



FORWARD PASS

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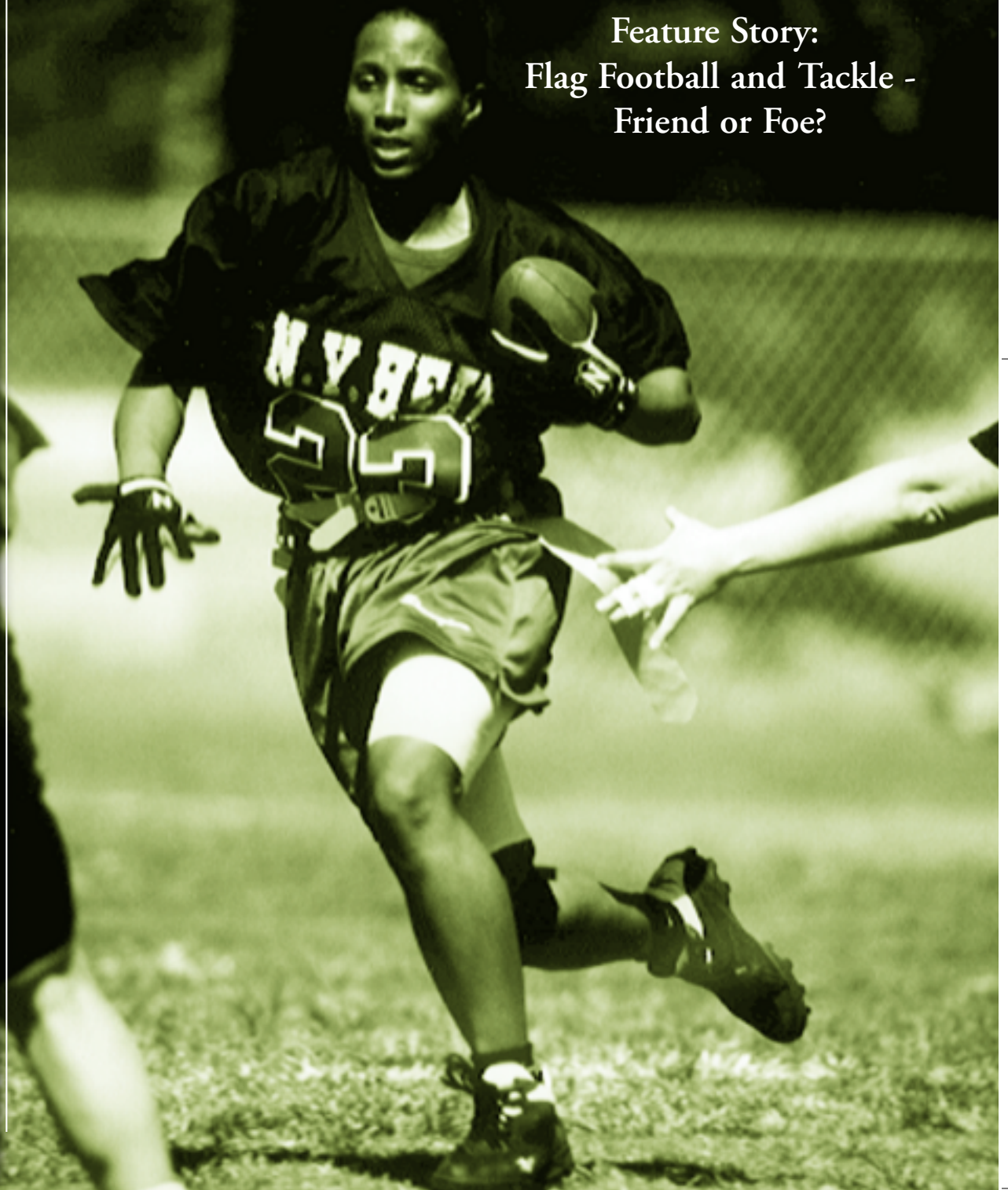
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2005 IWFFA Circuit of Tournaments

Kelly McGillis Classic – Key West, FL	14 th Annual	February	8 – 14
*Dallas, TX (tackle teams)	1 st Annual	April	16 – 17
Hjorring, Denmark	2 nd Annual	May	14-15
Oslo, Norway	6 th Annual	June	25 – 26
Toronto Classic, Canada	1 st Annual	July	2-3
# Va Beach, VA (girls & juniors)	1 st Annual	July/August	TBA
Quebec, Canada	5 th Annual	August	6 – 7
Gothenburg, Sweden	5 th Annual	August	27 – 28
Kate Clinton Classic	3 rd Annual	September	23 – 25
Washington, DC	6 th Annual	October	8 – 9

* All teams are invited to compete, expect to play a more physical game
 # We are offering and still need interest to have this competition

These tournament are subject to change and additional tournaments may be added. Check our website:
iwffa.com / tournaments 2005 for updated information

Coaching With a Sixth Sense

Legally Blind for the past four years, Rodd Johnson, coach for the Jacksonville Lady Midget Jaguars and Lady Jaguars continues to coach flag football with as much fervor and success than ever before.

We know Rodd as the guy who got girls involved with the IWFFA, when he made the phone call to us back in 1997 and asked the IWFFA to offer a girls division for our tournaments. He was first recipient of the Porter Wilson 2000 Award, had managed to bring his team to: Canada, San Francisco, Washington, DC, Key West, FL, Dallas, TX. They are champions, ranking number one in the girls division for year 2001, 2002 and 2004, as well as winning championships in: Key West 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2004, San Francisco 1997, 1998, and Washington DC 2002.

But you may not know that for the past four years Rodd has been legally blind, who continues to coach his teams. In 1996, his vision started to give him trouble. He was playing with his daughter and could not see the whites of her eyes. He shook his head, wiped his eyes, slapped his face to get focus, but still no change. He went to the doctor who took tests and discovered Rodd had: Farcoidosis Uveitis – which is an inflammation that effects parts of eye, optic nerve and can effect any part of a body organ (heart, lungs, liver, etc) There is no cure for it. The only treatment at the time was cortisone steroid – which if caught early will keep the disease in remission. It prevents further damage, but does not clear up previous infection or damage. In September 2000, Rodd was declared legally blind and from September - December of that year, Rodd could not work. He went to blind training school where people are taught how to use a blind cane, assistant dogs, and other means to assist blind people. Rodd never wanted to rely on a cane, because it would make obvious to the public that he was blind, and that would just re-assure him as well that he was disabled which category he did not want to fall in. The most pain he suffered at that time was that he missed coaching the girls and wanted to go back, but how?

His goal was to make it back to Key West for 2001

In coaching - Rodd relies on what he knows. He could not see his players, but he could feel where they were. He talked the techniques for his players to use. His hearing became real sharp! At first he would ask his assistant coach if a girl ran 5 and out. He memorized the sound for 5 yards and could detect whether a player ran 3 yards or the 5. (and then he would yell at them to run the 5!) He would also hear if his players run cuts in or out. The reaction of the crowd helped him understand what was going on. Shadow technique (how much light space the sun casts on a person's size) a person 5'5 and 6'5 will show much more or less light which is another technique Rodd uses. He also uses memory and smell to distinguish people. He smells what soap, perfume, body odor (ugh) for any person (which is usually consistent), and then will defines who the person is. He will ask his assistant nearby as he calls a players name "Diane" and ask his assistant "did Diane hear me"?

He developed new techniques in his mind – he sees the field as a grid in his mind (like a computer), so he knows what yard line he is on (he stands in middle of field at 40 yard line) After the kick, he moves with the team position on the field. He uses hand signals for his play calling. He will use his veteran players to demonstrate to new, younger players at times as well. He asks a lot of questions: He would ask QB, did the ball hit your right hand? to understand why the snap went bad. Because he can't see, he has to understand all the techniques in every movement that



was not correct.... in order to make correction for his player. And his players would sometimes try to cheat during exercises but he catches them by listening to the depth of their push-ups, their breaths, voices and he can tell if they are not going all the way for each exercise or warm-up. He carries a towel to swing around for direction to make sure he doesn't bump into anything as he is walking. When you are born with sight, you have a memory in your head, what things

should look like. As we speak (during this interview), he can picture driving from North Roosevelt, to our Wicker Fields, from his hotel to the fields in our Key West Tournaments from earlier years. He will ask a person assisting him, if there are any changes on the field from past years. If not, he is on his own (most of the time). He uses a cheat sheet with patterns drawn – he calls out a number for a particular pattern, then will stand where receivers should make their cuts and listens. During games, his assistant will be another set of eyes and explain to Rodd if players ran play, patterns, etc. the way they were suppose to. One very important Rule : Never throw coach the ball – there is always someone near by during tournaments to protect him in case. Also for directions to field, always needed an assistant for this.

