

THE MINIATURE FOOTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION



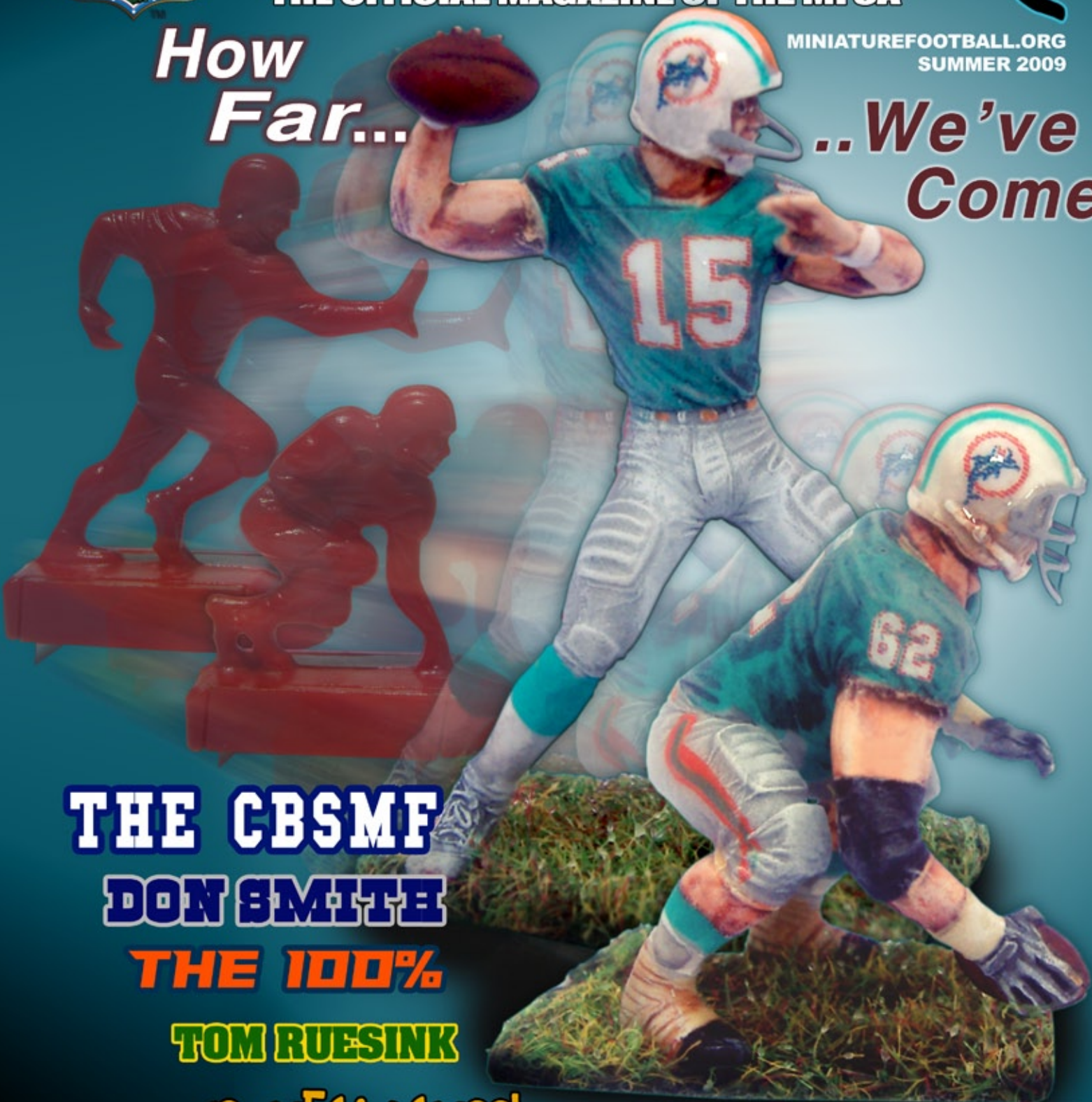
# THE TWEAK<sup>®</sup>

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE MFCA

MINIATUREFOOTBALL.ORG  
SUMMER 2009

*How  
Far...*

*..We've  
Come*



**THE CBSMF**  
**DON SMITH**  
**THE 100%**

**TOM RUESINK**

**COACHES IN SCHOOL**

**THE BASH & BLAST**





## A Letter from MFCFA Secretary, Matthew Culp

HOW FAR WE'VE COME! 1949-2009... this year marks the 60th anniversary of Electric Football! And to take it a bit farther, this year also marks the 80th anniversary of the beginning of Tudor Games, if you go back to Electric Football's ancestry. The roots can be traced back to 1929, when Elmer Sas incorporated Tudor Metal Products in New York City. Christmas 1949 marked the beginning of the electric football legacy with the first Tudor Game Boards. It is amazing just how far the hobby has come in 60 years. As I was going through some of my old fields the other day, I came across my 1949 Tudor field. Complete with steel players, I examined the single blade prongs on the bottom of the figure. After smoothing out the single wide prong I placed the player on one of my fields and turned it on...and off he went. He was no match for my Buzzball lineman or Miggle TTC bases, but the fact that he ran straight and somewhat fast completely amazed me... but he was no modern day player. We have come a very long way in this hobby in over 60 years now...yes...60 years. From rough outlined two dimensional steel players of the 40's and 50's; to the odd ball Gotham players of the 60's; from the Tudor figures we grew up with in the 70's; to the "renaissance" of the late 90's; to just four months ago with the release of the new Jennings figures...From 1949's two dimensional figures to the 2009 Jennings "McFarlane" like figures, I say we are living in the golden years of miniature football. The cover of this issue is a living tribute to the 60 years of innovation and to illustrate the past and the future of the hobby. I would like to personally salute all of the coaches, manufacturers and innovators of the hobby, who have been such a large part in the continued progress of the hobby...Bravo!

As a proud member of the MFCFA, we should all feel privileged to have such a great organization created by coaches, for coaches and for miniature football. We must also re-

member that the MFCFA is an organization that is only as good as its members and it takes all of us coming together in unity and fellowship, to make the hobby move forward. I often wonder why I play this game and work so hard to see it live on. Many coaches have asked this same question in recent months, as we ponder the amount of time we spend on this hobby versus our family and work lives. The answer is quite easy...miniature football is part of us...it is who we are...in a very big way it is our heritage. Because of this love for the game, coaches from around the country came together and formed an organization to celebrate this heritage. On April 23rd of this year the MFCFA turned two year old. This was a mile stone of sorts, since we not only made it through two years, but we continued to grow and develop as an organization. We should celebrate this mile stone and thank those who made it possible. One person who I would like to personally thank is the person who has been the engine of this organization. Although he will be stepping down soon, Lynn Schmidt has made a difference in the hobby and left his mark. When you are at the MFCFA Convention on August 7-9th...do me a favor...walk up to him...extend your hand and just say thank you. It will mean a lot to me.

It is with great pleasure that I introduce another great result of the MFCFA...your Summer 2009 issue of *The Tweak*. In this issue we will take a closer look at the CB-SMF series. We get up close and personal with Don Smith, one of the founders of the Seawall Brawl, Tom Ruesink and some very special coaches working with today's youth. We get league and event updates from the DSEFL, the 2009 Bama Blast, and the 2009 Beltsville Bash. In addition, George Diamond chimes in with his third part of his series on league building and we get to meet Peter Bearse of the 100% Club. We will announce the winner of our first annual "MF Greatest Wife" contest, which

was very hard to choose...and much, much more. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue.

Finally...the MFCFA is committed to the preservation of the hobby and its future promotion and growth. What do you think Elmer Sas would have said if you would have told him that in the year 2009 coaches from all around the country would be gathering at the Pro Football Hall of Fame for a miniature football convention and to honor the game he began so long ago? He would probably not believe that his simple game had such an impact on such a large number of people. But I think he would get a great deal of satisfaction to see us coming together as friends in fellowship and he would probably be amazed that such a simple game could bring people together for just an afternoon of fun. I hope to see everyone in Canton, Ohio on August 7th for the 2009 MFCFA Camp-in convention, as we induct two new members into the MFCFA Hall of Fame. It is only fitting that we have a MFCFA Hall of Fame, because we honor those coaches who have made a difference to the hobby and in many ways we honor the memory of Elmer Sas.

The MFCFA...Unity, Integrity and Fellowship...this is your heritage...embrace it as we celebrate football, friendship and fun. Don't miss this event, we have a lot planned and I promise that this year's convention will be bigger and better than last year's. The Hall of Fame, the CBSMF Championship, the MFCFA Points Challenge, the MFCFA Hall of Fame enshrinement, the Pro Football Enshrinement Ceremony and Game...the Sunday afternoon tailgating party...Hall of Fame passes...the first annual MFCFA "Jim Davis" hula hoop contest (still working out the details) and the list goes on and on. So don't miss it! May God Bless everyone and please have a safe trip to the convention. See you there!

# THE TWEAK

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMER 2009 Issue Nine

- 2 Letter From Matthew Culp *by Matthew Culp*
- 4 The CBSMF *by Corey Johnson and Reginald Rutledge*
- 10 The 100% Club *by Al Dunham and Peter Bearse*
- 14 The Don Smith Story *by Al Dunham*
- 19 The 09 Bash Report *by Kelvin Lomax*
- 22 League Building Part 3 *by George Diamond*
- 24 The 2009 Bama Blast *by David Nickles*
- 25 The Tom Ruesink Story *by Lynn Schmidt*
- 28 Coaches Corner *by Don Lang*
- 30 The Kicking Game Cards *by Chris LeMay*
- 32 The 2009 DSEFL *by Leonard Crawford*
- 34 The Greatest Wife Contest *by Matthew Culp*
- 36 Unity, Integrity, Fellowship *by Al Dunham*



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BY COREY JOHNSON AND REGINALD RUTLEDGE

## ***LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!***

**WHEN YOU LOOK UPON THE SET OF THE CBSMF SHOW FOR THE FIRST TIME, YOU WILL THINK YOU ARE ON THE SET OF A TRUE-TO-LIFE COLLEGE FOOTBALL GAME DAY SHOW. THE TRASH TALKING, NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND CONFERENCE CALLS ARE JUST A SAMPLE OF WHAT MAKES THIS NEW AND EXCITING LEAGUE, A HOT NEW MINIATURE FOOTBALL VENTURE.**



**W**hat started off as a simple “what if” statement, quickly turned into a “let’s do” campaign of more than seventy coaches from across the nation, in what has become known as the College Bowl Series of Miniature Football, or the CBSMF. Reginald Rutledge anchored this new miniature football league concept, which creates a scenario to crown a national champion.

### **THE ORIGINS OF THE CBSMF**

After considering a run at law school, Mr. Rutledge decided that time was not favorable for a jurisprudence degree, and he turned his focus towards other interest. As a result, he found himself with some extra time on his hands and looked to take up that vacuum with his favorite past-time, miniature football. Shortly thereafter, the concept of the CBSMF was presented to the miniature football community and received a very positive response. He was contacted by at least 30 coaches, who said if he went through with the new league, then they would commit to the league. It was very difficult for him not to be the point person for this new endeavor, as Mr. Rutledge explained, “I did not want to step on anyone else’s toes, who had projects in this area and with my intentions to go to law school, I would neither have the time nor energy to make this happen...such a task, as this, takes years of planning, the willingness for guys to think outside the box, and a commitment, and I am not sure we can do any of this within the time frame”.

After the football wizard saw a failed attempt, he knew it still could be done if the proper approach was taken. Known in some circles as the Walt Disney of miniature football and the master hyper, Don King, in other circles, Rutledge has that incomparable flair of being able to wield persuasion without twisting a coach’s arms. With Rutledge, he treats everybody as a friend and that’s why so many are quick to work with him.

**The Rose Bowl is one of the many stadiums created by Reginald Rutledge and will play host to the CBSMF Championship Game in Canton, Ohio on August 9, 2009.**





Reginald Rutledge has always been known for having passion for the game unrivaled. In the words of Rick Garrison of the CBSMF PAC 10, "Reginald Rutledge is like EF Hutton. When he speaks, people listen". That passion resonates upon the miniature football landscape as the league he founded, the DFW Miniature Football League, and the Texas Shootout, one of the most successful tournaments in miniature football history, have garnered local and national attention for the realism to the game that Rutledge brings. Reginald is quick to tell you, the CBSMF national championship will be no different.

