Gus" Bell, and Ron Florida was the Assistant Commissioner.

Despite some efforts made to resume play for a second season, the league folded after that shortened 1999 season. The announced beginning of the XFL for 2001 precluded any realistic chance of the league resuming operations.



HOUSTON  
OUTLAWS



MISSISSIPPI  
PRIDE



MOBILE  
ADMIRALS



NEW ORLEANS  
THUNDER



OHIO  
CANNON



SHREVEPORT-  
BOSSIER  
KNIGHTS



The SFL (Spring Football League) existed for one mini-season. League official dubbed the mini-season "Festival 2000". The league's goal was to test cities, fans, stadiums, the media, entertainment, and football as a product. The SFL was founded by many ex-NFL players such as Eric Dickerson, Drew Pearson,

Bo Jackson, and Tony Dorsett.

The SFL announced its formation on March 1, 2000. Raising a lot of questions on how the league would survive after many failed attempts. Bill Futterer, director of Spring Football League, said the league would play four games on Saturdays from April 29, followed by a championship game in Miami on May 27. Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, and San Antonio were awarded teams.

During the Festival 2000, musical entertainers such as O'Jays, Mark Wills, and Poncho Sanchez were scheduled for SFL games. The SFL was riding a sinking ship. Attendance resembled high school junior varsity football games; despite very competitive football games. After two weeks of play, SFL ended the Festival 2000 with two games left. Houston and San Antonio, the only teams to go undefeated were awarded SFL Co-Champions. The SFL officials would be back for 2001 season with full schedule and eight teams.

The 2001 season never materialized with the announcement of XFL by the WWF (now WWE) which destroyed the small chance of any return of the SFL. The SFL died very fast and no one seemed to noticed.



HOUSTON  
MARSHALS



LOS ANGELES  
DRAGONS



MIAMI  
TROPICS



SAN ANTONIO  
MATADORS





**Editor's Note:** This is actually the league that prompted this article. Years ago in researching uniforms to paint for non NFL teams I ran across a website for this league. All though this league never played a game, it came close and was the first league after the USFL with the intention of playing professional football in the spring.



The PSFL (Professional Spring Football League) existed for roughly five months. The PSFL folded ten days before the season opener. Red, white, and blue league was born on November 1, 1992, at a news conference in New York City the same room as the defunct spring league the USFL. Founded by Vincent Sette, computers salesman, was also the league's first and only President. The league had no media coverage, no television, or radio deals in the work for the first season. Basically, another shot at ill-fated attempt by the WLAF under a new regime. The players, were to be paid 40,000 a season under a 2 million dollar salary cap along with extra million salary cap, for non-player expenses. Teams would need to average 20,000 fans per game to break even.

Originally, nine teams were announced and another team would be announced at later date set to play a 16 game schedule. Albuquerque, Boston, Columbia, Las Vegas, Little Rock, Miami, Portland, Tampa Bay, and Salt Lake City. The PSFL, added Washington as the tenth and final team.

Franchise fees set at \$250,000, rosters at 43 active players and 7 on developmental squad, and commissioner, Rex Lardner, in place, the league was ready to head to training camp. The individual teams didn't sign players since the league owned the franchises. The league offices and assigned teams who had regional appeal; college location near the franchise.

Judge Peter Spivak and Walter Michaels from the USFL, were Chairman of the Board and Director of Football Operations, would take their knowledge to the new league. February 29, 1992, would have been a historical day, being the leagues' first game would be played between, Utah and Tampa Bay in Tampa Bay.

The leagues' championship game would be known as "Red, White, and Blue Bowl" on Sunday, July 5, 1992, in Washington D.C. at RFK Stadium. The 1992 season never made it to the field nor the papers. The league folded ten days before the season opener on February 19, 1992, during training camp. The worst part was Miami closed shop early; leaving the league at 9. The rosters were also being trimmed down to 60 before the plug was pulled. PSFL, probably won't be remembered by anybody other than few diehard football historians.