Today, his oldest player, Stephanie King - picks him up for practices. Rodd is with a third set of girls, as he continues to coach. He just loves the game of Flag Football, his girls and says that nothing can keep him from coaching. There is a chance, for future treatment with stem cell research. It is a long shot. But as of today, there is no cure. Rodd adds: "There is not anything that can happen to anyone that should stop a person to have a zest for life" and " It is always a beautiful day when you wake up in the morning –that is your fighting chance for the rest of the day".

Rodd hopes to bring not just one girls team for the 14th annual Kelly McGillis Classic, but a Junior team as well.... Amazing.

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International News

Scandinavian News – What's Going On

Back in 1997, the IWFFA traveled to Denmark first, then Norway, then Sweden, then Iceland where we actually introduced the sport of Flag Football (we were there before NFL 5 on 5!) We also promoted and trained in Finland (where flag football existed) to help start new teams for Finland Women's Flag Football. Because of logistics, the three countries of Scandinavia formed a pack to unite and work together (it is not easy to travel to Iceland or Finland on a regular basis – and besides, they are part of the Nordic Region and not Scandinavia). Today, each Team in Scandinavia has: one female representative. Each country has one female representative, the Scandinavian Region has one female representative, and the IWFFA has a female International Coordinator. This structure may slow things down (having to wait for people to make their responses or share concerns to all), but allows for everyone to be apart of the decision process and to have input for what direction to take flag football. It also offers work loads to be more evenly distributed and shared with everyone.

Scandinavian WFF, no longer falls under the Men's American Football Clubs (that in itself is an amazing story, where the women won!). In Sweden, Women's Flag Football falls under Korpen, Denmark: Firmaldrett, and Norway will soon fall under: Bedriftsdrett, and they all fall under the IWFFA.

During Scandinavian tournaments, there is a shortage of officials. Players on teams competing are asked to officiate games when their team is not competing in the tournament. One would think this would be an unfair advantage in that any official could "tip the balance" of fair officiating in order to create a desired outcome. Not so. In fact, there is more care and fairness I have seen from the players who officiate than in most officials who only officiate and who have been doing so for years. There is a concern about the quality of officiating however, and also a level of roughness some teams demonstrate during matches, and that is why the Scandinavians addressed the issue (initiated by Lone Olesen – Hjørring, Denmark and Bill Kiltgaard – Head Official) to start teaching the player's properly how to officiate. Their Hjørring, Denmark Officials training, October 16 – 17th, of this year, brought representatives from: Danish Devils, Gothenburg Angels, Oslo City Tigers and Knøttene United. All teams were asked to be represented, and not all the Scandinavian teams attended which is something needed to be addressed, because for future Scandinavian IWFFA tournaments, it is expected that teams not playing on field, share in the tournament officiating. Because teams wear "different hats", there is a comradity between teams during and after the tournaments like never seen before. It is a fantastic support system between those who are involved.

Tournament Programs have turned into a wonderful thing. Not only do programs give teams and players important tournament information, a history piece and souvenir for the event, but also as a way to raise money for tournaments, team expenses, travel, etc. This phenomena is well known to North American teams, but is a little different for the Scandinavians. However, raising funds through sponsorship and advertising is making it's way through the Scandinavian tournaments. The Danish Devils found out the benefits of soliciting ads for their tournament program which turned out pretty successful, with little effort. The Oslo, Norway tournament program offered in 2004, local teams the chance to get ads and keep 100% of the money as well using social events for fund raising during the tournament. For Oslo, Norway 2005, the offer is extended to all teams who come to participate (every country) who are offered to use the tournament program as a source to gain money through sponsors / companies back in their home city. Gothenburg has always used this method as a way to raise funds, in addition to offering a raffle and "hot

food" at the field, which includes Lena and Kiki's Secret Sauce Recipe in their famous pasta dish (they sell out every year).

For 2004, a new tournament was added to Scandinavia: Hjørring, Denmark May 29 – 30, offering now, three tournaments with one in each country. Because there is no regular league season (yet, and maybe Norway is soon there), it is hoped that all the Scandinavian teams (over a dozen) will compete in each of the Scandinavian tournaments. The IWFFA offered any teams in the U.S., Canada and Mexico during 2004, free registration to any Scandinavian tournament. No team took advantage and we hope North American teams would consider competing because there are great benefits. In Denmark, teams can book a little "hut" and cost is roughly \$10 per person, each night (they are walking distance to field) and food is prepared and offered by the Devils, which is cheap and good. Food and Alcohol is cheap in Denmark (the cheapest of Scandinavia). Airfare will be cheap this time of year. For Oslo, Norway, the tournament will be part of the Gay Games and so there will be many social events every night of the week. Schools can be booked for teams to sleep in at very cheap price, which is much like a hostel setting in the U.S. Norway is the more expensive of the 3 tournaments, but you would have the opportunity to experience the: midnight sun, mountains and fjords (before you die, you should go there). In Gothenburg, the average cost for hostel (which is much like a hotel) is \$20 per person, per night, food is cheap, on and off the field and the time of year offers good airfare rates. American Airlines now offers discounts for our Scandinavian tournaments, and the IWFFA will still consider sponsoring teams to go over there to compete. Go! (and take lot's of photos)

The tournaments will continue to be ranked beginners for 2005, but it is obvious that a good number of the Scandinavian teams are no longer suitable for this division (we will have to consider a change in ranking). The Oslo Panthers and Danish Devils will compete in separation round during 14th Kelly McGillis Classic, as the Gothenburg Angels (or half of the team) will continue to compete in the Beginner Division. Norway had a team: Oslo Trolls back in 2001, who competed in the 10th Kelly McGillis Classic, who made it into play-offs of Recreational Division, took 8th place out of 15 teams and ranked #2 for that year. That was impressive. And today, there is on the rise a group of very competitive teams from this area: Oslo Panthers who had taken the championship in DK and Norway 2004 Tournaments, and ranked #1 for 2004 Beginner Division. The Danish Devils, who tied during championship game in DK, and seem to be giving many teams a tough time. The Swedish Republicans who took the champ in Gothenburg played extremely well. These teams are the one's to watch out for as top contenders, but do not disregard any of the other teams. The Oslo Polar Bears have a new coach (Harold) who promises to teach his team how to play great flag football and recently got a QB with a good arm. The Oslo City Tigers woke up during the Gothenburg tournament and surprised themselves. The Stockholm Mean Machine, a new team is "driven", Stavanger is trying to get their act together, those loose teams of Scandinavia may turn some surprises and the Angels, the oldest (in age and years of experience) say they will bring even more experience to their game play to make a "smarter game", says Lena, coach of the Angels, who also says: "look – out for the Angeles"

Canadian Region

The Canadians have become leaders during 2004. The Quebec Storm started by taking the 13th Kelly McGillis Championship in the Middle Division, the Quebec, Canada tournament and took #1 ranking for Middle Division 2004. Other Canadian teams looking good are: Quebec Exillium, who took #2 rank-

Girls' Section

Ten Tips for Coaching Girls' Sports From Women's Sports in the News

By: Sarah J. Murray

Every coach a girl has will undoubtedly leave an impression on her. Here are some suggestions to get you on the road to creating a positive experience for blossoming athletes.



- 1. Encourage girls to get dirty:** Little girls can tackle, dive into headers, snag rebounds in traffic and be tough just like boys – if they are coached to. Give the girls you coach room to be as strong as they can be within the parameters set by the rules of the game.
- 2. Set clear goals:** Individually and as a team, kids need focus for their energies. To facilitate progress, set clear, concise goals for every practice and game. Make sure goals are attainable and relevant to the skills and tactics your team needs to work on.
- 3. Evaluate progress regularly:** Setting goals is only the first step. Evaluating strides each player made in a given direction is equally important to improvement. Girls need to know when they have achieved – so they remain engaged and enthusiastic. On the other hand, girls need to know when they have fallen short of their goals – so they can alter their effort or approach next time.
- 4. Be mindful of social dynamics:** Sports don't exist in a social vacuum at any level. Crushes, cliques and power dynamics come to practice every day, like it or not. Observe your group and work to understand what social forces are affecting their progress. Exploit positive behaviors (leadership, support, honesty) and intervene to diffuse negative behaviors (bullying, isolation, caddiness).
- 5. Take a process-oriented approach:** The athletic development of kids is slow to come when wins and losses are the success gauge of a season. Concentrate on how to shoot the ball rather than whether or not a goal is scored. Focus on fundamental skills, tactics and strategies over the obsessed-about victory.
- 6. Respect each players' contribution:** Every player on your team has something to offer the group – whether it's a positive attitude, a fast 100-yard dash or a smart play. It's your job to find each girl's strength and encourage it to shine. Learn to highlight all contributions – physical, emotional and mental.
- 7. Create expectations:** Before your season begins, let players know what expectations you have of them (timeliness, effort, equipment) and let them know what they can expect of you (feedback, support, communication). Create a predictable environment to support their learning.
- 8. Set an example of sportsmanship:** Your treatment of officials, opponents and fans will undoubtedly be noted and mimicked – by both players and parents. Recognize your role and make a commitment to respecting the spirit of the game and all those involved.
- 9. Help parents understand their supporting role:** Parental support is a key to a successful season. However, parental meddling in coaching details is a sure sign of trouble. Communicate your goals and expectations with parents – but demand autonomy in coaching practices and decisions.
- 10. Focus on fun:** After all, that's what playing is all about, right?