## THE RULESET

The CBSMF is based off the *Shootout rule system*, a high-energy brand of miniature football that allows for injuries, penalties, and fumbles with the shake of what is known as "The Box". "The



Box" is a 3-compartment plastic box, which house's various dice and is shaken after each play to determine whether some type of action occurs. The occurrences are random, but may come at the most opportune or inopportune time, depending on that team's fate.

Another important element of the Shootout style is the efficiency of plays. In some leagues, 40 plays are considered great, but in the Shootout system, 80 to 100 plays are expected. This style of play does not allow the coach to think too long on past events. The concept was introduced for the CBSMF to bring a high brand of energy to the game that many leagues had never experienced.

## THE COACHES

The miniature football "greats" knew that in order to sell the CBSMF, Mr. Rutledge would have to establish a reason for guys to participate. As many people knew, Rutledge went to the University of Tennessee and was proud of his Big Orange heritage. "Yeah, people hear me talking about Rocky Top and I know they just want to put a muzzle in my mouth. That's where the college thing comes in at", explains Rutledge.

With his famed "Road Warrior" package in the DFW combined with the Texas Shootout popularity, coaches quickly heard of this fast-paced style of play that brings in to account injuries, penalties, and fumbles. Over the years, some 30 plus coaches have come and participated in the DFW League, which essentially was the foundation of recruits that the CBSMF was established from. Add in the other enthusiastic "lifers" from across the country and the foundation of the league became even stronger.

## THE PROPS

No one in the game of miniature football can put on a show like Rutledge. When the CBSMF descends upon Canton, it will

bring with it, custom stadiums, talk shows, coach's interviews, and pregame hype unrivaled in the world of miniature football, with a wide range of talent to choose from. Finally the miniature football world will get to see how real a miniature football production can be.

The backdrop and centerpiece of the CBSMF is the model stadium with miniature spectators assembled. A decision has not been made yet on the venue, but it has come down to two stadiums, the Rose Bowl and a concept stadium designed by Reginald Rutledge. The stadium will feature lights, crowd effects, and magnetic scoreboards enclosing a 308 gameboard with CBSMF logos.

Marching bands, cheerleaders, camera people, and sideline players will all be a part of what separate this production from most. The attention to detail will be on a scale unseen in miniature football history!

## TV CONTRACT

At the beginning of the season, it was important for the CBSMF to have the ability to show games throughout the country, pitting teams within the various conferences against each other. This would add to the fervor that others were playing the game the same way. In the biggest league in miniature football history, a network would be one of the most important steps to aid in recruiting more teams and expanding the interest.

In March of 2009, the CBSMF signed a deal with a broadband media company to gain access to the broadcast of miniature football games from various conferences in the country. The network, which would be called the CBSMF Broadcast Network, has the capacity to broadcast football games, talk shows, coach's interviews, strategy sessions, or "How to" shows. It gives the CBSMF the potential to setup programming for all miniature footballers from a free or pay-per-view option.

While the technology is still in its infancy stages, the Big 10 played a game, to their own surprise, pitting the Michigan State Spartans against the Dartmouth Big Green. More than 30 people jumped on-line to watch. Games are being scheduled throughout the country, which allows for viewers to sign in and watch the exciting coaches throughout America.

## THE PLAYOFFS

The CBSMF, which has 77 schools, is the largest league in miniature football history. Unlike its real-life counterpart, which does not allow for a playoff system, the CBSMF will pit the top 32 teams in the country, to determine who the best team in the land is. The playoffs will be setup using 32 bowl games, which culminates in Round 5, the national championship game. The winner of the CBSMF championship game will receive a crystal trophy and the right to be considered the best team in college football and the CBSMF League.

The country has been looking for something like this to happen for more than three decades. The national championship game



will be played on the CBSMF network to a pay-per-view audience.

## THE AFTERMATH

The hope of this league is to inspire participation by all that want to take part. It gives the CBSMF a basis to build a national set of rules that can be played on a high skill level and all the elements of real football can exist. The goal is to increase recruits and educate them on the system that is used. If this can be done, there is no doubt that we will come closer to creating something that everyone looks forward to being a part of every year.

## CONFERENCE BREAKDOWNS

### THE PAC 10

The CBSMF is composed of 8 conferences with their own commissioners. The PAC10 is governed by Eric Robinson, which is a 12-member conference. Some of the best teams out west are the Michigan Wolverines, coached by Dave Campbell, the UCLA Bruins, coached by Marceilo Troilo and the Black College All-stars, coached by Commissioner Eric Robinson. The PAC10 has played under the rule system for more than 10 years and should be a significant challenger in the championship hunt.

#### Commissioners Update

reported by Eric Robinson June 27, 2009

Playing in the CBSMF Pac 10 is one of my greatest EF/MF experiences. The PAC 10 has an array of coaches, who show up consistently, contribute, and play for the love of the game. As expected, the usual suspects were at the top of the pack (Campbell, Robinson, Thompson, Trolio and Turner). Garrison, and Patterson made great strides to rival the top teams in the conference. Coaches have traveled from as far as Vegas, Northern California, and San Diego to vie for the top spot in the conference. It will all come down to the final three games of the season which will take place in mid July. Front runners will lock horns to determine who the top dog will be in the PAC 10. As expected, all of the coaches challenging for the top spot are either former champions, or runner-ups. This clash of titans (Black College All-Stars, Michigan, Oklahoma, Boise State, & UCLA) will be interesting.

The rest of the pack will have to step up their game, by making adjustments and gaining more game experience. Vincent Peatros (Michigan State) has yet to play a game in the PAC 10, but he will play a marathon schedule to challenge for the top spot. Most likely, Peatros will challenge the rest of the conference by participating fully in the PAC 10 Tourney. The tourney will pit all Pacific Region teams against one another in a bracket to compete for the top spot. I look for the lower echelon teams to make a real push in the tourney. Clemson, coached by "Shabby J" (James Partipilo), should make some noise in this tourney. Shabby J has an excellent team, and once his coaching and game time decision making comes into play, he should do very well. Peatros' prodigy (Rick Garrison) is expected to do well in the PAC 10 tourney as well...some say that he will challenge for the

THE COLLEGE BOWL SERIES OF MINIA TURE FOOTBALL





top spot. It should be a real dog fight for the top spot in the Pacific Region...will Garrison be able to knock off the top coaches and capture the gold? Stay tuned!

## THE SWC

The old Southwest Conference has been restored for this league. While the teams differ from the traditional conference, it consists of probably two of the best coaches ever under this style of play, Reginald Rutledge and Michael Robertson. Their teams, the Tennessee Volunteers and the Texas Longhorns, will bring the most creativity into this style of play as they know the rules from the front page to the back page. Other teams to look for are the Penn State Nittany Lions, coached by Robert Jackson and the quickly rising coach name "Rookie", Doug Shanafelt, and his Texas Tech Red Raiders. Look for Tennessee and Texas to play a huge role in the national championship picture.

## THE BIG 12

This conference is our smallest conference, but will have two very outstanding coaches at the top of it. Geno Hendricks, who will coach the Kansas Jayhawks, and Flynt Hendricks, one of the young protégés of the game, will come hard to beat with his BYU Cougars. The Big 12 will be looking towards a July showdown with the SWC to gain national respect and look for major upsets. The Big 12 will bring a certain flair to the league which only enhances the entire package.

## THE BIG 10

Probably the most vocal conference in the land is the Big 10. The commissioner of the conference, Greg Hardmon, ranks among the best in the country with his Saginaw Valley Cardinals. Another major surprise team has been the Texas Longhorns, coached by Simmie "Tookie" Lassiter. Texas has pulled off big wins against some of the best coaches in the land and continues to improve weekly. Other newcomers to the conference include defensive-minded Ken Allen and his Ohio State Buckeyes. The Big 10 is loaded from top to bottom.

### Commissioners Update reported by Don Lang June 26, 2009

The Big Ten is having a great season so far. Anchored by nationally recognized coaches like Norbert Revels, Simmie Lassiter, Greg Hardmon, Jim Davis, and Ken Allen, this conference is expecting knockdown, "drag'em" out battles all season long. The Longhorns lead the conference with Ohio State University hot on their heels, but this is almost anybody's race at this point in the season. Just about every game has been hotly contested, with every coach having opportunities to win games. There have been several overtime games, including two double overtime contests, by the rookie head coach Don Lang. Coach Steve Martin has his MSU Spartans in the mix, led by Heisman hopeful Blanche Martin. Others in the Heisman chase include: SVSU's Greg Hardmon and PSU's Larry Johnson. Stats change from week to week so keep an eye out for that race.

The Big Ten claims it is the top conference in the land and early





results show they can stake that claim loudly. Look out for a wild second half to the season.

## THE BIG EAST

The Big East campaign got underway in mid-June. Their commissioner, Morgan Scott, will bring the Syracuse Orangemen to the party as one of the top teams from the east. Other potential conference champions include the Michigan Wolverines, coached by Joe Greco, and the always dangerous, Georgia Bulldogs, under the direction of Brian Healey.

## THE ACC

The ACC is under the leadership of Kevin Boddie. His Catholic Cardinals should rank among the best in the ACC. Kelvin Lomax, one of the best minds in all of miniature football, is learning on the fly and will be among the best by season's end. Dru Sparks and his Florida Gators, will be a good team, but at this point, they are working out the kinks in his system.

## THE SEC

The SEC has decided to play under the Dixie League Rules. Each conference had the right to play under the CBSMF ruleset or a common ruleset for their comfort level. Commissioner Bryan Nutt is one of the best coaches around and his Tennessee Vols version will be playing long-time friend Joel Pritchard and his South Carolina Gamecocks in mid-June for the SEC title. The most colorful coach in the SEC is Butch Carter, a high school coach by day, and fiery boss of the miniature world by night.

## THE INDEPENDENTS

Led by commissioner Jeff Eby from northern California, the Independent Conference is a band of coaches spread out throughout the United States. Their role is to play games against anyone throughout the country when an opportunity lends itself. The Independents are a loose band of teams not bound by geography or traditions. They will not have automatic bids in the national championship.

### Commissioners Update reported by Jeff Eby June 26, 2009

The Independents conferences of the CBSMF have seven teams, but only three of them have played games at this time. All three active coaches are in northern California: Harold Plummer (Florida State), Jeff Wood (Duke) and Jeff Eby (San Diego State). The three "NorCal" coaches are scheduled for home-and-away games against each other, and each coach has made at least one trip down to Los Angeles to play members of the PAC-10 conference. Duke and Florida State are newcomers to the Shootout rule set, and both Jeff and Harold have taken to the new style of play. Each of them came away with good experiences and a win from their trips to the southland. In head-to-head matchups among the Independents, most of the games have been pretty close. Duke's full-house backfield gave San Diego State troubles, but the Aztecs held on for a 14-13 win. Duke and Florida battled to a 7-7 tie, while San Diego State has a couple of wins against Florida State.

## BIDS FOR THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFFS

Here are the Automatic Bids for the Top 32 Teams for the CBSMF Championship. For every 3 teams in a conference, you get 1 automatic bid to participate in the CBSMF Playoffs. A committee of 10 will decide the final at-large teams (The commissioner of each conference plus the chairman).

A selection show will be broadcast on the CBSMF Network in late July. Date is still pending. This show will determine what school plays who in Canton and should make for great drama.

