



# ADA, OHIO

## 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL IWFFA-ONU WOMEN'S FLAG FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT



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# Letter from the President



Welcome everyone to Ada, and to the 2nd IWFFA-ONU-Women's Flag Football Tournament.

If you arrived Friday morning, I hope you took advantage of the Wilson Factory Tour to see how our footballs are made. Ever since our beginning in 1995, the IWFFA (formally NWFFA) standardized flag football equipment with the Wilson, All Leather Premium, Junior size football. Back in the day it was called the "DUKE" and today it is known as the "GST". Check out our logo printed on the balls. I want to thank Susan at Viva Maria's for hosting the Friday dinner and Enrique at El Campo for hosting the Awards dinner. By the way, we are giving \$25 to the female arm wrestling champ. Just sign up at the awards dinner.

Ada is a great town filled with wonderful people. We will build up this tournament because it serves our women's teams as a more economic flag football competition. The dates will be changed. Having the event during Mother's Day weekend, and in middle of women's tackle season conflicts with many player's season games and plans. New dates will be decided for 2026, which will be our 3rd annual.

The work of the IWFFA has been intense. We are traveling all over the world, introducing the sport in countries who do not have this sport and we are uniting female flag football players. One of our greatest achievements was getting asylum for 73 Afghan female flag football players and their families in 2021. We have also created girls flag football teams in Central America, and our most recent tour was this past April in Nicaragua where we started the very first IWFFA Girls Flag Football League in Xilola. Check out our video: [https://youtu.be/wHY6r\\_OLeVI](https://youtu.be/wHY6r_OLeVI) ). The IWFFA is an organization run by women for women and we hope you would like to join us on a higher level as we take female flag football farther.

I have to warn everyone, this tournament may experience a snag for our Toronto Canadian Loose Women's team. We won't know until Friday, as they drive through (or not) the U.S. border. Lately, there have been many Canadians recently pushed back and not allowed to cross into the U.S.A. We pray for our Canadians to get through.

Virginia US8 team joins us for the first time, thank you Aaron Askeu for making it happen. Key West Beards & Brew, will be headed by Kellee Burns and Sarah Sweeny. I want to thank Eric who owns Beards & Brew for sponsoring the team. NFZ Columbus was started by Kyahe Wing and the Loose Women's team will be a combination of local women and our Toronto Canadians headed by Suzana Akol Agang Abdelbage. These are the four teams competing. I hope everyone has fun, makes new friends, play your best and have a great time this Saturday. Take time to read the article in this program written by: Nassima Jaghar, it's an intense writing about what we're doing here on the field. Enough said, thank all for coming and Let the Games Begin!

Sincerely,

Diane Beruldsen

President / Founder IWFFA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Diane Beruldsen'.





## ***More Than a Score: Reclaiming the true Spirit of Sports and Life***

***By: Nassima Jaghar***

### **Rediscovering the Heart of Sports in a Profit-Driven World**

In today's fast-moving, competitive world, one thing has become increasingly clear: the value we place on money and winning has overshadowed the deeper reasons we play, work, and strive. From youth sports leagues to boardroom meetings, the pursuit of success has often come to mean outperforming others, maximizing gains, and securing status. But as this mindset dominates more of our lives, it's worth asking—what are we leaving behind?

#### **The Commercialization of Play**

Sport, in its purest form, is a celebration of movement, community, and joy. It's a space where we connect with others, challenge ourselves, and experience the thrill of the moment. Yet over time, this spirit has been eroded. What was once about participation and enjoyment has been transformed into a high-stakes competition, deeply influenced by financial motives and societal pressure.

Today, children enter organized sports at younger ages and are often encouraged to specialize in a single sport—sometimes before they even understand why they enjoy it. Coaches and parents, influenced by dreams of scholarships or professional careers, push for performance. Trophies, rankings, and titles become the main goals, and fun can quietly fade into the background.

