

WIDESIDE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF FOOTBALL ALBERTA
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SPRING 2004
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UPDATES:

- The 15th Annual **Senior Bowl** High School All-Star Game will be played on **Monday, May 24, 2004**. Game time is **12:00 p.m.** at **Foote Field** in **Edmonton**. Both teams have been selected are listed inside this issue.
- Football Alberta is set to once again field a Provincial Team in the **Football Canada Cup**. This years event is scheduled for **Ottawa, Ontario** from **July 3 - 11, 2004** and will field teams from Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and for the first time ever – Saskatchewan. Alberta is coming off a Silver Medal performance from last year and hope to improve on that in 2004.
- Thanksgiving Weekend is set again to host the **9th Annual Football Alberta Thanksgiving Jamboree** that will take place from **Friday, Oct. 8 through Monday, Oct. 11**. This year's event will once again be held at two sites – Calgary's **McMahon Stadium** and the **University of Alberta's Foote Field** - over that weekend. If your team is interested in participating please contact the Football Alberta office. There has already been a mailout sent out for this event and things are filling up fast, however if you are still interested it will be first come first served with no team considered registered until the **\$250 registration fee** is in. As usual, all rental and official fees plus paramedical coverage included.
- Check out the new look **Football Alberta Web Page** which will launch on July 1, 2004. Located at www.footballalberta.ab.ca it will continue the distribution of information about football in our province via the Internet. Special thanks go out to our former webmaster, Mr. Rick Gilson from Grande Prairie for his years of service in creating and maintaining the website as we now turn over the control of the page to Digital Tea.
- **A.S.A.A. High School provincials** are scheduled as follows for all four Tier's in 2004:
Quarterfinals: Saturday, Nov. 13
Semi-Finals: Saturday, Nov. 20
Finals: Saturday, Nov. 27
- The dates for the **Minor Football Provincials** have also been set for 2004. Since the Capital District Minor Association is still the only group offering Atom (age 9-10) football its championship game on Nov. 6 will also be considered the Provincial Title Game. Otherwise there are major changes in the Pee-Wee and Bantam formats and this year both of those levels will feature Tiers for Provincial competition. Each league had a choice as to which levels they will be fielding teams in based on a format developed by Football Alberta. See inside for the schedule for 2004.:
- Football Alberta would like to welcome to the Alberta football scene one new teams for 2004. The **Prairie Thunder Football League** will add programs in **Lac La Biche** while **Innisfail High School** will be joining the **Central Alberta League** and **J. Percy Page High School** will join the **Edmonton Public League** at the High School level. Welcome aboard!
- **Sport Outreach Scholarships** normally available for the **U of A** and **U of C** Summer Football Camps through the **Alberta Sport Recreation Parks and Wildlife Foundation** are not available this season. Further updates will be included in future editions.
- Thanks go out to the coaching staffs of the five elite programs in Alberta for their support of the Senior Bowl Selection Camps. Due to their efforts we were able to run two complete full weekend Selection Camps in both regions for the first time ever. Special recognition goes to head coaches **Tony Fasano** (U of C), **Jerry Friesen** (U of A), **Gary Durchik** (Wildcats), **Mike McLean** (Huskies), and **Dave Diluzio** (Colts).
- The **Alberta Summer Games** have been announced for 2004. They will take place in **Okotoks/High River** from **July 22-25**. This will mark the fifth time tackle football has been a part of the Alberta Summer Games and with more and more bantam teams joining up each year the competition between the Zones should be greater than ever. It will also be the first time the Games, with football as a part of them, will be held in Southern Alberta. Creating the Coaching Staffs for all Zones will be the responsibility of the Football Alberta District Representatives. Should you wish further information on this or how to get players involved please check your directory to contact the District Representative nearest you.