Championship Teams for IWFFA 2004 Circuit of Tournaments

13th Kelly McGillis Classic – Feb 3 – 9

Key West, FL	GirlsJax	Lady Midget Jaguars
	Beginners	Team Europe
	Middle Division	Quebec Storm
	Higher Division	Tampa Lethal Weapon

Hjorring, Denmark	May 29 – 30	Oslo Panthers
Oslo, Norway	June 12 – 13	Oslo Panthers
Quebec, Canada	August 7 – 8	Quebec Storm
Gothenburg, Sweden	August 28 – 29	Sweden Republicans
Kate Clinton, Classic, Ptown, MA	September 24 – 26	RI Hurricanes
Provincetown, MA		
Washington DC	October 9 – 10	Va Bad Girls

IWFFA Ranking of Teams

Throughout the year, during all IWFFA tournaments, points are tallied and end of year team with most points takes recognition as the number one team for that division. Teams are awarded following year at the Kelly McGillis Classic and receive IWFFA necklaces. Once a team has registered in a division, they will be ranked in that division till end of year. For future rankings, it is the goal of the IWFFA to also include final league rankings and to also incorporate those in final ranking at end of year (IWFFA rules must be used). Currently, the IWFFA is deciding how to list Canada, Mexico and African countries as they will be more visible participants during 2005. Scandinavia already has it's own ranking. This system was developed by Stephanie Vigneault of Quebec Canada and seems to be the most fair ranking system the IWFFA has ever used.

How To Rank - teams receive these amount of points: 2 pts for each win / 1 point for each tie / 0 point for each loss / 3 points for first place team in each division of tournament / 1 point awarded to each team that participates in a tournament. For a list of all teams competing, throughout the year, and their scores go to your website: [iwffa.com / ranking](http://iwffa.com/ranking). For All-Stars and MVP's during each tournament, go to: [iwffa.com / tournaments](http://iwffa.com/tournaments) / and click on which year

Number One Teams Ranked for year 2004 (in each division)

Girls Division	Jacksonville, Florida Lady Midget Jaguars
Beginner Division	Oslo, Norway Panthers
Middle Division	Quebec, Canada Storm
Higher Division	Tampa, Florida Lethal Weapon
Scandinavian Region	Oslo Norway Panthers

2004 IWFFA Final Ranking of Teams

Girls Division

Rank	Team	State / Country	Tournaments	Total Points
1	Jacksonville Lady Midget Jaguars	FL	KW (10)	10
2	Key West Dolphins Girls and Boys Club	FL	KW (7)	7
3	West Palm Acreage Gators	FL	KW (3)	3
4	Key West KJOS Pitbulls	FL	KW (1)	1

Beginner Division

Rank	Team	State / Country	Tournaments	Total Points
1	Oslo Panthers	NORWAY	10 (DK) 14 (NOR) 6 (SWE)	30
2	Danish Devils	DENMARK	7 (DK) 7 (SWE)	14
3	Team Europe	SWEDEN	12 (KW)	12 (+ 36)
4	Sweden Republicans	SWEDEN	12 (SWE)	12 (+ 34)
5	Göteborg Angels	SWEDEN	4 (DK) 7 (SWE)	11
6	Norway / Sweden Loose Women	SWE/NOR	7 (NOR)	7 (+ 57)
7	Mexico / VA Diamonds	MEX / USA	7 (KW)	7 (+ 21)
8	Norway / Sweden Skansen	NOR / SWE	6 (KW)	6
9	Oslo Polar Bears	NORWAY	4 (NOR) 1 (SWE)	5
10	Knotten United	NORWAY	4 (NOR)	4 (- 16)
11	Oslo City Tigers	NORWAY	1 (NOR) 3 (SWE)	4 (- 60)
12	Stockholm Mean Machines	SWEDEN	2 (SWE)	2 (- 16)
13	Denmark / Norway Loose Women	DEN / NOR	2 (DK)	2 (- 27)
14	Kelly's Loose Women	USA	2 (KW)	2 (- 28)
15	At Home in Key West Loose Women	USA	2 (KW)	2 (- 33)

Middle Division

Rank	Team	State / Country	Tournaments	Total Points
1	Quebec Storm	CANADA	14 (KW) 10 (QUE) 5 (PT)	29
2	RI Hurricanes	RI	7 (KW) 5 (QUE) 14 (PT)	26
3	Va Bad Girls	VA	14 (DC)	14
4	Va Lady Phantoms	VA	9 (DC)	9
5	Ontario Markhuam Mauraders	CANADA	3 (KW) 3 (QUE)	6 (- 23)
6	Va Ice	VA	5 (KW) 1 (DC)	6 (- 31)
7	Houston Inferno	TX	5 (KW)	5
8	Tampa Perfect Storm	FL	3 (KW) 1 (PT)	4
9	Fl Dirty Minds	FL	3 (KW)	3 (- 10)
10	Quebec Extreme	CANADA	3 (QUE)	3 (- 19)
11	Houston Power House	TX	1 (KW)	1 (- 47)
12	DC Loose Women	DISTRICT COLUMBIA	1 (DC)	1 (- 71)
13	Salty's Loose Women	MA	1 (PT)	1 (- 86)

Higher Division

Rank	Team	State / Country	Tournaments	Total Points
1	Tampa Lethal Weapon	FL	14 (KW)	14
2	Quebec Exillium	CANADA	1 (KW) 5 (QUE) 5 (PT)	10
3	St. Louis Mich Light	MO	9 (KW)	9
4	Tampa Brew Crew	FL	3 (KW) 5 (PT)	8 (- 1)
5	NC Moser's Mutts	NC	5 (KW) 3 (DC)	8 (- 4.5)
6	Va Blue thunder	VA	3 (KW) 5 (DC)	8 (- 23 . 5)
7	CA Ruthless	CA	5 (KW)	5
8	Miami Bullets	FL	1 (KW)	1

Scandinavian Region

Rank	Team	State / Country	Tournaments	Total Points
1	Oslo Panthers	NORWAY	10 (DK) 14 (NOR) 6 (SWE)	30
2	Danish Devils	DENMARK	7 (DK) 7 (SWE)	14
3	Team Europe	SWEDEN	12 (KW)	12 (+ 36)
4	Sweden Republicans	SWEDEN	12 (SWE)	12 (+ 34)
5	Göteborg Angels	SWEDEN	4 (DK) 7 (SWE)	11
6	Norway / Sweden Loose Women	SWE/NOR	7 (NOR)	7 (+ 57)
7	Norway / Sweden Skansen	NOR / SWE	6 (KW)	6
8	Oslo Polar Bears	NORWAY	4 (NOR) 1 (SWE)	5
9	Knotten United	NORWAY	4 (NOR)	4 (- 16)
10	Oslo City Tigers	NORWAY	1 (NOR) 3 (SWE)	4 (- 60)
11	Stockholm Mean Machines	SWEDEN	2 (SWE)	2 (- 16)
12	Denmark / Norway Loose Women	DEN/NOR	2 (DK)	2 (- 27)

Gain or Loss of Yardage - Flag Football and Tackle – Friend or Foe?

Read interviews from seasoned Flag Football Players when asked how tackle effects their flag football games, teams and league.

By Diane Beruldsen

I wanted to address the concerns there exists today with Flag Football Players among Tackle Players competing in leagues and tournaments for Women's Flag Football (WFF). I remember during the 2001 Kelly McGillis Classic, noticing that something had happened to the teams that year which was a higher level of skill. Yes, this tournament gets the best of the best teams from all over for most of it's years, but this year, something happened and it was due to WFF Players participating in the U.S. newest round of female tackle teams. It seemed that tackle carried over to flag and WFF demonstrated a more highly skilled game. There were quicker, decisive, stronger moves and everyone knew their positions well. Also the plays were different. Women's Tackle had emerged, once again, as it has over the past decades (the history of women's tackle is a very interesting story). The difference this time, is that these tackle players have an additional venue to demonstrate their tackle skills..... Flag Football.

As a trainer, organizer, promoter, coach, founder and athlete for the IWFFA I separate the two sports and for practical reasons. I never played tackle, but having played rugby for six years as a left wing forward (in the scrum and able to get out quickly on top of the ball), I had a high level of contact with the opposing team. The rules were simple: tackle the person on other team with ball, if you get the ball – run downfield and do not pass ball forward. There are no pads, no substitutions, there are two 45 minute halves, running up and down a 110 yard field, training was with the guys and before we were allowed to touch the ball at practice, we had to warm up for a grueling 1 1/2 hour (6 mile warm up run, sprints, tackle drills, conditioning exercises (3 - sets of 20: men's push-ups, crunches, leg lifts, etc) in chilly, cold, snow or rain weather, twice each weeknight) It was the most intensive training I ever experienced and made my first marathon a piece of cake (I did not train by running, I just went to rugby practices). And my favorite part of Rugby was when the game was over..... it was over. The two teams went back to the bar (or on the field) shared a keg of beer, sang songs had fun and were friends.