### AUTOMATIC BIDS

PAC10-4

BIG 10-4

SEC-4

SWC-4

ACC-2

BIG EAST-2

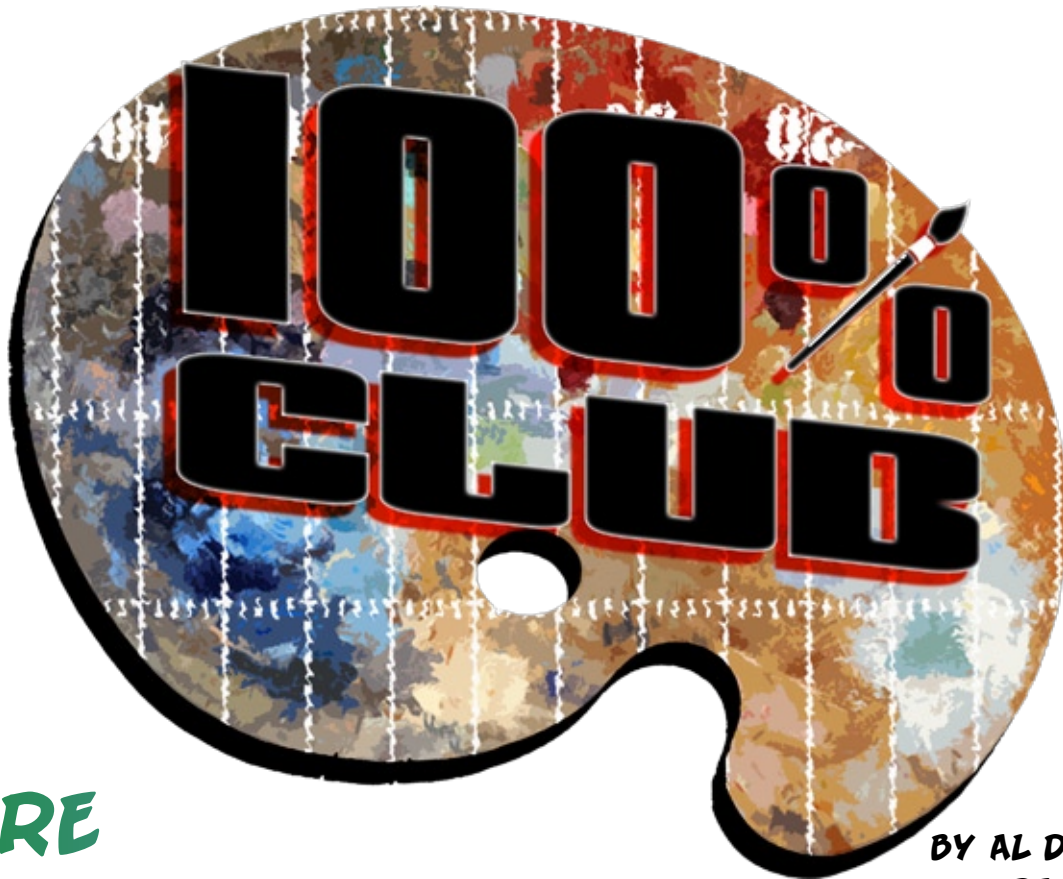
BIG 12-1

INDEPENDENTS-1

Look for all the elements of reality to come together in Canton, Ohio as teams converge on the MFCA Great Camp-In. The biggest league in miniature football history will be making a major statement at the show and all of this can be attributed to the coaches, who took a chance in learning a ruleset foreign to many. See everyone in Canton!







**THERE  
ONCE WAS**

BY AL DUNHAM &  
PETER BEARSE

**A TIME WHEN THERE WERE NO  
COMPUTERS OR DECALS TO  
REPRODUCE HELMET LOGOS,  
NUMBERS OR STRIPES. THOSE  
WERE THE DAYS WHEN YOU HAD  
TO PAINT EVERYTHING BY HAND,**

**100%**







**T**oday, many guys love to use decals, as they provide a consistency in the logos and numbers that no amount of hand painting can ever achieve. But there are also those who feel that decaled teams are too homogenized, too sterile in their appearance, that they lack individuality. For those folks, I give you the **100 Club**. A place where one can truly appreciate the time and effort that goes into painting **100%** of the figure, including the names, numbers and even shoe laces. Sure, they're not perfect, but perfection isn't what the 100 Club is all about.

The first member of the 100 Club is a fellow named Peter Bearse. Peter goes by the screen name Lindyhopper49 on the MFCA chat board and lives in Kingston, Ontario - Canada. Here, in his own words, is his story:

I am 25 years old and relatively new to the sport of Miniature football. I bought my first and only board in November of 2007 (it is a Tudor Super Bowl 620 board that came with the Rams and Steelers). However; I started down this path when I was very young.

When I was around 12, I began making and painting miniature figures of WWF wrestlers from scratch (I would make molds from plasticine and inject hot glue to make the figure). I have also always enjoyed painting on canvases. I later began buying and painting custom McFarlane football players (in fact I sold one to a player on the local University team who wanted one made of himself). I eventually began collecting and customizing the smaller size of McFarlane Football figures, but I began to think... 'these would be so much cooler if they could actually play'. It was around that time I stumbled across images of an immaculate custom Eagles squad and I was hooked! This game had everything that I had wanted!!!

Since I received my first order of miggie figures I have not looked back! I have painted 22 man squads of the Giants, Cowboys, Eagles, Colts, Browns, as well as, the Queen's University Golden Gaels, The University of Western Ontario Mustangs, and the University of Ottawa Gee Gees. I really enjoy the challenge of hand painting the entire team. I like searching for colors and mixing colors to match the team as exactly as I can. I also like trying to put player names across their tiny shoulders and, since I use the 'regular' sized figures not the '67 big man' size, it is even more of











a challenge (sometimes it takes 3 or 4 tries). Printing 'McQuarters' has to have been the biggest challenge to date (gel pens really help me out with names, especially using the opaque white).

Decals have never really appealed to me, I like to see how good of a result I can get using my own two hands, even though I have seen some decaled teams that have knocked my socks off and I know that my computer could more accurately reduce and render the graphics. As a painter, decals just aren't how I roll.



With miniature football figures, just like with a canvas, as layers of paint get laid down an individual starts to immerse, and, by completing the paint job from skin tones all the way through logos, numbering and names with your own two hands, that individuality really shows through. Each figure, whether a custom pose or not, with no carbon copy logos and no perfect lettering, has a character all his own...just as I think it should be!

The MFCA applauds the talents of Peter Barse and his great talent!





# THE DON SMITH STORY AND THE SEAWALL BRAWL



*by Al Dunham*

**E**veryone has his or her own story about miniature football. Many are similar in the way we grew up playing, lost interest for a while, and then rediscovered it years later.

Talking to Don Smith, I had the constant feeling of déjà vu mixed with new experiences. We both grew up in eerily familiar fashion. Both of our fathers were in the Navy, and we lived in the same areas at different points of our lives, Beeville, Texas, Virginia Beach, Virginia and the Bay Area of California. Our brothers and sisters were born in different cities and states, wherever there was a Naval Base nearby. We both had attended eight different schools between 1st and 12th grades. Very familiar, indeed, but when it came to miniature football, our lives were quite different.





**D**on was born in Mt. Vernon, New York in 1964. He was the oldest of 5 siblings, 3 brothers and one sister. Raised as a Navy brat, an affectionate term used to describe a person who moved around a lot due to their parents military duties, Don considers south Texas as the place where he grew up. He received his first EF game, a Super Bowl 5 set with the Dallas Cowboys and Baltimore Colts, at the age of 10. Unlike most of us, however; Don's gift wasn't a birthday or Christmas present. His came from his best friend, David Martinez, who had the game but didn't play it, and decided that since Don loved it so much that he would give it to him. Hey, what are best friends for?

A couple months later his parents purchased him a Joe Namath electric football set by Munro. Those teams came with the dreaded "Boat" bases, which were known as "Cone" bases back then. The two generic teams that came with the set looked similar to the New York Jets, and the Kansas City Chiefs. His parents also purchased him extra

electric foot-  
ball, and they  
weren't particu-  
lar either. Munro, Gotham,  
rookie, red  
pegs, and wide  
tops... they  
played with it  
all. Don still  
has teams  
today that are  
all rookie or  
Munro based.  
Life was good,  
but paradise  
doesn't last for-  
ever, especially  
when your father is in the Navy and gets  
re-stationed.

Eventually Don's family settled in the Virginia Beach, Virginia area, a blessing in disguise as miniature football was BIG there in the late '70s and throughout the '80s! How big, you ask? All of the local hobby stores had Tudor games in stock, as well as teams and bases



**After rediscovering the hobby, Don takes on long time coach, Will Shropshire in 2001.**

The reward for such an endeavor was a trophy that stood no less than 5 feet high and had Tudor Electric Football engraved underneath it!

In 1985 Don met Lavell Shelton, who was a director of the local YMCA. Lavell was quite literally in a league of his own when it came to miniature football. Not only did he continually

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**WHEN I FIRST FOUND OUT ABOUT YOU GUYS, I WAS UNAWARE OF ALL THE NEW MIGGLE PRODUCTS. I WAS STILL PLAYING WITH ALL MY OLD TUDOR STUFF... WIDE TOPS, RED PEGS, ROOKIES, HONG KONG FIGURES...I JUST FELT LIKE I WAS USING ALL THE OLD SCHOOL EQUIPMENT COMPARED TO WHAT EVERYONE ELSE WAS USING.**

---

teams, figures, and bases using the old Tudor order form. It took about a year before Don was confident enough to paint his first team. He chose the 1975 Los Angeles Rams and turned plastic figures into players like James Harris, Lawrence McCutcheon, Harold Jackson, Jack Youngblood, John Cappelletti, Fred Dryer, Merlin Olsen, Jack Reynolds, and Isiah Robertson. He even wrote their names on the backs of their jerseys using toothpicks.

Living near a military base, there were always other kids around... lots of other kids. Also, being in Texas, most of these kids loved football. It was only natural that these kids would get together and play. They had their own league and seasons. Most guys would consider themselves lucky if they can get 9 or 10 coaches together at a time. Don grew up with 30 - 40 kids who all loved playing

for sale. The Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation Department had an annual city EF championship. Newport News (just across the bay from Virginia Beach) had yearly satellite tournaments of it's own, attracting other EF enthusiasts including one of the hobbies more well known names, Mike Pratt. It would be another 20 years before the two men would know that the other was there at the same time.

One of the tournaments that Don attended was the East Coast Electric Football Championship in Raleigh, North Carolina. In his first effort, Don came in second place, losing in the championship game to a fellow from Sacramento, California. This was pretty amazing, considering that there were over 300 participants. Don got his revenge the following year by winning it all, and repeating the feat the year after as well.

have 75-90 coaches in his league, he had commercials on both the radio and on TV! Sadly, a combination of video games dominating the scene, mixed with Tudor going out of business and Lavell moving to South Carolina left Don with a void in his electric football world. That void would not last for long, though, as Don was about to discover the world of Miggle.

It was sometime in the late 80's or early 90's that Superior Toys, the makers of Tudor Electric Football went out of business. Don was devastated. "Man, I tell you, when I found out that Superior was bankrupt and that I couldn't get any more teams or games, it was like being kicked in the stomach. I didn't know what I was going to do. I just loved electric football so much." One day, sometime in 2001, Don was playing around online and just happened to think about





putting electric football into a search engine. "What came up was astonishing. There were all kinds of sites. I especially remember one for the Columbus League, and for the DFW. I was ecstatic!" Don started going to the Miggle chat board. Even though he had grown up in a heavy electric football atmosphere, Don could not help but feel like an outsider coming into the Miggle world, where many of the guys had known about each other for several years. It was this odd man out feeling where Don got his screen name of OldSchool. "When I first found out about you guys, I was unaware of all the new Miggle products. I was still playing with all my old Tudor stuff... wide tops, red pegs, rookies, Hong Kong figures... I just felt like I was using all the old school equipment compared to what everyone else was using." His figures and bases may have been old, but his EF skills were anything but.



**Patrick Morris battles with Don at the Miggle Convention, while the trophies wait in the background.**

That year Don went to the Miggle convention in Canton, Ohio and made it into the final four in his first tourney, and then in 2002 he competed in a Buzzball tourney and placed in the final four there as well. Six months later during the summer he brought home the Buzzball Championship title. In 2003 he won Tom Ruesink's National EF Tournament in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and in 2004 won the Pepsi & Cold Pizza Lightning Tournament held at the Mall of America in Bloomington Minnesota. In 11 championship games between 2001-2008, Don has an impressive 10-1 record.



**From left to right: Hanging with Coach Jasper Scott from the DSEFL.**

**Don with his son DC and the Landsmans at the Miggle Convention.**

**The Dixie League includes Lavell Shelton, Bryan Nutt and many of Don's friends.**







**Don receives his Seawall Brawl/MFCA Skills medal from MFCA, V.P., Will Travers, for Strongest Man.**

Perhaps the most amazing thing about Don's record is the fact that he has never played with his favorite team in any of the games. Growing up in the Texas area, it was only natural that Don grew up a huge Cowboys fan. He loves them so much that he has 17 different Cowboys teams. One of them has a 90 man roster,

Electric Football Tournament Don used his old style, red jersey Patriots against Frank Johnson's Chicago Bears. Unlike that 1985 Super Bowl game, these Pats came out on top.

