

THE MINIATURE FOOTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION



THE TWEAK[®]

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE MFCA

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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE MFCA



A Letter from Tweak Writer, Edward J. Scott (aka "Smokestack")

Welcome to the 2009 Spring edition of the Official Magazine of Miniature Football Coaches Association-The Tweak. I would be remiss if I did not first acknowledge the fine work and enduring contributions of Matthew Culp – Editor and Publishing Director and his fine staff and magazine contributors. Among them are: the creative genius of its design and graphic artists, Lynn "Weird Wolf" Schmidt, Assistant Editor and editorial writer-Al Dunham and Assistant Graphics Artist-Dave Campbell. Special recognition is necessary for the magazine's cover artists and contributing photographers, editorial staff and contributing writers (who are too numerous to mention in this piece). And last, to those who manage the publication's finances (Lynn Schmidt and Mike Guttman); customer service (Lynn Schmidt); subscription organization (Lynn Schmidt and Matthew Culp); web and media publications; and all those who have contributed mightily to the success of this venture from its genesis in the summer of 2007. I am certain that the spouses, children, and extended families of all those cited also deserve some well-deserved mention. A successful venture involves sacrifice and compromise. There is another group who are working just as hard as we read these pages. They are committed to making the next MFCA convention in collaboration with the Seawall organizers and College Bowl Series Championship - a huge success in Canton. It is my hope that your health and circumstances over the next few months will allow you to attend and participate in this celebration.

Edwin Way Teale once said, "The world's favorite season is the spring. All things seem possible in May. During the spring, the hemisphere begins to warm significantly causing new plant growth to 'spring forth,' giving the season its name." On that note - let us examine the significance of the spring season as it relates to miniature football and the MFCA. Think about it. A year ago, GM and Chrysler were somewhat healthy, you could still buy a plasma television at Circuit City and our economy was prefaced with the "I" word as opposed to the "R" word. A lot has changed both in our world, our lives, and in our hobby. But as much as things change – like the spring season, so does the opportunity for renewal and growth appear. No where is this more apparent than in our hobby.

Whether you are twittering or tweaking, the convergence of new technology and materials – cou-

pled with the sheer pace of change (if we choose to embrace it), allow us - the hobbyist and contributor, to sit in the front row as we witness a true renaissance in our hobby. While one could argue that there is a place for the purity of playing with stock poses or the tranquility of a good game of solitaire. We can all agree that there is joy in whiling away hours in our special EF places or workshops. Some of you are sculptors, graphic artists, detailers, base trainers, or painters - so you can attest to the sea of change that has come upon us. We are now free to utilize social networking sites (i.e., MySpace, YouTube, etc) to blog, chat, post on web sites, and to instantly hyper-upload your thoughts and experiences in this hobby. It is flat out an exciting time. We are the beneficiaries of the risk taking and innovations of a number of true pioneers. Their vision and perseverance (even in the face of opposition) has allowed us to select and choice among different products and styles of play.

This edition will chronicle the story and path to the Miggle 2009 Super Bowl Championship by Jim Davis. There are few peers in the hobby more deserving of this honor and crown than Jim. As a leader, coach, league mate, and friend - Jim has made enormous contributions to the hobby. For all in attendance, it was an awesome moment to see someone who gives so much - revel in the glory and excitement of the Big Win. He was honored by Miggle for having not missed a single convention. He was recently overheard saying that "You people are like family to me – I love all of you..." that epitomizes the spirit of Jim. If you haven't heard him challenge you to produce your "strongest man" in a primitive display of brute base strength – then you don't know Jim. The reality is he is a kind and gentle man who dotes on his family. He is also the current record-holder for shortest retirement. His foe – Norbert Revels showed the same grace and humility in defeat. We will also take a closer look into Jim Davis and his life in a new series in The Tweak titled-Legends of Miniature Football.

You will also be placed in a veritable IMAX theatre of words and imagery at the January Miggle Convention in Chicago. Matthew Culp and the National One (Corey Johnson), will help immerse you in the Miggle Convention in case you missed it. Jerry McGhee and Mike Pratt will give the inside story on this year's 2009 Buzzfest. In addition, we also have articles from Jeff Eby, Brian Wittkop, George

Diamond and Bob and Nick Slate. All of this is not possible without you - the subscribers, readership, and avid fan base of The Tweak. Without you - none of this would be relevant. We celebrate each new member and each record of achievement. The reality is that we are not 200 or even 300 strong. There are literally thousands more (in every state) who have not been given a proper introduction to the joy of miniature football. They (the next 650 new members or so) along with our youth - will form the basis and foundation of our hobby for years to come. It is a double-edged sword.

So, I challenge you to selectively use media and technology to welcome them and guide them on their path to awareness in the hobby. Don't force your views and style on someone who hasn't had ample time to find their own space. Allow sufficient debate before taking your league in new directions. 4.0 is not for everyone. Some people don't need the pomp and pageantry. 5 or 6 friends cracking around a board is as special and relevant as a 32 franchise league with D-Jenn poses. Change should be incremental and not game changing. It is a tremendous responsibility. Can we count on you to give back as much as you take from the hobby? Are you willing to line up in a skills challenge, contribute to a fund raiser, or volunteer at a sponsored event? What was your last random act of kindness for a newcomer in our hobby? You may not have felt as welcomed at first. Hopefully, we have all grown and changed. Don't perpetuate the myth that we are not approachable to newcomers.

Thank you for all that you do. So, sit back with this edition and grab your favorite beverage - whether it is cocoa, tea, a sports drink, Hennesey & Coke, or perhaps a pint of brew. Find a cozy chair and curl up with your significant other. Kick off your shoes and embrace the spring air. We truly hope you enjoy this edition. This publication is as much yours as it belongs to the hobby. If you want to rant or rave about something we missed or misquoted, contribute new ideas through an article, or perhaps we are overlooking a significant event or milestone in the hobby, then send your comments and suggestions to Matthew Culp at mmmculp@comcast.net. Thank you for your support of the MFCA.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SPRING 2009 Issue Eight

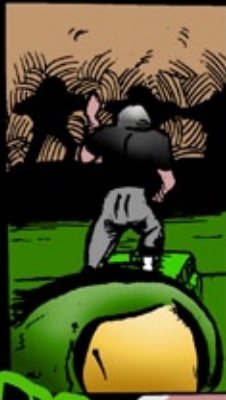
- 2** Letter From Ed Scott *by Edward J. Scott*
- 4** The 2009 MFCA Convention *by Matthew Culp*
- 14** Hanging With The F.O.T.H. *by Corey Johnson*
- 15** The Green Room Rumble *by Ray Fanara and Corey Johnson*
- 18** Two Times The Fun *by Robert Slate*
- 21** Buzzfest 2009 *by Jerry McGhee*
- 26** League Building *by George Diamond*
- 28** The Jim Davis Story *by Matthew Culp*
- 31** Making Your Own Miniature Football DVD *by Jeff Eby*
- 35** My First Season *by Nick Slate*
- 36** Tom Johnson *by Corey Johnson*
- 38** Boards Of The Past *by Brian Wittkop*



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HULK vs THOR

The 2009 Miggles Championship... EPIC POWERS UNLEASHED!





MIGGLE CONVENTION 2009

BY MATTHEW CULP

Hulk versus Thor...Davis versus Revels...the Windy city of Chicago...the Landsmans...the Family Reunion...the Brotherhood of electric football and a thrilling ending to perhaps the greatest Miggle Convention ever! It is April and coaches are still talking about the convention that rocked the electric football world. The 2009 convention had it all...new coaches...great games...stuff to buy...skills competitions...the MFCA, but what will be long remembered will be what will go down in electric football lore as..."The Run". For 15 years Jim Davis was on the outside looking in. For 15 years he made the journey to the Miggle Convention, never once making it to the final eight nor getting out of the round robin...but this was his year and this was his time and, with 15 years of disappointment, he went for the ring of rings...the 2009 championship...on one fateful play.





It was no wonder that, as my good friend Tim Young and I drove home on a Sunday afternoon in late January, we could not stop from talking about the weekend and experience we had been through over the last 48 hours. After dropping the “Weirdwolf” (Lynn Schmidt) off at O’Hare International Airport, we finally had some time to take it all in...with a beautiful sunset to our shoulders and the great city of Chicago in front of us...it was one of the most satisfying drives home following a Miggle Convention that I can remember. So satisfying, that the convention renewed my love of the hobby and I truly believe I was not the only coach leaving Chicago with a great feeling of fellowship and a weekend well spent. The 2009 Miggle Convention was one of the funniest, most entertaining...and certainly one of the most thrilling electric football tourneys that I have ever had the pleasure of being a part of. This one was number 15 in Miggle’s long lasting tradition of Convention excellence and the experience was priceless. Electric Football’s annual “Family Reunion” went off without a hitch and once again the fellowship, friendship and fraternity atmosphere made the weekend another huge success. Each year that goes by I wonder how they can top the previous year...but the Championship game this year made the convention the best of them all. If you missed it...here is your second chance to relive it, as the MFCA presents the 2009 Miggle Championship and Convention.

WELCOME ONE AND ALL MIGGLE CONVENTION BANQUET FRIDAY JANUARY 23RD

Chicago was the location for this year’s convention, returning back to where the tradition started and had not taken place in Chicago since 2004. The weather was perfect...the economy, not so much and there were fears that there might not be as good a turnout...but Michael and Delayne Landsman decided that the reunion would go ahead anyway...and the coaches came. This simple fact proved to me one thing...and that is that we are a family and the Miggle Conventions are something special and not to be missed. I was touched that, although times are bad, we all still found a way to come together. Most everyone arrived on Friday to the Embassy Suites in Deerfield, Illinois and as usual, the Embassy Suites was a great host for the convention. Most coaches arrived in groups and as everyone rolled in, the reunion officially began. All of the familiar faces were here...Weirdwolf, Mike Turner, Ken Allen, Frank Johnson, Jimbo Dunagan, Mark Francis, Joe Greco, Ronnie Bradley, Steve Martin, Scott Hooper, Ed Scott...the East coast crew...the Ohio crew...the Detroit crew...the Atlanta crew and the list goes on and on and, of course, the “Face” of the hobby...Mr. National! It was great to see everyone that we had known for years, but it was also great to meet new coaches for the first time.

We had a lot of new coaches at this convention. It was my pleasure

to make some new friends such as John Stamm, who traveled all the way from Northern California to experience his first Miggle Convention and play in his very first ever tourney. John was as nice as they come and his love of football and gaming was very apparent. He landed in my round robin group and I was impressed with all the coaches who offered him advice and made a great effort to bring him up to speed on the finer parts of strategy and tweaking... welcome John! Another new coach was Sean Jackson from Texas. We had some great conversation and it still amazes me how many newcomers to the hobby have the same story as all of us in regards to playing electric football. Sean was very excited to be here, and was both shocked and surprised to see the level of detail in the figures, boards and level of play...big welcome to Sean! Butch Carter was another coach that I met for the first time. Coming all the way from North Carolina, this High School football coach gave his all and he made it to the elite 8 in his first tourney, with a the help of Andrew Stewart, who demonstrated great sportsmanship, by giving up his spot to Butch...but more about that later. There were many other first timers from all around the country and, when they were asked to stand up during the Friday night dinner, it was amazing to see all the new faces.

As coaches got settled in the true fellowship began. Coaches got caught up with the "goings on" in each other's lives. Everything from talking about kids growing up...to what's the latest in your league...to discussion about the MFCA Convention this summer. From the time coaches get there, until the Miggle Banquet around 7 p.m., electric football is about family and filling in the gaps between get-togethers. At

7 p.m. everyone began to head on down to the Banquet room for another Miggle tradition, the 2009 Miggle Banquet, one that everyone enjoys and is grateful that the Landsmans put on every year. It was a big crowd this year, as the



familiar round tables began to fill with coaches from all around the country. As anticipation was in the air, it was Michael and Delayne's turn to update "their family" on the past year. The banquet began with Delayne coming forward and sharing with all of us the struggle that Michael Landsman went through all last year with his ailing back and some very serious health problems. For me, I received the news of his complete recovery with joy and all thanks to God for allowing Michael to continue on and to be at the convention. As Delayne told us of his determination and resolve to pull through, everyone took a breath and a sigh of relief to know that he is going to be just fine. At last year's convention it was apparent of the physical pain he was in and yet, like a true gentleman, he went on with the convention. It was wonderful to see him there smiling and in good health. For me and everyone, we appreciated Delayne's opening remarks to let us into their personal lives and let us know Michael is okay.

As with tradition, the opening ceremonies to the banquet continued with some awards. There were three Miggle "Good Vibration" awards handed out this year. The first of the 2009 Miggle "Good Vibration" awards went to Jim Davis from Detroit, Michigan. Jim has made it to every convention and the Landsmans honored him



with this award, not only because of his streak of making all the conventions, but because he is a presence when you are around him...and let's face it, there is everything to like about Jim. The other two "Good Vibration" awards went to Mike Guttman and Dave Haydel. They jointly were awarded the "Good Vibrations" award for 2009. Both of these guys have given a lot to the hobby. Dave ran the convention last year and, with the absence of Ira Silverman, it was up to Mike and Dave to run this year's

convention. I think everyone would agree...they did a great job! From the MFCA I would like to thank Dave and Mike for a job well done. Finally, Michael Landsman was unable to make last year's 2008 MFCA Convention in Canton, so Lynn Schmidt got up and made a short speech



and gave Michael his MFCA Hall of Fame Induction award. Again congratulations to Michael for this achievement. After that... it was time to eat! The food was great as always and never let it be said that Delayne does not know how to put together a meal, because that woman is a master at it! Again...thank you to Miggle for an outstanding meal the whole setting makes

you feel like a celebrity. Following dinner most all coaches registered for Saturday's tourney, as for the first time, each coach had to turn in their teams for inspection prior to the tourney, which no one seemed to mind. The "Buzzing" began in the Embassy Suites and it was easy to know which room had an electric football coach

in it, as the game play started and went on for most of the night... it was music to this coach's ears!