UPCOMING EVENTS

UNIVERSITY/JUNIOR

mid-July - Alberta Junior Team's Camps Open
Aug. 15 - U of A and U of C Camps Open
Oct. 18 - PFC Championship Game
Nov. 1 - Canadian Bowl
Nov. 8 - CWUAA Championship Game
Nov. 15 - CIS Semi-Finals
Nov. 22 - Vanier Cup - Toronto
* - all above listed dates are subject to change

HIGH SCHOOL

Apr. 28 - May 2 - Edm. Eskimo Player Development Camp
TBA - Rangeland Talent ID Camp
May 16-18 - Senior Bowl H.S. Training Camp - Calgary
May 19 - Senior Bowl H.S. All-Star Game - Calgary
TBA - Rockyview Talent ID Camp
July 2-4 - Team Alberta Training Camp - Red Deer
July 5-12 - Football Canada Cup - Ottawa
July 7-11 - U of A Summer Sports Camp - Edmonton
July 7-11 - U of C Summer Sports Camp - Calgary
Aug. 30 - Cochrane Pre-Season Tournament
Aug. 30 - Medicine Hat H.S. Football Fiesta
Aug. 30 - Hanna Sun Bowl Pre-Season Sr. Jamboree
Sept. 6 - Archbishop O'Leary Invitational Tournament
Sept. 6 - M.E. LaZerte Pre-Season Sr. Jamboree
Sept. 13 - M.E. LaZerte Pre-Season Jr. Jamboree
Sept. 27 - Whitecourt Junior Jamboree
Oct. 10,11 & 13 - Football Alberta Thanksgiving Jamboree
Nov. 8 - A.S.A.A. Provincial Playoff Quarterfinals
Nov. 15 - A.S.A.A. Provincial Playoff Semi-Finals
Nov. 22 - A.S.A.A. Provincial Playoff Finals

BANTAM /MINOR

June 13 - Cal. Stampeder Alumni Pee-Wee Camp
June 14 - Cal. Stampeder Alumni Bantam Camp
Oct. 12 - Football Alberta Thanksgiving Jamboree
Nov. 1 - Atom Provincial Final - Edmonton
Nov. 1 - Bantam Provincial Quarter-Finals
Nov. 8 - Pee-Wee Provincial Finals - Calgary
Nov. 8 - Bantam Provincial Semi-Finals
Nov. 15 - Bantam Provincial Finals - North Winner

COACHING

N.C.C.P. GENERAL THEORY CLINICS

LEVEL I

May 2-4 - Fort McMurray (contact 791-8944)
May 3-4 - Calgary (contact 220-7749)
May 3-4 - Calgary (contact 284-7248)
May 3-4 - Red Deer (contact 357-3663)
May 3-4 - Rocky Mtn. House (contact 845-3720)
May 3-4 - Stettler (contact 742-4411)
May 10-11 - Grande Prairie (contact 539-2834)
May 24-25 - Lacombe (contact 782-1250)
May 24-25 - Edmonton (contact 497-5300)
May 31-June 1 - Calgary (contact 233-8383 ext. 103)
May 31-June 1 - Edmonton (contact 497-5300)
June 7-8 - Edmonton (contact 497-5300)
July 12-13 - Calgary (contact 233-8393 ext. 103)

July 12-13 - Calgary (contact 220-7749)

LEVEL II:

May 2-4 - Edmonton (contact 497-5300)
May 2-4 - Lethbridge (contact 320-3323)
May 9-11 - Calgary (contact 233-8393 ext. 103)
May 23-25 - Grande Prairie (contact 539-2955)
May 23-25 - Red Deer (contact 357-3663)
May 23-25 - Rocky Mtn. House (contact 845-3720)
May 23-25 - Calgary (contact 220-7749)
June 13-15 - Edmonton (contact 497-5300)
June 20-22 - Calgary (contact 233-8393 ext. 103)

LEVEL III:

May 23-25 & May 31-June 1 - Edmonton (contact 497-5300)
Aug. 9-10 & 16-17 - Calgary (contact 220-7749)