Adults aren't exempt from this shift. Recreational leagues have increasingly adopted professional models: strict stats, aggressive competition, and a win-at-all-cost attitude. While some thrive in this environment, many others are discouraged or excluded, especially those seeking community, exercise, or simple enjoyment.

#### **Business Before Balance**

This same mentality extends beyond the field. In many areas of life, particularly business and education, success is measured through

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### **MISSION**

Influenced by a unique history and an enduring affiliation with the United Methodist Church, Ohio Northern University's mission is to provide a high-quality learning environment that prepares students for success in their careers, service to their communities, the nation, and the world, and a lifetime of personal growth inspired by the higher values of truth, beauty and goodness.

The University's distinctive academic program includes mutually supporting liberal and professional education components that integrate practice with theory, complemented by excellent co-curricular offerings that enrich the Northern experience.

To fulfill this mission, faculty and staff engage with students so they can learn to think critically, creatively and entrepreneurially; communicate effectively; gain practical experience; solve problems collaboratively; and act as ethical and responsible member of a global community.

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metrics—profits, grades, promotions—while qualities like kindness, creativity, and collaboration are often dismissed as “soft.” The obsession with being the best has created a culture where burnout, stress, and disconnection are widespread.



Corporations celebrate growth at the expense of employee well-being. Schools reward test performance more than curiosity. And in both worlds, those who cannot keep up with the pace are left behind. We have created systems that reward only the outcome, rarely the process. The result? A society that is technically productive—but personally unfulfilled.

### **Losing the Why**

The deeper issue is this: we've lost sight of why we do things. Why play sports? Why pursue work or learning? Why engage with others? If the only answer is to win or earn, we're left with a narrow and often unsatisfying definition of success.

Exercise should be for health and happiness, not just competition. Sports should be for building friendships and learning resilience, not just filling trophy cases. Work should be meaningful, not just profitable. And life, at its fullest, should be about connection and purpose, not just advancement.

### **The Power of Reframing**

But this doesn't have to be our reality. All around the world, individuals and communities are choosing to do things differently. They are reclaiming the true essence of sports, relationships, and learning by putting human needs first.

In reimagined sports programs, winning is no longer the only focus. Emphasis is placed on teamwork, inclusivity, and the joy of movement. Everyone plays. Everyone contributes. Coaches foster confidence instead of pressure. Players support one another rather than compete ruthlessly. These environments don't reject competition; they balance it with compassion and perspective.

Similarly, workplaces are starting to explore models that prioritize mental health, work-life balance, and purpose-driven goals. These shifts are not about lowering standards, they are about raising human standards, about building sustainable, fulfilling experiences for everyone involved.

### **Letting Play Be Enough**

There is a quiet revolution happening when we allow play to be enough. When we measure the value of a game not by the scoreboard, but by the smiles, the lessons, and the connections it creates. When we allow exercise to be about feeling good in our bodies, rather than achieving an aesthetic. When we let life unfold not as a race to the top, but as a shared journey of growth and discovery.

This return to purpose isn't about abandoning excellence. It's about broadening our definition of it. Excellence can mean lifting others up. It can mean being a gracious teammate. It can mean showing up with heart and humility. These are not lesser victories—they are the ones that last.

### **Building a Culture That Values People**

If we are to create a healthier, more humane world, we must rethink what we reward. Yes, let's celebrate success—but let's also celebrate effort, kindness, inclusion, and joy. Let's value people not just for what they produce or win, but for how they live, how they play, and how they care.

This shift begins with small choices. Choosing to coach with encouragement instead of pressure. Choosing to run a business that supports people, not just profit. Choosing to redefine progress as more than performance. Choosing to believe that life is not a scoreboard—but a field we share.

The future of sports, and of society, depends on what we value. If we can look beyond the obsession with winning and profit, we might rediscover something far more meaningful: the power of connection, the beauty of balance, and the simple joy of being in the game together.