GAMEDAY

2009 MIGGLE TOURNNEY BEGINS

SATURDAY JANUARY 24TH

A new tradition that seems to be popular is the Saturday morning breakfast. One thing about the Embassy Suites...that free breakfast will bring out the hungry coaches, but it is also great to sit down and hear about who played who last night or possible outcomes to the tourney. It was also a great atmosphere to catch up with more coaches. I got to talk with Miggle Tourney legend Ron Bell for a few minutes, as well as some new good friends Harvey Bennett and Don Lang. I also met up with fellow Cowboys fan Scott Hooper and, of course, my best buddy John DiCarlo and a host of others. Saturday morning breakfast should have its own name like the Green Room Rumble...maybe the Breakfast should be called the "Meet and Greet".

Following breakfast it was time for the main event...electric football tourney time. Now, if you have never been to one of these conventions, I think it can be a little bit

ACC, Big Ten, SWC, Mountain, Big East...etc. It was a refreshing change to the tourney round robin setup, which worked out well. Play started at around 11 a.m., as each coach in their conference played each coach in their group. Each game consisted of each coach starting at his own 50, with four plays to get as many yards as he could or simply score. You got points for a win or tie and whichever coach finished with the highest points, then that coach moved on to the next round. In between games I went around the room and took in all the action. There were some surprise upsets and then there was the Miggle Tourney veterans, who just found ways to win...which is what great champions do. The tourney play lasted for almost five hours, and by 4 p.m. your conference champions emerged from the pack and the elite eight were set for Saturday night's "Miggle Bowl Championship Series" playoffs. One thing about the round robin...it is fun...whether you advance or



not. I personally did not advance, but I had a great time and learned a few things about tweaking...thanks Brian Redmond from Atlanta...I learned a new trick from you! But more importantly, I got to play coaches from around the country that I have never played before and that is what this tourney is all about.

In addition to the big boys playing...we also had the kids' tourney that was going on. Make no mistake about it...these kids have the passion for the game of electric football. I stopped in and watched a few games during some down time and these kids are talented. Most impressive was Jaron Turner and his passing game. I hope I never have to face this kid! Remember that name for future tourneys. Ron Christianson's son, Joshua, also played well, along with all the other kids in the tourney. I watched one game where a girl

overwhelming to see 20 games going on simultaneously, but just remember...we are men at play...and it is going to be loud! All the coaches got their teams from our tourney officials (Dave and Mike) and then we were instructed to our field of play. This year Miggle went with a college theme and each coach was assigned to a "NCAA Conference" as their group. We had the Pac-10, SEC,





Butch Carter (wildcard). Andrew Stewart “officially” had the wildcard spot, by just a few points, but he stepped aside to let Butch take his place...a great example of sportsmanship. Advancing for the Spark Bowls were...in the Junior Division... Ryan Roche and Gerry Fulton....for the Senior Division...Joshua Christianson and Jaron Turner.

The bowl games were set based on seeding and points from the round robin... here are your brief game highlights in the round of eight.

The Tostitos Fiesta Bowl featured the Kansas City Chiefs, coached by Norbert Revels, against the Auburn Tigers, coached by Butch Carter. It must be said that Butch held his ground against one of the best coaches that ever picked up a pair of tweaking pliers. Butch got off to a

great start with a short drive that got him into field goal range, but he had his attempt blocked, as neither team scored in the first half. Norbert then took control of the second half. He opened with a 13 play 80 yard drive for a touchdown...there was only 15 plays in the half. He held off Butch on the final two plays for a 7-0 win.

The AT&T Cotton Bowl featured Jamel Goodloe's Auburn Tigers against Steve Martin's Cincinnati Bengals. Auburn's special teams set the tone with a 70 yard punt return to setup a short touchdown. Auburn then picked up a second half touchdown pass on 4th and 10, while holding Cincinnati to two punts and one interception. Auburn won 14-0.

The FedEx Orange Bowl matched up Ron Bell's New Orleans Saints against Frank Johnson's Oakland Raiders. This was a great match-up! Without question defense ruled this game...as we had sack after sack...on both sides, leading to no scoring after regulation. In overtime, the Raiders pulled off the upset with a touchdown and Frank Johnson advanced with a 6-0 overtime win.

(might have been one of Jim Davis') was setting up some complicated formations. I was impressed with the next generation coming

SATURDAY NIGHT ACTION 2009 MIGGLE TOURNEY BOWL GAMES NO GREEN ROOM RUMBLE

Traditionally, Saturday night at Miggle is when everyone takes a breather from a long day of intense competition and gets their best teams out for a Saturday evening of just plain “challenge your buddy” fun...known as the “Green Room Rumble”. This year, however, the Green Room Rumble was replaced with the Miggle Bowl Championship Series, which is the finals between the “elite 8”. Your “survivors” of the day, or the elite eight, were...four time champion-Ron Bell, 2005 Miggle Champ-Norbert Revels, last year's champion-Greg Hardmon, long time announcer for Miggle Championships-Frank Johnson, three more Great Lakes EFL veterans...Jamel Goodloe, Steve Martin and Jim Davis...and advancing in his first Miggle tourney and representing North Carolina well-





The final elite 8 bowl game was the Capital One Bowl pitting best friends against each other. Jim Davis and his Oakland Raiders matched up against Greg Hardmon and his Michigan Wolverines...and what a game it was! Jim's Raiders opened the game with a 6 play 80 yard drive for a touchdown (60 yard touchdown run) to go up 7-0. But Greg responded with a 4 play drive of his own for a touchdown. The rest of the half was all defense. The second half was wild. Michigan got the ball and put together a short drive, but quickly found themselves with a 4th and 22. Greg went for it and got sacked. Two plays later the Raiders went in for the touchdown to go up 14-7. Back came Michigan with a 5 play drive ending with a 46 yard touchdown pass. With time running down, back came Oakland. The Raiders returned the ball to midfield on the kickoff, then completed a 50 yard touchdown pass for the win. Jim Davis advanced with the 21-14 win.

It was now on to the semi-finals...the Final Four of electric football...

In the first semi-final it was Frank Johnson versus Norbert Revels in the Allstate Sugar Bowl. This game was close, but Norbert set the tone in the first half with a quick score. Following a 50 yard return on the opening kickoff, the master of the passing game... Norbert...nailed a 54 yard touchdown pass to go up 7-0. Norbert had a field goal miss during this half, but overall it was mostly defense, as the Chiefs lead 7-0 at halftime. The second half began just like the first, except this time it was Frank's turn. The Raiders returned the opening kickoff 56 yards setting up a 19 yard touchdown run to tie the game at 7-7. But Norbert's running game went into "Grinding it out" mode, as they ended a very long drive with 5 straight running plays to work the clock. A one yard plunge for the game's final score and it was Norbert Revels advancing to the Miggle Championship by the final of 14-7.

In the second semi-final game it was Jim Davis versus Jamel Goodloe in the Rose Bowl. The Raiders came to play, but it was a close first half. Jim Davis opened the game with a two play drive capped

off with a 60 yard touchdown run to make it 7-0. Back came Jamel. Auburn scored late in the first half on a 10 yard touchdown run to tie the game at halftime. The second half was all Raiders. Jamel opened the half with a blocked punt...that lead to a 12 yard touchdown pass for the Raiders and it was 14-7. Auburn then got a 57 yard kickoff return setting up great field position, but the Raiders managed a quick interception on the first pass play. That interception leads to another Raiders touchdown. Jim's Raiders then were able to stop Auburn one last time and add another touchdown for a final of 28-7...and Jim Davis was off to his first ever Miggle Championship in 15 years of trying.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT! INSTANT SENIOR SPARK BOWL CLASSIC AND THE JUNIOR SPARK BOWL CHAMPIONSHIP

The Senior Spark Bowl took place on Saturday night and was one of the best games I have seen in recent years. It put Joshua Christianson up against Jaron Turner and his Minnesota Vikings. In a defensive game like this one special teams are huge...and they were for Joshua. The only score of the first half was a 70 yard punt return for a touchdown, with a missed extra point. Both these guys went at it in the first half, but the second half brought more action. Jaron opened up the second half with a six play drive into field goal range and a 47 yard attempt, only to just miss the field goal. But Joshua gave the ball back two plays later on an interception. Four plays later...on 4th and 24...Jaron connected on a 41 yard touchdown pass...he went for two points and he got it! Jaron now lead 8-6 late in the game. With about five plays left, back came Joshua, as he returned the kickoff to the Viking 48 yard line. He had two runs for -6 yards, then completed a 19 yard pass down to the Viking 35 yard line...final play...it was going to be a 54 yard attempt for the Senior Bowl Championship...the kick went up...and fell no good! It was by far the best game of the day and was tremendous to watch. Congratulations to Jaron Turner on the win and to Joshua Christianson for a tremendous effort.

The Junior Spark Bowl took place Sunday morning prior to the big boys and pitted Ryan Roche and his New York Giants against Gerry Fulton and the Miami Dolphins. In the words of Mike Guttman... "this was an exhausting defensive game"...as Mike continues... "Just when you thought one team was going to punch it in, the defenses held ground. The Dolphins opened the scoring, with the only scoring of the game, a 63 yard TD pass at the midpoint of the first half. From then on it seemed like all possessions were three and out, but they were 5 or 6 and out. I don't recall seeing a game with 6 or 7 punts, but these punters were tired. The Giants gave one good push in the second half, which was halted at the 50, so Ryan punted the ball down to the 4 yard line, pinning Gerry back deep. The Dolphins came up big with two pass plays that covered 54 yards to get them out of trouble. One last gasp by the Giants defense held the Dolphins to give their Offense one more shot. Unfortunately for the Giants, but fortunate for the Dolphins, the Dolphins prevailed in the 7-0 victory. Both played a very entertaining game and both will be playing each other again as they are now in the Senior division. Good job!!"



***JANUARY 25TH
CHAMPIONSHIP SUNDAY
THE MFCA AND THE MIGGLE SKILLS
COMPETITION AND PREGAME JITTERS***

Much can be said of Jim Davis and his run at Miggle, but for me personally it was a win for the little guy. Like Jim, I have never made it out of the round robin and his run gave all of us some hope against the veterans. At Sunday morning breakfast all the buzz was

about Jim's rise to glory and the fact that he would be facing the guy he would be riding home with that afternoon. I stopped and gave Jim my best wishes and although I am a big fan of Norbert Revels...I was a Jim Davis fan today and I let him know I was in his corner. Sunday morning was a very busy morning. Jim looked nervous and those pregame jitters showed...but deep down we knew what was happening...the transformation...this is the Hulk and the Hulk would show up to play.

The MFCA was proud to be a part of the Miggle Convention for the first time, as Miggle allowed us the pleasure of running the skills



competition for them and it was a great event. Your winners for the skills competition were...the Miggle Fastest Man Award, that honor went to local man Ron Christianson, who beat out Joel Pritchard with a smoking final run. Joel did not feel too bad, because he turned around and won the Miggle Strongest Man competition just beating out Greg Hardmon. The Miggle Passing title went to Norbert Revels, who scored a perfect 300 to beat out Damon Lucas with 290 points. And finally the Miggle Kicking...well it was a three way tie following the first round of qualifications. The three facing off...myself, Joe Greco and reigning champion Brian Healy. I thought for once I might actually win a skills competition, but going up against Joe and Brian my dreams of glory were short lived. During the "Kickoff" I had a strong kicker, but not the accuracy, as I bowed out at the 40 yard line, missing to the right (I swear there was a draft in that room). Meanwhile, Brian and Joe continued on...all the way out to the 60 yard line. Both missed from that distance, but on the second go through, Brian missed and Joe just got it across the crossbar for the title...congrats Joe!

Sunday morning continued with games going on, some coaches saying their good byes and most all making their final purchases at the Miggle store. Ronnie Bradley out did himself again this year, with all of his outstanding college teams on display. Joe Allore also brought his works of art and it was great to witness these creations that they had spent so much time on. But as Sunday morning wore on, it was getting to that time we all waited for...then it began...the game of all games...as everyone gathered for the 2009 Miggle Championship.

AT LONG LAST...THE HULK IS THE CHAMPION

Everyone began to congregate for the Championship game and it was a good size crowd. Dave Haydel and Delayne Landsman got things rolling with a few awards. The "Break Though Coach of the Year" award went to Butch Davis, who was very deserving of this honor. Your "2009 Coach of the Year" went to a very suprised Frank Johnson as he was beginning to announce the 2009 Championship. This award was justified and merited through many years of service to Miggle Conventions. All the awards were handed out to the winners of the Spark Bowls and Skills Competitions, as well as, all the participants in the kids tourney. Then it was time for our National Anthem. If you missed it...sorry about your luck...but this year Ben Neuhauser and David Redmond sang the National An-

ymns and Norbert took over at the Raiders 34 yard line. With great field position, Norbert went to the running game, only to be stopped on three straight runs. On 4th and 10 the Chiefs went for the field goal and Jim's Raiders came up big on special teams as the attempt was blocked. Jim's Raiders took over and began to move the ball, as they drove down to the Chiefs' 24 yard line after 4 straight successful running plays. But the drive would end there, as Jim threw an interception with time running out in the half and the half ended in a 0-0 tie.