OTHER

Athletic First Aid

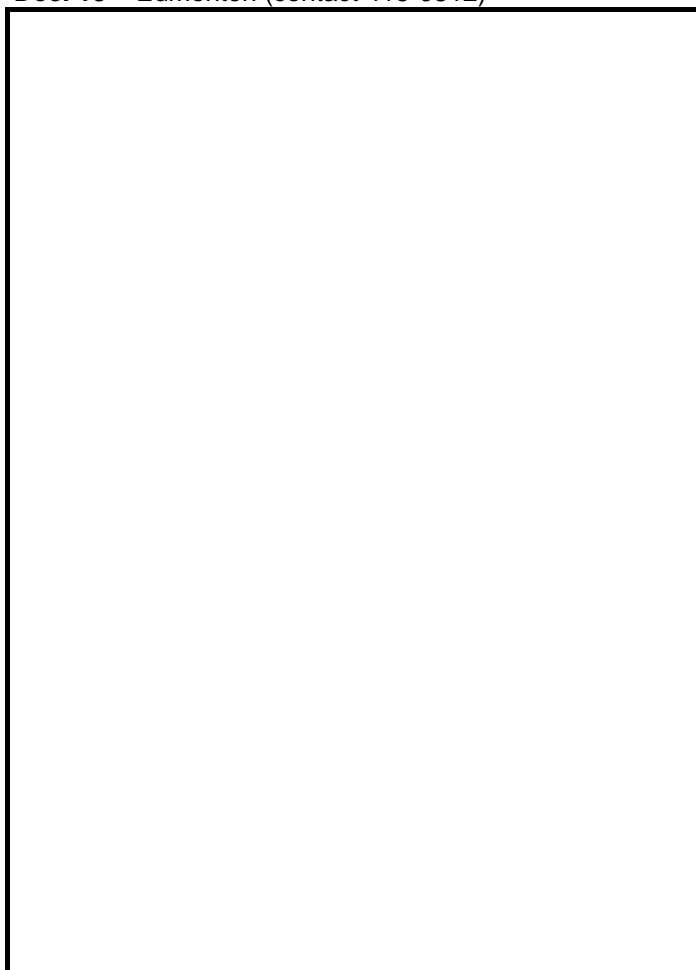
May 10 - Edmonton (contact 492-3565)
June 21 - Edmonton (contact 415-0812)
Sept. 13 - Edmonton (contact 415-0812)
Dec. 6 - Edmonton (contact 415-0812)

Taping and Strapping

July 19 - Edmonton (contact 415-0812)
Nov. 8 - Edmonton (contact 415-0812)

Sport Nutrition

May 10 - Edmonton (contact 415-0812)
Dec. 13 - Edmonton (contact 415-0812)



AWARD WINNERS

2003 FOOTBALL ALBERTA AWARD WINNERS

Here are the Award Winners for the 2002 Season as voted on by the Football Alberta Board of Directors from nominations submitted by the membership at large.

NORM KIMBALL COACH OF THE YEAR

Jerry Friesen – Head Coach, U of A Golden Bears

In only his third year at the helm of the Golden Bears, Jerry not only lead his team to the playoffs for the first time in a decade but all the way to the Canada West Championship Game. As a Level 4 coach, Jerry is a well respected on-field manager of players and coaches and has taken every opportunity to improve his team since taking over in 2001. His innovations such as taking his entire coaching staff to Washington State's Spring Camp have paid off and the Bears are now once again a power to be dealt with in the tough Canada West Conference.

For having taken the Bears to the promised land and delivered their first playoff victory since 1981 we are proud to recognize Jerry Friesen as this years Norm Kimball Alberta Coach of the Year!

FRANK MORRIS TIER I H.S. COACH AWARD:

Gino Divincentis - Head Coach, St. Francis Browns

Winning the Provincial Tier I Championship is not a bad way to finish your first year at the helm as longtime St. Francis assistant coach Gino Divincentis took over as head coach in 2003 and promptly lead the Browns to their second ever Provincial Championship. His Browns went 11-0 on the year and finished off the year with dominant victories over L.C.I. in the semi-final and Strathcona in the Provincial Title game which featured the first shutout since 1997.

One of the most dedicated coaches in Alberta it's a true pleasure to present the Frank Morris Tier I Coach of the Year Award to Gino Divincentis.

THE LAURIE ROBERTSON TIER II H.S. COACH AWARD:

Ken Sommerfeldt - Head Coach, Cardston Cougars

One of the most successful coaches in the history of Southern Alberta football, Ken Sommerfeldt had another banner year in 2003. Having been an assistant coach when the Cougars had their remarkable run of four straight Provincial Tier II Titles in the 1990's, Ken has served as the head coach for the past few years and this past year lead them back to the Provincial Final for the first time since 1994.