It was after the 2006 Miggle convention in Baltimore where Don and Jimbo Dungan, a coach whom he had met in 2001

they could raise some money for a charity that changed Don's mind. The two men hammered out the details with a 3.3-gram weight limit and height and width restrictions. Any figure could be used as long as it met the requirements, regardless of how that was achieved. The first Brawl was held in June 2006 for the benefit of the Police Unity Tour. There were 55 coaches playing in that first gathering, and Don's son, DC Smith, took home the trophy. The following year, the Brawl saw over 90 players competing for the title. It was a tough battle, but DC won his second straight championship. In the 2008 Brawl there were only 50 or so coaches, due to the faltering economy. Nonetheless, the competition was as fierce as ever as Adrian Baxter broke the DC stronghold to come out on top.

Tournaments aren't the only arena where Don's coaching skills shine. A member of the Tidewater league, Don has been at the top or near the top of the standings every year. Last year was bittersweet, as Don had gone undefeated during league play in both the Dixie League and Tidewater. Unfortunately, Don didn't get a chance to play for the title in either league due to unforeseen family circumstances that prevented him from being able to participate in the playoffs. "Yeah, I was undefeated in 2008, but it wasn't in the cards for me to play for a championship; it's okay because there's always next year. I've even added two more leagues, the MPFL and the DSEFL to my already busy schedule. I'm even considering the NHFL next year if a certain King of fantasy teams has my babies ready by then. He's one of the greats in this hobby so I'm not going to rush him, he can take all the time he needs. Sometimes it gets tough balancing

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**HE'S WON TOURNAMENT AND LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS AS WELL AS THE GREEN ROOM RUMBLE. HE'S BEEN THE MIGGLE COACH OF THE YEAR ALONG WITH HIS SON D.C., AND WINNER OF AN MFCA STRONGEST MAN COMPETITION. HE AND HIS GOOD BUDDY JIMBO HOST A TOP-NOTCH TOURNAMENT, AND ALONG WITH HIS GOOD FRIEND BRYAN NUTT STARTED THE MINIATURE FOOTBALL COACHES FORUM THAT ULTIMATELY BECAME THE MFCA MESSAGE BOARD.**

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while the rest have anywhere between 35 to 70 players on the team. "It always seem like somebody wants to use the Cowboys whenever I go to these tournaments. I just let the other guys play with them and use some other team instead. It doesn't really matter which team I use, I just want to play." Indeed, in the National

at Miggle's Canton convention decided to team up and give something back to the hobby. It was Jimbo's suggestion that he and Don should host a tournament of their own...thus the Seawall Brawl was formed. "At first I didn't want to host. That's too much work. All I wanted to do was play." It was the realization that

the hobby with my home-life, but I will continue to always put my family first over Miniature Football..."

Besides the leagues and tourneys, Don is involved with starting a TV reality series that is based on miniature football. When it hits the airways, he expects big things





to happen, really big things. "Man, when this thing gets out there, there's no telling where it will lead. Can you imagine all these guys across the country seeing this on their TV sets, thinking to themselves how they had this game when they were a kid and how much they loved it, but not knowing that it is still here, and how much this hobby has evolved. I tell you; the guys who make the products that we use are going to be overwhelmed with new demand for this stuff. It will blow their minds!"

He's built boards, made custom figures, and tweaked bases by the thousands. He's won tournament and league championships as well as the Green Room Rumble. He's been the Miggle Coach of the Year along with his son D.C., and winner of an MFCA Strongest Man competition. He and his good buddy Jimbo host a top-notch tournament, and along with his good friend Bryan Nutt started the Miniature Football Coaches forum that ultimately became the MFCA

message board. OldSchool is also responsible for all of us having different colored bases in our hobby; he was the one who originally gave the idea to the Landsmans to increase sales and to help curb cheating when Miggle used the out-of-the-bag format. So what does the future hold for Don Smith? Well, nobody knows for sure, but my guess is that whatever Don decides to do, if it involves miniature football, he will have great success at it. His track record is living proof of it.



**Bennie Gibson vs Don in a recent Dixie League matchup.**



**From left to right: Don works with Daniel Schultz while in Minneapolis.**

**Da Chicago Boyz: Joe Allore, Ron Christianson, Frank Johnson, Don and Jimbo Dunagan  
Don's son, D.C., on his way to another Seawall Brawl victory.**





By Kelvin Lomax

# THE '09 BASH REPORT

As the last offensive play was being setup, I took a moment to reflect on the 2009 Beltsville Bash and smiled because it would be my first win. It didn't matter what play my opponent Big Keith Chalmers would run, it was not going to work on this day. It was finally my turn in the spotlight and I got to walk away the winner of our league (Beltsville Electric Football League or BEFL) tournament for the first time. How we arrived here was the fun part, so let's take a look back at the action.

Our tournament uses the rules we play by during our Pro Season. This means FOB – Front of Base tackles! It's one of the best ways to play this game. FOB makes running a more successful part of the game. However, we have other rules that made this tournament special, but that discussion is for another time. This article is about the tourney itself and the great matchups that took place.

May 16 & 17, 2009 would be the weekend for the 2009 Beltsville Bash. Opening day started out with the random drawings to find out seedings for the tourney brackets. One other thing to mention about the tournament – it was a double elimination, which means that you have to lose two times to be sent home packing. That is the real reason this tourney is so good, as each coach had a second chance to reach the title game, as long as they kept winning. Early games matched up some good action, as guys were feeling their way through the process. We had little kids, teenagers and, of course, the rest of us adults ready to play

some football. We had just two little kids and we matched them up, which proved to be a really fun game to watch. As for the adults, the double elimination format turned out to be a good idea, so everyone could find their way in the first round and still be alive even if they lost. Coach Kevin Thrower gave his take on the tourney... "I love coming down here to play in this tournament." You could see him trying to get the upper hand in his 1st round game. We had Mr. National, a.k.a. F.O.T.H, a.k.a. Corey Johnson, performing the MFCA skills action in the corner and also posting comments and reporting all the action on the MFCA website to keep the public involved in the action.

## BASH ROUND ONE

We had some very good match ups in the first round and they were: Lomax vs. Dearell, Healey vs. William Chalmers, "Smitty" vs. Kevin Thrower, Karim vs. Robert Chalmers, Ty Ware vs. Mozeek, Greco vs. Creasy, Warren Jefferson vs. "Big Keith", and Ephraim (Creasy's son) vs. Tristin (Ty's son)

Darian Ross was here taking it all in, as well as, John Wright, Adrian, and some others. With the table set it was time for the games to begin. The action was fun and exciting in the first round. Several coaches flexed their muscles and looked like they were ready to move on to the next round, while the losers got lined up and ready for the losers bracket. The Results from the first round of play were...  
*Lomax over Dearell 7-0*

*Brian over William 24-14*  
*Smitty over K. Thrower 14-7*  
*Morgan over Ty 7-0*  
*Creasy over Greco 14-7*  
*Big Keith over Warren 16-14*  
*Ephraim over Tristin 21-7*

## BASH ROUND TWO

Round two started up and I got a chance to play Brian Healey, our very first time! It was a very good game. I got lucky with the win and moved on to the next round. We had some coaches show up late. With the BEFL, it is never too late. Each late coach took a loss and went into the "Losers" side and starts playing. This works great for those who want to play, but don't want to stay overnight. Coach Rip, a.k.a. George Diamond, had this to say, "Man, I had a great time... I want to thank Tom, Dearell, and the rest of the Beltsville gang, for putting on a great show. I went down there expecting to watch as I knew I would get there late, and the guys made some adjustments so I could get in on the fun with my Maryland Terps.... Can't thank you guys enough!"

The second round was played, and result is what follows:

*Lomax over Healey*  
*Karim over Smitty*  
*Creasy over Morgan*  
*Keith over Ephraim*

In the winner's bracket it would be Lomax vs. Karim & Creasy vs. Keith in the next round. The Round two losers bracket had the following results:

*William Chalmers over Kevin Thrower*







*(Thrower is out)*

*Ty Ware over Ed Scott (Ed is out)*

*Robert Chalmers over Joe G. (Joe is out)*

*George over Tristin (Tristin is out)*

The next round of the loser bracket went as follows, with the addition of the late coaches:

*William over Ephraim*

*Ty vs Smitty. (the winner plays William)*

*Robert over Healey*

*George over Morgan (George plays Robert)*

### **BASH SEMI-FINALS and MFCA SKILLS COMPETITION RESULTS**

Things were starting to move into the semi-finals and, after playing Healey for the first time, I now got to play one of my students, Coach Karim. I say student, because he is willing to learn anything I might have to show him about this game. Whether it was about tweaking or formations to trick plays, he would always ask great questions to help him stay near the top of his league. Well, we hit the field and it was a slow start to the game. I made a play, then he made a play and we battled to a tie at the half. In the second half, I found a way into the end zone for an early lead. But on the kickoff, he ran it right down my middle and tied the score with a touchdown. I then gained another touchdown and lead going into the final plays of the game. Coach Karim needed a 1st down to continue and he set up in a run formation, although it had not worked too well in our game. So, the play is run and

he gets stopped short of the 1st down, I had to ask him some questions, but I only asked one – “Why didn’t you have an option on that play in case I stuffed the run??” I asked this because it was some-



thing that we had talked about in the classroom. It was a lesson learned and for me it was on to the winner’s bracket final to play Big Keith, again.

By this time, Corey Johnson had finished the MFCA skills event and this was his report from the action... “In the MFCA skills events we had a couple of perfect scores!!! Darrain Ross posted a 300 in the passing (he was the 1st guy up too!)...his attempts were all solid hits. I didn’t know Mr. Ross could sling it like that! In the speed challenge, it was the Grand Master Karim. His guy made runs of 19 1/4 & 19 3/8



to take home the medal! However, Creasy had a player run 20 inches, but the scores are combined to determine the winner. And, in the kicking, it was Brian Healey again posting a perfect 300. We may need to re-name this event the Healey contest. Since Brian already won the Northeast region challenge....2nd place contestant Keith Chalmers (260) will be eligible in Canton to compete.”







### DAY 2-ON TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP

Day 1 is over, and the final action was set to pick up on Day 2. After some gritty finishes, the finals for the Loser's bracket ends up being "The Chalmers family throwdown", as father and son got set for the game with the winner moving on to the championship game. Young William was poised to defeat his dad, but Big Keith was not having any of it. They both battled hard

finals where here, if I win – it's all over, if I lose, we play it again. I was ready for the championship.

The game begins and it's going according

football's greatest coaches. It is never really over in one of our games until the final gun sounds. We battled and the game came down to the last few plays, as Big Keith battled back. Big Keith came back and after being up 14-0, I found myself up 21-14 as the situation had changed to surviving the Big Keith comeback. After being up by two scores early, it came down to an inside kick late in the game, to see if Big Keith can complete the comeback and force a second title game...



and in the end, it was dad who moved on in the tourney.

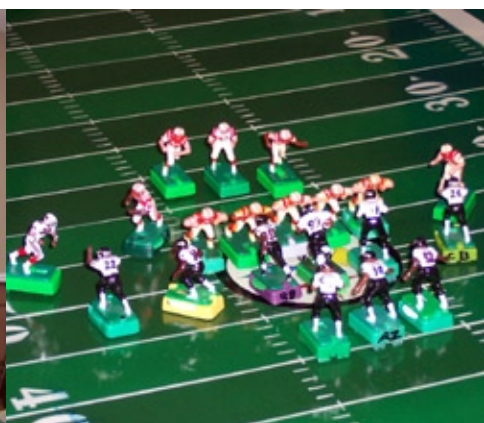
So, now it was set for the Winner's bracket game to be played between myself vs. Coach Big Keith Chalmers for a shot at the 2009 Beltville Bash title. Of course, it was going to be another one of our classic games! It seemed like all of our games are instant classics. Coming from the winners bracket I knew I would have a shot again if I lost. Now the



to plan, as I score first and then get the ball back and score again to go up by two touchdowns. I thought it was in the bag, but I forgot I was playing one of miniature

The players lined up and Big Keith made a perfect kick ...it was a LIVE BALL...and the Redskins (Big Keith) recovered the ball with about 3 or 4 plays left in the game and great field position at the 50 yard line. On first down Big Keith got a man open, but could not complete the pass. On second down, Big Keith tried to go over the middle, but was just high on the pass attempt. So the game and the championship came down to one play, the big down – 3rd down. Well, I can taste it about now... I was not going to let him get anything on the last play...I played the prevent coverage behind some zone-blitz and made a game saving sack to hold off the big fella and win my first Bash after being the runner-up last year. I had finally won my league tourney and I did it against one of the best...the final 21-14.