The simple philosophy of taking down your opponent, created a very different level of adrenalin and mentality in my body, than when I would play flag the following day (I played Rugby Saturdays, and Flag on Sundays). As defensive line women, my Rugby games made me very quick and more aggressive and I was really a top defensive line player. In one play, I had put my fingers on the ball (snapped shot-gun) before it reached the QB and had the chance to run the clear field for a TD (I muffed the ball). But it was the combination of the two sports which I believe developed a stronger athlete in me.

In those days while playing FF (in many different offensive positions and defensive line), I was never a problem with penalties. It was not a matter of the Official "not seeing it" ... I just always played a clean game. And though my defensive play was made much stronger through my rugby

experience, I have to admit my offense really did not have the chance to advance because of my lack of knowledge for the game rules. Playing offensive and defensive line my first two years, all I knew was to get the QB, or protect the QB. As a matter of fact, during one game I asked my friend Kathy why the other team kept running on and off the field and she would said: "that was their offense, now they are defense and we are offense" (my teams were usually small and we had to play both ways.

The first league I started was the Brooklyn Women's Flag Football League (BWFFL) in the late mid 80's. In that league, we had a good number of teams (8) who were women playing FF for the first time. The skill level was not that great, and most of the teams were evenly matched (there were no "killer teams"). Then one year, there was a team who started to recruit the best players from all the other teams, and this made a difference in the league. Not long after a few years, while competing against this one tough team, the "weaker" teams started to say "we don't get paid for this, it is not fun getting so many black and blues we're dropping out" and eventually the league folded. The one strong, physical team had such an effect on this league.

Today, with some FF leagues, there exists this same problem, which is one, two or a few teams in an existing FF league that is being effected by Tackle teams and Tackle Women. During our Kelly McGillis Classic, because we get so many teams to compete, it is possible to separate teams according to their level of skill, which offers Beginner, Middle, Higher and Elite Teams the chance to compete with other teams their caliber and offers a better level of competition within their division of skill. But even for our smaller IWFFA tournaments, there exists

this problem of having one very strong team (usually a team which consists of several tackle players) who plays with such intensity against their opponents and crushes them. Is it fun for the teams? Does this situation offer the chance to help develop the weaker / stronger teams? And what to do about it.

The goal of the IWFFA is to offer any female the opportunity to play. We do not want to alienate any female, but rather unite under one umbrella to make our sport healthy and stronger. While there is a percentage of women who enjoy the level of aggressiveness and roughness for the tackle game, I believe that the majority of women do not have the desire to "take down" their opponent, but rather feel more natural "pulling a flag". We also have girls who are part of our organization. For their parents, not only is playing FF cheaper than tackle, but most likely more acceptable and more practical as there are many more FF girls teams. And yet, today, there exists a new type of flag football player who has emerged and takes her tackle experience onto the FF field. In the past, we have had players take cheap shots, illegal blocks and we have penalties to address those actions. But how can you penalize someone for blocking between shoulder and waist, a clean block as her opponent is shaking her head and seeing stars all around (not the Kelly McGillis type). There is more intensity and roughness which the sport has never experienced before.

For 2005 we want to address this issue before we see any flag football teams drop out because of this. So far, we have decided offer our Dallas,

The goal of the IWFFA is to offer any female the opportunity to play. We do not want to alienate any female, but rather unite under one umbrella to make our sport healthy and stronger.

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TX tournament for tackle teams (April 16 – 17), to give higher level teams a chance to play FF on a more level /competitive field. Will it work? Will it be successful..... maybe, maybe not.

We need to address this phenomenon occurring in WFF, and in the remainder of this story you will find interview with other women who have answered directly, or consulted with their leagues for answers addressing our questions to them for this story. A description of their background or association with FF or tackle is included. You decide, or at least start to think about the issue and please share with us.

Kris Anderson – Founder of the Houston Women's Flag Football League, Flag Football Player and Tackle Player.

What is your background? “I started the HWWFL in 1996 because I had a dream of playing football. In 2000, another dream came true when I joined Houston Energy of the WPFL. We earned 3 championships from 2000 to 2002. In our first game of 2003, I was sidelined by what turned out to be a career-ending injury (shoulder separation requiring surgery).

As a player who has played both types of games, what is the difference between playing flag and tackle? This question stumped me because the games are so very different yet so very similar. The tackle game is much more physical with more players, more equipment, more coaches, and more preparation. Because of the difference in physicality, the strategies differ somewhat. As much as I thought I knew about football, I really didn't know much about playing tackle ball until I joined the Houston Energy. On the other hand, they are both games requiring the offense to strategize how to move a football downfield by passing or running and the defense to strategize on how to stop it. My experience as a flag football player gave me the basic skills to play quarterback for the Energy. The amount of knowledge I gained, along with the many hours of training, practice, and play as an Energy quarterback, has made me a better flag player (barring my injury from a shoulder-crunching tackle).

What effect does the flag football have on the tackle? I believe the women's flag football leagues gave rise to the tackle teams. In fact, it was during a Key West IWFFA tournament that Robin Howington heard about the professional tackle leagues, and consequently bought the Houston Energy. Many of the pro teams are filled with flag players, particularly in the skill positions.

When the HWWFL started, (what year) how many tackle players were there? There were no Houston tackle teams when the HWWFL began in 1996 so originally this was a non-issue. Since the time Houston Energy emerged, the HWWFL has faced several conflicts, none quite so contentious as the issue of professional tackle players.

What defines a tackle player in your league? Because our league has chosen not to differentiate between a tackle and non-tackle player, there is no reason for the HWWFL to officially define a tackle player. However, nearly all HWWFL players know which flag players also play or played tackle for the Houston Energy. In fact, many Energy players played flag football before joining the pro team.

Today, what effect does the women's tackle have on the HWWFL? For the past several years now, the new HWWFL board has discussed what, if anything, needs to be done about the existence of pro tackle players in the league. Some of the concerns by non-tackle players are:

1) The level of aggressiveness of the professional tackle player is assumed to

be higher than that of the recreational athlete. The tackle players are trained to be stronger, more aggressive, and more skilled. They practice 2 to 3 times a week and are trained by coaches who are paid to be knowledgeable in the sport. The women learn how to hit and how to take a hit. They go through drills designed to enhance their football performance. As a professional, it is their job to be in good, if not superior, physical condition. These women then play in the HWWFL recreational league with women who play for fun and recreation. Non-tackle players don't practice as often or as intensely. Non-tackle players complain that the pro players have difficulty taking the aggressiveness down a notch.

2) As stated above, the level of experience is assumed to be greater among professional players. The HWWFL players play flag for fun on the weekends. They are not professionals and don't train like professionals. To my knowledge, there is no sport where professional players form a team to play in a recreational league. Most would agree that it would be silly for the Houston Comets to form a team during the off-season to play in a women's recreational basketball league.

3) The HWWFL season overlaps with the tackle season. The Energy flag team(s) take forfeits until the pro season is over. As I write this, the current Energy flag team is 0 and 6. Depending on how far they advance in the WPFL playoffs, they could be 0 and 10 before ever playing a flag game. It doesn't make sense to allow a team in the league that may take 10 forfeits out of 18 games.

There are several opposing viewpoints

1) Just because someone plays professional tackle football does not mean they are better, stronger, or faster than a non-tackle player. In fact, the two new owners of Houston Energy: Stacy Agee and Karen Moanes as well as one team captain: Shelly Roth, were at an HWWFL board meeting to make this point. They stated that some of their Energy players would make poor flag football players. They also said that some HWWFL players are better than players on their roster and they'd love to have them playing for the Energy. In addition, they stated that many practices have been a waste of time since they don't really learn much at practice. Many of the coaches are poorly organized, don't know how to coach football and/or women. As for the tackle players being “professional,” they pointed out players are only paid \$1 per game and essentially must raise money or pay to play. They even have to pay for their own equipment. While it's given the title of “professional,” until it starts making a profit it's really more like club ball.

2) Many of the players played flag before they played tackle ball. The argument is made that flag improves the tackle skills, not the other way around.

3) Since the tackle players have more football experience and skill, they teach the rest how to play better, which consequently improves the overall level of the flag game.

Our league has looked seriously at the issue of pro players playing flag. It would be ideal to have different divisions, but our league is really too small to do that. Besides, if one team were a pro team playing flag, there would be maybe only one or two other teams who could compete in their division and the remaining teams would play in the recreational division. We also discussed limiting the number of pro players on a team.