Despite losing that game to the defending champion Archbishop Jordan Scots, Ken once again has the Cougars kicking on all cylinders and it is our pleasure to present the Laurie Robertson Tier II Coach of the Year Award to Ken Sommerfeldt.

TIER III HIGH SCHOOL COACH AWARD & NOVICE COACH OF THE YEAR:

Jason Lafferty - Head Coach, Peace River Pioneers

What a year for the Pioneers as under the direction

of second year head coach Jason Lafferty the formerly moribund program streaked all the way to the Provincial Tier III final! Jason has been credited with breathing new life into football in the Peace River area and the on-field performance of his team are a direct result of that. Starting last year with an Athabasca Conference Championship the Pioneers moved up to the Peace Conference of the Mighty Peace League this year and went all the way to the final before bowing to the powerful Grande Prairie Warriors. A similar fate awaited them in the Tier III Provincial Playoffs as they roared through the north only to run into the juggernaut that is Cochrane High School in the final where they lost 57-14. In any event, things are definitely on the rise in Peace River and mainly due to the hard work and excellence of head coach Jason Lafferty who we are proud to present with both the Tier III Coach of the Year Award and Novice Coach of the Year Award..

TIER IV HIGH SCHOOL COACH AWARD:

Frank Collins - Head Coach, Lac La Biche Huskies

The only head football coach Lac La Biche has ever known, Frank Collins lead his Huskies to the Provincial Tier IV final in 2003. Having started the team from scratch in 1997, Frank has supervised a steady rise in the program and also kick-started the local bantam team during the same period. This year his team went 6-1 in league play and beat out Sylvan Lake and Beaverlodge to earn their first ever berth in a Provincial Title Game.

Despite losing that game to the defending champion Bow Valley Bobcats, the Huskies established themselves as a proud, well-coached, classy team that will be a factor for years to come under the tutelage of head coach, and now Tier IV Coach of the Year, Frank Collins.

ATOM/PEE-WEE FOOTBALL COACH OF THE YEAR:

Scott Smith - Head Coach, Sherwood Park Atom Broncos

It was a banner year for the Broncos as under the direction of head coach Scott Smith, they ran the board and finished 15-0 winning the Capital District Minor and Provincial Atom Championships in the process.

Beyond the winning, Scott is credited with creating a positive environment where sportsmanship and teamwork are valued. His work in teaching his players about life skills as well as X's and O's make him a tremendous example of the kind of coach football needs more of at the Atom level.

For his success on the field, and more importantly for his work off of it, we are pleased to present the Atom/Pee-Wee Coach of the Year to Scott Smith.

BANTAM COACH OF THE YEAR

Jim Skitsko – Head Coach, Sherwood Park Rams

Another big year for the Rams and head coach Jim Skitsko as the powerhouse from Sherwood Park were at it again. Its been quite a run for Jim as he took over a team in 1996 that had won only two games in the previous two seasons and has lead them to five Capital District Championships and four trips to the Provincial final, winning three, including last years 44-21 win over the Calgary Wildcats which capped an undefeated season.

Known for his innovations at the Minor level, Jim

was responsible for creating the first ever Canadian Bantam football scholarship in 1999, and has been instrumental in other fundraising and facility development initiatives that have made the Rams one of the top programs in Canada.

For all of that hard work and a successful 2003 it is our pleasure to present the Bantam Coach of the Year Award to Jim Skitsko.

HAROLD FERGUSON OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR:

Keith Henderson – Edmonton Football Officials Association

As a member of the EFOA since 1976, Keith Henderson has had many accomplishments and has officiated every level of the game from Minor to the CFL. However, it is not only his on-field support of the game of football that he deserves recognition for but his off-field pursuits as well. Keith has served on the EFOA Executive from 1978-1985 and from 2002 to the present. Over that time he has served as President, Vice President and his current position of Training Chairman. He has been very active in the coordination of Officials Clinics all over Northern Alberta and is a current member of crews that do CJFL and CIS games.