I hope that everyone enjoyed the action.... see you in the fall.







by George  
Diamond

# TAKING IT ONE STEP AT A TIME... PART III

I would like to refer back into part two, from the Spring Issue of The Tweak, of when you are talking with a prospective league member. I advised that you don't want to appear desperate and how that can be a "turn-off" for potential league members. I also want you to think about how being desperate can get you in some uncomfortable situations. After all, this is a person with whom you will be spending time, valuable personal/leisure time. So, don't get someone just to have someone in the league, because, do you want to spend two or three hours with someone that is going to be a chore to be around?

Some other things to think about:

Is this someone you would have in your home?

Is this someone you could see as a friend?

Is this someone who could potentially be a psycho?

These are some questions one must address in the screening process of potential league mates. I am sincere when I say this because of personal experiences. We had one guy who would just call at weird hours of the night, and just show up at other league mates' door steps at night without calling. He never did join the league, but he sure did wear out his welcome real quick. I would put this person in the "psycho" category.

Next, let's move on to you. Yes, YOU! The league, your league, is a reflection of the coaches in the league. So not only are you looking at prospective league mates and screening them, many of them, ....the ones you most likely would like to have in your league, are also screening you! This means that wherever you set up your games or demonstration, your set up should be presentable, along with the coaches demonstrating the game of miniature football. This means teams should be sharp looking, bases should be working well, and boards should be running and reasonably "quiet" .



George "Mr. Buzz" Diamond, Corey "The National One" Johnson and Paul "Raiderman" Bartels enjoy some laughs at the Pizza Shop where the Harrisburg Buzzball Leagues play! Good friends in a great venue. It doesn't get any better!





This means you and your league should be dressed presentable, meaning wearing clean clothes, from head to toe. I have seen guys trying to recruit wearing clothes like they had just finished doing yard work. “Groaty” looking sneakers, a sleeveless tee shirt with arm pit hair sticking out, and shorts that are too short, isn’t the way to make a good impression. I would suggest a nice pair of jeans or khakis, and a golf shirt. I got this idea from Michael Robertson when I played in the DFL in L.A., as he had dressed the part of a “coach” wearing tan pants and a team coach’s shirt. He looked sharp, and he looked like someone you would want to associate with outside of a league function. Jerseys seem to be the most popular article of clothing and are okay too, as long as they are clean and go with the rest of your outfit.

Another part of you is not only how you are dressed, but how you are “groomed”. It really is a good idea for most of us older guys to be clean shaven, beards and mustaches need to be trimmed. The younger guys can get away with the unshaved look, as it seems to be part of the “look” for today’s young male. Being well groomed means your clothes are clean and neat, you have put on your deodorant, hair combed, and teeth are brushed. It is always a good idea to have a pack of breath mints or gum to keep fresh breath. I know we all have had some times when we had some onions in what we ate, or something else like garlic that can make our breath offensive. To me, there is nothing worse, but I understand we all have it from time to time..... it’s just when it’s all the time it can be an issue.

At one event, one of the main referees had a problem with his “onion” breath. After the first night, I was “done” speaking with him for the rest of the weekend. When he walked my direction, I walked in another. Hey, life is too short to be around people that annoy you, so pick your league mates carefully.

Next is the league venue. My favorite type of venue is to have a regular place to play that is relatively easy to drive to, CLEAN, and is spacious enough to accommodate future growth. Plenty of electrical outlets are another thing to consider, but one usually does not think about it until the first day/night setting up, when it may be too late. Community/Recreation centers are good, church meeting rooms, bowling allies, sports

bars, restaurants with a banquet room, and restaurants without them can be good too. At one time I had a great working relationship with a local hotel and we rented a meeting room for the Saturdays we had league. The room cost us around \$30.00 for the day. That particular season we had coaches driving up to three hours to play in the Harrisburg BuzzBall League.

Having a commercial venue is nice because one does not have to worry about folks coming over to the house. I think I’m correct about this, as most significant others “prefer” that you and your league mates play somewhere other than your house. If folks do come over to the house, that does put an undue stress on you to get the house cleaned up, or worse yet, the wife thinks she has to make the place presentable for your league mates, which may put undue stress on your relationship.....something none of us need. If you do pick a venue like a pizza shop, it only makes sense you patronize the restaurant by eating appetizers, or lunch/dinner when you play. We had one guy who tried to bring in a McDonalds bag of food to play in the pizza shop. That didn’t go over well with me, or the owner of the pizza shop.

Always remember...businesses are in business to make money; they are not in it out of the goodness of their heart. Playing at a business should be a win/win situation. They see your league as a way to provide a little income opportunity for them, and it is a nice open venue for your league to play.

I have one more part of my series on league building... see you in next issue of the Tweak. If you have any questions about building a league that have not been addressed in this part, or previous parts of “League Building,” send me an email [coachrip@yahoo.com](mailto:coachrip@yahoo.com)



Pride in your appearance is important. Would you want this guy in your league? 😊







WRITTEN BY DAVID NICKLES

My name is David Nickles and once again, I want to thank all of the coaches for coming out to our 15th anniversary Bama Blast. This is truly where the big boys play. Our motto has always been, "If you think you are the best, then come and pass the test". I have been blessed to see many coaches come through Bama and I have always admired the great strategies that the coaches have brought to the tournament. I have yet to see anyone come to the Bama Blast and blow their opponent away. Most games have always come down to a field goal, a two point conversion, or overtime, to decide the champion. This year's Bama Blast was no different. We put out the "test" and the "best" signed up. Bryan Nutt brought his crew, which included Joel Pritchard, Butch Carter and Lavelle Shelton from South and North Carolina. Leonard Crawford and Jasper Scott brought their crew from the DSEFL, which included Ronnie Shannon, Rafiq McDanul, Joe Ramaglia and a few others. The "out of towners" were Danny Long from Montgomery, John Overy from Louisiana, Charles Lane from Tennessee and Gary Pate from Alabama. We even had Steve Graham from Lincoln and myself, David Nickles, also from Alabama. We were also blessed to see Chris LeMay drop by to watch the battle on his way back from vacation.

The Blast began Friday, June 5, 2009. We had it all at this tournament; hard hitting, great passing, and some major calls during the early games. We had a lot of coaches going for it on fourth down and long, as each coach put it all out on the line to advance. However, in the end, there were only three coaches who made it to the top to battle for the gold. In the 4.1 gram weight class, it was Butch Carter verses Bryan Nutt; student versus teacher. Butch took the 4.1 gram championship in a big win. In the 3.3 gram weight class, it was Joel Pritchard and again Butch Carter to battle it out. The winner of the 3.3 gram was Joel Pritchard.

Congrats to all of the coaches for a great tourney and to our finalist, who played two hard-fought games. Their names will go down in history with all the great champions that played in BAMA and won. This tournament has been around a long time. It is

hard to believe that 15 years have gone by. Again, thanks to all the great coaches who participated in this event from the North, South, East and West.





# GOD HAS GRACE FOR PACKERS FANS TOO

## The Tom Ruesink Story

By Lynn Schmidt

Electric football was the cause for the first time Tom Ruesink ever got his mouth washed out with soap. Earlier in the day, he was called “the f-bomb” on the playground after he made a hard tackle in lunchtime football. So when his father made a touch-down with the Packers against little Tom’s Dolphins, he called his dad “the f-bomb”. He learned two things very quickly that day:

Ivory Soap does not taste good and do not mess with Ken Ruesink when it comes to manners.



A five-year-old Tom Ruesink drives the field against his opponent and father.

### Bottom Jobs

Growing up in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin (a distant suburb of Milwaukee and the place where the Wizard of Oz held its movie premier), Sports played a big part in shaping Tom Ruesink’s childhood. “My brother Mitch and I were always reading the backs of our sports cards. We used to play a game where we would guess the colleges of the players faster than each other”. Tom had played football through 7th grade and was usually a quarterback. He continued, “I enjoyed the cerebral part of being a quarterback, coming up with plays and all. I soon realized, though, that I was too slow to run the Oconomowoc option offense and too small to be of much value in other positions.” Golf was Ruesink’s real passion during the younger years. He had won the Waukesha County tournament at age 12 and age 13, but when he took his game to the statewide level, he soon ran up against golfers who were much better than him. “I remember going to the Junior Masters golf tournament in Racine at age 13 or 14. I shot around an 84 and was feeling pretty good. I looked up at the leader board and some kid my age named Steve Stricker was 16 strokes ahead of me.

That’s when I knew that I wasn’t going to be the next Jack Nicklaus.” Tom remarked, “Actually, we had four guys within a year of me from Wisconsin play on the tour...Skip Kendall, Steve Stricker, Jerry Kelly, and JP Hayes. Stricker was definitely the best, but our team knocked his team out of regional my senior year and we made it to State.” As for how he came to play electric football... “My dad got me a game for Christmas (Dolphins vs. Vikings) and I was immediately hooked. I used to tweak players bases for my family.” The funny part of that story is that Ruesink used to say, “I gave my players bottom jobs”. He admits to being pretty naïve back in his childhood.

His childhood buddy Mike, who now lives in the Dallas area, and Tom, used to get together all the time to have afternoons of electric football. “We drew up rules that usually resembled more of a scrum than a free-flowing west-coast offense. But we sure had fun! We had a halftime ritual of ice-cream sundaes. I remember our first game...I won by a Fred Cox field goal.” A former Packer season-ticket holder, Ruesink warned the interviewer, “Don’t tell anyone that I used to play the Vikings when I first started. I’m a huge displaced Packer fan now.” Jeff Siemon ended up being Ruesink’s adult Sunday School teacher when he moved to the Twin Cities and his recurring quote to me was that “God has grace for Packer fans too.”

### Renaissance Man

Toys actually must have stayed in his friend Mike’s blood. After a successful run on the University of Wisconsin Baseball team, his friend ran baseball clinics for youth. Needing a device to help illustrate the urgency to get the ball out of the mitt fast to turn a double play, they came up with a Velcro circular paddle and Velcro tennis ball. That toy, “Grip-It” as it was then called, became the #1 toy in the U.S. the next summer. His friend Mike moved on and became president of the largest temporary tattoo company and was sitting on a beach in Hawaii and came up with an idea for Hawaiian shirt drink insulators. He took that to market and is doing quite well there too. “Mike and I touched base a handful of times over the years and the topic of discussion usually centers around either the Packers or the electric football industry.”

Ruesink chose Winona State University in Minnesota as his college for four reasons:



1) He loved the beauty of the city and the beauty of the place with the bluffs on both sides of the Mississippi River. 2) They had a strong speech team and program. 3) They offered him the chance to play golf as a freshman on their team. 4) They were a very strong nursing and elementary education program so the guy to girl ratio was favorable (c'mon...he was a pragmatist after all).

"I loved Winona. I was vice president of the student government my sophomore year, but the highlight was my junior year being

a week. Ruesink sold his 50% share in 1994 when his children were born.

1994 was a pivotal year for Tom as he and his wife of two years, Neesa, heard they were going to be parents of twins. All was going along well in the pregnancy until at 25 weeks Neesa started having contractions and they couldn't get them to stop. Austin and Logan were born 2 weeks later at 11lb 14 oz and 1 lb 15 oz respectively. Many prayers were answered as they survived 3.5 months in the hospital and nine surgeries. Austin has cerebral palsy, but it doesn't let

## eFootball

As for his foray into electric football, Ruesink credits the internet..."I did a random search on electric football one day and up popped some figures that a guy named "G-Man" from California did. I was so excited to see the detail in those figures. I soon saw names on the back of jerseys and from there on I was hooked." He decided to go to his first event in 2002 (or 2003, he doesn't really remember). It was Summer Slam in Harrisburg. "George Diamond and Mike Pratt were very pivotal in me becoming involved in the hobby. George spent a lot of



Tom carefully paints one of his custom teams.



A close up of a figure from Tom's winning "Bash" team.



Two more close up views featuring both the Offensive and Defensive squads of Tom's beautiful "Bash" championship team.



elected to represent the 54,000 students of the State University System as head of the statewide student government. I was able to give speeches in the capitol rotunda, meet with the governor and legislators to talk through issues like student financial aid/tuition stabilization, lobby nationally in DC, and work with the state university student governments to drive issues like ensuring a viable student voice in the faculty evaluation systems."

## Career Moves

After college, Ruesink worked briefly for the Nielsen Ratings as a Wisconsin field representative, but then, in 1991, wanted to move to Minneapolis to satisfy his entrepreneurial itch and start a franchise called Comedy Sportz along with a former Second City comedian. "It was a precursor to the show Who's Line Is It Anyway. The show is a gas. Two teams of "improv" comedians compete against each other in various comedy games based on audience suggestion. There's a referee who calls fouls like "Groaner" or "Brown Bag" (when anyone says something off color). It's pretty cool that the show is still going today – 6 shows

it stop him too much. Logan is an active swimmer and was able to earn his varsity letter this year as an 8th grader. Annika came along 5 years later and she's probably the biggest sports fan of the group!