After much debate, our league eventually voted to place no restrictions or limits on pro players. All in all, it seemed too arbitrary to decide that

someone is going to be better or stronger because they play tackle ball. My flag team last year, Fire-n-Ice, went undefeated and won the league championship. Fire-n-Ice had the most pro players in the league with 55% of the team being Energy players (all of them being 1st string). However, the 45% who weren't Energy players contributed equally to the success of the team. I see both sides of the issue and I know that just because one is a tackle or "pro" player does not mean one is going to be a better player.

It also is hard to define who qualifies as a pro player. What if one is on the roster but is 3rd string and never plays? What if one is on the roster but was injured and never played or never fully recovered? What if someone played last year but did not play this year?

Another point—when organizing the HWFFL, I remember talking to you (Diane) about how we wanted to give women the opportunity to play physical football and make it as close to tackle as possible because women didn't have that opportunity to play tackle. I based the HWFFL rules on the IWFFA rules and the idea of making the game as physical as possible. Now that women have the opportunity to play tackle, rules could be changed to make flag football closer to flag rather than tackle football. HWFFL has rejected this idea thus far; however, if players were truly concerned about aggressiveness increasing because of tackle players, this would become a non-issue if the flag game were a less aggressive game. The closer it is to tackle the greater the carryover from tackle players.

If the concern is about stacked teams, I believe there is a better way to go about the business of ranking players rather than tackle or non-tackle player. In fact, I think flag football is big enough that we ought to have a ranking system for players much like they do in other sports—tennis, golf, basketball, hockey, soccer, and softball. In big leagues or big tournaments like the IWFFA Key West tourney, division placement would then be based on the rankings of each player on a team's roster. This wouldn't eliminate "sand-bagging," but it would certainly help. In smaller leagues or tournaments without divisions, individual rankings could be used to make the teams more evenly skilled. This would help create more parity among teams (since the option of free agency and salary capping is out :) I understand a ranking system would be difficult and tedious and not 100% accurate. However, other sports manage to do it. I believe flag football is a sport worth the time and effort.

Overall, I think it's great that we have this "problem." Women now have more opportunities to play different types of football—finally!!! I want to see football, whether it's flag or tackle, grow until girls and women have all the opportunities boys and men have (including the salaries)! Let's continue this dialogue and work at making decisions that promote growth, fairness and fun.

Stephanie Vigneault – League Founder Quebec Women's Flag Football League, Flag Football Player, Coach and Tournament Team Organizer

How many years have you been coaching flag football? 7 years

Which rules are you use to? 7 on 7 no contact and now 8 on 8 semi-contact (and I prefer this kind of flag football - more action, more option, more contact!)

As a coach, who has players playing both tackle and flag football, is there a difference coaching these players? During training? or During games?
"My tackle players were, at the beginning, the flag football players with 4-5 years of experience. I have just one who start to play tackle before flag.

You know, tackle players are more aggressive, but I think that it's a good thing to play flag football semi contact. But, when they play flag 7 on 7 no contact, I have to remind them to be smoother. It's not a problem to coach tackle and flag football players, and all of my players prefer to play flag football 8 on 8 than tackle".

Is there a difference in coaching between your teams that have tackle players than with teams who do not have tackle players?

"No, everybody have the same passion: football! No matter what kind of football. Many players try 3 kinds of football, flag 7 on 7, 8 on 8 and tackle. They are able to make the difference between that 3 kinds of football. You know, some players are better for tackle and someone else are better for the flag. It's not the same strategy, it's not the same game. The only women who have an advantage to play tackle it's the 3 lineman. By example, my team, Quebec Storm we are not the strongest team, but we are good because we are fast and smart. I don't think that a tackle player will be a better flag football player. An athlete is an athlete! But a big and strong tackle player is not necessary a good flag football player".

Is there a good or bad interaction that happens by playing flag football players and tackle players on same field?

"I think that it's not bad, but the tackle players have to respect the rules and have to control their aggressiveness."

Do you have any concerns or thoughts for the future of flag football ?

"I think that the flag football is the best sport for women. I want to promote the flag football 8 on 8 and I think that many women have a big passion for the flag. I talk about flag football all the time and wherever and everybody are interested to know and to play flag football. Do you know what is my best satisfaction? It's when I coach or referee a game on a field and at the middle of the game we have like 10 peoples who stopped around the field and ask: "what is the game? What is this sport? It's like funny, I want to play!" And they give me their phone number to play in the next season. In Quebec, we play flag football 12 months by year, and we have a bad winter with snow, but we play indoor. I did start a women flag football association in 1997 with 5 teams (around 40 members), now we are 200 and I have 3 leagues and I'm coaching 4 teams and I organize 3 or 4 tournaments each year. But, I like it! And I want do more! I want to promote flag football in province of Quebec and in all the Canada. I see only the good things for the future of flag football.

Lori President – ex president of Metropolitan Women's Flag Football League – Flag Football Player (Lori had conferred with persons from her league and gave these final remarks).

When did MAWFFL started, (what year) how many tackle players were there? 1995 (50% tackle players)

What defines a tackle player in your league? A more physical and an aggressive player. Display a higher level of competition from a physical aspect due to equipment protection, special football techniques and tackle football rules are more flexible and the rules are uncontrolled, etc..

Today, what effect does the women's tackle have on your league? The effects are players become more physical and aggressive than a flag football player. Tackle is more intense focus. Techniques are different and although tackle women develops football experience they tend to struggle with flag rules which enforces safety vs. unrestrained rules.

Where there are benefits and disadvantages Benefits: Tackle - more

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conditioned, more technique focus and ideally strong in 1-2 positions. Flag - conditioning, recreational, flexible in player positions, less intense and more finesse. With both you develop great cohesion and unity amongst women.

Disadvantages: Risk of injury is more apt to tackle than flag. Tackle - Requires more conditioning, extra time/money vested, strengthening your position(s) and adapting when participating in flag. Flag - No protection, less dedication, less conditioning, less intense...

What effect does the flag football have on the tackle? Creates an interest for women in learning the football fundamentals, some conditioning, related football techniques are applied and the love of the game.

What tackle team do you (did you) play on (did you ever)? It was interesting when the opportunity for tackle tryouts was presented in 2000. Experienced the conditioning during the tryouts and realized this is not for me. In comparison with flag, the tackle displayed more of a physical focused game vs. participating in flag created a more finesse type recreational sport for women. We are not physically build like men and tackle seems to be more of men skilled sport.

What makes the tackle teams professional (do they get salaries?, some kind of compensation) Through endorsement and sponsorship with the intent of women tackle once established earned and receive player salary and compensation. I'm not sure if this process has been successful.

What is the difference between playing flag and tackle? Enormous difference - There are limitations with tackle when considering your age (related to injury), how much conditioning is required, physical, what are the benefits, how much time you invest and cost. With flag, recreational, small fee per season, less physical, less time, minimal conditioning and no expected benefits.

Is there anything else you would like to add? "In order to achieve, we must first believe"

Sue Putnam – Tackle Player / Flag Football Player – Lansing, MI

I started first in tackle football in about 1985. I didn't play flag until about ten years later. I'll talk about tackle first. We were a new franchise in Lansing to a semi pro league that frankly only had about three teams left (Toledo, Grand Rapids and Cleveland). I was so excited to have such an opportunity to play on a real team. I never thought it would happen because you just didn't hear about women's tackle football. One day I saw an ad for try outs for a Lansing team. Heaven! We practiced two or three times a week on an uneven open space near a school (not a football field). We lost just about every game but it was so much fun. We didn't have much financial backing or fan base. We never expected to be paid anything and a lot of expenses came out of our own pockets. We were about to start our third season I believe when we as players were faced with a choice of carrying even more of the burden of financial backing and less support for our sport (equipment, coaches, a home field, help with travel costs, etc.) As much as we LOVED playing tackle football, we voted to fold the team at that time.

Women's tackle football today is no comparison. I've witnessed first hand the backing of these teams. You have corporate sponsors and stands filled with both male and female, young and old fans. Good equipment, full coaching staffs and nice uniforms. 10, 15, 20 years have made a big difference. Personally I think it is because over these periods of years, that it

has become not just more accepted for women in sports but has become mainstream.

Somewhere around 1995 or so I was introduced to flag football by you at the Michigan Women's Music Festival. What a blast. I think I played flag football for about two festivals or so and coming home I knew that I had to start a local team. I wanted to play more than just at the festival and I knew that I had to start a team if I wanted to play organized ball. That simple. Well it didn't seem too hard to generate interest. I did organizing, coaching and playing for about five years. We ended our run with a championship at the Key West Tournament. I never wished that flag was tackle or vice versa. I see them as two different versions of football. I love them both.

From this part of the country, I don't see much happening with flag football but we are in a small city (Lansing). There could be flag happening in Detroit or Grand Rapids areas. Tackle seems to be on the radar but they are not getting much press. I'm probably only aware of them because a couple of former flag players are now playing tackle for the Southwest Michigan Jaguars.