PSFL (1992)



ARKANSAS MINERS



CAROLINA COUGARS



MIAMI TRIBE



NEVADA ACES



NEW ENGLAND BLITZ



NEW MEXICO RATTLESNAKES



OREGON LIGHTNING BOLTS



TAMPA BAY OUTLAWS



UTAH PIONEERS



WASHINGTON MARAUDERS

A review of the website [Remember the PSFL](#) will give you a lot of information regarding this league. There were several recognizable names of NFL coaches and players associated with this league.

*Over the years I have painted several of the teams that played in these Spring Professional Football Leagues and used them in my solitaire play. At one time I had the 6 NFL Europe teams from the early 2000 seasons and the 8 teams of the XFL that have since been sold on ebay. I have painted several USFL teams for collectors as well. Unfortunately I don't have pictures of them anymore.*

*I also have in my collection a set of the 1991 WLAF trading cards. These are great for using as uniform references.*



# Professional Spring Teams of Miniature Football



**Generals and Breakers of the NJLMFL**



**USFL Figures by Chris Markham (clm designs)**





# ANOTHER SPRING FOOTBALL LEAGUE



The National Spring Football League is scheduled to begin play in March 2014.

Currently there are 12 teams located in

Goodyear, AZ, Los Angeles, CA, Portland, OR, San Antonio, TX, San Jose, CA, Houston, TX, Boston, MA, Orlando, FL, Kennesaw, GA, Louisville, KY, Providence, RI, and Virginia Beach, VA

The NSFL is promoting itself as the "1st Minor Professional Football League that is totally dedicated to the growth and development of its players, coaches, staff, team and league."

"The NSFL will be the 1st Minor Professional Football League that is totally dedicated to the growth and development of its players, coaches, staff, team and league. Rather than competing against leagues such as NFL & CFL, we opted to place ourselves in the "little brother" role, learning from both their successes and their failures. Our practices will be open to scouts from both of these leagues and we encourage and invite them to have scouts at our games. Game Day videos of all games will be sent to the scouting departments of the NFL and CFL on a weekly basis.

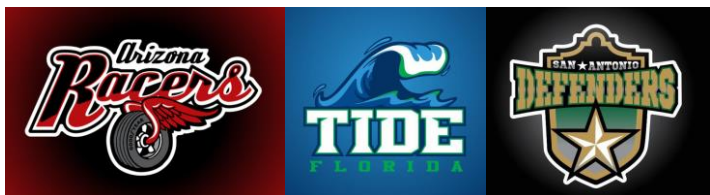
We will provide our players with quality film playing outdoor football, quality coaching and quality life development programs so they will become better players and better men. Teamwork, integrity and leadership will be a constant theme throughout the players time spent with their team.

We will provide our teams and staffs constant training, development and leadership that will last for generations. Our league structure focuses on planning for longevity, not a "win now" mentality. Our league and team staffs focus is on developing long term relationships with other outdoor leagues, sponsors, affiliates, local and national charitable organizations and the local communities that each team resides

in. Teamwork and family values is what the NSFL will institute in its daily operations.

Everyone will have a voice in our league through associations. These associations include, but are not limited to, sponsorships, players association, coaches association, officials association and fans using social media and fan input boxes."

Many of the teams already have web sites where you can find logos, helmet and uniform designs.



The Georgia Blaze website features a photo gallery that has many of the uniforms of the teams.

[Photo Gallery](#)

# Solitaire Coaches The SCBCS Bowl Game Picture



## Points Challenge Update

The first season of the Solitaire Coaches Points Challenge will end on June 30th, 2013. July 1st – July 3rd the SCPC Rules Committee compiling the final points totals and making its decisions on the SCBCS Bowl Game Bids and issuing invitations to the SCBCS Bowl Game participants.

Then in the Fourth of July issue of “Solitaire Illustrated” we will be announcing the winners of the Division Season Total Points Championships and the Season One SCBCS Bowl Game Participants.

The TOP 2 teams in the final points standings of each division will be given the opportunity to participate in the SCBCS Bowl Games.



After the 4 SCBCS Bowl Games have been played. Points will be recalculated and a SCBCS National Champion will be named.