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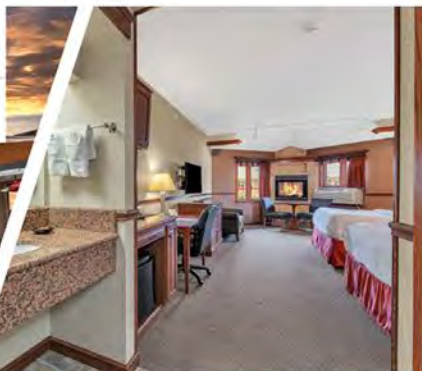
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# Who's Who & Main Sponsors

## **Ohio Northern University - ONU & Main Sponsor**

### **#1 in Ohio, #2 in the Midwest**

Ohio Northern is well-known regionally and nationally for its excellence and rigorous academic programs.

ONU students exceed the national average of senior students who participated in high-impact practices (HIP): learning communities, service-learning, research with faculty, internship or field experiences, study abroad, and culminating senior experiences. "Point your compass toward your dream, Adventure Awaits. Discovery Awaits. Your future awaits at Ohio Northern University – the place to find True North! "

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The Inn at Ohio Northern University is the top choice among Ada, Ohio hotels. The Inn at ONU offers terrific, restful experiences for those seeking a hotel in Northern Ohio. Located on the ONU campus, only steps away from vibrant campus life, we are the preferred hotel in Ada, Ohio for business, leisure, faculty, sports, alumni and family guests.

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## **International Women Flag Football Association (IWFFA)**

The IWFFA is a union of women's and girls' flag football teams, leagues, and individual players from around the world. It is an organization run by women.

Our mission is to provide an opportunity for all females regardless of race, nationality, age, skill level, economic status or sexual orientation to enjoy healthy competition, have fun, develop teamwork skills, learn fair play, good sportship, create new teams and unify exiting teams and leagues to help grow and organize the sport.

Our goal is to promote the educational process, assist our players through our tournaments, trainings, clinics and promotional tours to build self-esteem, confidence, enhance leadership skills to better compete in the business and political world to one day have peace and to professionalize the sport of flag football for women.





The IWFFA ranks teams internationally and offers flag football education and clinics around the world, including regions where the sport does not yet exist. We also offer scholarship funds to underprivileged teams so that they may compete in IWFFA tournaments.

**IWFFA@IWFFA.COM**

**<https://www.iwffa.com/>**

**(305) 896 – 8678**

**Thomas Simmons –  
Athletic Director ONU  
Serving 24 years as  
director of athletics at  
Ohio Northern University.**



Simmons is an Ohio Northern graduate, with the B.S.B.A degree in Business Administration ('85) and the B.A. degree in Sport Management ('86). He earned the M.S. degree in Sports Administration from Ohio University in 1987. Since his appointment in August of 1999, Northern boasts 58 OAC championships and 170 All-Americans across all 24 sports. He has a strong background in sports administration and promotions in professional baseball. Simmons served as General Manager of the Los Angeles Dodgers' Class A minor league affiliate in Vero Beach, Florida from 1987-1997. He served as the General Manager of the San Diego Padres Class AA affiliate in Mobile, AL in 1998 and 1999. He received the 1998 Southern League Community Relations Award and was named the 1991 Florida State League Executive of the Year.

**Russ Crawford  
Professor of history  
at Ohio Northern  
University.**



Crawford spearheaded the idea to bring this tournament to ONU. Russ graduated from Chadron State College with a BA in History in 1985, and again in 1991 with a BS in Social Studies Education. He taught high school in South Dakota and Iowa. He received his MA in History in 2000, and his Ph.D. in 2004 from the

University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He has published three books: *The Use of Sports to Promote the American Way of Life During the Cold War: Cultural Propaganda, 1945-1963* (2008), *Le Football: The History of American Football in France* (2016), and *Women's American Football: Breaking Barriers On and Off the Field* (2022).