In regard to the influence of being a competitive and successful athlete in other sports, I'm not sure what to say about that. I'm sure that it made easier for me to be successful playing football. I have to say that playing tackle in the yard with my brother and neighbor boys when I was growing up has to be a big factor in playing as an adult. I knew I loved it as a kid but of course as a girl you could not be on a team at school or in the community at least in the era that I grew up in.

In closing, I would say that in my experience on the field in both flag and tackle as far as competition is concerned, I have to say that there is not much difference. Everyone that I have played against and with has been serious and very competitive. You can hit just as hard and be hit just as hard in flag as you can in tackle.

Bea Hawthorn – Flag Football Player, Tackle Player, Team Organizer – Tampa, FL.

I played varsity all four years of high school in volleyball, basketball and softball ending with a scholarship offer in both volleyball and basketball (I accepted the basketball scholarship). After college I continued to compete in sports whether it was tournament softball, league basketball, or tournament volleyball.

I found flag football about 7 years ago and fell in love with it immediately always trying to learn as much as I could and always looking for tournaments to play in. About a year after my first experience with flag I decided to tryout for the first Tampa pro team (tackle). I thought it would give me the high that I got from flag and while it definitely proved to be extremely competitive and extremely physical it didn't match the high I got from flag. I did and do like the unity of an organized team that I missed from high school and college but that thrill of playing wasn't the same as in flag. As I look at it my opportunities to play more than one side of the field may have had an influence in that since I only played on the defensive side. I missed playing offense. I only played for half the season do to management and didn't go back until the last two years when it seemed management was much better. During that period from pro I continued to play flag in as many tournaments as I could. The training for pro was/is very grueling physically. It is by far the most punishing sport I've ever played and it really gave me a great respect for the guys who've played since childhood. Just wearing the uniform is in itself a hurdle to get used to and the 3 nights a week practice for 2-3 hours tackling part of the practice... well you can imagine.

Flag is not so much about conditioning and being intense during its practices for us. It's more about working on plays and strategies and game planning. It's more relaxed yet still productive with scrimmages thrown in

since we don't have the leisure of having a women's league. The one thing I find with the pro teams is that many do have flag teams in the off season and I suppose it helps them with pro without the rigors of actually tackling. I think that for the most part the players on my team enjoy both sports equally and are excited to move on the one when the other is at an end season wise. A couple miss the act of tackling so they enjoy pro more but that is only a couple.

Where do I think flag will go? I think flag will and should remain its own entity and as more and more girls in high school and little league flag get more exposure it should keep growing. At least that's my dream. When I'm too old to play (which is coming very soon) I have a strong interest in coaching. I think it's a matter of maintaining organization and getting it publicized so that more girls are aware that it doesn't have to end in high school or intramural in college.

Bonnie Levin – Flag Football Player / Tackle Football Player – Miami, FL

I recall, two defining athletic experiences in my life. The first, a clear fall day in Miami, Florida, 1997, where I came upon a field full of women scrimmaging against each other in flag football. The second, years later in 2003, where on a similar field I came upon a group of women, well known to me and now fully clothed in pads and helmets. Both moments have affected positive changes in my mental and physical athletic being and I'll never forget either! I consider myself an athlete, having toured the country and world competing professionally in beach volleyball. I have won countless tournaments and even earned a gold medal. The beach volleyball season typically lasts between March and late September and I was looking for a dynamic sport to fill in those off-season times. My goal, to keep in shape by running lots of sprints, throwing (which is the same motion as spiking a volleyball), and keeping that hand-eye coordination sharp. I found this in football and a lot more.

My first season was with the Miami Bullets, where we won the IWFFA Key West tournament in 1996 and where I learned a lot about the game and dynamics of a team sport. I then played with teams all over the country, and personally witnessed the explosion of flag football. The depth of competition grew each year as did the overall numbers of players and today our team mentors a younger group of female athletes, who have become competitive, beat many older teams and I anticipate will soon beat us too. I felt confident in flag football, having trained with, and competed with an incredible group of athletes. We win a lot of tournaments and maybe I felt a bit immortal, however, and when asked to play tackle with them, I asked one question, "Will it hurt?"

The skills are similar in that endurance, speed, coordination, and strategy are keys to success. However, I now enjoy a certain freedom with flag football, gearing up with only cleats, kneepads, and a bandana as opposed to a full body of pads and helmet. All of which are necessary. In both, I play defensive end, linebacker, tight end and center (preferably when there is no contact and the center is eligible to catch passes.)

I recall meeting up with my friends after agreeing to play tackle football. It started innocuously enough, we ran all types of drills, receiver patterns, played defense, ran after the runners and quarterback, and all the typical stuff you see and do in flag. However, once we suited up in pads and helmet, we were placed up in two lines. I faced a friend of mine, a beautiful, feminine, female who I have personally witnessed smoke a bar in Las Vegas with her sultry looks, and incredible dance moves. She is about 5'4" and around 120lbs., I'm 5'10" and 145 lbs; seemed like a good match-up for my first tackle. I couldn't have been more wrong. The only thing I remember when she hit me, was a sudden clear, view of the sky and me laying flat on my back, trying desperately to catch my breath. I did, and never admitted that she completely kicked my behind on that hit!

I decided then I needed to learn how to tackle and negotiate my defensive moves with the pads and helmets on. Training became important to my self-preservation, and more importantly, my pride.

In flag we train once or twice a week, and participate in smaller league play in 4 on 4, and 7 on 7 (no contact) leagues and tournaments. We fine-tune those passing patterns, receptions and defensive scheme. However, in tackle a great deal of training is involved. We are fortunate in that tackle, we have coaches who have either played collegiate level football or coached the same. Even our assistant coach worked with high school teams and was able to give us a lot of guidance.

We trained two times during the week, usually for a period of three to four hours, and if we weren't playing on the weekend, we would train the entire weekend as well. No one complained, as we were learning a whole lot of new skills. I haven't met a lot of females who actually know how to tackle, so we spent a lot of time with the fundamentals of hitting and wrapping up a player. In addition, we learned how to move more effectively and efficiently.

This training and drilling during tackle and helped even the seasoned flag football players enhance their abilities and level of play. In addition, it gave us a greater appreciation of tackle football at all levels and gave us the confidence to yell at the obvious mistakes when watching a college or pro player make a mistake on a televised game!

It took months of hard work, and lots of missed tackles and getting physically pounded (I lined up with 240-310 physically fit offensive line-women) to get the hang of it. We made up for small size with speed, and made it to the Super bowl last year. We were always the underdogs and on this day we didn't prevail. However, every one of us left that game with a great sense of accomplishment as with the exception of a few players, this was our first season in tackle and somehow with hard work and dedication we made it, to the Super bowl! Did it hurt? I recall that it did, but with most things we forget after awhile...until I put those pads back on and take the first hit.

Gail Bowen – Flag Football Player / Tackle Player / Team Coach and Organizer – Miami, FL

I started 13 years ago playing flag football on Miami Bullets, in the first Key West tournament. Then in 2000 I played tackle football for the Miami Fury when the league expanded to this area.

When I was very young my older brother played Pop Warner football. I asked the coach if I could play. But since this was long before title 9, he just laughed and told me I could be a cheerleader. When you came up to us at a softball tournament and told us you were starting a football tournament, it was a dream come true. The first year we really were just learning, but we had so much fun we kept playing.

A few years later tackle seemed like the natural next step. We had coaches that had all played college and pro football, so we learned so much more about the game / sport. It was remarkable to put on the uniform, come out of the tunnel and run onto the field in the Orange Bowl.

Training - In flag we practice once or twice a week for two hours, with some running on our own. In tackle it was three hour practices twice a day for mini camp, then two to three hours four nights a week, with weight training and running in between. Walk thrus, travel then game days.

Competition - Both are very competitive depending on the make-up of the players and coaches on the team. With tackle we had to be much more physically and mentally aggressive. Even with the larger team, wear-

IWFFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(PRINT ALL INFO - CLEARLY)

(please circle one) Women in U.S. (18yr + older) / International Women (outside the U.S.) / Girls (8 - 13 yr old) / Juniors (14 - 17 yr) / Coach / Manager / Official
Certified check, or money order (payable to: IWFFA) \$20 for all memberships...

Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State/Province _____

Country _____ Zip Code (or country postal code) _____ / Date of Birth (month/date/year) _____

Phone (area /country code) Home (____) _____ Work(____) _____ Cell/Mobil (____) _____ Fax (____) _____

Email (please write very clearly) _____ Team Name _____ Team Contact _____

League _____ Field Location _____ How did you find out about IWFFA? _____

Waiver / Liability Release

I, the undersigned, have agreed to participate in the International Women's Flag Football Association (IWFFA) event & appear in a video / or photos produced by the IWFFA and it's assigns and licensees, in any manner in any media either alone or in a conjunction with any other material.. I sign Release for year 2005 (initial here) _____

I hereby waive and release and agree to hold harmless the IWFFA from any and all claims damages, causes of action, suites and liability, of any kind for any personal injury, death or property damage which I may sustain arising out of or occasioned by my participation in the IWFFA activities. This wave and release shall also be binding upon my spouse, partner , heirs, personal representatives and any other person who may claim through me. I sign agreement / waiver for year 2005 (initial here) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

For IWFFA Medical Accident / Injury Coverage At an additional rate, contact our office. Yes (I do want the IWFFA Medical coverage) _____
\$100 deductible / \$15,000 maximum per injury - directly related to flag football for tournaments, league or practice play from Membership date till December 31, 2005
You will receive full description of medical policy along with rest of membership materials.

You will receive your IWFFA membership card, IWFFA embroidery patch, IWFFA benefits to begin upon payment.



Mail to: IWFFA / Membership / 1107 Key Plaza #233 / Key West, FL / USA 33040 - 4077

Certified check, or money order (payable to: IWFFA) \$20 for all membership categories

Short Passes (Little Tidbits)

This issue of 2004 Forward Pass Magazine is an annual publication, mailed directly to all our 2004 IWFFA members. We encourage our members to update our office for any change of address, contact information and most important – those email addresses. We hope you enjoy this issue, it took a lot, lot (much longer time than expected) to create.

Special Thanks to those who have contributed to our articles: Kristen Anderson, Stephanie Vigneault, Lori President and MAWFFL, Sue Putman, Bea Hawthorne, Bonnie Levin, Gail Bowen and Rodd Johnson.

Advertising – We would like to thank Flag A Tag, Sports Supply Group, Moped Hospital and Advance Trophy for taking ads out in our first edition of our Forward Pass Magazine (it use to be a newsletter). As you can see, there is color, nicer pages, more information and it all costs more money. If our players can support them in any way, please do so, by perhaps giving them your business, or even a thank you letter (but I think they would prefer the business!).

Future Forward Pass Magazine – Offers advertisement to businesses. Think about the chance to market your goods directly to our flag football players, teams and leagues.

Special Thanks

To certain and special individuals who have hosted or helped the IWFFA tournaments during 2004 season: Wenke Breistein – International Coordinator, Patricia Bonay – Tournament Coordinator for Kelly McGillis Classic & Quebec, Canada, Lone Olesen – Hjorring, Denmark, Bill Klitgaard – Scandinavian Head Official – for all the 2004 Scandinavian Tournaments, Stephanie Vigneault – Quebec, Canada, Lene Johannsson – Gothenburg, Sweden, Wendy Moreau – Kate Clinton Classic, Fred (my man) Chapman, Jennifer Taylor – Registration for Washington, DC.

More Special Thanks

To All the volunteers, officials, coaches and team reps who helped out at these tournaments (there are so many to list), the teams and players for participating.

Special, Special thanks to Brian Johnston who is the Head Official of the IWFFA for his efforts in organizing and developing program for our 2005 Officials' Training.

Officiating Clinics in 2005

This is an area that needs to be addressed, lack of good quality officials for girls and women's flag football games.... At affordable prices. It is tough to find good refs and when you do, they want too much money. Our sport needs dedicated, educated women to take over the reins and control of our sport. Learning how to officiate will not only help your team, league, or tournament, but it will make a better player out of you. The IWFFA will offer a circuit of Officiating Clinics during 2005 and has already started with it's first one in Hjorring, Denmark. Contact our office to get involved. You will learn everything about officiating!

Scandinavian Region - First Officials Clinic - October 16 & 17th, 2004
Many thanks to organizers: Lone Olesen and Bill Klitgaard (IWFFA Head Official / Scandinavia) and all the participants from teams: Danish Devils, Gothenburg Angels, Oslo City Tigers and Knotten United. This first

group of participants have already deciphered IWFFA rules and have made some interesting suggestions for 2005 rules modifications.

Our very next officiating clinic: Will be full day, intense training in Key West, FL. Wednesday February 9, 2005 from 1PM – 6PM (see website for more details). Free for IWFFA members, otherwise, it will cost \$100 (you do the math)

Future Officiating Clinics – Let us know if you want us to come out to your “neck of the woods”

Looking for a few more officials for the Key West, 14th annual Kelly McGillis Classic - Hotel and Salary – Contact us if interested. Experience necessary with good officiating qualities. Must be on island Wednesday February 9th for officials clinic (to put you on same page as everyone else) – Monday, February 14th (when you can leave)

American Airlines – NEW starfile numbers for Domestic and International Flights

For the first time, American Airlines offers discounts on International Travel to our IWFFA tournaments, as well domestic discounts. Call Meeting Services Desk at 1-800-433-1790 and use IWFFA Starfile 17824 (for domestic flights) or IWFFA Starfile number 17825 (for international flights) to get your airline discount.

Tournament Update – You will find list of 2005 tournaments in this issue of Forward Pass. Here are new one's / news we'd like to point out.

NEW for 2005 Tournaments – You only have to sign once! Once you have signed liability and waiver release for any IWFFA tournament, we will keep your signature on file, along with initials on 2005 IWFFA membership cards, and you won't have to submit again for further 2005 tournaments, those waivers and liability forms. This may not sound like much (to the players), but to the team contacts and organizers who bring their team to any tournament, it is a big relief. See, we are sometimes thinking of new and innovative ways to make your flag football experience even better (and saving the trees)!

1st annual IWFFA / Dallas Tackle Flag Football Tournament

(*for tackle teams) April 16 - 17, 2005 (* non-tackle teams may compete as well)

As we were researching our story: “Gain or Loss of Yardage / Flag Football and Tackle – Friend or Foe”, it occurred to our staff to offer a more competitive and tougher competition - singling out those tackle teams who play in our flag football tournaments, and also to invite new tackle teams to compete in our flag football competitions. The Loose Women's team, will have to be ready for this one and we suggest very competitive teams and athletes to get involved

1st annual IWFFA / Toronto, Canada Classic – July 2 – 3 – Hosted by Ontario Markham Mauraders. There should be lot's of Canadian teams, and we encourage American, other International teams to participate.

1st annual – IWFFA / Va. Beach Classic Girls /Juniors Flag Football Tournament

July or August, 2005
We would like to offer a tournament just for the Girls ages 8 - 13 and Juniors ages 14 - 17

If you are interested please contact our office - we would like to see what

FORWARD PASS Winter 2004

interest there currently is. Also let us know if you are interested to coach a girls team. We need to get a good number of teams in order to offer this tournament.

IWFFA reaches new continent – AFRICA

Did you know that we will have not one, but two teams from Africa competing in our 14th annual Kelly McGillis Classic! Team South Africa and Team Nigeria. You know the IWFFA will continue promotions with these countries and travel in the near future to offer flag football trainings to help start new teams and leagues in S. Africa and Nigeria. Let us know if you are interested to help in these promotions.

Who won the Olivia Cruise Vacation?

As part of your 2004 IWFFA membership, each member received a chance to win this Olivia Cruise trip. Caribbean Comedy Extravaganza - May 1 - 8, 2005 on Olivia Cruise for two. Join comedians: Elvira Kurt, Kathleen Madigan, Tammy Pescatelli, Page Hurwitz, Julie Goldman, Rene Hicks, Suzanne Westenhoefer and Amy Boyd for Olivia's 4th comedy extravaganza cruise. Valued at: \$3, 200. We printed out all IWFFA 2005 membership numbers, added additional raffle tickets purchased throughout our 2004 tournaments. We held drawing on November 12, 2004, at Pearls Rainbow Guest House) in front of a huge audience, and winner was: Melissa Sterner of Key West, fl

Second Winner of our drawing was: Diane Lipscomb -of Palm Springs, FL - she won an official all leather Wilson TDJ Football (and she was so happy!)

Buying Flag A Tag Belts & Flags Directly through the IWFFA office – Saves you BIG money! Teams are starting to catch on, that by going through us (which seems like the middle woman), players will save money when purchasing Flag A Tag Belts & Flags. We will be here (when the others catch on). \$49 for a dozen, \$90 for a starter kit (2 dozen, with ring). This is a benefit for IWFFA members only.

Wilson TDJ All Leather Footballs - Premium Grade with IWFFA Logo printed on them! \$35 for IWFFA members, \$40 for non-members. Contact our office.

IWFFA Accident / Medical Insurance

As of November, 2004, we still do not have a rate for players wanting the 2005 IWFFA Accident / Medical Insurance. It is in addition to your \$20 membership dues fee, and offers: \$100 deductible / \$15,000 maximum per injury – directly related to flag football for tournaments, league or practice play from Membership date till December 31, 2005. If you do not have any insurance, we encourage players to buy this! If you already have existing insurance, with a high deductible, this will act as a secondary and save you money.