The winners of the SCBCS Bowl Games will be awarded a Trophy designating them as a Division Champion. Currently we have one sponsor. BUZZBALL is the sponsor for the 4buzzball.com 3.3 Tweaked Division Championship Game. Tudor Games will be sponsoring the SCBCS National Championship Trophy.





In addition to the SCBCS Bowl Game Trophies, Award Plaques will be given to the 4 Season Division Points Leaders.

## **AND AS AN ADDED BONUS!!!!**

**Any coach with a bowl eligible team or teams (six or more wins) that was not in the top two of their division, therefore not qualifying for a BCS game, can play in a bowl game as determined by their owner. Other bowl games can be played between teams owned by the same person or can be a 'challenge' bowl game against another coaches team as arranged between the two coaches. Other bowl games can be played by any SCPC coach. All other bowl games should be reported as regular season games were and will be scored and included in the final rankings. Bowl eligible teams are allowed just one bowl game. Other bowl games must be completed and reported prior to the MFCA convention in Cleveland.**

So as you can see, once the season is complete there are still several opportunities for bowl eligible teams to participate in the postseason.

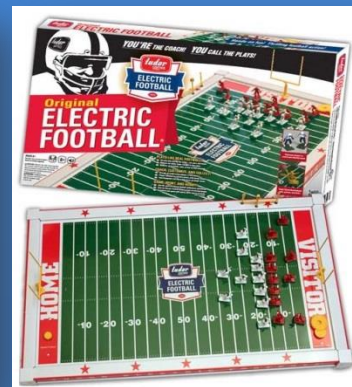
I want to personally thank all the owners / coaches for participating in the inaugural season of the SCPC. It has far exceeded the expectations of the SCPC Commissioner and Rules Committee.

I hope you have enjoyed it as well. It has been great to read about all the leagues and their game summaries and action photos.

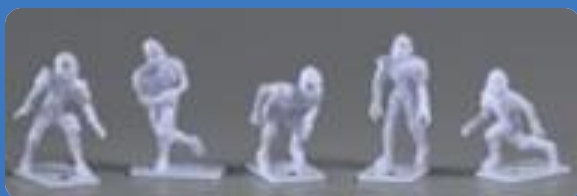
Hopefully we have fulfilled our purpose of giving “solitaire coaches a format similar to the MFCAL by which coaches, teams, and game results may be entered into a database and earn points towards being recognized as the MFCA’s Solitaire League National Champion.”



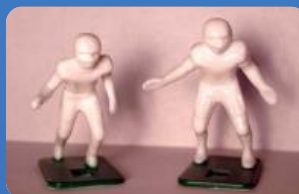
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offensive and defensive positions

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**\$15.00**

Set of 24 "DDB's"



**\$15.00**

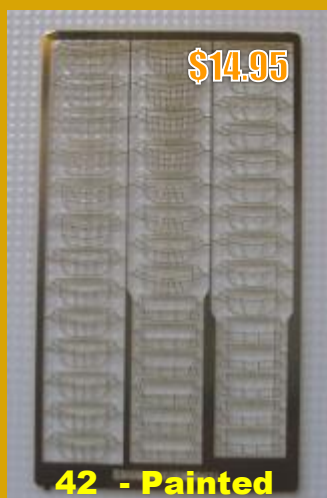
Set of 24



**\$12.99**

Includes 1 Measuring Stick, 3 Distance Sticks  
and 1 Magnetic "BuzzBall" Football

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**\$14.95**

42 - Painted



**\$15.00**

Set of 90

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Solitaire Coaches Bowl  
Championship Series



***"THIS IS NOT THE EF YOU REMEMBER GROWING UP..."***

# **MPFL AND SOLITAIRE PLAY**

**By Anthony D. Burgess**

***There are many coaches who are seeking something more from this game and many of them have found it in the MPFL Solitaire Play.***

***With this play they are able to have the actual look and feel of a real football game without the complication.***

***This system is the only system that makes you more intelligent about the game of football the more you play it.***

***You gain an understanding of position discipline and the fundamentals of football, and making you a part of the game and not just simply a spectator.***

***The challenge with the MPFL Solitaire Play is that you must play by the NFL rules of the game and the system allows for that.***