After working six years at Thomson Legal Publishing, Ruesink became a data warehousing and reporting consultant for the Cognos reporting tools. He got on a long-term project at Carlson Wagonlit Travel and that's where he got started being a travel data and negotiations specialist. He worked seven years at Carlson, helping them start their consulting practice. "It's been cool working with a lot of the fortune 500 companies and getting to see their headquarters and understand their culture. The industry has become so sophisticated that the companies buying travel really need to understand the airline and hotel yield management systems or they can get locked into very disadvantageous contracts." About three years ago he formed Ruesink Consulting Group and now works almost exclusively with the Coca-Cola travel program and still does some design work for CWT.

time initially on the phone helping me understand the various figures and bases out there. Pratt tweaked my first tourney team and spent about an hour with me before the event making sure I knew the rules and checking out my instincts. I won my first tournament game and from then on, the competitive juices were flowing."

## Raising Money and the Bar

Ruesink continued, "Though Minneapolis has only had one year of a league, we did host a few very fun tournaments. I wanted to do a benefit that would help people like my son participate in sports. There was a group called Courage Center that runs adaptive sports programs. My son Austin can ski through the use of a mono-ski or when he is rope-teathered with a volunteer. He can also water ski through that program and is now into archery. I wanted it to be the type of tournament that perhaps hadn't been seen up to that point. We raised over \$10,000 the first event with some excellent donations coming in privately and corporations paid to have a custom football board cover and other signage and radio spots. We had pictures with the Vikings cheer-



leaders, had Chuck Foreman, Bill Brown, and Joey Browner attend and had silent auction items signed by many sports figures like Steve Young, etc. Don Smith won that tournament over his son DC. It was a lot of work, but was an incredible amount of fun and we so appreciated the guys coming in from around the country to make it happen. Watching Weirwolf roll around on the floor after his Priest Holmes scored the opening kickoff made me realize that this wasn't your typical weekend. They did 2 more tournaments in Minneapolis, each at the Mall of America. The formats changed

like. He has been proud of his steady improvement. "When I first started playing I couldn't hit the broad side of a barn with the TTQB. It was pretty cool to notch the first 300 in the passing skills competition and realized that I'd turned a weakness into a strength." He hadn't picked up a switch since last May and this year's Buzzfest was a highlight for him. He knocked out Norbert Revels in the second round and Chuck Lawrence in the quarterfinals before losing to eventual champion Adrian Baxter in the semifinals. "The Great Lakes guys, like DC and Harrisburg, are awesome coaches and

ing training camp in the atrium of Lambeau Field. "It would work. There's a lot to see with the Packer Hall of Fame, training camp, and stadium tours. It's conducive to that kind of an event."

### Inside the Coach's Workshop

We thought we'd try the Inside the Actor's Studio 10 questions with Tom...if you like it we'll continue it with other coaches:

1) What is your favorite word?

*Grace*



Tom Ruesink squares off against Keith Chalmers in the double elimination finals of the 2007 Beltsville Bash.

Posing with his '07 Bash Trophy, Tom Ruesink demonstrates his winning attitude.

Tom carefully surveys the field during the 2008 Buzzfest.

slightly, but another \$4,000-\$5,000 was raised. I have the upmost respect for guys that coordinate tournaments. They are definitely a grind."

### High Fives and Kryptonite

As for national tournaments, Ruesink finally got the bridesmaid tag removed by taking home the 2007 Beltsville Bash champion trophy, defeating Keith Chalmers in the double-elimination finals. He had been a runner up 4 times. He had lost in finals to Adrian Baxter twice in the DC College and previous year's Beltsville tournament, lost to Tom Johnson in the NHFL inaugural season championship, and lost to Raiderman in the finals of a Minneapolis tournament. "That one stung. I was the idiot who made the tourney rules and I had it as double-elimination up to the final game and then it was single elimination. I beat Raiderman in the winners bracket and he came back through the losers bracket. The championship was only one game and he beat me. So I had one loss and the second place trophy."

Ruesink doesn't play near as much as he'd

some of my favorite guys in the hobby. Jimmy Davis and I have a running smack-talk as I remind him that I'm 5-0 versus the Great Lakes in my tournament career and call myself 'Great Lakes Kryptonite'. He is quick to banter back that kryptonite doesn't have any effect on the Hulk! That's what makes this hobby so fun is the friendships that go way beyond the board."

His favorite electric football tourney memory had to be when he played Big Keith in the DC College tournament. "It was the last play of a 0-0 game and he tried a Hail Mary with the ball at the end of a long stick. My safety beat his guy to the ball and then ran 100 yards for an interception return to put me into the finals. I was like Hale Irwin at the U.S. Open running around the room high-fiving everyone."

As for what the future of electric football holds, Ruesink hasn't written off hosting another charity tournament, but with the ages of his kids and his business growing he cited that it wouldn't be fair to his family to do another one. But he still has a vision of someday doing a tournament dur-

2) What is your least favorite word?

*Selfishness*

3) What turns you on creatively, spiritually or emotionally?

*Competition and compassion*

4) What turns you off?

*Status quo*

5) What is your favorite curse word?

*Pickles! (my daughter says that...)*

6) What sound or noise do you love?

*Hello, daddy.*

7) What sound or noise do you hate?

*The alarm clock*

8) What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?

*Be the data research guy for an NFL team*

9) What profession would you not like to do?

*There's honor in all professions, but if I had to choose I guess I'd say anything where I worked for someone I couldn't respect or learn from.*

10) If Heaven exists, what would you like to hear God say when you arrive at the Pearly Gates?

*Well done*





Karim "Grandmaster KC" Campbell, #18, poses with a group of young coaches during a MF event.

# Coach's Corner

Often, you here chatter on the MFCA forum about preserving and passing this wonderful hobby of miniature football to the next generation. Many of us wonder how can MF compete with the video game versions of the gridiron sport. While that discussion will probably go on for some time to come there are a few coaches who are effectively using MF in working with youth around the country. Two of them are Karim Campbell and Tim Smith.

## **Karim Campbell**

Karim Campbell is known throughout the MFCA community as "GrandMaster KC" a name he earned in his youth as a "battle DJ". Karim's enthusiasm for this hobby is unsurpassed. He started in MF at about 11 or 12 years old. He got his first set from the local Woolworth and started playing other kids in the neighborhood. In recent years Karim has played in the NHFL making the final four in 2008 with the "Bombing Jets". In that same year he took the

"Mighty Buccaneers" to the Inaugural BAM Championship, before bowing out to Brian Healy. This year he coached the Arizona Cardinals in the NEFL and will Coach the same team in the DSEFL in September.

Karim has a history of working with youth. He has been there for the kids in his community, doing things like teaching Karate to youth at the local King Center. He started getting the kids involved in MF in 2005. He put the word out that he needed electric football items and coaches from around the country responded in kind. Soon, Karim and the kids had boards, teams, and bases to get off the ground. In working with the kids Karim came across a shy 10 year old tike named Kelvin. Karim quickly got him involved in the



By  
**Don "detroitchild" Lang**





News-Journal/David Tucker

Tim Smith, aka "Steel Town Tough", displays some of his work at Giuseppe's Steel City Pizza in Port Orange.

hobby and soon Kelvin was competing against other kids. At first, young Kelvin was getting his clock cleaned, but improvement came in time. He started in a junior league ages 8-10, eventually graduating to the senior league, ages 11-15. Kelvin became a deadly passer and eventually placed second in the senior league. Kelvin now referees games for the other kids and has just finished his first season in the Deuce-Philly league.

Karim, who plays with youth at the Hub City Teen Center in New Brunswick, New Jersey and more recently, South Brunswick Public Schools Community Education After School program, says playing with the kids helps to get him energized and in balance in preparing to play stiff competition in leagues and tournaments along the mid-East Coast. He thanks his family for supporting his love of the "Electric Football" hobby.

### Tim Smith

Tim Smith, a.k.a. "Steel Town Tough", started playing at about 9-10 years old. His first set contained the Packers and Dolphins. He was usually found playing his buddy who had the Pittsburgh Steelers. Tim collected teams until high school where, like many of us, he fell away from the hobby.

Tim was an athlete who excelled at football and baseball. He went on to play football at Liberty College where, in his senior year, he had the opportunity to play for Sam Rutigliano. After college he started coaching high school football in 1990 and has been at it ever since. He is proud of the fact that he has sent quite a few young men to college.

He got back into MF about 4-5 years ago. He fell in love with McFarland figures and the rest as we say "is history". He started creating his own miniatures and customs and has put out some fantastic stuff, so much so, that there was an article on him in The Day-

tona Beach News-Journal about his work. In 2008 he started a miniature football league at Deland High School in Daytona Beach, Florida. He also started the Volusia Miniature Football League. As before, coaches around the country pitched in to help with the items needed to get his leagues off the ground. One of his most ardent pupils, Jacob Cosat, won the inaugural season championship with the Chicago Bears.

Smith, who looks like he could still play football and is also into weight lifting, uses MF to teach actual football strategy. In fact, he is considering using the multi-stop style of play next season. Under coach Smith miniature football should remain live and well as long as he is involved.

Much thanks to Karim and Tim, for passing the MF torch. They are doing much needed work with the youth of our communities and they are using miniature football as a tool for excellence.





# “THE KICKING GAME” Kick PLACEMENT CARDS

BY CHRIS LEMAY



**W**hen I developed “The Kicking Game” kick placement cards, I was creating a solitaire league with the teams of the defunct XFL and wanted to take advantage of the punting rules that had been developed by the XFL to create “the most exciting fourth down in football”. In the XFL, there were no “fair catches” of punts and punts of 25 yards or more could be recovered by either team. In addition to the change in the punting rules, there was a change to the kickoff rules. In the XFL, all kickoffs into the end zone had to be returned out of the end zone.

In electric football, at the time, most kickoffs were just returned from the goal line with that one “kick return specialist” that if placed just at the right spot on the board could usually get a very good return or break at least one per game for a touchdown. Punts were just 40 to 45 yards with no return allowed at all.

In my solitaire games, I wanted to make kickoffs more exciting and more realistic by devising a way to kick the ball to different areas of the field and not always have that one “kick return specialist” return every kickoff. To make punts more exciting and realistic, I wanted to be able to have punt returns or be able to kick “coffin corner” punts to pin the offense down deep in its own territory.

I researched the ways that kickoffs and punts were performed in other football games using dice, charts and

spinners and most just gave distances, but I wanted to be able to kick the ball to different areas of the field. I felt that the best way to accomplish what I wanted was to develop a deck of “playing cards” that would give a distance and show a placement on the field of the kick.

“The Kicking Game” kick placement cards consist of a deck of 48 cards divided into four sub decks (19-”Kickoff” cards, 19-”Punt” cards, 5-”Onside Kick” cards, and 5-”Punt from inside midfield” cards). Each card gives a distance in yards and a placement on the field relative to the hash marks and other field markings to add another dimension to kicks and punts that cannot be achieved with other methods of kicking and punting and make it possible to get more realistic and exciting returns.