Norbert's Chiefs got things rolling in the second half with a 37 yard kickoff return. But Jim's run defense was stiff, as three straight Chief running plays lead to a 4th down punt. Then the game's second biggest play happened, when the Raiders special teams came through again with a punt block, giving the Raiders the ball at the Chiefs 29 yard line. Just three



yards and it was flawless...great job! Then it was game time...with Frank Johnson and Ken Allen doing the play-by-play...

Jim and Norbert...how much more evenly matched can you get? What a match up, as we had Norbert, known as Thor, the Lord of the running game...bringing the hammer...versus Jim Davis, better known as The Hulk, not to pretty...but gets the job done. They play in the same league, ride together to tourneys and are best of friends, but in this battle of wills...defense was the rule in the first half. Jim's Raiders got the ball first and returned the kickoff 31 yards. But Norbert's chiefs' defense put up an early fight. The Raiders lost four yards on two run plays and threw an incomplete pass setting up a 4th and 14 at the Raiders 27 yard line. Jim went for the first down...he completed a pass...but only for 7

plays later Jim Davis took the lead on a 3 yard touchdown run and it was 7-0 Raiders midway through the second half. But true champions do not fade in crunch time and Norbert came right back. Following a touchback, Norbert's running game finally broke out...a 74 yard run when he needed it most! Three plays later he nailed a 9 yard touchdown pass to tie the game with 1:36 left to play in the game. The Raiders had three plays to end the half...but Jim could not pull off the miracle and it was off to overtime for the Miggle Championship.

At this point everyone wanted the game to just stop...what a great second half...and it was just unbelievable to see what was transpiring on the electric gridiron...



overtime...for the championship...this is why we play the game. In college overtime each team gets the ball at their own 25 yard and each team gets the ball once until we have a winner. Norbert took the ball first and it did not look good after two plays. Starting at his own 25, on 1st and 10 Norbert got sacked...loss of 12...2nd and 22... another Raider sack...loss of 12...3rd and 34 from the 49 yard line...everyone could not believe it...the Raiders were coming on...3rd and 34...it looked bad for Norbert. But Norbert would not be denied and he wasn't. Norbert this time picked up the blitz...got a receiver open...and made a very long pass. The receiver avoided two defenders and ran out at the 15...are you kidding me...first down Chiefs! That play is why Norbert is the most feared passer in the game. It was too much for the defense to handle. Three plays later Norbert's Chiefs scored on a 3 yard touchdown run. Norbert elected to go for the field goal and it was 14-7 Chiefs. So now it was up to Jim and his offense and the Hulk responded quickly. On his first play from the 25 the Raiders

broke a 16 yard run...next play...they took it the rest of the way...Touchdown Raiders! And then it came...Jim stood up and said... "I am going for two". The on lookers could not believe their ears...15 years in the tourney...first chance to win...and he is going for two, but champions must believe in themselves and Jim believed in his team. As the teams setup for the play of plays a silence fell upon the room...with the Miggle Championship on the line...everyone there crowded the board to see the play of the year...perhaps the play of plays for 15 years of Miggle Championships. Jim lined up in a t-formation, Norbert's defense crowding the line and appeared to take away outside lanes...then the decision was made...both were set and Jim gave the ball to the back on the outside for a sweep to the left...the board went on and the back ran a perfect sweep to the left...just avoiding one of Norbert's Kansas City Chiefs and went in for the conversion and Jim Davis finally was champion! It was the moments of moments as 15 years of frustration lit up the room as Jim celebrated with family and

friends...it was pandemonium at Miggle! What a way to end a convention and what a game between two great coaches. Immediately afterwards Jim was a little over come at what had just happened, but everyone in the room was happy for him and it was simply a classic moment...one that will not soon be forgotten.

HEADING HOME...

What a great convention! It was full of great memories and moments. From the welcome dinner, to the skills competition, to the fellowship and the Championship. I hope everyone had a satisfying trip home on January 25th, 2009 and we should all thank the Landsmans and never take them for granted. I hope to see everyone August 7-9 in Canton, Ohio for what should be a great time, as we have our second annual MFCA Convention...until then...God Bless and long live miniature football.

MIGGLE
CONVENTION 2009



HANGING WITH THE FACE OF THE HOBBY

Mr. National's take on the 2009 Miggle Convention



Amid a cloud of uncertainty Michael and Delayne Landsman went ahead with their 15th Annual Miggle Toys Convention.

This year they were back in familiar territory...the Embassy Suites in Deerfield, IL. Deerfield had been the host site just five years earlier, and the state of Illinois has seen five Miggle Conventions all together, but this time was much different than any of the other conventions. This time the

state of the economy had put this convention in serious doubt. Can we afford it? Will anyone show up? If they do, how many, and will they be able to buy anything? These were questions that Michael and Delayne, as well as every person thinking of attending, had to think of, and answer. Those questions were answered by hundreds of smiling faces as the convention opened on Saturday morning.

Coaches that had never seen each other, let alone roomed together, were sharing rooms. Coaches crammed as many league mates as possible into their rooms. Instead of eating out, coaches went to the super market to buy cold cuts, so they could make sandwiches back in the room. The people of this great hobby had to show that anything is possible when you put your mind to it, and that included staring down a very bad economy. The usual suspects were here, Mike Turner and Harvey Bennett were meeting coaches in the lobby as they came in. Frank Johnson, Jimbo, and the rest of the Chicago area coaches were here. The posse was here as the group from the GLEFL made the journey. Mr. National and his Philly entourage were present. The Friday evening dinner was filled to capacity. There was no Ira Silverman this year, but the Landsmans took the podium, and gave a heartfelt thank you to everyone who braved the difficult times, and the very, very cold weather. Over 50 coaches competed in the tournament, while dozens of other coaches elected to watch, and enjoy the fellowship.

The Saturday morning breakfast is turning into the place to be for hearing about what went on when you were too tired to stay up! "Happy Hour" is where coaches will gather to plan out the rest of their evening, and night life. The kids, the hobby's next generation, were living in the pool when they weren't playing miniature football or watching their dads play. As Sunday rolled around, the Great Lakes had three of the final four coaches, and five of the elite eight still alive in the tourney. Mike Landsman kept calling raffle numbers, Margie was packing up boxes, Frank Johnson and Ken Allen were doing play by play color commentary, and for those fortunate enough to hang around, you were witness to the greatest title game in Miggle's fabled history. The finish of this game was as powerful as....as...as, the incredible HULK!!!!

BEST MOMENTS

- ▮ JUST SEEING HOW MANY COACHES SHOWED UP DESPITE THE ECONOMIC CRUNCH.
- ▮ WATCHING ALL THE FIRST TIMERS STAND UP DURING THE FRIDAY DINNER.
- ▮ JIM DAVIS BEING RECOGNIZED FOR ATTENDING ALL 15 CONVENTIONS.
- ▮ SEEING ALL THE GREAT TEAMS PAINTED AND DECALED BY OUR COACHES.
- ▮ BEING A WITNESS TO THE TITLE GAME BETWEEN JIM AND NORBERT. WHAT A FINISH.

DID YOU NOTICE?

- ▮ HOW TIPSY TOOKIE WOULD GET DURING HAPPY HOUR.
- ▮ THAT NO DAVE WAS BETTER PREPARED THAN LAST YEAR.
- ▮ HOW MUCH BUTCH CARTER LOOKS LIKE A REAL NFL COACH?
- ▮ THOSE NICE AIR BRUSH SHIRTS COREY WAS WEARING.
- ▮ FRANK JOHNSON WAS VERY CASUALLY DRESSED ALL WEEKEND.
- ▮ MICHAEL LANDSMAN WAS WALKING WITHOUT HIS CANE.
- ▮ NOBODY PAYS ATTENTION TO THOSE RAFFLE TICKETS
- ▮ THERE WAS NO GREEN ROOM RUMBLE AGAIN!

THUMBS UP

- ▮ TO MIGGLE FOR LETTING THE MFCA HOLD THEIR SKILLS EVENT.
- ▮ TO THE GLEFL FOR PLAYING A PLAY-OFF GAME DURING THE WEEKEND.
- ▮ TO JIMBO FOR BRING THE AFL SET UP FOR EVERYONE TO CHECK OUT.
- ▮ FOR THE FINE JOB THE MIGGLE STAFF DID ALL WEEKEND.

THUMBS DOWN

- ▮ FOR NOT HAVING THE GRR.
- ▮ TO ANYONE WHO DIDN'T BUY A BLOCK POOL FROM MR. NATIONAL
- ▮ TO ANYONE WHO SAYS THEY DIDN'T HAVE A GREAT TIME!
- ▮ FOR PLAYING THE TOURNEY ON THOSE SMALL BOARDS.

The History of the...

GREEN ROOM



GREEN ROOM MEMORIES PART 1

by Corey Johnson and Ray Fanara

The Green Room Rumble (GRR) has been increasing in popularity with each passing event since its inception at the Miggle convention in South Bend, Indiana in January 2003. Let's look back at the some of its history, and the coaches that still make it a memorable event, for all its' participants whenever it's held these days. Saturday evening, during Miggle's "Electric Football Conventions," is a time for coaches from across the country to strengthen friendships made on the chat boards, and to make new acquaintances within the hobby. It's traditionally a time to share and demonstrate playing styles, base tweaking techniques, playbooks and enjoy the fellowship and relax after two hectic days of travel and competition. We all have fond memories of seeing, for the first time, the strategy divider, Miniature Arena Football, the DFW rule set in action and coming to understand the infinite possibilities for Miniature Football (MF) presented in many rules and playing styles. Fortunately, the Lands-

man's always provide a large hotel conference room for coaches to gather after scheduled convention activities come to a close for

the day, so we can mingle, bond and explore new ways to play and enjoy our hobby. While playing at the Miggle Convention is always a highlight on the MF Tournament Tour, we coaches always felt inhibited by not being allowed to use our own personal teams during Miggle sanctioned competitions, which was

the case for the first ten Miggle conventions. You spend hours fine tuning your team, tweaking bases and learning its unique characteristics for competitive play, only to find you could not use that team at the Miggle Convention due to the nature of the event, which promoted fairness and a level playing field for all contestants regardless of experience.

Well, all that changed in South Bend, Indiana, January 2003.



The First Green Room Rumble South Bend

On a snowy Saturday night at the Hotel adjacent to the College Football Hall of Fame, a "Players Tournament" conducted by the players was conceived when Ty Ware and Corey Johnson decided to stage a tournament that was open to everyone. Frank Johnson and Ray Fanara each provided assistance in organizing the event, helping to define a simple rule-set, game length and team limitations. Each had a vision for making this impromptu competition fair and fun for all, and



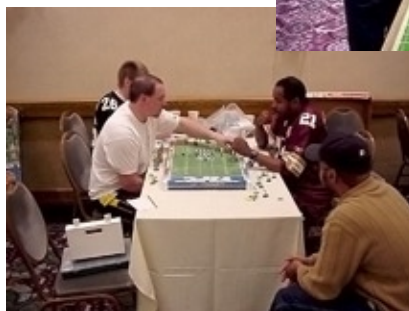
best of all...you could coach your own team. The four men put their heads together, coming up with a standard rule set that allowed everyone to use their league

or favorite team. The only exception was there were to be no boiled bases allowed. The Detroit coaches, who were using boiled bases at the time, agreed, and went with their non-boiled teams. The group decided to go with FOB tackling, no QB running into the LOS; no passing sticks and some of the rules developed by Tudor/Miggle. It was basically a simple rule set that allowed self governance and sportsmanship without inhibiting coaching ability or creativity.

A nominal two dollar entry fee was invoked just to make it interesting and not drive anyone away. Coaches were instructed to write their names on one of the bills of currency they provided and a blind draw to determine initial match-ups was conducted by Ray Fanara, with Ty Ware, having the biggest mouth, shouting out the match-ups. When Corey finished with money collection, he and Ty explained the rules, while Frank completed drawing out the brackets and setting down the match-ups for all to see. Twenty-two coaches began play around 10:00 PM that evening and play continued until well after 2:00 AM. During the course of activities someone suggested naming the event (e.g. Back Room Brawl, Miggle II, Big Room Tourney, etc...) to name a few suggestions. It was Ray who told stories of his pool hall days, where tournament players and hustlers would play side games for money on tables away from the actual tournament. They referred to this room of tables separate from the actual tournament as the 'Green Room' where you could always get action after getting knocked out of the tournament. It was if a light went off in Corey's head...Green Room Rumble! Everyone loved it, and that's what these side tour-

naments at major events are still referred as to this day.

The inaugural Green Room Rumble featured four-eight play quarters to determine game length, overtime would be 1 play from the 50yd line, and yardage wins. All game results were turned into one of the unofficial officials, the winners kept playing and some of the losers hung around to watch, and help ref. The tourney



went late into the night, early into the morning. After the smoke had cleared only two remained, Mike Turner and Corey Johnson. Since it was so late, they decided to finish it

on Sunday morning. The \$44 dollar pot awaited the winner. During breakfast everyone was asking who won... is it over? Mike was known for his coaching ability, but it was the unexpected Corey Johnson in the final game that shocked most. He was more likely to win best dressed rather than an EF tourney. They played on the new Miggle big board, while the Miggle Final Four were playing, where Charles "Abby" Vaughn and Edgar Downs made it to the Miggle final. In the meantime Corey was ahead of Mike as they had to clear the field for the official Miggle final game on the same Big Board. Corey agreed to split the pot with Mike, but Corey was the official winner of the inaugural Rumble.