***Each position functions independently yet all work together as a team so if you don't understand the duties of any position on any play your weakness will be exposed and playing yourself gives you the opportunity to identify and correct your weak areas of the game.***

***So if you are seeking a higher level of solitaire play then the MPFL is the ultimate challenge.***

**For more info about the MPFL, visit [www.mpflfootball.com](http://www.mpflfootball.com).**





## 4 STOP NATION

### A Miniature Football National Movement

MANTARAYDRE (ANDRE COGDIL)

There has been a shift in the world of miniature football, a shift that is seeing more and more leagues use stoppages of the playing surface to bring realism to the game. During electric football's infant stages, no such thing was heard of, but as this popular game brings out the athlete in the individuals who play the game. It was only natural to want to take their skill set to new heights.

Stopping the playing surface in increments of one to two seconds, affords each coach the ability to simulate a true football play as it is drawn up in a

play book. These plastic figures cannot think for themselves, so stopping the board and redirecting their path is a way to give them a sense of direction. Running backs can perform various cut backs and slashes. Wide receivers can run a detailed route tree. Quarterbacks can scramble, move around the pocket and go through their natural progression locating an intended receiver. An entire new world and way of thinking has arisen with this ever growing 4 stop system.

This level of miniature football came to fruition with the emergence of the MPFL (Miniature Pro Football League) several years ago. It's founder, Anthony D. Burgess, was not satisfied with the level of play seen around the country and decided to format a system that plays like an NFL game watched on Sundays. Upon various discussions with coaches at national events, I was pleased to hear they are using some form of stoppages in their game play experience. You can do so much more when you're able to direct players into areas you want them to be instead of hoping they end up there.

A league entitled 4 STOP NATION kicks off this fall with solitaire coaches from around the country. This league is comprised of various coaches who use the stoppage system of play competing with their favorite NFL teams as home teams. What makes this league unique is all the coaches live in different states, but are able to play in the same league. The issue of travel, finances, headaches, are all non-existent in this format. It is quite a task to get coaches who love the same system together in one league due to the region they live in.

In Solitaire play you have to have the horses (teams) to replace the live coach. In today's world there are a million playbooks online, from NFL play dating back to the 70's to the present. Also college playbooks are available to you anytime you need one.

The premise is to play against the playbook, this is your coaching opponent. You can coach against any NFL OR college team from any era as long as you have the horses as mentioned above. The beauty of solitaire is, once you are set up with teams, a style, and playbooks. You are never at a loss for an opponent. Also playbook development is a way of

keeping your mind sharp. Seeing what various teams do and playing against that book is no different than what NFL teams do also. Use your dice to call offensive and defensive plays to take the game out of your hands.

4 STOP NATION is just the beginning. This will grow and take on a life of its own. Solitaire football has branched out and is popular due to the many ideas that have come from its great coaches. Everyone is so diverse and you can never expect everyone to play exactly as you would. In the 4 stop nation league, you can play however you like, we all have different ways to simulate a game using stoppages. Your mind is a natural playbook and it can take you as far as you want to go in miniature football. The combination of real plays and stops brings this hobby as close to the NFL and Madden like no other. The 4 STOP NATION consist of Tennessee, Carolina, Miami, Kansas City, and Minnesota. Coaches from various regions have signed up to help get these franchises to the super bowl.

In the future, the 4 STOP NATION caravan will branch out into country clubs and retirement villages teaching individuals how to stay sharp via miniature football. Research has discovered many retired men are bored with not much to do. These are the ex-working class who made their jobs their lives and now are lost with leisure time at their disposal. Also, these people are avid football fans, so why not test your knowledge through playing a game that you watch on TV every weekend. You can either view this game as a toy or a learning tool. We at 4 SOP NATION choose the latter. STOP 4 a minute and think about it.

# From the Locker Room

## Radical New Idea – to Make Games Shorter

By NEWYORKGUY

I have shared this before. It can be used as an alternative way of playing this great game.

Each team gets 1 OR 2 possessions per quarter, you decide how short you want the game to be.