A very active official and a good one to boot, this years winner of the Harold Ferguson Official of the Year is Keith Henderson.

GARY HOBSON AWARD:

Scott Chadsey – Southern Alberta Minor Football Association

As well as being an accomplished coach Scott has done numerous duties behind the scene to the credit of the sport. In his hometown of Lethbridge, he has been the pointman in the development of the game at the minor level and oversaw the renewal of the Bantam Stampeder program which now boasts twice as many registrants as it did when he took it over in 1994 and had added a Pee-Wee team to boot.

As well, as an executive member of the Board of Directors for the Southern Alberta Minor Football Association Scott has been a driving force and will head up the coordination of the Zone 1 Alberta Summer Games Team this summer. . It's safe to say that football would be worse off in Alberta and especially Lethbridge if Scott weren't a part of it. A true volunteer whose efforts have made our province a leader in the development of the game we are proud to congratulate this years winner of the Gary Hobson Award to Scott Chadsey.

SENIOR BOWL

14TH ANNUAL GAME SET TO GO FOR MAY 19th

With each year the opportunity for young athletes who have chosen football as their sport during their high school years to have elite experiences grows.

Over two weekends in April the annual process of selecting the "North" and "South" All-Star teams that will compete in the 14th Senior Bowl was completed.

As usual the ever increasing levels of talent made the choices very difficult for the coaching staffs selected to run the "North" and "South" Teams.

The game is scheduled for 12:00 p.m. on Monday, May 19th at Calgary's McMahon Stadium. Tickets are available at the door for \$5.00.

Here are the rosters as selected:

"North" All-Stars

Quarterbacks: Nathan Aldred – Grande Prairie
Brendan Maher – Bev Facey (Sher. Park)

Runningbacks: Wisam Azooz – Grande Prairie
Riley Janzen – Salisbury (Sher. Park)
Tendayi Jozzy – Harry Ainlay (Edm.)
Tyler O'Gorman – Strathcona (Edm.)

Receivers: Liam Boyd – McNally (Edmonton)
Tyler Boyd – Beaumont
Ben Grant – Strathcona (Edmonton)
Jamie Olsen – Bev Facey (Sher. Park)
Symon Pfau – Sexsmith
James Watson – Parkland (Spruce Grove)
William Young – Grand Centre (Cold Lake)

Off. Line: Sean Brown – Bev Facey (Sher. Park)
Aaron Chambers – Strathcona(Edmonton)
Tyler Desjarlais – Lac La Biche
Derek Dowdell – Bev Facey (Sher. Park)
Murray Filkowski – Arch. Jordan (Sher.

Pk.)
Dayne Mielken – Grand Centre(Cold Lake)
Les Smith – Sexsmith

Def. Line: Stefan Boddy – Lloydminster
Travis Cooper – Bev Facey (Sher. Park)
Darcy Robertson – Parkland (Spruce Gr.)
Ben Smith – Fort McMurray
Jason Yuzyk – Strathcona (Edmonton)

Def. Backs: Eduardo Diaz – Strathcona (Edmonton)
Jeff Hecht – W.P. Wagner (Edmonton)
Al Lalany – Harry Ainlay (Edmonton)
Dwayne Letendre – Holy Trinity (Edm.)
Rod McLelland – Jasper Place (Edm.)
Brett Neufeld – Leduc
Joel Pipella – Bev Facey (Sher. Park)
Brodie Yyelland - Lloydminster

Linebackers: Blaine Bartoli – Lindsay Thurber (R.D.)
Dan Bass – Ardrossan
Justin Dyrland – Ardrossan
Leroy Fontaine – Fort McMurray
Andrew Gray – St. Albert
Stacey Letawski – J.R. Robson (Verm.)
Justin Paniak – Harry Ainlay (Edm.)

"South" All-Stars

Quarterback: Billy McConkey – St. Mary's (Calgary)
Mark Stinson – Henry Wise Wood (Cal.)