**Blake Rus**

**-Wilson Sporting Goods  
Global Marketing Director  
and Team Sports**



Lead marketing for all global WILSON Team Sports activities, including flag football, basketball, volleyball, soccer and football. Blake manages a team of 5 full time staff members in Team Sports who manage direct to consumer marketing, e-commerce support, social media, event activations, partnerships, content development and grassroots marketing functions.

**Diane Beruldsen  
President & Founder  
Of the International  
Women's Flag Football  
Association (IWFFA)**



First generation flag football player since 1978, then started her first team called the Brooklyn Untouchables in 1979. She started the Brooklyn Women's Flag Football League in 1985, then New York Women's FFL in 1990, Key West Women's FFL in 1991, Key West tournament In 1992 Diane started what was to become the Kelly McGillis Classic tournament and would become the largest women's flag football tournament in 2001 with 48 teams (7 were international) registering 1,243 athletes.

The Kelly McGillis Classic helped seed women's tackle and helped to create the National Women's Flag Football Association in 1995, then the International Women's Flag Football Association in 1997. Diane recently became a million-miler traveler flying around the world to build new teams and develop leagues in other countries.





# IWFFA

## International Women's Flag Football Association

### 2025 IWFFA TOURNAMENTS / PROMOTIONAL TOURS

Ada, Ohio	May 10 (one day)
Mexico	May 16 - 17 (2 days)
CUBA	JUNE 4 - 9
Canada	June 28 (one day) / Promo 23 - 27
El Salvador	July 12-13 (2 days)
Boston	July 26-27 (2 days)
Sweden Flag Football Festival	July 28 - August 3 / Friendship Games August 2-3 (2 days)
Honduras	September April 12- 13 (2 days)
Ptown Classic	September 19 - 22 (2 days)
Guatemala	November 1 - 3 (2 days)
34th Kelly McGillis Classic	January 22 - 26, 2026 (games only)
Key West, Florida	Full Week Jan. 20 - 26, 2026
Nicaragua	April 1 - 12, 2026 (Promotional tour and tournament)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CONTACT US:**

**IWFFA@IWFFA.COM**  
**<https://www.iwffa.com/>**  
**(305) 896 - 8678**





# TOURNAMENT ITINERARY & SCHEDULE

## **TEAMS COMPETING**

Canada LOOSE WOMEN	Key West Beards & Brew	Virginia US8	NFZ COLUMBUS
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**Friday May 9**

**WILSON FACTORY TOUR - 10:30AM - 517 E Highland Ave, Ada - 1 Hour Tour of the factory**

**Friday Dinner**

**4pm - Viva Maria's Pizzeria - Italian Food - Home Made - 125 Main St.**

## **SATURDAY - MAY 10, 2025      TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE**

- TOP 2 TEAMS MAKE CHAMPIONSHIP
- GAMES SLOTTED EVERY 1.30 HOUR
- TEAMS WILL HAVE BACK TO BACK GAMES
- HALF TIME GAMES AFTER EACH GAME
- TEAMS MUST REPORT TO SIDE LINE 10 MINUTES BEFORE GAME FOR PLAYER CHECK
- CHAIN GANG (TEAMS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO HOLD CHAINS - 3 PERSONS)
- Pick up & Return Score Cards to decide MVP players for each team

TIME	TEAM	SCORE	TEAM	SCORE	CHAIN GANG
9:00	Beards & Brew		US8		LOOSE WOMEN
10:30	<b>LOOSE WOMEN</b>		NFZ COLUMBUS		US8
12:00	<b>LOOSE WOMEN</b>		Beards & Brew		NFZ COLUMBUS
1:30	NFZ COLUMBUS		US8		Beards & Brew
3PM	<b>LOOSE WOMEN</b>		US8		Beards & Brew
4:30	Beards & Brew		NFZ COLUMBUS		US8
6:00PM	CHAMPIONSHIP		TOP 2 TEAMS		

**SATURDAY AWARDS - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CHAMPIONSHIP GAME**  
**TIME APPROXIMATE: 7:30PM @ El Campo - 204, N. Main St**



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