Are you receiving your IWFFA / Monthly Updates? If not, chances are we don't have your email address, or you changed it, or we couldn't read it when you wrote it on your membership card, or we just made a typo (if you make one mistake on those email addresses, you can forget about it). It is the fastest, easiest and cheapest way to contact you. Updated IWFFA information available to you. Email us, to receive your next update: iwffa@iwffa.com

2005 IWFFA Rules – Go to our website: iwffa.com / rules for updated 2005 rules. ●

continued from p.11

ing a helmet felt much more isolated. The fans are further away. The plays and coverages are much more complex and require you to focus more on your individual assignment / task.

Where is Tackle going - With flag football expanding in the school and parks systems the Tackle leagues have more experience players trying out and to draw from. The problems are the cost to uniform, practice and playing venues and lack of sponsors and a large fan base to keep support the leagues. I have heard fans say that the game is slower and a little boring to watch.

Where is Flag going - With flag football now included in the local High Schools and College programs, we've seen more and more leagues and tournaments developing. We now have a womens league here in south Florida with over 12 teams, with more coming on board every season. All of the local and national tournaments have now included a womens division, and are looking into matching the prizes of the men.

Random - Flag play used by tackle teams to keep players in shape, and improve on thier skills, Allows them to keep playing between seasons. With having had Pro coaches during tackle I learned a lot of drills and skills to bring back to the flag team. Flag limits the positions available for the larger slower girls. ●

International News continued from p.4

ing for Higher Division 2004 (also who should have been seeded into the Ptown Play-offs, but because our tournament rules had a hole in them, the team was left out of the play-offs – We apologize to Team Exillium, and have since fixed that play-off seeding rule, one of the changes made for 2005 IWFFA rules). Also Ontario's Markham Marauders who took 5th in Middle Division Rankings and who just joined the IWFFA for first time this year. The Marauders traveled to two tournaments and have desire to compete in many more tournaments (possibly Sweden!).

These Canadian teams, along with Quebec Extreme, travel extensively to compete and perhaps it is their desire to compete that makes them excel, or perhaps it is their Canadian style of play, because for sure, they do not play like the Americans. Their game is very fast and quick and passing plays dominate their running plays.

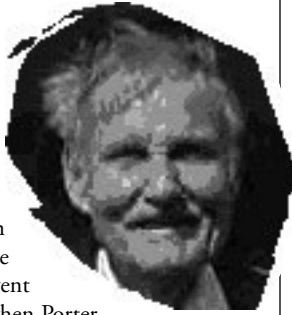
Canada will offer a second tournament, July 4th weekend (July 2 – 3) in Toronto and hosted by Ontario Markham Marauders. This new tournament is a great location because it can easily be traveled by U.S. teams, which we hope to attract as well as many new Canadian teams.

Our IWFFA Representative for Canada, is Stephanie Vigneault, who has been coaching flag football for seven years, been with the IWFFA for the past five years, brought Canadian competition for the first time to our U.S. tournaments: Key West, Washington DC and Provincetown, who continues to bring her teams. In a country where 7 on 7 is so popular, Stephanie has decided to promote with full force the 8 on 8 game we play. We will see with more Canadian competition in Canada and other countries, if they can continue their dominance.

Soon to Come (2005) : African Region ●

Porter Wilson Award - The most prestigious award offered by the IWFFA

Porter Wilson - Creator of "flag football", inventor of the Sonic Boom Belts & Flags, founder of Flag A Tag and our first sponsor and long time supporter, passed away in September of 2000.



Sitting in Porter and Madeline's living room, in Arizona of '96, I listened to Porter Wilson as he explained how he came up with the idea to invent this type of equipment. It was back in 1957, when Porter was a Physical Education School Teacher, when the boys in his gym class were playing football and tearing the ball carrier's shirt to tackle the player. Porter used the idea of protecting and attacking one's "territory" by creating the flag and belt (worn by every player) which then became the most important element of the game - protecting / attacking the ball carrier's flag.

In the women's and girls game of flag football, this new element opened up the opportunity for females to excel in the new and exciting sport allowing for greater finesse, more dynamic plays, ball handling and running with the ball compared to greater brut force needed to play the tackle game. It opened the doors for girls to participate as parents were reluctant to allow their daughters to play the sport of tackle.

Since the development of this piece of equipment (though there have been many variations for the game flag football) technically, it was when these belts & flags were invented, that the sport came to be developed as the game we play today. Porter Wilson invented our game of flag football, and started the future of our history. We continue the history by playing, organizing and expanding the sport all over the world and to one day professionalize the sport of flag football for women. It is thanks to Porter, not only for his invention, but also for his support of females players as he and Madeline were the first and only sponsor for our women's flag football in the old days when many companies did not feel it was "lady like" to play flag football and declined sponsorship. Through money and equipment for our promotional clinics, the Wilson's made it possible for the IWFFA to expand the sport to new cities, countries and soon..... continents.

In tribute to Porter, and respect for the sport, the IWFFA chooses one person each year, since his passing from this earth, to acknowledge and commend any individual who also has done much for girls and women's flag football. We call this award the: "Porter Wilson Award". Our Porter Wilson Award recipients receive their special plaque during our Kelly McGillis Classics. Recognizing our first recipient at the 2001 Kelly McGillis Classic for year 2000.

We welcome nominations from any league, team, group or individual who knows of a well deserving person which they feel has done so much for girls and women's flag football. Please send any submissions to the office of the IWFFA by end of December 31st.

List of Past Recipients

2000 Porter Wilson Award	Rodney Johnson	Florida, USA
2001 Porter Wilson Award	Stephanie Vigneault	Quebec, Canada
2002 Porter Wilson Award	Mashonda Gilmore	Georgia, USA
2003 Porter Wilson Award	Lena Johansson	Gothenburg, Sweden
2004 (to be announced at 14 th annual Kelly McGillis Awards		

We are accepting nominations until Dec 31st

Flag Football History Section - Let's Talk about the Football

(Most of this section was taken from another piece: Brownie Locks and the 3 Bears).

The Football was started by the Vikings (I bet our players in the Scandinavian Region are sitting up now!). Way back in the eighth century when Vikings landed on the shores of England with the sole purpose of overthrowing it. They failed, made the English People angry, and the Viking leader's head was cut off and kicked all around town which made a game out of it (All the townspeople got involved and this was a healthy type of therapy used back in those days). "Forget about rules... let's play!" (I am sure this is what was said back then).

The problem was that the Vikings caught on to the fact, that maybe England was not going to be the vacation place they thought it would be, and stopped going over there. So, the English didn't have any more Viking heads to kick around (bummer).

So, they cut the bladder out of a dead cow (what a genius..... must have been a woman!). She let the bladder dry, blew it up then tied it off (like a balloon). Today, we call the inside bag of the football a bladder (get it?) Sometimes, during their "fun" game however, the cow bladder would bust (I wonder if that's how we got the term we use today..... "Busted!"). So, they started covering this bladder with animal skins such as: cowhide, deerskin, goat hide and even pigskin. Today, because of the pigskin used, the football is known as a "pigskin" (see, there is a reason for everything!)

Wilson TDJ All Leather Premium Grade: How the Modern Football is Produced Today.

In standardizing rules for Flag Football, part of the IWFFA equipment needed to play is the: Wilson TDJ All Leather Premium Grade Football (not the composite, nor the TDY, nor Spalding, MacGregor, nor Rubber Balls, etc). Read on, how the official IWFFA football is produced.

Wilson produces all the footballs NFL uses (impressive) as well as for pee wee leagues, amateur leagues, leagues in between and our association (we are on the top). Their plant is located in Ada, Ohio (pop 5,582) since 1955. The hand-stitched footballs and are only footballs that are made in the USA (I guess you won't find these in a Wal-Mart store). 130 people are employed, making Wilson the 2nd largest employer in Ada.

A sheet of leather is taken from the side of a cow, complete with marks left when the animals brushed up against barbed wire (that's why you don't have cows running through city streets). The leather is then cut into pieces which are stamped with the Wilson Logo and our IWFFA logo (I guess we can take credit for employing the people in Ada, and also killing the animals). After being shaved to make the leather thinner, four pieces are sewn together, along with a vinyl and cotton lining, to make the distinctive oval football shape (now it's possible to throw those long, accurate, beautiful spirals for the T.D.! - yeah, right, in your dreams). The football is then put into a steam box to soften the leather, then nimbly turned right side out on a metal rod. It is stuffed with a polyurethane bladder (what happened to the real thing?) laced, and filled with air. 4,000 - 5,000d are produced daily during two 10-hour shifts, four days a week.

The town takes great pride in these balls as their water tower bears the NFL Wilson logo. One can also understand the pride they must feel just before every Super Bowl Game, the biggest game of the year, in the world, as tens of millions fans watch... as their balls are kicked to start the game! You can order your Wilson TDJ All Leather Footballs, directly through the office of the IWFFA with beautiful logo printed on it for \$35 each.

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