2004 Green Room Rumble Chicago

The following year the convention was in Chicago...Deerfield, Illinois to be exact. Everyone was talking about the Green Room Rumble. Corey was somehow anointed the commissioner of this tourney, and was getting emails, and phone calls about the rules, and equipment specs. As Ray had said, "the beauty of the GRR is that it's arranged on location." No strenuous team check-in or lengthy rule books. Based on the simplicity of the Rule-set, everyone felt comfortable with the rules before the Rumble started. The second GRR saw the committee use any touch tackling, and there were no entry fees. There were over forty coaches in this year's GRR. Due to the amount of coaches, the Rumble would be two 12 play halves. The main issue was the fact that three coaches from the LAEFL wanted to play, but wanted to play with their boiled league teams. Now the GRR, wanting to stand by their adage of you play with your team, allowed the boiled based teams. Bracket master Frank joked that he should just have them play each other, but they put the names of Eric Robinson, Cleon Tate, and Mike

Turner into the bucket with everyone else. Another twist to the plot was that Corey was approached by a new board maker on the scene; he was having difficulty selling his boards. Both thought it would be a great idea to have the coaches participating in the Rumble to play on these fields. A must for any GRR event is to have plenty of boards available for competition. The board maker was none other than Bruce Watts. So now we had the rules, boards to play on, but nobody, and I mean nobody wanted to have to play the LA coaches. You see boiled bases had the reputation of being overwhelmingly strong. Well Cleon, aka Rasta Haze decided to stay at the bar area, and wasn't interested in playing. Mike was picked to play somebody that he beat in the first round. He awaited the winner of the other first round match up in his bracket, league mate Eric Robinson vs. a wide eyed, big smile rookie out of the Detroit area. He had just gotten back into the hobby, and couldn't believe how many guys still played the game. That rookie was Norbert Revels! Using a team of Cleveland Browns he had from his youth, he overpowered Eric's boiled team. Next up was the veteran Mike Turner, same result; he pushed Mike's Broncos all over the field. Everyone was asking...who's this Norbert guy? The other question all the coaches were asking, who makes these boards we are playing on? Norbert had single handily took care of the, "Who's going to play the boiled guys dilemma." He steam rolled his way into the final, on the other side of the bracket was none other than "Prettyboy" Corey Johnson, again.

The time was now after 3am, the Hotel manager had to lock up the big room, so they had to play the final game elsewhere. Corey wanted to finish it in the morning, but Great Lake coaches Ken Allen, and Simmie Lassiter said they could host the final game in their room. Norbert was as fresh as a daisy. Prettyboy was way past his bedtime and wanted some beauty rest. Not only was Norbert the strongest team at the convention, he had his offensive, and defensive coordinators helping him throughout the game. Playing with the deck stacked against him, Corey somehow pulled out the victory and repeated as Green Room Rumble champ. After the game the two coaches stood out on the balcony and talked for hours about miniature football and life in general.

Again all the talk during the breakfast was who won the GRR? This tourney had taken on its own life, and in some ways was as important as the Miggle tourney. By the time the convention had come to a close, Bruce Watts had sold every board used in the Rumble. To this day, Bruce still says the Rumble put him on the map! Bruce Watts has since become one of the biggest board makers in the hobby, while Norbert has probably tweaked as many bases as anyone in the hobby. Corey has become not only the face of the GRR, but most consider him the face of the hobby! All three coaches' early development can be traced back to the Chicago Convention, and Green Room Rumble II.

The next two Rumbles had 25 plus coaches in Pittsburgh and Baltimore respectively, each with memorable games and outcomes. We'll look at those events in more detail in part two along with the GRR at the Seawall Brawl and Beltsville Bash. As Corey states, the GRR has taken on a life of its own and continues to be a popular event promoting fellowship and friendly competition. In preparation for Miggle Conventions, and other upcoming tournaments, coaches now prepare teams to play in the main tournament as well as a team for the GRR. We hope to see you at the next Green Room Rumble, where having fun and good fellowship are mandatory.



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2008 Connecticut New York Electric Football League

The Connecticut New York Football League recently completed its sixth season. A few familiar faces from previous seasons took the year off and a number of new young coaches joined the league. New young coaches joining the league this year were: L. J. Harris Jr., Damien McClary, Robbie Moye, Nick Slate and Reggie Wilson. The October 25th opening day was held in the Saugerties, New York home of the Packers and Coach Slate. 13 games were played on opening day and, as

Continued on pg. 19



18 SPRING 2009 THE TWEAK

TWO TIMES THE FUN!

The CNYEFL and **BAM**

Season Recaps by Robert Slate



2008 BAM Season

The first season of the Big Apple Miniature Football League (BAM) officially got under way on Saturday, July 20th, 2008. The coaches met up at the Joyce Kilmer Teen Hub Center in New Brunswick, New Jersey. After some rules discussions and interesting pre-season interviews a bit of scrimmaging took place to allow coaches to get used to the DFW Shoot Out rules set.

On August 8th the first official BAM games kicked-off at the John M. Perzel Community Center in Philadelphia. Some exciting opening day match-ups took place including an over-time thriller involving the Jets of Joe Greco and the Falcons of Brian Healey as well as a down to the last play game between the 49ers and the Packers. BAM play resumed two weeks later, again at the Perzel Center, with the now famous "dicey" incident taking place.

In late August, Co-Commissioner Morgan Scott visited the Toy Wiz in Nanuet, New York.

Continued on pg. 19



usual, a good amount of food and fellowship was shared. The Rams of Coach Wharton opened the season scoring 53 points, letting everyone know that they were ready to defend their title. Coach Gardner led his Steelers to two opening day wins. Newcomers Nick Slate's Bengals and Damien Moye's Eagles put forth great rookie starts as they each registered two wins on the day. The regular season was marked by some excellent competition and a few surprises. On Thanksgiving Day the father-son divisional match-up between the Bengals and the Packers ended in a 17-15 win for young Coach Slate. In the first week of December, the Steelers handed the Rams their first loss on a game saving, last play tackle. One week later the Giants upset the Cowboys 28-20.

The Play-offs opened with two more surprises as the Chargers defeated the Steelers 20-14 and the Bengals defeated the Saints 26-17. In the conference finals Coach Wharton's Rams shut-out a very tough Chargers squad 23-0 and the Packers won round three of the father-son match-up defeating the Bengals in another close game 20-15.

On February 21st the Coach Slate's Packers and the defending



champion Rams of Coach Wharton faced-off in the Big Dance. The Packers opened by recovering a Rams onside kick attempt and then drove for the opening score, but missed on a two point conversion attempt – score 6-0. The Rams came right back with a nice kick-off return and short TD drive. Coach Wharton then attempted his second and final onside kick attempt. This time, the Rams recovered in the Packers end zone but missed the PAT. The teams exchanged possessions one more time without scoring to make it 12-6 Rams at the half.

At halftime of the championship game the league awards ceremony was held. Steelers Coach Thomas Gardner was chosen by his fellow coaches to receive the highly coveted Coach of the Year Award. Nick Slate and his Bengals won the Sack Award by registering 53 sacks on the season, while coach John Wharton and his Rams took home the rushing title.



Continued on pg. 20

Coach Scott immediately saw the great potential that the Toy Wiz had to offer and made arrangements for this great gaming spot to be the official home of the BAM. The first BAM games at the Toy Wiz took place on Saturday, September 6th.

The first BAM Super Bowl pitted passing ace Brian Healey and his Falcons against the gritty – never say die Buccaneers of Coach Karim Campbell. Healey's Falcons completed the season undefeated and then defeated the 49ers to advance to the big game. Coach Karim's Buccaneers traveled a much tougher road to the championship game.

First they had to win their final game to have a chance to make the play-offs – which started that same day! The Buccaneers scored on the final play in their last regular season game to defeat the Chiefs and then a short time later took down the Packers 35-



24. Immediately following the game with the Packers he started the semi-final match-up with Joe Greco's Jets. In a game that was broken up into two different days at two different sites the Bucs outlasted the 2nd seeded Jets and moved on to Super Bowl I.



BAM Super Bowl I

A very nice group gathered to watch the first BAM Super Bowl on December 21st at the Toy Wiz in Nanuet. In addition to the BAM coaches were 50 or so other New York electric football coaches and fans as well as the usual gamers at The Toy Wiz. While Coach Karim and Coach Healey were preparing their teams, Mr. National was conducting interviews and setting up the broadcast booth with guest commentator Ed Scott. Co-Commissioner Morgan Scott set up the Wattz board with a beautiful custom BAM Super Bowl cover made by Larue. The other Co-Commissioner, Wally Jabs, and his son arrived carrying tons of great food for the half-time festivities.

Coach Healey opened the game driving the ball inside the Bucs 20 yard line, but had to settle for a 36 yard field goal. Coach Karim moved the ball with some success – but, as would be the case for most of the game, the Falcons defense consistently stopped the Buccaneers run game. The Falcons took over and drove the ball once again deep



Continued on pg. 20



The second half began with the Packers using their first onside kick and recovered it deep in Ram territory. The Packers scored just four plays later and, with the PAT, took the lead back 13-12. The Packers then recovered their second onside kick and continued using their power run game to drive for their second consecutive touchdown and, with the PAT, went up 20-12. The ensuing kick-off went out of bounds giving the Rams the ball at their own 40 yard line. The Rams scored three plays later after a short pass completion turned into a 45 yard touchdown. Coach Wharton successfully converted the two point conversion to tie the score at 20. With no onside attempts left the Rams had to kick away to the Packers. The Packers took the ball and drove down the field one last time, scoring the go ahead touchdown with only three plays remaining in the game. After another kick out of bounds, the Rams took over on their own forty yard line. This time, the Packer defense stiffened, driving the Rams back inside their own 10 yard line to finish the game, and giving Coach Slate his first CNYEFL title.

More to come from around the MFCA, as we take a look from around the country, region by region.



into Buc territory. This time they hit pay dirt with a 1 yard touchdown pass and, with the conversion, made it 10-0 with 9:00 remaining in the half. After trading possessions the Falcons got the ball back inside their own 40 and on the last play of the half hit a short pass to a back out of the backfield, which turned into a 66 yard touchdown – Falcons 17-0. The second half was a defensive battle between the two teams with the lone score being a 63 yard field by the Buccaneers late in the third quarter. The final score of BAM Super Bowl I was Falcons 17 - Buccaneers 3. Coach Healey and his Falcons completed the season with a perfect 12-0 record.

During the course of this first season of the BAM, the coaches worked through learning the Shoot Out rules and style of play, traversed scheduling conflicts, dealt with a few health related issues and experienced various other first year challenges. Morgan Scott and Wally Jabs did a fine job of organizing and administering all aspects of the inaugural BAM season. There were a few stressful moments and bumps in the road along the way, but always evident was the love of playing the game and enjoying spending time with others.



The start of the next BAM season is just around the corner. The league has expanded from 10 teams in 2008 to 28 teams for 2009 – including coaches from Texas, Florida and the Midwest - this is a sure sign of the level of excitement and competitive energy expressed by the coaches during the opening season!



2009 BUZZFEST

THE LIGHT falls on BAXTER...

(LITERALLY!)

BY JERRY MCGHEE



March 27-29, 2009

Thirty-nine coaches from eight states came to Harrisburg, PA to compete in a 32 grid bracket for one big trophy and bragging rights to this year's Buzzfest IX championship! The event was hosted by George Diamond and this year, as in years past, George put a great deal of hard work into the tournament to ensure it ran smooth and on schedule. George had a lot of help to keep the tournament running along on schedule and, as anyone who has put together any kind of event knows, the volunteers that help run the event are invaluable to the success of any event. My hats off to everyone who made it run great! This was my third year in a row to attend Buzzfest. I personally like this tournament

a great deal. I like it for a lot of reasons, but first and foremost, it's close to where I live! I'm not trying to knock anyone's tournament anywhere else, but like most "EFLers" who go to tournaments, proximity (i.e. location, location, location!) has a lot to do with it. Second, due to its proximity, there seems to be a great deal of EFLers who attend every year which makes the tournament grid rich with competition...I like that a lot too!

I really like competition. It is a lot of fun and is a great source of entertainment in electric football to see how it all plays out. There are a myriad of factors that come into play during an electric football tournament and much like watching your favorite NFL or College team's season play out during a year; you can experience that thrill of victory and agony of defeat in a single weekend with some of your closest electric football friends! I live in Frederick, MD which is about 84 miles from Buzzfest. I arrived at Buzzfest on a Friday night with my wife and 18 month old son, Peyton, in tow. My good friend Mark Francis, from Richmond, VA, stopped at my house for lunch on his way up to Buzzfest. It was a good visit as it got



Ed Scott (left) takes on me and Peyton.
(Thank goodness Peyton can pass.)





John Martin from Ohio (left) versus Mark Francis of Virginia

me charged for coming up and getting focused to play.