You can have kick-offs or eliminate them entirely as well. With a kick-off you will start the possession where the player is stopped. Without kick-offs, each team begins play from their own 40 yard line.

HERE IS THE RADICAL PART. You only play 2 downs per possession.

If a team gets 10 yards or more on their first down play they get 7 points. If they go 10 yards or more, but it is done on their second down play they get 3 points. If they DO NOT get a first down, meaning they did not get 10 yards or more on the two plays, the defense is awarded 3 points. If a team scores an actual TOUCHDOWN, they are awarded an additional 7 points. A real TD on a first down play is worth 14 points ( 7 + 7 ), a real TD on a second down play is worth 10 points ( 3 + 7 ).

This system shortens the game, and makes every single play important, because it is a scoring opportunity. The defense must take chances, has to play tight, not a loose zone, because they must shut down the other team in 2 plays.

If you use kick-offs, a real TD on a kick-off is worth either 10 OR 14 points, you decide. If each team returns a kick-off to start the game,

and start the second half, the team that returned the ball further up the field, when comparing the two kick-offs to each other, can be awarded 3 points as well, adding more meaning and value to the kick-offs.

This system provides fast play, allows you to play many games, and does not allow you to take any play off, because every play has heightened meaning. Teams can make big comebacks quickly, the game becomes more competitive, and defenses can score by just stopping the other team.

If a defense scores a TD on a turnover, they get the additional 7 points as well, a 10 point play, 3 points for the stop, and an extra 7 for scoring too! When a team is stopped on the two downs, the defense takes over at the last spot.

If the team got a first down, let's say on their 45 yard line, the other team will begin their drive on the other 45 yard line, now needing 55 yards to score and not 45 yards. In other words, they must go the longer distance, on the other side of the field.

I also like flipping a coin for each play as well. HEADS is a running play, TAILS is a passing play. You can add or use DICE too. ODD rolls is a RUN PLAY, EVEN rolls is a PASS PLAY. In a 2 dice system, the roll of 12 is either a PENALTY on the offense, OR defense, you flip a coin to decide if it is 5 OR 10 yards, and against who.