Runningback: David Gruninger – L.C.I. (Lethbridge)
Kyle Rawson – Foothills (Okotoks)
Matt Richards – Foothills (Okotoks)
Jacob Swainson - Raymond

Receivers: Taylor Altilio – Dr. E.P. Scarlett
(Calgary)

Ben De Swart – Holy Trinity (Okotoks)
Matt Lambros – Sir Win. Church. (Cal.)
Scott McKenna – St. Francis (Calgary)
Ryan Smith – St. Mary's (Calgary)
Jon Vanderlee – Bow Valley (Banff)
Jordan Wevers – L.C.I. (Lethbridge)

Off. Line: Eric Bishop – Henry Wise Wood (Cal.)
Mark Hagen – Foothills (Okotoks)
Brent Kettles – Western Canada (Cal.)
Jeff Lyster – St. Mary's (Calgary)
David Maltman – Dr. E.P. Scarlett (Cal.)
Rogan Verboven – LesterPearson (Cal.)
Steven Whitehead – Henry Wise Wood

Def. Line: Alan Bergsma – L.C.I. (Lethbridge)
Mark Chambers – WilliamAberhart (Cal)
Josh Comeau – Bishop Grandin (Cal.)
Jonathan Doolar – St. Francis (Calgary)
Doug Haggins – St. Francis (Calgary)
Colin Ross – W.R. Myers (Taber)
Alex Wood – Sir Winston Churchill (Cal.)

Linebackers: Anthony Dudar – St. Francis (Calgary)
Chris Han – Bishop McNally (Calgary)
Greg McLeod – Foothills (Okotoks)
Marc Mercier – William Aberhart (Cal.)
Andrew Patzer – L.C.I. (Lethbridge)
Eric Walther – Winston Churchill (Leth.)

Def. Backs: Mark Chyc-Cies – Bishop Carroll (Cal.)
Jon Colnett - Springbank
Chudhi Nzekwu – St. Francis (Calgary)
Kyle Robinson – Foothills (Okotoks)
Jordan Sailer – L.C.I. (Lethbridge)
David Savage - Cochrane
Ben Swen – Kate Andrews (Coaldale)

Don't Forget!
Football Alberta Senior Bowl
Monday, May 19th
12:00 p.m.
McMahon Stadium
Calgary

BIKE IS BACK IN THE GAME!!!
KODIAK SPORTS PRESENTS THE
NEW BIKE HELMET

These dynamic, new helmets from BIKE ATHLETIC represents the most revolutionary innovation in football helmets in the past 25 years. Its lighter, more comfortable and better ventilated than any other football helmet. Let your BIKE REPRESENTATIVE show you this tremendous advancement in helmet fitting and comfort

**Contact Kodiak Sports at
 (403)291-4479**

RESOURCE LIST

The following is a list of resources available through the Football Alberta office. Should anyone wish to access these resources please contact us at (780)427-8108. The prices are listed for both member (ie. those individuals whose teams have submitted Membership Fees to Football Alberta for the 1999-2000 season) and non-members. Additional GST and Shipping costs will be charged.

TACKLE RESOURCES

	<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-Member</u>
<u>Rule Books</u>		
Tackle Rule/Case Books	\$15.00	\$18.00
<u>Coaching</u>		
NCCP Level I Student Manual	\$65.00	\$80.00
NCCP Level II Student Manual	\$65.00	\$80.00
NCCP Level III Student Manual	\$65.00	\$80.00
Gino Fracas Book	\$5.00	\$6.25
Introduction to Football: A Guide For Novice Coaches	\$15.00	\$20.00
A Beginner Strength and Conditioning Program for Youth	\$15.00	\$20.00
<u>Equipment Managers</u>		
Purchasing and Maintaining Football Equipment Manual	\$15.00	\$20.00

TOUCH RESOURCES

	<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-Member</u>
<u>Rule Books</u>		
Touch Rule Book	\$13.00	\$18.00
Touch Case Book	\$13.00	\$18.00
Introduction to the Rules Manual	FREE	
<u>Coaching</u>		
Coaches and Teachers Instructor Manual	\$30.00	\$35.00
Touch Basics: Rules, Skills Strategies and Drills	\$15.00	\$20.00