I met Mark at last year's Buzzfest (2008). He had heard about me and at the time I was living in Virginia not that far away from him. He was going to contact me, but someone had told him that I was a recluse in EFL world, which I thought was pretty funny. I'm not very vocal on the chat boards, but as anyone who has met me has found out, I'm far from being a recluse. I'm just a hard working American who loves the electric football hobby. Mark and I met in round one in the 2008 tournament. One of the first plays in round one, I called Mark out for an off sides and I took the penalty and eventually the "W". He couldn't believe it! He thought I was a prick. But rest assured, it didn't keep me up that night. He just didn't know me yet. But I digressed somewhat...on to the 2009 Buzzfest!

Friday night was the preliminary round. The prelims are a lot of fun as you get to play a lot of different coaches in a very



The "Buzz Kids" prepare for the event by showing how their going to drive for a score... First downs, baby...first downs!!

short period of time. What was pretty cool this year was all but one of the top eight preliminary qualifying coaches made it to the quarter finals. A testament to the wonderful world

of statistics! In 2008, I lost in the quarter finals to Flemington, New Jersey's own Joe Greco! To make it even more telling of how competitive the tournament is, I lost in overtime! It was a pretty hard fought battle. Fast forward to 2009 and it's like déjà vu all over again...there I was going into the quarterfinals and yet again I had to get through Joe Greco! Statistically, I finished 4th in the prelims and Joe finished fifth. We both were exactly where we needed to be at that moment. Ultimately Joe

won for the second year in a row against me in the quarter finals at Buzzfest, which now in the world of Jerry McGhee makes him like Tom Brady and me like Peyton Manning. A good hard fought rivalry that Joe and I look forward to

continuing. Know this Joe...I'll get you one of these days even if I have to move to New Jersey to do it!



Old and new friends reunite at Buzzfest! From Left to right: Chuck Lawrence, Ray Fanara, Mike Pratt, and John Menesini

Tournament play requires skill, but is also a test of your emotional and physical endurance. Saturday at Buzzfest is a long day if you're winning. It is the good, the bad and the ugly all in one day! The ugly usually get eliminated early. The bad comes in the form of lower back pain and headaches from game after game after game. The good comes with victory and your overall satisfaction with your performance. Not only do your electric football players need to be in peak tweak base perfor-

MFCA Vice President, Will Travers, finally gets to play some games after sitting out previous events to run MFCA skills competitions.



mance, but you, the coach, need to be in some semblance of physical, mental and emotional peak performance. The competition in the games is fairly intense. Your successes and failures hinge on the vibration of the board and your own personal knowledge of how you think your squad is going to move and how you react to your opposing coach if he's shutting you down.

For me, hunching over a game board is physically exhausting. To do it repeatedly for 3 or 4 games over a 12 hour period is really physically exhausting. But the pain is worth it when, after the last play, you realize you've won the game. If you're on the losing end, the pain deepens and sets in like rigor mortis. Head games are a part of electric football. Some coaches are very vocal about this and others are more passive aggressive. Getting inside your opponents skull and taking them off their focus is all part of the game. Overcoming this is difficult, but nonetheless achievable, if you stay true to your game and don't let your emotions get the best of you. Abandoning your game plan once a coach is in your head is probably the worst thing you can do. Just like in real football, if you're going ugly early, use halftime to readjust your game plan and gain the advantage. Fatigue can also get you out of your game plan at an electric football tournament. Physical fatigue can wear you down and sack you faster than your opponent's head game, so make sure you prepare physically as well as mentally.

When I was playing Darrin Ross early in the tournament, Jim Davis (The Hulk) and Corey Johnson (Mr. National) were squaring off in a classic Raiders vs. 49ers battle. Jim Davis



Mike Guttman keeps the bracket flowing. He is not only Buzzfest's right hand man, but also serves as the MFCA's Treasurer and organizes and helps run the Miggle Convention. The hobby wouldn't be the same without him!



Buzz Gold! Lots of trophies were available for the "Custom" division and "Second Chance" division to the "Buzzy" awards.

was verbally tormenting National. It was entertaining for everyone in the room as they were so loud! There was no doubt that there were some serious smack and some serious coaching taking place. At one point, I saw Corey plug in his iPod and I'm not sure, but I'm pretty sure I heard the song "Get Back" by Ludicrous blasting through the headphones over and over. It had to have helped him focus as he started a comeback. But the plays ran out and the Hulk, a.k.a. 2009 Miggle Champ, won 21-14. The Hulk wasn't

that vocal in his next game as he was squaring off with the defending Buzzball champion, Raiderman. The change was noticeably different as the two champs squared off. I thought the change in the intensity of their game was interesting to note. I think that was all about respect.



Big Dawg field, George Diamond's home field, plays host to a prelim.

My friend Mark Francis had a good tournament. Mark always astounds me when he comes to tournaments, because he says he doesn't come to win. As a military guy I am incapable of processing this thought. When you square off with me on the electric gridiron my intention is to get in your head, shut you down and pound you relentlessly until you lose and I'm not going to make a big deal out of it when I'm doing it. Mark has not adopted this philosophy yet. Mark finished a respectable 15th in the Prelims out of 39 coaches, but lost to Norbert Revels in Round 1. I think that Mark



secretly likes to do this and likes the ambiance, camaraderie and pick-up games much more than the competition. Don't be fooled though, Mark Francis has an "A" game too. He's one of these guys who are a diamond in the rough right now. It's a good thing he hasn't tasted the sweet success of

brand new untested bases for the 2009 season. He's off to a great start in 2009 claiming the Buzzball Championship by defeating Raiderman 7-6 in the Buzzball Championship. Like Raiderman, Adrian is another competitive ironman of electric football and hard core competitor who racks up championships. Like most everyone at the tournament he's also a pretty good person to get to know and learn from. Congratulations Adrian!



Joe Greco and Paul "Raiderman" Bartels show the wear of a 4 overtime game. Raiderman pulled it out to go on to the Championship game.

victory at a tournament yet, and then he'd be really hard to beat. He races bicycles through the streets of Richmond competitively and has a very competitive job by nature. I really think Mark is doing nothing more than enjoying the hobby on his terms; which is cool, I'm just not that evolved to understand it at a tournament (LOL).

Last year's defending champion, Paul Bartels (a.k.a. Raiderman) was there to defend his title and he gave it a good run. He received an automatic #1 seed ranking as defending champ in the prelims and making a good run through his competition all the way to the championship; a place he's very familiar with in this tournament. Raiderman is a tough competitor; however, this wasn't his year for the Buzzball championship.

This year's event belonged to Adrian Baxter. Adrian did well in the preliminary rounds claiming a 3rd seed after Friday night's preliminary action. Adrian's battles started much earlier as Adrian fought through a heart attack in December and later in the tournament he sustained a mild concussion after he crashed through a hotel light fixture with his head demonstrating his 39" vertical jump after a victory in one of the elimination rounds. Ya gotta love the passion! Adrian said to this reporter that he was competing with a set of

There were three other tournaments embedded in the Buzzball main event. The "Custom" division, which allowed weighted and custom figures, the "Youth" division and lastly the "Second Chance" division for those who got eliminated early, but desperately needed a trophy to take home to their wives to prove that they were actually at an electric football tournament (LOL!!). Winner of the "Custom" division was again none other than Adrian Baxter. The "Youth" division was won by "Lil" Jerry Fulton. Congratulations to these guys for their endurance and skill to win it all! George also gives out his "Buzzy" awards. This year's Buzzy winners were: Chuck Lawrence "Preliminators" (Best Qualifier); Mike Guttmann "Best In Show" (Custom throwback Broncos) and Andrew Stewart "Survivor" (a.k.a. "Second Chance" division).

If you've never been to Buzzfest, it's a tournament that you might want to put on your calendar. It's a lot of fun, a great place to visit and a lot of good people to meet and get to know. Oh yeah, there's a lot of stuff for sale at Buzzfest too, as well as in the trading rooms. It's best to get there on Friday to get your team checked-in and do your best to get a good seeding in the Friday night preliminary rounds. Saturday is the heart of the tournament as the single elimination rounds take place. Expect to play 3-4 full games on Saturday if you're doing well. Lose and you're done...don't worry though, there are plenty of other coaches available for pick-up games you can get into; these pick-up games go well into the night. Sunday is the final four and lastly, the Buzzball championship. If you can make it that far, you've gone through some great talent to



Zack Greco (standing) and "Lil" Jerry Fulton competed for the Youth Championship. Jerry took home the trophy in this youth rivalry.





Adrian Baxter prepares his team for the "Big Game".

get there. Again, thanks to George and his assistants for hosting another great event and to all the coaches who showed-up to make another Buzzfest tournament great! All-in-all, I had a great time at the Buzzfest. It was good to see everyone again and it was good to play as many games as I did and in the end I finished respectably. The best philosophy I think I have for these tournaments is to win graciously and lose gracefully. Now I just have to get past my personal nemesis...Joe Greco! Know this Joe... I'm working even now to make my team better. Was that graceful enough?

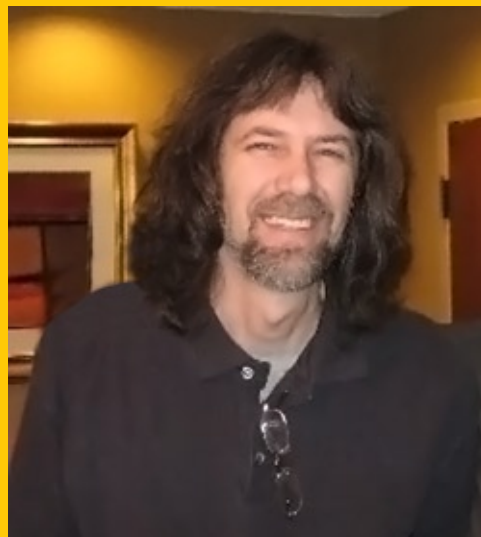


Yes, that is a haze! The "After the Fest" cigar is becoming a growing tradition around the country as coaches share a laugh and some last fellowship before heading home.

THE BUZZFEST AWARD'S CEREMONY



(SOMEBODY BUY GEORGE A REAL CAMERA!)



COMPLETELY PRATT-ICAL

BUZZFEST MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT

"Adrian's Leap of Faith into the chandelier was a definite defining moment. His excitement after a game winning play caused him to go vertical and directly into the light fixture above him. It came crashing down, followed by a BOOM when the bulbs burst. We can only laugh now since no one got hurt. Additionally, I soon thought of how I might feel had I been the one who did it. I have since dubbed him Adrian 'Southwest' Baxter after the famous commercial series. 'Wanna get away?'"

BUZZFEST MOST TENDER MOMENT

"During the Championship game with respect to a called sack – Raiderman said this... 'Guys, listen. We are playing on a vinyl field cover. Players do not bounce. His team has more bouncing going on than Winnie the Pooh and Tigger Too'."

THE BUZZFEST STAFF

"It would be construed as egotistical for me to comment extensively on this since I was a part of it. Though I do not mind saying that overall, things went very smooth. George busts his hump to bring a venue to the hobby that a Champion can be proud to earn. Those of us more behind the scenes are required to help make sure it happens for him. No excuses, no regrets. The show goes on, with or without. It mostly went on with! Guttman is a gem."

THE BUZZFEST SURVIVOR TROPHY

"Survivor trophy is a separate bracket for those who were eliminated during the main event. It gives those coaches a chance to keep playing and fellowship on the board. Oh! Yes, there is a trophy for the winner. I was going to participate myself. But in true Survivor series fashion, I was promptly voted off of the island. He He!"





by George
Diamond

TAKING IT ONE STEP AT A TIME... PART II

I hope “League Building Part I” helped you in some way to start a league or have your existing league grow. In this second part of the series on league building, I would like to touch on some important aspects of league management and one topic that is a hot topic in leagues-fees.

One topic that is debatable is the concept of “league fees”. I feel strongly the league fee should be an amount that creates a feeling of “commitment” from the participant. In our first year of the HPBL, the league fee was \$60 if you already owned a game board and a team. It was \$100 if you didn’t, but that amount got you a brand new Super Bowl game which included the league fee. If one has a nominal league fee, like \$5 - \$20, it becomes easy for the participant to walk away from his obligation of playing in the league. There is nothing more irritating to me than someone who does not follow through with his commitment to participate in a league. It is VERY selfish. I understand things come up, but for the most part it is a commitment like a bowling league or a softball league. Others have set aside time to play in the league, and for guys not to show, or worse, not even call, is a dagger in the heart of any league with hopes of growing and prospering. The point I am trying to make is produce a league fee that demands a commitment that will make guys think twice about just walking away or leaving league mates hanging. It must be looked upon as an investment.

Now that we have addressed the tangible aspect of league entry, in the form of the league entry fee, let’s address one of the most important intangible aspects of building your league and that is the psychology of the recruiting process. I have noticed this from talking to many customers on the phone, and via emails, that many

of us are chasing potential league mates away without intending to do so. To make a not so intended pun, it is the VIBES we give when talking to potential recruits. It is not just looking into the eyes of the recruit, which is important when talking to anyone and showing your sincerity, it is the LOOK that you are giving him. And for many of us, it has been the look of “Desperation” or, the “Beggar’s” look.

I have had similar conversations with some female friends of mine, being that when we discussed potential dating situations, a



Tom Ruesink answers the usual questions for a passerby at a charity event held in the Mall of America in Minneapolis.



couple of them told me that they always play hard to get because if they do not, they will not be respected or the dater will think perhaps something is wrong with them. To use an old sales skill, it is called the “take away” close technique. The psychology behind this is that if something is free, no one will want it or respect it. People want what they cannot have. So, if when recruiting, or to put it into terms of the take away, “casually showing off the game”, one has to be in control of the conversation. How does one do that? YOU ask the questions, preferably qualifying questions that DO NOT HAVE a YES or NO for answers. And do not ask open ended questions like, “ So Bill, what do you think?” WRONG!