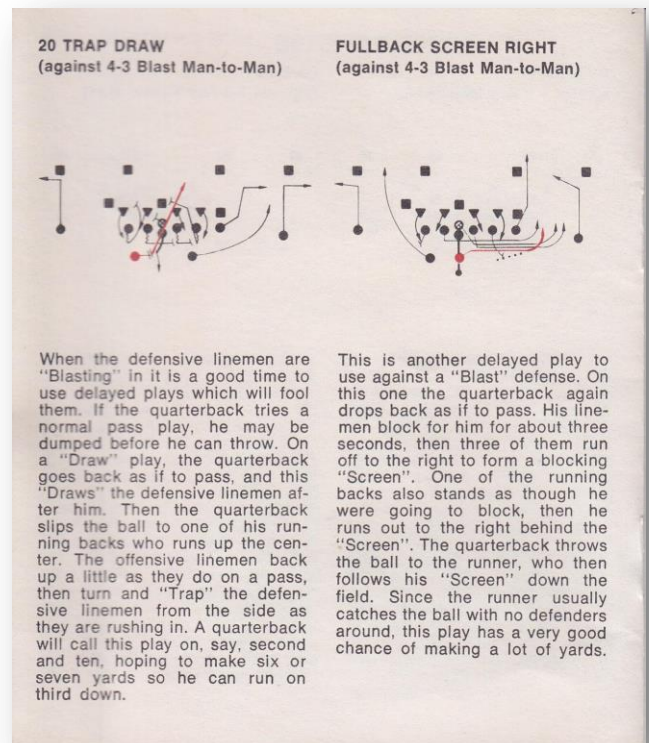
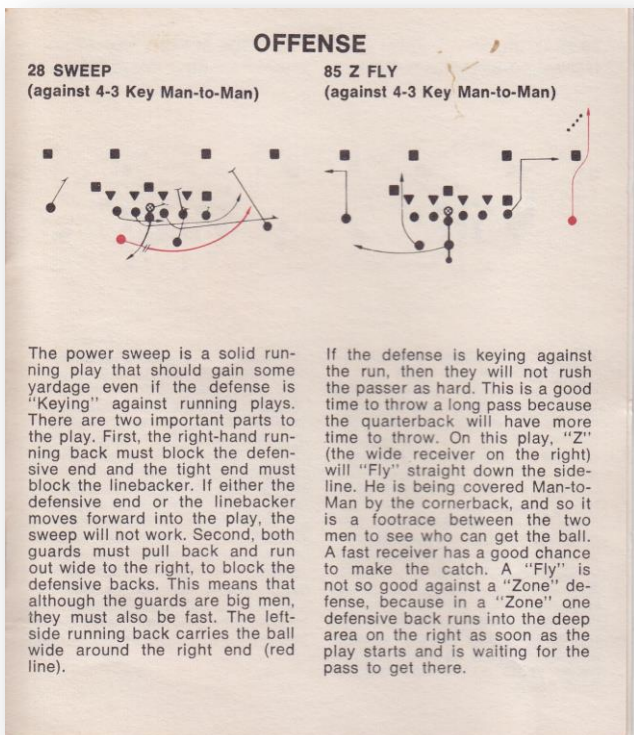
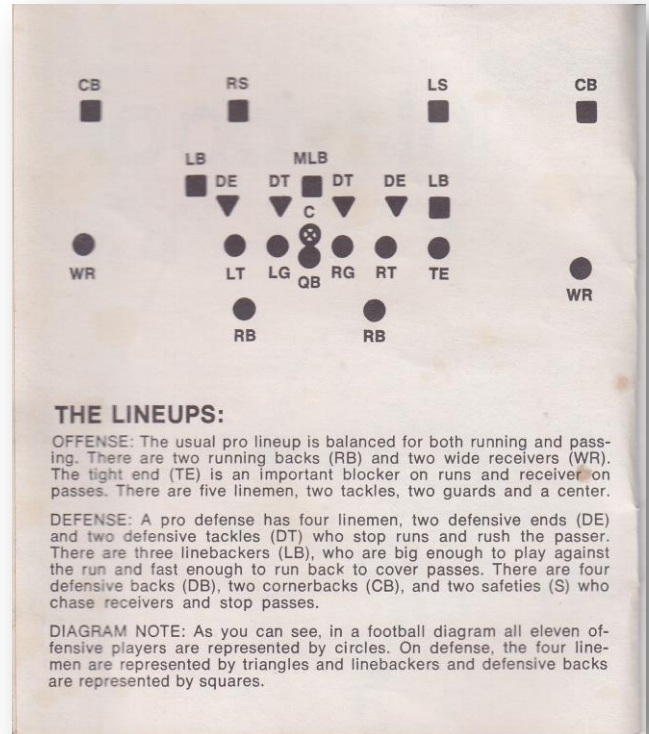
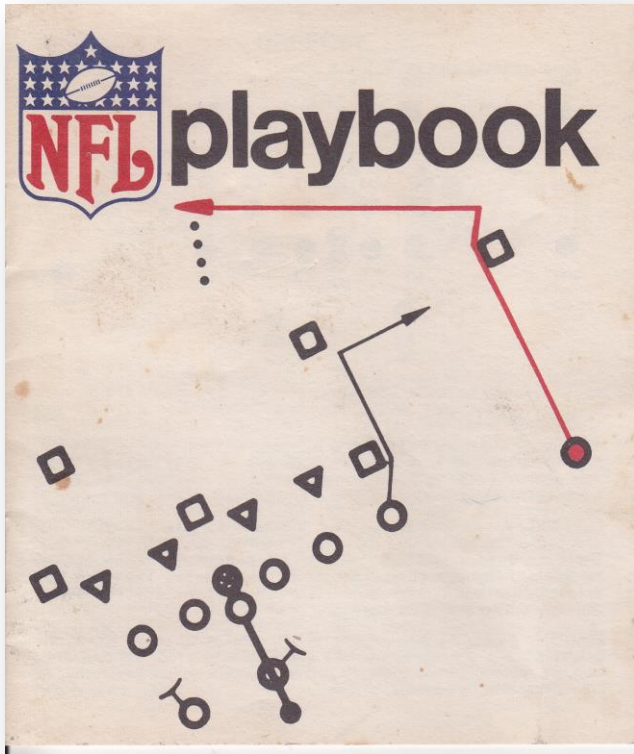
That is pretty much it. Take from this what you want or like. I hope it at least makes you think about alternatives!!!