**GST AND POSTAGE
 WILL BE
 ADDED ONTO
 ALL PRICES AT POINT
 OF PURCHASE**

***University of Calgary
Dinosaur Football
Development Camp***

July 7-11

**Contact (403)220-7749
For More Information**

**Junior (Gr. 6-9) All-Day Camp
\$220.00**

**Senior (Gr. 10-12) All-Day Camp
\$210.00 (please add G.S.T.)**

**Senior (Gr. 10-12) Evening Only
\$140.00 (please add G.S.T.)**

Program Information:

- All Skill levels welcome to attend
- Learn proven techniques and fundamentals through a step-by-step teaching method.
- Chalk Talk Sessions
- Daily non-contact scrimmage
- Learn an offensive and defensive position
- Awards
- Jersey Included

Note: Full Day Camp includes Speed and Strength Training for Football

***Residence Program
Available***

***University of Alberta
Golden Bear
Summer Football Camp***

July 7-11

**Contact (780)492-2231
For More Information**

**The annual Golden Bear Summer
Football Camp awaits all those looking
to improve upon their skills for
the 2003 season**

**Sessions are offered at both the
Bantam and High School Levels.
the Camp will be run throughout
the week and will culminate
With an inter-camp scrimmage.**

**All Campers will receive
individual skill analysis,
instruction, and a coach to
Player ratio of 8:1**

**Join us for a great kick-off to your
summer!**

***Residence Program
Available***

SPORT SCIENCE

6-Step Teaching Progression of the Long Snap

by
Dr. D.G. Syrotuik
University of Alberta

Introduction:

The following 6-step teaching progression will aid coaches in the instruction of the long snap for both punting (14 yd.) and field goals (6 yd). Since success of the both the punt and field goal are somewhat based on the "get away time"* , the speed and accuracy of the long snap technique greatly contributes to the overall success of these important elements of the kicking game. The progression has been set up with the complete novice in mind, but coaches may also use this progression with the more experienced long snapper to 1) review important mechanics of the overall technique or 2) to help refine certain phases on the snap that are problematic. When instructing the complete novice, it is advisable not to proceed with the next step, until the previous one has been mastered.

* Time elapsed from the initiation of the snap, to the ball leaving the kicker's foot; punting 2.1- 2.4 s.; field goals - 1.2- 1.4 s.

Step # 1 - Throwing Mechanics

The success of the long snap is predicated on sound throwing mechanics, similar to a quarterback. The grip, delivery, release and follow-through of throwing a football should be reviewed and practiced. *Until the athlete displays a competent and mature throwing motion, it is fruitless to progress to the next step.*

Coaching Tips:

a) See Level 1 NCCP Football Student Manual, "Quarterback section" for review of proper throwing technique.

Step #2 - Throw the Ball between the Legs

Coaching Tips:

- a) Work in pairs, 8-10 yards apart.
- b) Turn your back to the kicker.
- c) Take a comfortable stance, feet slightly wider

than shoulder width

- a) Grip the ball with dominant hand **as if to throw the forward pass.**
- b) Bend over till you can see the receiver in your sight between your legs.
- c) Following a verbal cue or command (i.e. "after ready"), throw the ball, similar to a forward pass, between your legs; the throwing motion is performed without the ball being placed on the ground.
- d) Ideal target area for the center is the hip of the kicking leg of a punter and the extended hands of holder on field goal attempts.
- e) Be sure to follow-through till the throwing arm strikes the inside thigh with the elbow and the hand & fingers are extended to the target, palm-facing outward.

Step # 3 - Throw the Ball Between your Legs; Ball on the Ground

Coaching Tips:

- a) Repeat the above throwing sequence with the ball now placed on the ground, slightly out in front of the head of the center when they are in the bent over position, looking at the kicker.
- b) "Cock " the ball slightly, by placing the near end of the ball on the ground, so that the ball is at a 35-45° angle to the ground.
- c) Emphasize the "throwing" aspect, as before, and follow-through.
- d) Some players may be more comfortable initiating the throwing action by lifting the ball quickly off the ground, prior to delivering the ball backwards (similar to a quarterback "cocking" their arm backwards, prior to initiating the forward action of a pass).