Many folks today have the attention span of a lit match. And they come at you firing question after question. It goes something like this:

Hey man, I remember that game,...how do you pass?, do you still use that QB thingy? ...I never used that thing, my brother and I just threw the fuzzy ball with our hands...we could never get our guys to go straight, do they go straight now? So, do you guys play all the time, have leagues and stuff? I can’t believe guys are still playing this game...

Just take a step back and listen, then take charge by answering his machine gunned questions with a question of your own, “So, you had this game as a kid, which teams did you have? What is your favorite team now? Oh, yeah, Clint is that team this year, come over here and let me show his team...etc. First thing is to get to know the prospect before even bringing up the subject of getting involved with the league. Raiderman is really good at this as I hear him ask, “What’s your favorite team?” or “Remember this game, it’s come a long way. Did you have one? Which teams did you have?”

Once you have a grasp on the prospect’s preferences and have gauged his interest, now is the time to start to ask questions that will qualify the prospect as a potential league mate. Imagine your questions taking them down a path. Along the path there will be forks in the road, and choices the prospect will choose will be one of the two YOU OFFER. For example...

YOU: We are getting ready to start our league in two weeks, Bill, if you were to play in the league, would you like to use your favorite team? (one of his old teams from childhood)? Remember, you had asked him that earlier.

Prospect: Well I think I would like to. (favorite team)

Another guiding question style is to focus on the positives of the game. Never, ever, ever get a prospect to focus on the negative. What do I mean when I say this? Again, it is the psychology of guiding his focus by the words we use. An example of using a negative phrase, “Don’t think of the color green”, ...as soon as you hear or read “green” something green flashes through your brain. The same principle applies here, although this can be an open ended question. The questions should focus on the positive.



Terry Redden of Kearney, Nebraska, explains the game to some young, prospective, coaches who are seeing the game for the first time in their lives.

YOU: Bill, I can see by the look on your face, you are amazed/surprised by how much the game has changed. With what you have seen so far, what is it that you LIKE the most.

Prospect: Wow, I really like the passing with the sticks...I never did like using that QB thing!

At some point you want to infer that he will be coming aboard, like:

YOU: Bill when you join the league, we will help you get your team competitive right away. In pre-season we will show you how to tweak your bases to run like this (showing him), and we have a preseason so you get to understand the rules. WE want to see you get competitive, I can’t promise you will win many games in your first season, but if you liked this game as a kid, you’ll love it now, I can promise you will have fun.

While the questioning is taking place, if you are not playing a game, this is the time to give him a guided tour while asking your qualifying questions, and showing off the finer points of the game and equipment. Show him the figures with face masks, and show him some screaming fast bases. Explain to him that you don’t want all you bases to go straight and why.

Remember to stay in control because it is easy to get knocked off track because you want to ask all the questions, but keep a steady path.

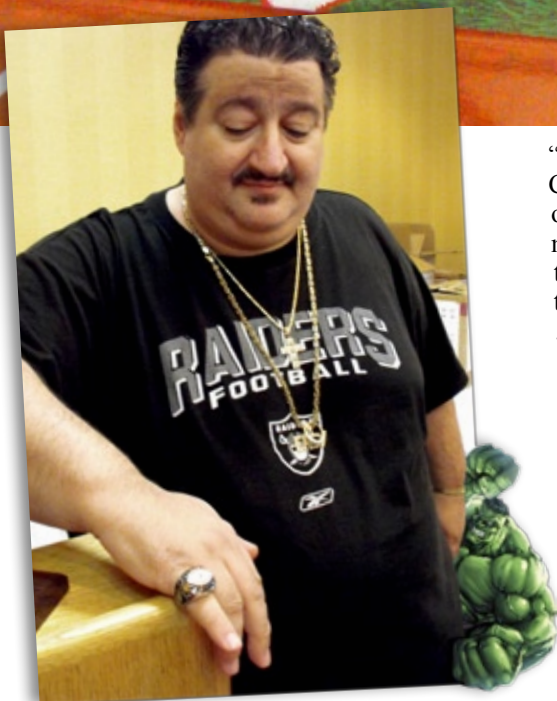
Stay tuned for Part III in the next issue of the Tweak!



The JIM DAVIS

Story

by Matthew Culp



“Always a bridesmaid...never a bride!” That was the cry of Jim Davis at the end of the Championship game at the Arch City Huddle tourney last year in Columbus, Ohio. It was one play for the championship that did not go his way...ohh what a difference a year makes! That used to be the motto of the man known to many as “The Hulk”, but not anymore as his destiny finally caught up to him on January 25th, 2009. Jim Davis is a well known coach in the world of miniature football and he is known for many things. What is he known for...well...some have said he has never been known to be shy about how he feels about something and voices his opinion accordingly. Many have said he is known for his tremendously strong bases, which many coaches have used to find their way far into tourneys using his equipment. He is also known to be a family man and takes great pride in being a father. But now Jim is known for something that has eluded him for many, many years...a Miggle Champion.



Whether you respect him for his tweaking abilities with bases or his style of play...one thing that stands out to all is his presence. When Jim enters a room he commands attention immediately. His demeanor is somewhere between Hulk Hogan and Santa Claus, in the sense he is funny, always a very good sport and he just wants to play ball. I met Jim Davis at the very first Miggle Convention at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Chicago in 1996, and he made such a good impression on me, that although we had just met I was ready to sit down and play some football with this larger than life character. Jim is a guy that offers friendship to whoever wants it and offers game experience advice to any coach out there that asks for it. So it is no wonder that many coaches have come to know Jim. For 15 Miggle Conventions Jim Davis has been a regular in the tournament and has brought many great mo-



ments of laughter and fun to the event. To sum up who is Jim Davis all you need to know is this...he is all heart...and I mean all heart. That is why this year's Miggle Convention was so special to him and to those who have been rooting for him all these years. He came, he played and he, at last, won.

Jim is also a very rich man, for he has many friends and has a great group of guys around him in the Great Lakes Electric Football League (GLEFL). At Miggle during the "moment" immediately following his win, it was apparent that these guys are a tight group of friends and it was great that they could all share in his moment. If you ask Jim, he will tell you that his level of play is due to the fact that the GLEFL plays at such a high level, that you have to adapt to survive. Jim has not won many league titles or tournaments. He is well known for expressing his opinion and has a big bark. But look at him closely and you can see that right through that bark lurks the heart of a gentleman, and a determined

"JIM HAS THE BEST RUNNING GAME IN EF PERIOD. NOT JUST STRENGTH. THE MAN RUNS SWEEPS, DRAWS, TRAPS. BECAUSE HE DOESN'T PASS, HE DOESN'T GET THE RESPECT HE SHOULD IN THIS HOBBY. ALSO, HE HAS A BIG BARK, BUT DEEP DOWN IS A BIG TEDDY BEAR. HE IS A VERY NICE GUY."--CHUCK LAWRENCE

competitor. For these reasons, many consider him, including myself, to be a Legend of Miniature Football, because of the sheer fun he brings to the table. The staff of The Tweak has begun this new series to highlight those coaches, who simply play the game and love the game of miniature football. Legends are not born...they are made and it is my distinct honor to tell the Jim Davis story and share the story of one of the greatest "tweakers"...one of the most fun loving, charitable human beings in this hobby. This is the Jim Davis story.

JIM DAVIS EARLY YEARS

Jim Davis was born on August 27, 1960 in Detroit, Michigan to James and Delores Davis. He was your typical kid growing up and, like many of us, he found football as a way to make friends and pass the time. For some of us the hobby started during our younger years, for the most part on the Christmas when we all got our first football sets. For Jim it was Christmas 1968, one of the best year's to receive a Tudor game board. Jim had a younger brother, Anthony "Skeet" Davis, who he played electric football with. Jim also had another brother by the name of Robert and a sister named Tammy, who did not play electric football. His electric football career actually started with neighborhood kids in his third grade class. As a matter of fact, it seems several of his class mates got the same game for Christmas that year and all the boys in the class immediately started to get together on a regular basis and play. By the time the school year was over, Jim had helped form a 12 team league at the age of 8, with stats and everything...well everything a third grader could put together.

As the years pasted Jim enjoyed many seasons of electric football with the same core of friends. From third grade all the way up until his junior year in high school, electric football was a big part of his football life. There was always an electric football league in his neighborhood and he was fortunate enough to have eight of the original group of friends go to the same high school. Some of this group included Kenny Dunn, Zeff Kennedy, Barnett Brown and Ezele Johnson to name a few. But of all his friends there were two friends that were the closest to him and lived the closest as well-Derrick English and Calvin Mayhew. Following their junior years in High School the boards went silent and many of the original group never got back into the hobby, but these years were very special to Jim, as Jim stated in our interview... "these core groups of guys meant a lot to me; because we grew up together and just enjoyed the game... it was always just about having fun and being a kid. When I was with these guys, they were like family-like brothers". Today those fond memories of his youth are priceless, and with graduation and the end of his High School career, the world of miniature football took a back seat to the necessities of life, love and his most cherished thing of all...his family.

MICHIGAN STATE, THE ARMY AND THE JIM DAVIS WORLD TOUR

What was Jim Davis' destiny after High School? Would anyone be surprised to hear it was a musical group called the "Dramatics"? Post high school life for Jim was everything but boring and although he no longer played electric football, he lived in Michigan...football is in the blood in this state! Jim Davis went on to attend Michigan State University after high school. After Michigan State he then joined the Army in 1981 and served for two years. He received an Honorable Medical Discharge in 1983 for ongoing heart problems he suffered through over the period of a year. That same year Jim got back into what he loved most-football. He got a job as a Junior Varsity Coach at Mumford High School in Detroit and he learned a lot about football from his experience that first year. The following year, in 1984, Jim switched gears again. Mike Marshall, a good friend that he had met at Michigan State and was a fellow coach at Mumford, persuaded Jim to leave Mumford and take on a new coaching job. They both left Mumford and went to Henry Ford High School to coach the varsity squad. For the next three seasons the varsity team won three straight city championships and in addition, the JV teams dominated and had tremendous success. This was one of Jim's proudest accomplishments, as both a fan of football and as a coach, but with all the success he had, the bills had to be paid and it was time for a new change in his life.

"JIM DOES HAVE THE BIGGEST HEART IN THE HOBBY, PEOPLE DON'T SEE AND KNOW HIM LIKE I DO, ALL THEY SEE IS THE LOUD MOUTH ONLINE, BUT HE HAS A HEART OF GOLD FOR HIS FRIENDS."--NORBERT REVELS

In 1986 Jim started working for a musical group as a driver and body guard. The group was called the "Dramatics" and this job took him everywhere. The group traveled all over the U.S., Canada, Europe and parts of Asia including Japan. For over four years he made \$250 a night and the traveling and the whole experience was one that he will never forget...but who would have thought...Jim a body guard? As Jim was sharing all this with me during our interview a little light bulb went off in my head...this is where his "vociferous" persona comes from. I can see it all now...red carpet...boy band leaving the limo and there is Jim holding back a wave of fans and girls! If he yelled at



me...I would get out of the way, wouldn't you?! To any extent his body guard days allowed him to see the world, but in 1990 Jim took on a new job in an all familiar place.

Jim returned home to Detroit in 1990 and went to work at Ford Motor Company as a line worker. It was a big change for him, but he was home and he enjoyed his time at Ford. In 2005 Jim had an injury on the job and received a medical retirement from Ford. The great thing about being home for Jim was the fact that electric football came back into his life and this time it was for good.

1994-GAME BACK ON AND MIGGLE CONVENTIONS

One joy in Jim's life is his wife Renee and she gets credit for bringing him back into the hobby. In 1994 Renee happened to be reading an article about electric football and the first Miggle Superbowl to take place at Michael Jordan's bar in Chicago. Jim could not believe that the game was still going and the wheels were set in motion for his return. That same year he ran into some old friends-Ken Allen, Tony Jones, Al Jones, Tim Jackson, Brain Thompson, Keith Thompson, Daryl Dukes and Eric Thompson. All these guys had formed a league and had been playing since 1991...Jim joined in on the fun. From 1991-2000 the Ann Arbor Electric Football League was in high gear. Later on Tony Johnson, Greg Hardmon, Chuck Lawrence and Pat Casey joined in, as the league grew. In 2000 the Ann Arbor league became the Great Lakes Electric Football League, after getting more coaches from the Detroit area. From 2001 until the present the GLEFL has picked up coaches from all over including Gary, Indiana, Toledo and Columbus, Ohio and Chicago, Illinois. Eventually the league reached 30-32 coaches.