Since the cards are merely designed to give a distance and placement on the field and as simple to use as

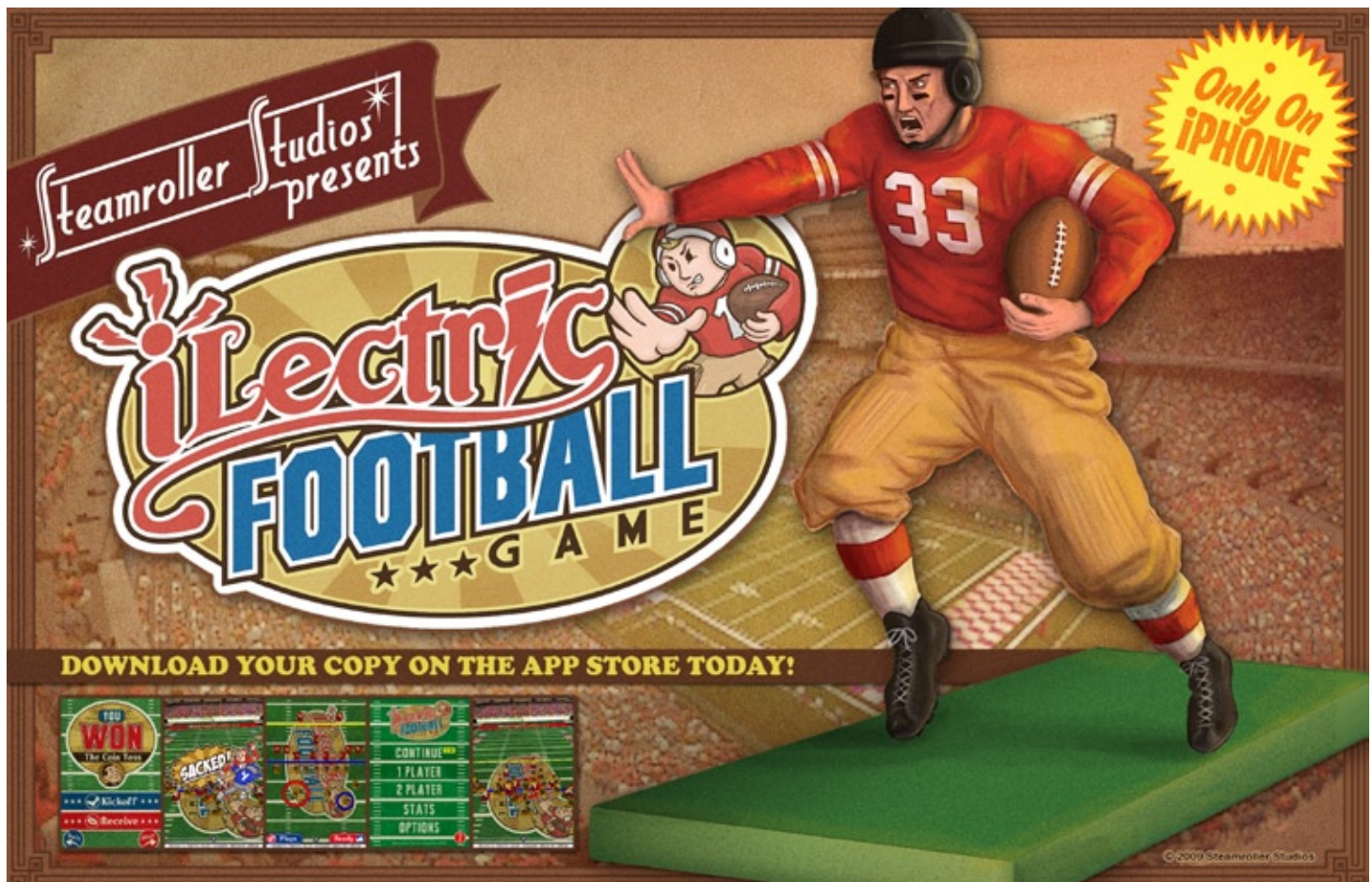




shuffling a deck and flipping up a card, they are easily adapted to any kickoff and punting rules used for electric football play, whether for solitaire or in a league or tournament format.

The cards come in a convenient storage tray along with some basic rules for using them and are currently available through my E-bay store "Nolensville Electric Football". Please check them out and I hope they can add yet another dimension to your electric football experience. They are currently \$15.00 per deck + 2.00 shipping and can be purchased through my ebay store, Nolensville Electric Football or directly by contacting me through email.

Questions and comments are always welcome. Send emails to: [effanatic@comcast.net](mailto:effanatic@comcast.net)







## ON FIRE IN THE SOUTH

James Shealey takes the DSEFL Championship  
The Deep South Electric Football League Report  
By Leonard Crawford

### THE PERFECT SEASON

They ended the season the way they had started it, unblemished. James Shealey and his Texas Tech squad truly had the perfect season by beating David Redmond and his Boise St. team by the score of 21-17 in the DSEFL BCS Championship Bowl. This game was an air attack, as both teams marched back and forth on the field. Boise played tough defense against the run, but was unable to stop Texas Tech in the air. This game was hyped up to be a great one, and it was one that had to be watched.

James began playing electric football back in 1972, but ended up taking a break during his teen years and during the time he was in the Army. It wasn't until 1998 that he came back to the game and started playing in league play. During those days he played in the GAEFL, where he was the back to back champion. When I asked James how he managed to be undefeated this season, he said "I put in more time this season than I ever did. I took the extra time out to work with my team. Anytime that I was free, I was getting my team ready. I also put in the extra time scouting my opponent by watching game films of them." James came out in this game with a totally different attack than he normally uses. By changing to a passing attack versus running, he was able to keep Boise St. on their heels the entire game. He continued, "This is the first time ever in my career that I have been undefeated, and I had fun the whole time doing it." Watching James receive his trophy at the end of the game was something amazing, as he was filled with emotions during his speech. James loves being with the guys within the DSEFL and he showed it that day... "But I tell you, my toughest games this year were against Charles and Ronnie. Both of these guys really made me play hard." Will he repeat as the champion next year? That would be a thing to see.

### THE RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

This is what this game had built itself up to be. The two ACC powerhouses had to battle it out in the Fiesta Bowl, Georgia Tech (coached by Brian Redmond) and Miami (coached by Leonard Crawford). Prior to the start of this one, Ga. Tech made a bold prediction, as they have been known to do, by promising a win over Miami, and even went as far as saying "They are not even going to score". How did his opponent feel about this one? It made him mad. How can he guarantee a victory when we beat him down earlier during the season? From the start, Tech made true of their promise, by taking the opening kickoff and driving down the field for the early lead. Miami battled back, getting the ball down to Tech's goal line, only to have to settle for the field goal. From that point on, Tech pretty much had Miami on its back the entire game. Brian Redmond, who is one of the top coaches within the electric football community, just kept pounding him on both offense and defense. Miami, known for its running attack, was held to only 65 yards rushing during this outing. In Ga's final offensive drive, Brian went old school on the Canes and totally took the wind out of their sails by running the famous "Klingbeil Trap"

Brian explained, "I knew that he had never seen this play before, so when I ran it, he thought that he had me stopped on the play, but I burst it open for a 80 yard score". Although the Canes managed to score points during the game, they were totally out matched, and out coached by Georgia Tech. Tech ended up winning 28-13.





## SUGAR IS SWEET

The battle was on in this Sugar Bowl classic. Just two weeks prior, these two teams met and fought a hard one, as Kansas ended up beating Tennessee, but this time it would be a different story. Tennessee jumped out to an early 14-0 lead and the game seemed over just as soon as it got started. However, Kansas is a tough team and they were not about to lie down and give up the easy victory. Once they settled down and played, they started managing to move the ball and ended up with their first points of the game. Not being worried, the Vols continued to move the ball down the field, scoring twice more making the game 28-7. Kansas had to play tough defense if they wanted to stay in this game, and they did, stopping Tennessee and then scoring on unheard of drives. But it was all too late as the final score was Tennessee 24-Kansas 21. Big ups to both Charles and Rashad in this game.

## I FINALLY GOT HIM

Ronnie and his Nebraska team knocked off the favorite, David Nickles and the Oregon Ducks, in the Cotton Bowl by the score of 10-7 in overtime. This game was back and forth and the Ducks struck first, but Nebraska battled back and tied the game at 7-7. The game was pretty much deadlocked when they went into overtime. The Cornhuskers had the ball first and hit a deep pass on the first drive in overtime. Now it was time for the Ducks to move the ball, they hit a pass out in the flats, but it was stopped short. The Nebraska coach was seen running around shouting "I finally got him".

## THE DEEP SOUTH IS CONTINUING TO GROW

The Deep South Electric Football League is growing each day. We have expanded to include our first ever "Road Warrior Program". We started out with 10 coaches 2 years ago, but have now grown to 32. We knew that we could grow larger than what we were currently at, but never imagined that it would be like this. Our first two seasons went off without a hitch, as Alan Ridgell was the first champion of the league. After that season, things just seemed to take off. The following season, Charles Lanes became the first ever champion in two leagues. He posted an undefeated season in the DSEFL, and also did the same thing during the 2008 Dixie League Cup. At that point, Jasper and I said, "As long as one of us is living in the Atlanta area, the Deep South will always be a part of the city". During the off season, we came up with more coaches,

and more ideas, to put us on the map as we hosted our first Toys for Tots fund raiser, in which the league collected more than 1000 toys, and over \$1000.00 for needy kids in the area. After that, people started to take notice to what we were doing.

Playing in the Deep South is no easy task, because the coaches have one thing in common – winning. Our style is that of a "snap" format, in which after that point all unengaged players can be turned to make the



block on the play. This also creates a more realistic feel to strategy and coaching. Leonard wanted coaches to be prepared for the "what will happen next", instead of the old bully ball style. We use the "turn and burn" method after the receiver makes the catch, so you must be on your toes while playing defense. We have even made changes to the old pass placement method, as David Nickles came up with the idea of placing the ball on a string device placed on the turf in order to allow the player to run thru it for the catch.

### The 2009 DSEFL Bowl Championship Series

#### Fiesta Bowl

Brian Redmond (Georgia Tech) 28 Leonard Crawford (Miami) 13

#### Sugar Bowl

Charles Lane (Tennessee) 24 - Rashad (Kansas) 21

#### Cotton Bowl

Ronnie (Nebraska) 10 - David Nickles (Oregon Ducks) 7

#### Sun Bowl

Flynn (Alabama) 14 - Jasper Scott (Rebels) 10

#### GMAC Bowl

Joe Ram Champion

#### Rose Bowl

Browns (USC) 28 - Bill Jones (Fla. St.) 3

#### DSEFL BCS Championship Bowl

James Sheeley (Texas Tech) 21 David Redmond (Boise St.) 17

As our style is beginning to take shape, more and more coaches are calling each day wanting to know why and how our style of play is different from the others. The feature that makes us different is that we allow for a ball snap format where, prior to the snap, your offensive linemen may be pointed in any direction in order to make the block. That way coaches are forced to think in a real football manner. To show how much the league has grown, one of the members of the DSEFL made a bold statement over 2 months ago saying that he would win the Dixie Cup hands down. Brian Redmond proved that he was the mouth of the south, by winning the Dixie Cup again. Brian was the first champion of that cup and, in my mind, he didn't win it only because he showed up five minutes late for last years tourney. Brian came on strong this year by blowing away every team he faced on his way to the final match. In the finals against Charles Lane and his feared Raiders team, the Falcons held true to their word and ended up winning in the most exciting game to be played in a long time. Big ups to him and Charles, as two members from the DSEFL met in the final game on the season. We will see what will happen with the upcoming season. The Deep South is going to be here for a long time to come.



# The 2009 "Why my wife is the Greatest MF Wife ever" contest

Presented by Matthew Gulp



For years and years our significant others have been there through the sweet victories and bitter defeats. Let's face it...our wife's put up with a lot, so much so, that the staff of *The Tweak* decided it was time for them to be recognized for their efforts. And so it is with great honor that we put on the first annual "Why my wife is the Greatest MF Wife ever" contest. We received entries from all around the country, with coaches pouring out their hearts, so that their wife might be named "2009 MFCA Greatest MF Wife of the Year". Well, I must say, we had some very heart-felt letters that would make any wife grab a tissue or two. Talk about your "brownie" points! If you did not win, you should at least put your entry on the frig at home. She is bound to notice it and wall-la...instant forgiveness for all of those hours of buzzing!

I would like to also take this opportunity to thank everyone who participated in this year's contest. Our distinguished panel of judges consisted of Corey Johnson (a.k.a. Mr. National), Lynn Schmidt (a.k.a. Weirdwolf) and me (a.k.a. Silverhorse 228). It was very hard to pick the top winner and runner-up, but all these wives are winners for just putting up with hours upon hours of constant buzzing, game play and road trips. I wish we could give all of them a medal and take every one of them out on the town to say thanks, but in these tough economic times we can only help two coaches say-I love you dear-thanks. The rest of you...well if you play 20 hours a week I suggest putting aside at least 2 hours for dinner and a movie.

The top prize for this contest is a \$60 Gift certificate to Olive Garden or major restaurant of her choice, so the winner can treat their significant other to a nice evening out and a 2009 MFCA Wife of the year trophy, for them to show all of their girl friends. Second prize is a \$40 Gift certificate to Bath and Body. All entries will receive a MFCA prize package for participating.

And now...give it up for these men among men...as we share with the entire world some of our entries (in no particular order) and we give you our first runner up and 2009 MFCA MF Wife of the Year. Congratulations to all.