Step #4 - Place the Non-Dominant Hand on the Ball

Once the throwing action between the legs is mastered, many players prefer the one-handed snap. The major problem with snapping the ball with one hand is 1) the ball tends to rise up to the head (or over) the kicker which disrupts the natural kicking action and 2) in inclement weather conditions, the player may find it difficult to control the ball. The key teaching point when proceeding to this step is to **reinforce that the non-dominant hand acts only as a guide**, and does not interfere with the throwing

action of the dominant arm.

Coaching Tips:

- a) Place the ball on the ground and slightly in front of the head, in a cocked position (as in Step #3).
- b) **Place the non-dominant hand** on the top of the ball; palm down, with fingers slightly spread, pointing towards the front of the ball.
- c) The Non-dominant hand places only light pressure on the ball
- d) It is possible to experiment with hand positions. (E.g., rotate the throwing hand slightly more under the ball; place the non-dominant hand slightly to the side of the ball, rather than directly on top). **It is important to retain a good throwing grip** (do not "palm the ball") **throughout the variations!**
- e) As with step #3, throw the ball between the legs: **emphasize the dominant arm throwing action!** If the center has been throwing the ball with a tight spiral with one hand, and the addition of the non-dominant hand on the ball creates a "wobble" on delivery, it is usually a result of the athlete imparting force on the ball with the non-dominant hand.

- The non-dominant hand follows the path of the throwing action of the dominant arm, stopping on the inside of the thigh of the opposite leg, palm out.
- When viewed by the kicker, both of the center's hands complete the snapping action with both elbows striking the inside of the thighs, palms both facing outward.

Step #5 - The "Hitch"

Similar to a quarterback, a longer, more forceful delivery of the ball occurs using the "summation of forces" principle - that is, using the larger muscle groups of the lower body and torso to help generate force in the direction of the pass. Delivery of the ball 14 yards to the punter in a timely manner, requires the same principle. The introduction of the "hitch" action may have already occurred, as the athlete naturally tries to initiate the snapping action by moving their hips slightly down, then quickly up. This helps generate force from the

leg and hip extensors, similar to a quarterback stepping to his target receiver when delivering the ball.

Coaching Tips:

- a) As with previous steps, partners would be no more than 10 yards apart.
 - b) Introduce "hitch" action or emphasize if already performing it naturally.
 - c) The "hitch" may be performed in two ways:
 - Initiating the downward and upward thrust
 - of the hips in an "explosive manner".
 - "Pre-cocking" the hips, by lowering them as the center takes his initial set-up and grip on the ball. The "hitch" is then initiated by an explosive upward thrust of the hips only.
- As the center gains control, accuracy and confidence using the "hitch" action, gradually increase the distance between partners, 1 yard at a time, until the required 14 yard distance is achieved.
 - Since the field goal attempt is only 6 yards from the line of scrimmage, the "hitch" action is not normally emphasized. Accuracy and control of the ball by the holder is paramount, thus the force of the delivery is not paramount.

- Initiate the snap after a verbal command.
- Once the arms have been extended and slap the inside of the thighs, snap the head and hands up quickly for protection.
- Once comfortable with the protection action, the coach may wish to use a small shield and deliver a blow to the center.
- Teach a proper release to facilitate coverage down field for punts and missed field goal attempts.

Concluding Remarks:

- Be sure that the athlete can perform each step proficiently before introducing the next step in the teaching progression.
- All teaching sessions should be conducted with players in a minimum of helmet and shoulder pads.
- Use appropriate quarterback "throwing balls", if you are not kicking the ball. It helps the learning curve tremendously!
- The use of video at any step in the teaching progression is very beneficial.
- As the center masters the movement pattern, stress "accuracy" of the ball before speed.

For further explanation or help in introducing this progression, contact the author directly at (780) 492-1018 or via "E" mail: dan.syrotuik@ualberta.ca.

Good Luck!

Step #6 - "Protection"

The amateur rules prevent opponents from delivering a blow to the back of the center's head when they have their head down between the legs and looking at the kicker/holder. The "protection" phase serves to help protect the center as well as facilitate the release from the line of scrimmage to cover punts and missed field goals.

Generally speaking, if performed correctly at the end of the throwing/snapping action, the center will not see the ball arrive in the punter/holders hands.

Coaching Points:

- Coach should stand 1 yard in front of center.