# The Offensive Coordinator

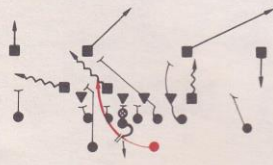
# The Defensive Coordinator

Recently Jerry McGhee found his original 1972 Tudor Metal Products NFL Playbook that was included with electric football games of the early '70's. The issue "Offensive and Defensive Coordinator" will reprint scans from this play book.



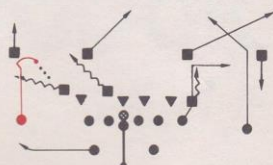


#### 45 DRIVE (against Over Key Strong Zone)



An "Over" defense has the linemen overshifted to the strong side (on the right in this case). That means that the offense will want to run back to the left in most cases. One running back "Drives" into the hole between the left guard and the tackle, and the other back follows him with the ball. This is a power play aimed right at the weakness of an "Over" defense: the big space between the three linemen shifted to the right, and the one lineman remaining on the left. Although there is a linebacker in the hole, he is back away from the line about a yard, and the play gets a head start.

#### 83 X HOOK (against Over Key Strong Zone)



When the defense is using a "Zone Pass Defense" that rotates towards the "Strong" side (the right side in this case), the offense will often throw the ball back to the left. On this play, "X" (the wide receiver on the left) runs downfield fifteen yards and then "Hooks" back toward his passer. Since the safety on the left runs away to the right in a "Zone" only the cornerback is left to stop the pass. But the cornerback also must drop back to cover the deep zone on his side. This leaves "X" alone for an instant in a crack between the zones, if the quarterback can throw the ball straight and on time.

#### 29 QUICK PITCH (against Maximum Blitz)



Often if the defense is going to run the "Maximum Blitz" some of the defensive people will chest up to the line before the play starts. A smart quarterback will see them moving up, and call out a new play to his offense. One play he might try is a quick pitch-out. On this play the quarterback takes the ball and immediately tosses it to the left-side running back who is running around the left end. With eight defensive men charging up the center, the running back may escape around the end and down the sideline with very few men left to stop him.

#### 82 Z SLANT (against Maximum Blitz)

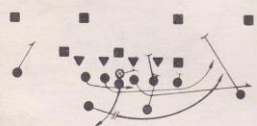


Another play that the quarterback could call out is a quick pass to his wide receiver. The important thing against a "Maximum Blitz" is that the quarterback must not hold the ball long, or the "Blitzers" will get him. On this play, "Z" (the wide receiver on the right) takes two or three steps downfield and then quickly "Slants" to his inside. The quarterback drops back a couple of steps and fires the ball. "Z" catches the ball at full speed and if the cornerback, who is supposed to be chasing him, misses the tackle, "Z" has a good chance of going all the way for a touchdown.

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### DEFENSE

#### 4-3 KEY MAN-TO-MAN



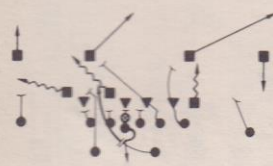
This is the most basic pro defense. The numbers "4-3" indicate that there are four linemen and three linebackers, and that these men line up in an evenly balanced formation. The word "Key" means that the four linemen will "Key" their blockers, that is, watch what their blockers do, before they rush in. When linemen do this they are under control to stop running plays, but they are slow at rushing in to get the passer. The words "Man-to-Man" indicate that the defensive backs will each take one of the offensive receivers and follow that receiver wherever he goes—"Man-to-Man" (dotted lines indicate which receiver each defensive back takes).