## Entry from Phil Giliam

My wife is so deserving of this award. She has been by my side through thick and thin since 1980 and has never complained about my electric football virtues. I finally broke down and joined the GLEFL in 2001 and she made sure I made it to my destination almost every week. She has been so supportive of me threw the long haul. We are not rich or even well off, but we do scrimp and save so I can go to tournaments and league games down in Columbus, Ohio. I am not a great coach and sometimes not even a good coach, but she knows I love playing this child's game and she loves me and I love her for it. It is very difficult to find practice time at my house with my job and we have two grandbabies living with us, that sleep at the most unopportunistic times, but yet, I get no complaints from her. Times are hard for us right now, but with the lord and each other, we do manage to stay afloat (sometimes just barely) hoping someday we can pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off and have a good laugh. That is why I think she is so deserving of this award...

## Entry from Warren Jefferson

I think this contest was made for my spouse. Since we've been married, my wife has been with me to countless tournaments, convention weekend and EFL special events. And after standing waiting in the corner, while I play hours of EFL games, even after that, she ask to learn how to play the game, she learned how to play the game, and actually played very well making the playoffs 4 out of 5 years. She has also won the first elf game played live on the internet against Wondell (ask Don Smith he will chime in). Even though we seem to have our ups and downs prior to coming to any of the tournaments, you would have never guessed what exactly may have been wrong with her, because she comes in with the



most pleasant smile, even though we may have been playing for hours at a time. She mingles well with all other competitors' wives, children and just family in general. She supports all EFL function. She always lends a helping hand to whatever. For example, she would cook, clean, and help watch over other people kids. After all this I feel she is truly a great efler wife that I'm very proud to have..

## Entry from Tim Young

### *Why I have the "MFCA MF Greatest Wife!"*

My wife Kim has to be the greatest. Over all the years of our marriage (going on 30 yrs.), she has supported whatever I wanted to do from Go kart racing, RC racing, slot car racing, electric football and even cowboy shooting. She was always there to support me, dragging the kids around in strollers or wagons, to cooking, cleaning making sure everything was ready for people to come to the house, supplying ideas or listening to me venting because I got cheated even when I didn't. She has put up with a lot from me, going to conventions, swap meets or races while she would sit at home with the boys. Kim would sometimes come and watch me race even though it scared the living day lights out of her. Never once complaining about the heat or the cold or travel time, late hours and the money I was spending. In May of 1982 she was 9 months pregnant with our first child due any day. I was in the middle of a run at amateur national's title with HOPRA (HO Professional Racing Association). At that time I was in the top 5 in the nation and there was a national's race in Detroit, Michigan. If I missed it, it would drop me out of contention. I was planning to stay home. She pleaded with me to go, as she knew how much it meant to me, even though she could go in to labor any minute. Well I ended up going. I didn't win the title that year, but they knew I was there. I got back home at 10:30 Sunday night and my oldest boy was born 12 hours later. Whether she wins or not she will always be the greatest in my eyes and in my heart.

## Entry from Al Dunham

The top 5 reasons why my wife is the best MFCA wife:

#5 She always helps me when I'm painting. Indeed, she'll often say "Why don't you go back into your room and paint some more?"

#4 She never bothers me when I'm playing my solitaire games. When I'm finished, it's usually "Are you done already? Don't you have another game to play?"

#3 A few years ago she helped me make my imaginary teams when my mind was drawing a blank. I'll never forget her advice. "Why don't you make a league based on your inner persona? I know, how about a team of gay guys? Or a team of goofballs? Or a team filled with losers and jerks?"

#2 She never gives me any problems when I want to go over to somebody else's house and play. She always encourages me to play. "Don't you have a game today? Aren't you supposed to go over to their house and play? I think you should go over there anyways. Go ahead and play a couple of games. Just go!"

And the #1 reason why she's the best..... Because she's HOT!

## 2009 MFCA

### GREATEST MF WIFE-FIRST RUNNER UP

## Entry from Reginald Rutledge

### *ROSE RUTLEDGE*

#### *A Woman Like No Other*

It's 4:00 am and about 10 coaches are sitting around in my living room talking about running power sweeps and great defensive backs. In the center of it all is my wife, Rose Rutledge. A lady, well versed in "bubble

screens and cover corners", knows the importance of her role as an ambassador for the game of miniature football.

Few women can even compare, in this respect, to Rose in her ability to juggle being an exceptional mom and wife, AT&T business executive and football aficionado. While I've known my wife ever since the seventh grade, I would have never imagined in a hundred years, this would be the person who I shared my life with and my football ambitions.

I have been involved in establishing leagues, hosting tournaments, and being involved in miniature football functions. The Dallas-Fort Worth Miniature League was established in 1995 and Rose had a huge hand in it's conception. From the discussion of rules to where games were to be played, Rose played a key role in making things possible. One of the main reasons that people speak so tremendously of the hospitality on their visit to Texas is due to Rose's attentive care of our guest. No one does it any better.

As many of you know, I own Footballfigure.net/Footballfigures.com. To venture into such waters, it took a wife with undying faith and support to allow me to try this. Many wives would never do this! I may have cost her much but she has never once complained. All she has ever wanted is my happiness. This selflessness that she displays is what makes my love for her greater each day!

You can gage how a wife is thought of in the game of miniature football based on the number of people who come up to her wanting to hug her and hold conversations about the game. I am always amazed when Rose enters a miniature football room how the guys magnetically come to her, genuinely happy to see her. They commence to talk sports and she is just as knowledgeable as they are. She is every husband's dream girl!

The defining characteristic of my wife is her ability to make everyone, both friend and foe, feel like her best friend. What you see is what you get! She walks in beauty and grace. My love for her grows stronger each day!

## 2009 MFCA GREATEST MF WIFE -WINNER

## Entry from Jeff Eby

### *For my wife, Ann Durbin*

When I got back into miniature football nine years ago, my wife didn't roll her eyes at my latest goofy idea. Despite the fact that she is not a sports fan, and knew little about miniature football, she was happy to help out with my latest obsession. Over the years she's detailed four teams for me (I'm a sloppy painter, and she has much better touch than me). Whenever I need to bounce an artistic or creative idea off of her, she's ready and willing. She's been happy to take long drives with me to various MF events over the years. Come gameday, she'll load my board into the car (my disability makes it hard for me to lug my board around). She even "proofreads" my videos, making sure that someone who isn't into the hobby will still "get it". And there's never been a complaint about the days I'm gone, the motor noise when I'm practicing, and the phone calls from fellow MFers in the middle of our TV watching. I have to say I'm pretty lucky!

On behalf of the staff at *The Tweak* and the MFCA we would like to say thank you, again, to everyone who participated and we look forward to next year to see who will be our 2010 MFCA Greatest MF Wife of the Year. Love makes the world go around-God Bless





by Al Dunham

**QUICK, name something important that happened in history on July 4th.**

**Chances are, you said that was the day we declared our independence from England, and you'd be correct. Now, name something in history that happened on April 23rd.**

**Drawing a blank? I'll give you a hint, it was also a declaration of independence, of sorts.**

**Still don't know? Ok, one more hint, it was only two years ago that it happened. Give up? April 23rd is the day that the MFCA officially became, well.... official.**

Yes, our two year anniversary came and went and nobody seemed to notice. No gold rings, no new car, not even a cupcake with a couple of candles on it. On that date, back in '07, at precisely 11:52 a.m. EST, Lynn put up a post thanking Beenutt and announcing the new MFCA banner at the top of the page. Now, I know it's not as important as your wedding anniversary, or your children's birthdays, but to the miniature football enthusiast, it should still be considered a date to remember. It was on that date that we collectively stood together and said "We are the people who love this hobby, and we will put aside our differences and band together to educate the public and promote miniature football. And, we will do it without the outside influence of any manufacturer." Well, maybe those weren't the exact words, but you get the general idea.

I'd like to take a little bit of time and go over that banner that runs at the top of the MFCA chat board word by word. The first word is 'Miniature'. Miniature means a representation or image of something on a small or reduced scale. That is what our figures are, small representations of athletes... or clowns, robots, monsters... whatever your team is made up with. Next word is 'Football'. We all know that football is a sport, played by people of all ages. It has certain rules and regulations, which means that wherever you play, it is the same. Unless you live south of the border or over seas, in which case 'football' is played totally different, which

*continued on pg. 38*





*Last years convention brought together the young and the young at heart, inner city and out of this world, black and white, arena and frozen tundra, East and West, 3.3 and 4.0. The only thing we didn't see together was laughter and anger because anger forgot to show up!*

From left to right: Ray Fanara working with the kids at the Kid's Tailgate Party, Matt Wavra and Kelvin Lomax compete in the CPC, Two future HOFers, Adrian Baxter & Mike Turner, battle on a McGhee Big Board.



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For all your 2010 Convention info and itinerary, visit [www.miniaturefootball.com/forum](http://www.miniaturefootball.com/forum)

is why we call it 'soccer', though they still call it 'football' which is confusing as all hell. 'Coaches' means a person, or persons, who trains an athlete or a team of athletes, which is what we do, though most of them seem to have a mind of their own, and some don't seem to have any minds at all, which is where most of my players fall into. 'Association' is an organization of people with a common purpose and having a formal structure. In our case, it's more of a formal purpose and common structure, and that common structure is overweight and out of shape. Growing old sucks!

'Bringing' - to cause to come to or toward oneself; attract., like 'bringing in the sheaves' (Just what the heck is a sheave anyways???) 'Together' - into or in one gathering, company, mass, place, or body. The Turtles were happy together, and so we should be as well. 'The' is a small, three letter word that everyone knows what it is, but can't really define either, sort of like my mother-in-law. 'Miniature Football' (already covered) 'Hobbyist' - a person who participates in an activity or interest pursued for pleasure or relaxation and not as a main occupation, which is not to be mistaken for a person who goes to one of those 'ranches' in Nevada for a different form of pleasure and relaxation. 'Coach' (also already covered) 'And' - another three letter word used to connect grammatically coordinate words, phrases, or clauses. 'Player', is a person who takes part or is skilled in some game or sport, which would describe me if you took out the word 'skilled'.

Now, off to the right of that phrase, is a base with 3 words engraved into it. The first word is 'Unity'. It's defined as the state of being one; oneness, the state or fact of being united or combined into one. This is a very important word, for without unity, we are just a bunch of people scattered

about the country playing our games with no sense of purpose. 'Integrity' is defined as adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty. Once again, that leaves me out in the cold. Last, we

# FELLOWSHIP





have 'Fellowship', a friendly relationship; companionship.

When the MFCA convention comes along in August, I would like to see every MFCA member attend. The MFCA and the hobby needs your support. I know with today's economy, that will not be possible. Many people just can't afford to go, and that's understandable. For those that can afford to go but won't, I'd like you each to ask yourself "Why?" What could be better than spending 3 days with a bunch of other guys who share the same passion and interests in this hobby that you do? Where else could you go and have this much fun playing different games with guys that you otherwise wouldn't be able to play against? Let's face it, there is a solid core of players that go to the various tournaments around the country. They play each other at one venue, then go to a different tourney where the same group generally shows up and plays each other again, but under different rules or standards. At each gathering, there is a handful of different guys who show up

to make things interesting. For most of us, though, we can't afford to travel to the different tournaments. We can only afford to go to one or two in the year. We don't get the opportunity to play very many different guys.

The MFCA convention is our only hope of being able to meet and play many of these people. The best part is, you can play any rule set you wish. With the Coaches Points Challenge, the more games you play, the more points you get, and the more, different rules you play by, the more points you get. It's a win-win situation no matter how you look at it. Last year everyone I spoke to said it was the best time that they had had, mostly because of the variety of games that they could play. This year hopes to be even better. If you've been on the fence about coming, I urge you to just go. Go, and have fun, because having fun is what this hobby should be all about!

**Far left: Kids understand all this without being told...they just have FUN!**

**Left: Corey Johnson (right) checks out John Martin's adjustments in a CPC game.**



# I N T E G R I T Y



**From top to bottom: The last game of the CPC; Steve Martin vs Joe Allore, Jimbo Dunagan vs Chris Fields in the Armed Forces Tourney, V.P. Will Travers checking out teams with Mark Francis.**





THE MFCA OFFERS OUR CONGRATULATIONS TO THE  
FINAL FOUR CANDIDATES FOR THE 2009 MFCA HOF!



JOIN US AT THE MFCA CONVENTION ON AUGUST 7  
TO FIND OUT WHO THE TWO NEW 2009 INDUCTEES WILL BE.



LAVELL  
SHELTON



MARK & BILL  
KLINGBEIL



MIKE  
PRATT



MIKE  
TURNER