In addition, the rebirth of the hobby for Jim with the Great Lakes league amounted to a lot of years of fun. However, Jim found actually winning league championships to be very elusive. In 2003 he did managed to go undefeated and win the Akron League. He won the Ann Arbor league titles in 1999 &

"JIM BRINGS THE BEST OUT IN MY GAME, I MUST STAY FOCUSED WHEN WE PLAY."
GREG HARDMON

2000, but he has never won the Great Lakes. He lost the Superbowl in 2007 to Simmie Lassiter, but still has never won this league, despite leading the GLEFL in rushing every year. Miggle Conventions always posed high expectations for Jim and every year he truly believed he could win, but for him winning the Miggle Convention was always about passing and he was a running coach and it is hard to run at Miggle. During the 2008 Convention in Detroit Jim did something he had not done in a while...he did not play in the tourney. When I asked him what his greatest memory or moments from past Miggle Conventions was he was quick to answer...it was watching his daughters Shyenne and Jaya play in the Spark Bowl tourneys. In 2008 he got to sit back and watch all of their games and it was great for him to see them play. Jim is so very proud of his girls. Shyenne has won the tourney twice and Jaya went to the Spark Bowl championship last year and lost (she was only 8 and lost to a 12 year old). Watching his daughters playing have always been his highlight at Miggle and it was only fitting that Jim's moment at Miggle would be shared with them by his side.

THE 2009 MIGGLE CHAMPIONSHIP

Jim never thought he would ever win the Miggle Championship, let alone meet one of his best friends in the finals. He just went to have fun, watch his girls play and catch-up with everyone and the Landsmans. He did have a good performance in the GLEFL, but he still thought in the back of his mind that to win at Miggle you needed speed on defense and power on offense. His tourney started off rough. He lost to Butch Carter to start things off going



1-2 in his first three games of the round robin. It was not looking good, but everyone wanted to play him and he won the rest of his games and he got some help to advance to his first elite 8. In his first game he played good friend Greg Hardmon and was not nervous since he was playing someone from his league and he won. Lucky for him six of the eight were from the GLEFL. Jim met Jamel Goodloe and played one of his best games winning 28-7, which only built his confidence, as he advanced to the Championship game against Norbert. Jim reflected.... "we rode together, we talked about who we thought would win and we played each other three times already this year, it was a dream to play someone, who I had so much respect for"...Jim continued, "leading up to the game the camera crew interviewed me and I told them I had great respect for Norbert...then before the game started Norbert rattled my cage by asking if I was nervous...if he only knew".

The Championship game went on and the rest is history. Norbert fought back late and Jim stayed with his game plan of the running

game. The key play was the one that stuck in Jim's head the most, Jim continues, "as Norbert was lining up on defense I knew I wanted to play it smart, I noticed I had the outside blocked, but I also thought of going to the quarterback up the middle...I went for the outside and the sweep came through". I asked Jim how he felt when he knew he won... "the moment felt great, I could not believe it."

JIM DAVIS AND HIS LEGACY

For electric football, Jim Davis and many coaches like him make this hobby more than what it is. Jim wanted to let the Landsmans and everyone know how grateful he is that we can share fellowship like we do in this hobby. For the MFCA, he is just another shining example of how you can have a family at home and a family of electric football coaches, who enjoy each other's company. Jim's legacy...his humor, his family and his big heart. He truly is a Legend of Miniature Football!





Eight years ago Cleon Tate Jr. and I headed up to Chet Haptonstall's garage to watch the playoffs of the inaugural season of the Los Angeles Electric Football League (LAEFL). On a whim I grabbed my camcorder, and while I was there I filmed footage from several of the games. Watching the footage, I was hooked on the idea that it was possible to make a video of miniature football action. I put together a brief video with that footage. The Show III video came out a couple of years later (VHS), followed by DVDs of the Show V, XIII, and IX. Along the way I've learned a few things, which I'll share with you here.

What I hope to accomplish with this article is to get you started in producing videos of miniature football action. I'll cover the basics of equipment, filming, editing, and production. If you're looking to buy equipment or software, I'm not going to tell you what to purchase, but I will provide some thoughts about the factors you need consider when making a purchase. Likewise, rather than saying, "This is how you should film the action," I'll instead talk about the different ways of filming and the pluses and minuses of each. My goal is to help you get started; then, your own creativity will generate new ideas and you'll be on your way.

Continued on pg 32



EQUIPMENT

CAMERA

If you're looking to buy a camera, there are a ton of websites out there to help you. I am by no means an expert on cameras, and even if I were, things change quickly so you'll want to go online to get the latest information anyway. The past couple of years have seen lots of changes in the camcorder world, so pay attention to the dates of the online articles you find -- anything more than a year or two old is archaic! The best website I've found for camcorder reviews and information is www.camcorderinfo.com. This place has incredibly detailed reviews. Check out this site and others; there is definitely a learning curve involved. Here are some things to consider.

High Definition or Standard Definition. There are many consumer cameras now that film in high definition. They cost more, of course, but the quality of the footage is significantly better than standard definition. Just playing back the raw video on an HD TV has a "WOW" factor. The higher quality footage also lets you do interesting things during editing. For example, you can zoom way into the action, and the quality will still be excellent. The downside is HD is a bigger investment. The camera costs more, and, in the worst case, your current computer may need to be upgraded to edit HD footage (check the computer specs required for the editing software). The quality/cost trade off is up to you. Think about what else you might use the camcorder for -- that might help you make the decision.

Storage format. This is how the camera stores the video that it is recording. The choices are: mini-DV tape, DVD, hard drive, and flash memory. Tapes are going out of style, but they offer high quality (for both standard or high definition) and are the best format for editing. One drawback is that it takes an hour to load an hour of footage onto your computer. DVD is very convenient for playback (just put the DVD into your DVD player), but the picture quality isn't as good and the format not as friendly for editing (but for simple edits it is

okay). Hard drive and flash memory makes transferring the footage to your computer fast and easy (much faster than tape), and the format is similar to DVD. I can't tell you which format is "best", just be aware that there are differences. Consider what you will be using the camcorder for most of the time, and also think about the editing software you will be using (which formats does it handle, etc).

Other features to consider: Zoom. All cameras can do some level of zooming. The higher the optical zoom, the better (ignore the digital zoom rating -- when you use that, the picture quality suffers). Image stabilization is good to have, since you may be doing a lot of handheld work. Recording time: depending on the storage format, check to see how much recording you can do before your device fills up (or needs a new tape/DVD).

TRIPOD

Modern cameras have pretty good image stabilization, so that a hand-held shot isn't as jumpy as it might be. Still, shooting on a tripod makes the shot perfectly still (unless someone bumps the tripod!). Things like introductions, interviews, awards presentations, and announcer shots look professional when shot on a tripod. I find that I don't use the tripod much during the actual game. I try to minimize my "footprint" when filming; a tripod is just one more thing to get in the way of coaches. Plus, I like to be able to get in close and follow the action sometimes, and when the camera is on the tripod, that's not an option. However, you may find that using a tripod to film game action works for you, so experiment with it.

MICROPHONE

Built-in microphones of most consumer camcorders are, to put it bluntly, poor. The sound quality is mediocre, and they are omnidirectional (that is, they pick up sounds from all directions, not just where the cam-

corder is pointed). That's fine for game action; you'll hear the coaches, the board motors, the crowd, the ref, and so on. But for interviews, award presentations, and any other filming where the sound focus is on a particular person or persons, you'll want an external microphone. Microphones have a wide-range in prices, but you don't have to pay a lot to get a big improvement. There are basically three options: hand-held, lapel, and shotgun.

Handheld microphones are the basic mics you hold in your hand. They are great for interviews, as the mic must be held close to whoever is talking. Ambient sound is minimized, so you mostly just hear who is talking.

Lapel microphones are the type that clips on to a shirt. These are less obtrusive than handhelds, but only work with a single speaker. Both handhelds and lapel mics can be wired or wireless (wireless costs more, of course).

Shotgun microphones mount on the camera itself. The mic is directional -- it will pick up sound in the general direction the camera is pointed. They pickup more ambient sound than the other two types, but they don't require the microphone to be held or clipped on to someone's clothing.

With all types of mics, you need to verify the connection type that your camcorder supports (there are different size of jacks). There are also converters that will allow you to connect different connector sizes to your camcorder.

You can spend a lot or a little on a microphone. My recommendation is: if you are going to be filming interviews, award presentations, or anything else with a "talking head", at a minimum go to Radio Shack and buy a cheap handheld mic with a nice long cable. When filming the interviews, plug in the mic and have the interviewer hold it. The sound will be immensely better, especially in a noisy room.



FILMING

Filming. So now it is the big day and you're ready to film the action. Here are some considerations. Much of what I'm going to talk about assumes you are filming in a league or tournament setting, with live action going on. This is more challenging than a "controlled" situation (like filming some solitaire shots, or filming a commercial for your MF product). But some of what I'll discuss is universal. The question you need to ask yourself is...

What is your goal?

Do you want to make a promo video (maybe set to music)?

Are we making a highlight film?

Are we making a documentary?

What you want to get out of your footage

should affect how you shoot it. Plan ahead a little bit and make a list of the types of shots you want. That way at the end of the day you'll have the right kind of footage for your video.

Lighting. It is important to have good lighting. In dim lighting you lose some of the color and detail of the figures. If the room doesn't have good lighting, you may need to bring additional lights. It is much better to have indirect lighting - bounce any bright lights off of walls or ceilings. Bright, direct lights can cause glare and harsh shadows.

Spacing. Make sure there is enough elbow room between tables, so that the cameraman won't get in the way of the coaches

Positioning. The TV networks that film the NFL have total control over where they can put their cameras. In miniature football, this isn't the case. You generally have to stay out of the way of the coaches and the ref. Sideline shots are tough: the areas on each side of the line of scrimmage are almost always "owned" by the coaches. You can be on the sideline, but just at an angle, down (or up) field from the line of scrimmage. I've found the end zone to be a good

position too. If you film from the end zone, position yourself in the end zone that the offense is going toward. Why? When a coach passes with the TTQB, they generally do it from either directly or slightly behind their QB, so if you're behind the offense, you're going to get shots of the back of the passing coach, and your view of the field will be blocked. But if you're behind the defense, you'll get shots of the front of the

make. The drawback of these shots is that you can't always tell exactly what is happening, so from a play-by-play perspective this footage may not be as useful.

There's no harm in mixing up the shots, even on the same play. For example, on a pass play you might start wide, and zoom in on the QB slowly as the play starts. When the switch goes off, frame the QB and re-

ceiver and watch the pass attempt. After the completion, zoom in on the receiver and follow him down field. In a single play, you've got

several different kinds of shots. (Of course, now I'm going to contradict myself and warn: don't overdo the zooming! You don't want to make your viewer seasick!)

Also, consider positioning the camera instead of zooming. In the previous example, instead of zooming on the receiver, just move the camera closer to the player, even to the point of holding it over the field, and follow the player with the camera as he moves. Positioning the camera close to the action provides a different look than just zooming, and it gives a very pleasing effect. Just don't drop the camera!

Besides the action on the board, don't forget to film the rest of the action! There's tons of stuff to film: pre-game and post-game interviews, player introductions, trophy presentations all make good footage. During the game, the coaches' and fans' reactions add a lot to the story you are telling. Some coaches are more emotive than others, so be ready after a big play to capture their reactions. In the quiet before the game, film some set pieces. Shots of the empty playing fields, either stationary or a "fly-over", are especially good for the introduction shots of your video.



passing coach, with a clear shot of the field. Plus, the coach doesn't have to go around you to get into passing position. Corner end zone or corner-sideline shots work too. No matter what angle you're shooting from, be ready to move a bit, even during a play. When a coach lines up a pass, consider moving the camera to line up the passer with the receiver.

Shot selection. So, when the play starts, what should you actually film? Wide angle on the whole board? Tight on the line and QB? Isolated on the running back who's carrying the ball? I usually end up with a mix of shot types, and for a good reason. Different shots are good for different reasons. Wider shots (that basically show most or all of the 22 players on the field) are good for highlight films. This "coach's film" view allows you to follow all the players. That way, no matter which players are the key to the play, they are likely on film. The drawback is that the shots are less dynamic -- the action isn't as intense. Close shots show more motion; players are flying in and out of the frame. Close shots also show the details of the figures. For these reasons these shots are great for promo videos, especially the fast cut videos I like to



EDITING

Editing your video will take much more time than filming it. You don't have to spend a long time editing, but the more work you put into it, the better the result. I enjoy editing, but if you find it painful, then just do the minimum. What's the minimum? Certainly you want to remove the "dead" footage. No one wants to see the two minutes of a blank wall you filmed when you forgot to turn off the camera, or the five seconds of jerky footage when you got out of the way of a coach who was hurriedly setting up to pass. After that, it's all optional. The more you add, the nicer the result, but the more effort it takes. Some possibilities:

Titles. Titles are simply any text on the screen. Use them to introduce segments of your video, relay the game situation (score, time remaining, etc.) or identify players or coaches, or (like with the 2008 DFW DVD) display details about the rules being used. If you kept stats during the game, you can put up in-game stats, which is a nice touch.

Transitions. Transitions are the way in which two video shots are joined together. The most common transition is the cut, in

use a transition to let the user know that we're not in "live" action anymore (NFL broadcasts do this).

Sound. You can stick with the sound you recorded live, or, you can completely replace it with a new sound track (music, narration, or a combination). You can also leave the original sound at a reduced volume and layer in some new music and narration.