#### 4-3 KEY BLAST MAN-TO-MAN



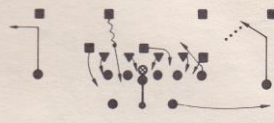
This defense is basically like the one on the left with one important exception. The defensive linemen are no longer "Keying" their blockers before they react. On this defense, they "Blast" right in as soon as the ball is snapped. This means that they have a better start at rushing the passer, although certain types of running plays will be hard for them to stop. The defense on the left, the "Key" defense, might be used on first and ten when the defense is expecting a running play. The defense above, The "Blast" defense, might be used on third and eight when the defense is expecting a pass.

#### OVER KEY STRONG ZONE



This defense is a common variation, and is deliberately more solid against plays on the side where the tight end lines up on the offense. The word "Over" means that three of the defensive linemen overshift towards the tight end, making it difficult to run to that side. The words "Strong Zone" indicate that the defensive backs are each going to cover a zone on the field instead of a special man, and that they will run towards the "Strong" side (the side where the tight end lines up) to go to their assigned zones. Against this defense, it is very hard for the offense to either run or throw to the strong side—(the right side in the diagram above).

#### 4-3 MAXIMUM BLITZ



This is the most dangerous defense in football, both for the offense and the defense. The defense lines up in a standard "4-3" but when the ball is snapped eight men "Blitz" in to rush the passer. This is the maximum number possible since three defensive backs must stay back to cover the three offensive receivers. All four linemen, all three linebackers and one safety are part of the rush. The maximum blitz is a big gamble for the defense. They are taking a chance that they can overpower the offense and trap the quarterback for a long loss. If the quarterback does manage to pass the ball however, there is almost no one left to stop the play and many large gains can result.

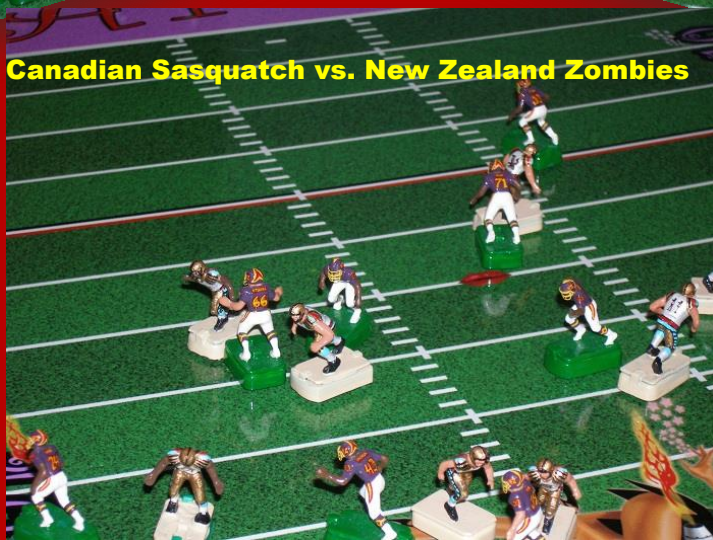
## Special Teams

**How do you coach your special teams or include special teams in your Solitaire Play??  
Send your ideas for a "Special Teams" article to the "Solitaire Illustrated" Editor.**

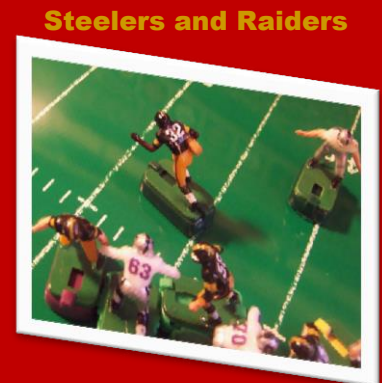
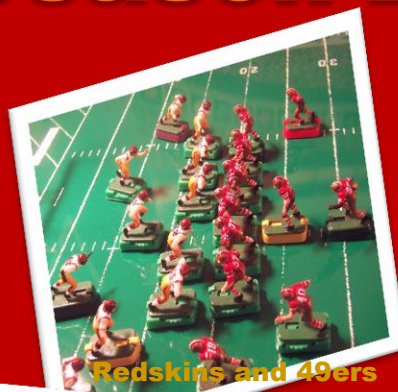


# Action from around the Leagues

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