Replay. I like to use replays. Miniature football moves fast -- some plays take just 1-2 seconds. So it's good to see the play again, especially because the second time you know what to look for. Almost all of my replays are in slow motion

Highlighting players. One of the things I like to do in my videos is highlighting key players. NFL broadcasts do it, and it is even more important in miniature football because it isn't always clear who has the ball. So highlighting the running back at the start of the play may be the only way to identify who has the ball (the player's numbers aren't always available). The easiest way to do this is with a picture-in-pic-

EDITING SOFTWARE

There are many choices for video editing software. Some are free (Windows Movie Maker or iMovie on the Mac). There are also several good products in the \$60-100 range. All provide the basics -- importing video, organizing the footage, placing the clips on a time line, adding transitions, titles, etc. They will also generate videos suitable for YouTube, and build DVDs. There are plenty of online reviews of these software packages, although reading all the reviews will probably leave you overwhelmed. PC magazine has a nice summary of the available products (just go to www.pcmag.com and search on "video editing"). Many of them offer trial versions, which can help you make your decision. It's nice to try the product before you buy, since some of the biggest differences between them are how easy they are to use. Once you decide on a package, there are plenty of online tutorials and user forums that can answer your "How do I...?" questions.



which one shot changes instantly to the next. There is nothing wrong with a cut, but other transitions (fades, wipes, zooms) are available. I tend to use transitions to provide a visual clue to the viewer that something different is about to happen. For example, at the start and end of a replay I'll

use a transition to let the user know that we're not in "live" action anymore (NFL broadcasts do this).

ture feature. The technique is a bit hard to describe, but it basically involves using the same shot twice, with the "isolation" shot on top of the basic shot. Zoom in on the player you want to identify and he "pops out" on the screen, as shown above.

What features should you look for? The features I use the most are picture-in-picture, freeze frame, and slow motion. Picture-in-picture (it's not always called this) is simply the ability to put two video clips on the screen at the same time. As previously discussed, I use this technique to



highlight players. Freeze frame and slow motion slow down the fast-paced action of miniature football so that your viewers can follow the action.

Since many of these products have very similar features, some of the differences between products are simply the depth of each of the features they support. How many video and audio tracks are supported? How many effects can you put on a clip? How many types of transitions or video effects do they support?

Many of these software packages have pre-defined settings that generate video suitable for YouTube and other video websites. The quality of this video isn't as high as DVD, but there's no quicker way to reach a lot of people.

Most of the video editing packages come with basic DVD production tools. You can keep it simple and use standard templates for your DVD, or you can incorporate animation and sound into your DVD,

to give it that professional look (for example, an animation that plays when you insert the DVD, rather than going straight to the menu). Of course to actually make the DVDs your computer will need a DVD burner, but these have come way down in price (under \$100).

Well I hope you have enough information to get started making your own miniature football video. If you have specific questions, email me at eby.jeff@gmail.com. Good luck, and have fun!

Message from the Editor

A message from the Editor and Team Leader for the MFCA Promotions Committee-Matthew Culp. I hope everyone enjoyed Jeff Eby's article on how to make your own Miniature Football DVD. Jeff's talent is tremendous, as we have seen in his videos from the LAEFL, and he is a great asset to the MFCA and our hobby. Starting this year the MFCA Promotions Committee is going to begin our own MFCA DVD series.

The series will entail three separate DVDs covering topics from basic game play, to starting your own league, to recruiting new coaches. This project is going to take everyone's help to make it happen and with Jeff's editing and creative abilities on this project, we believe it is going to become an outstanding learning and promotional tool for miniature football, your individual leagues and the MFCA.

It is our hope that everyone will use all of Jeff's information in this article, go out and take great coverage of your leagues and share all of your footage with the Promotions Committee to make this DVD series into a reality. Just imagine being able to hand a new coach a instructional DVD giving them our background, history, styles of play, basic rules, where to find leagues, basic painting and the list goes on and on. It all starts with all of you, so go out and get those cameras rolling and then send us your footage. Thank you.



Kid KOACHES KORNER

(WHERE MFCA Kids call it the way they see it)

My first season

by Nick Slate



This year, I started playing in my first electric football league, the CNYEFL. The team I chose to play with was the Cincinnati Bengals. I chose the Bengals because they were one of the teams available and they are one of my favorite teams. To get my team ready, I had to paint them, decal them, get them based and practice with them so I knew how they worked. I spent a lot of time looking for loopers to pressure the quarterback. For wide

receivers, I looked for bases that were straight and fast and for my linemen, I looked for the strongest bases I could find. I decided to use the metal quarterback because I was more accurate with it and could hit my receivers very well. During the season, I won 7 games and qualified for the playoffs. In the playoffs, I beat Coach Harris and his Saints, who I lost to twice in the regular season. My team made 53 sacks to win the sack title. During the season, I learned that you should practice a lot, and to

make sure you know what you're doing and keep time outs in mind. I had lots of fun during the season, and I have been learning how to tweak bases to get ready for next year.



Tom Johnson

Always There!

The Playoffs, Commissioner and Top Underrated Coach

by Corey Johnson

I had the pleasure of chatting with one of the most under rated coaches in the country. Not only does he have a high football IQ, but he reads and dissects the rules of the tourney and/or leagues he plays in. Most know him, but I got a chance to know him better and now, so will you!

Tom Johnson was born in Washington D.C. in 1968. His mother, Barbara, then moved the family to Bladensburg, Maryland. This is where he was exposed to electric football at the age of 13. He played with guys in his community for a few years until the family moved out of that neighborhood. Left behind was the game of electric football. Just like most teens back then, MF was not high priority. Tom went on to play football for Northwestern High School where he later graduated in 1986. After graduation Tom attended Job Corp in PA. He received his diploma in 6 months. Tom also attended Test College after returning home, and received his diploma in electronics.



Tom anticipates the start of the NEFL Super Bowl X. His Chargers went on to win the game 14-7.



Tom receives a medal during the 08 SWB for his on field accomplishments during the year.



The NEFL defending champ plays a league game during the 09 season.

Tom has been active in the boys and girls club of America since 1990. His natural leadership skill has allowed him to thrive as coach and commissioner of a couple different clubs. This brings us back to Tom's first love, electric football. Funny how his new passion helped find the old one. It was a regular day at football practice in Beltsville, Maryland when one of Tom's friends pulled up, and noticed him out on the field...it was Big Keith Chalmers. They grew up together, played little league football as well, but it had been some time since seeing each other. Keith told Tom to "come inside when you're done running your practice". This regular day of practice was on the same day as the Capital Clash ran by Vance Warren. Tom was introduced to him and others in the hobby. Tom met one of the vendors that were selling the modern electric football products. He couldn't believe what he was seeing, and what this guy was telling him. That vendor was George Diamond. To this day they remain close, and will always have that bond.

Tom joined the MEFA in 2002. Keith Chalmers was his mentor, and together they spent many hours preparing and getting him readjusted to the hobby. Tom has never missed the playoffs in any league that he has played in. He gives big props to Keith. All the work has paid dividends. It didn't hurt that Tom had a football mind to start with either! After that 2002 MEFA PRO SEASON, some of the guys in the league wanted change. So the B.E.F.L. (Beltsville Electric Football League) was born. Dearell Brevard was the first commissioner of the league, but after a couple of years on the job Dearell felt burned out. He asked Tom to take over and he has been running the league ever since. Folks, please don't think it was as easy as just that, we could go on forever if we divulged the whole scenario. We just made a long story short.



Tom has played in five championship games in his seven year career, the first being in 2002. Tom defeated Ed Morgan in the MEFA College Championship. The second one came in 2005, defeating Tom Ruesink in the first ever NHFL title game. Last but not least, the 2008 NEFL Super Bowl X defeating Brian Healy. Tom is doing well as the defending champ of the NEFL, as he is among 32 coaches competing for the title. Tom is also very busy preparing for the best Bash tourney ever! While I had Tom with me, I had to take the opportunity of grilling him with some Q&A...

CJ: When you walked into that tourney, what advancement of the hobby surprised you the most?

TJ: Figures, Bases, and board size.

CJ: You have hinted about stepping down as commish a few times, what keeps you coming back?

TJ: I just felt that my job wasn't done yet.

CJ: Of all those titles, which one are you fondest of?

TJ: It has to be the NHFL because it was the first ever.

CJ: What do you like about the MFCA?

TJ: All of the unity and support that it gives to all the coaches.

CJ: Why should a coach make the Bash (5/15-17) a tourney they must attend?

TJ: If you want to play with some of the best coaches in the country, they will be there. The coaches that come here are tough!

CJ: What advice would you give someone trying to start a league or being the commissioner?

TJ: Don't worry about your numbers. Get quality coaches and the numbers will follow.



Beltsville Bash organizer Tom Johnson poses with the winner Tom Ruesink.



The look of a champion. He may not be high on anyone's ranking, but Tom knows how to win the big game.



A rather dapper Ed Scott interviews Tom Johnson prior to NEFL Super Bowl X.

gone but not forgotten...

BOARDS OF THE PAST

Coleco, Gotham & Munro

By Brian Wittkop



Above - Mid 1970s JC Penny Advertisement showing various electric football games available at the time



Top to Bottom - Joe Namath Munro Gameboard, Joe Namath Gotham Board, Gotham Pro League Gameboard



Above - Coleco Advertisement showing the Command Control version of their Electric Football Gameboard.

Most miniature football coaches that have been around long enough know all about the Tudor and Miggle companies, who helped bring about the electric football revolution in the late 1960's. Although most know about Lee Payne and his "Fab Five" figures that have become the standard for the hobby today, few are familiar with the smaller one man companies, that were also a big part of the hobby's rise in popularity.

There was a time when there were other companies bidding for your electric football dollar. They were the Gotham Pressed Steel company, the Coleco company and the Munro company. Not only did they each have their own electric football boards,

figures and bases, each company also made them to their own scale, though they were very similar in size.

Coleco - leather, pigskin and cabbage...

Let's travel back in time and examine all three companies. First, we'll take a quick look at the Coleco company. Coleco was founded in 1932 by Maurice Greenberg as the Connecticut Leather company. Originally, it just made shoe leather for other companies, but in the fifties moved into making leather craft kits as well. In the late fifties and early sixties they ventured into manufacturing plastic wading pools and games. Eventually the





leather part of the company was sold off and Coleco moved to Canada. In the very early seventies they began to produce a line of sports related games. The table hockey games were the most popular, but so too, were the table basketball and, of course, electric football.

The Coleco electric football games were fiberboard sets with plastic figures that were cut at the middle and were pushed together. The legs of all the players were the same, while the tops were two different poses. The quarterback was a large plastic molded piece. It used a small magnetic square football that, when passed, stuck (hopefully) to the metal on the base. The field goal posts were on the goal line as was the rule in the early seventies.

Coleco made three sets. The large #5785 model, the smaller #5765, plus the highly collectable Canadian set that had two fifty yard lines just like in the CFL. A couple of years later Coleco introduced a new concept called command control. This was a magnetic arm under the board that gave you control of one player. The only problem was when you pulled on the control arm, you would wipe out everything on the board. By 1977 Coleco gave up on electric football and turned its efforts into the increasingly popular video game field. They became a top producer in the very first handheld video games of their time, with handheld baseball, football and bowling. In 1982 they became the first company to mass produce what was to become one of the most iconic toys of its time, the Cabbage Patch Dolls. Unfortunately, the success of the doll sales wasn't enough to stem the losses from their failed video

venture and in 1988 filed for bankruptcy. The following year Hasbro purchased all of Coleco's assets.

Gotham gives it a go...

Next is the Gotham Pressed Steel company. This company was based out of Brooklyn, New York...sound familiar? They started in 1938 as a tin toy company making many of the highly prized tin, wind-up toys that go for high dollar on eBay today. In the 1940's they branched out into pinball machines. As the fifties rolled around they expanded into the board game market, and in the early 60's Gotham got into the electric football business. Like Coleco, they made a fiberboard set, but, unlike Coleco, Gotham made one piece molded players in four different poses. Gotham players came unpainted with a thin, metal plate that went over the base. Each player had a name tag that displayed the players name, number and team he played for. Gotham was the first electric football company to get NFL licensing when the model #1500 came out in 1963 with NFL logos around its metal frame. As with Coleco, the goal posts were on the goal line.

In 1965, Gotham came out with the Big Bowl game G150GS. This set had a two tiered cardboard stadium that went around three quarters of the board. In 1967 Gotham lost its NFL licensing to Tudor and tried to come up with other ideas to entice young football fans. They turned their attention to the NFL Players Association and struck a deal. With NFLPA licensing in hand, they signed up some of the biggest names of the day. Joe Namath, Dick Butkus and Roman Gabriel each had their own game with their

face right on the package! In 1971 Gotham tried to take over the electric football industry once and for all and came out with what would be its biggest seller. The Superdome was basically the regular field with a cardboard "dome" around the field. Though it sold well, sadly, it did not stave off Tudor and its growing popularity. By 1976 Gotham was out of the game.

Another Canadian, eh?...

The last of the other electric football companies was Munro. Like Coleco, they were based out of Canada. In 1973 the Munro company came out with their own version of a Joe Namath game, and also released the Day/Night game that had the largest field ever produced (until Miggles deluxe board). It was 25" by 40" and had a double decker grandstand with flood lights that would light the field. The players were on a base that was similar to Coleco's, but with a TTC type dial that was built in. This dial had all four prongs built into it. As a result, it was possible to make the men move sideways, as well as backwards, a feature that many of today's coaches look for. By 1977 all three companies had pulled out of the electric football business and left Tudor in the clear. While not in business anymore, the nostalgia for Gotham, Coleco and Munro games is still with the electric football community as many coaches started their EF career with one of these fine games.

Today, all of us in our 30, 40 and 50's look back at these board games in wonder. Although Tudor and Miggles survived the tide of the video game era in the 1980's...we must not forget the boards of the past that were a big part of some of our childhoods.



LEAGUE CHAMPIONS FROM AROUND THE MFCA

