



IWFFA

International Women's
Flag Football Association

FORWARD PASS

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FLAG FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



2021 ANNUAL ISSUE

IWFFA.COM

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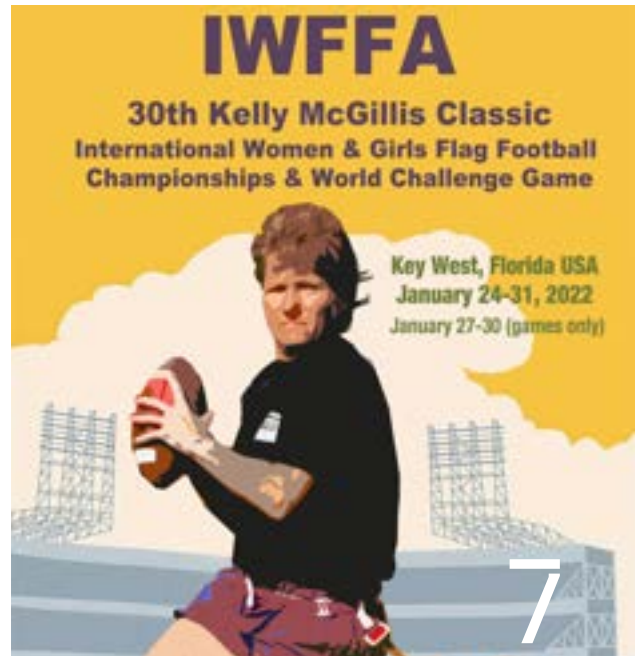
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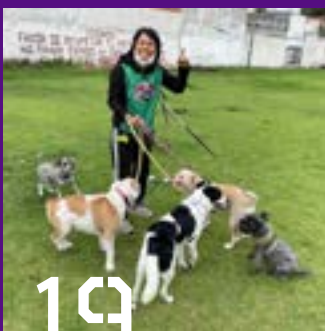
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LETTER FROM THE

PRESIDENT

BY: DIANE BERULDSEN

Well, Covid has continued to affect our 2021 flag football programs, tournaments, and clinics, and our leagues have had to cancel many events for a second year.

The 2021 “unofficial” 30th Kelly McGillis Classic only had local teams competing this past January because non-local national and international teams were restricted from registering. All athletes had to wear masks during play as well as off the field. For this reason, we are celebrating the “Official” 30th Kelly McGillis Classic International Women & Girls Flag Football Championships and World Challenge Game X next January 24 – 31, 2022, in Key West, Florida, USA. This event is filled with flag football clinics, certifications, social events, parties, water sports, women’s speaker series, and a parade. For those teams wanting to compete in the tournament games only, the dates are from January 27 – 30th.

Over the course of this year, the IWFFA had to cancel four promotional tours and eight tournaments. It wasn’t until summer 2021 when the pandemic starting to change direction that travel restrictions were lifted, and the IWFFA managed to travel to Mexico City, Mexico and Kingston, Jamaica for flag football clinics and

league development. You’ll be able to read those stories in this issue of Forward Pass. We were able to host the New Orleans and Ptown Classic tournaments, as well as the Guatemala Friendship Games. However, things are not back to normal, and we ask all our players and members to please vaccinate and get your boosters so we can be done with this COVID pandemic and get back to our regular flag football schedules.

The top story in this issue of Forward Pass is about our Afghanistan Women’s Flag Football Players. Their situation is dire. Currently, they are in hiding fear for their lives as the Taliban has taken over their country and is searching for sportswomen who have broken the newly established laws. Sportswomen have been executed by beheading, so it is urgent that we get them out!

On this matter, I want to share the importance of our IWFFA organization and of women uniting together. As an individual, when I was first contacted by our Afghan members back in August asking for our help to get them out of Afghanistan, I didn’t believe we could do much for them in this situation. And I was wrong, because letters, emails, and efforts by the IWFFA have been so powerful that we will be able to bring our members from Afghanistan to the United States! We informed all of our members, and it has been our very own IWFFA flag football player and attorney Bridget Cambria as well as Sahar Jalili from the law firm Aldea – The People’s Justice Center who have been working tirelessly on the evacuation of our 40

Afghanistan Women’s Flag Football members. Currently, we have found work and places to live in Key West, Florida, for 40% of the women. Without the unity of all of our IWFFA members, this would not have been possible!

We are proud to be part of a women and girls flag football organization that unites women all over the world. Unity = Power, and we’re doing it! Feel proud to be a member of the IWFFA because we are making a difference in this world. Please read the story in this issue written by Maxine Kroll about our Afghanistan flag football players. If you are able to take in one woman for temporary housing – do so! If you are able to donate any amount of money – do so!

Next year the IWFFA will host the first of its kind women’s flag football festival in El Salvador from April 10 – 17, 2022. What is a flag football festival? It’s not a tournament, it’s not clinics . . . it’s a gathering of women only who will share a week in the forest, camping, tenting, eating together, and joining in a variety of daily workshops and evenings of women’s music and entertainment, for the purpose of empowering the female spirit. If you are familiar with the Michigan Women’s Music Festival, then you can understand what we are offering to our flag football women and fans. We’ll offer workshops for every flag football

// **THINK OF THE IWFFA AS A UNION OF PLAYERS AROUND THE WORLD, SINCE 1997. WE ARE AN ENORMOUS NETWORK OF WOMEN, GROWING AND BECOMING AN EVEN STRONGER FORCE FOR THE QUALITY AND UNITY OF FEMALE FLAG FOOTBALL. WOMEN SHOULD RULE THEIR OWN SPORT.** //

position as well as classes in Women's Music, Women's Poetry, Support Groups, Drumming, Spiritual Guiding, and Indigenous Training to Strengthen the Female Spirit. After one week, your female spirit will grow, and your soul will be filled with pride in being a woman. It's a phenomenal opportunity, and you should join us. We will hold our second women's flag football festival in Sweden in 2023. Contact our office if you'd like to attend or to host a workshop.

I want to thank the women who regularly contribute to the IWFFA during the year:

- Briseida Beltran runs the Female Officiating Program and has trained dozens of female players to become IWFFA Officials. You're welcome to join any of our IWFFA Officiating Trainings on Zoom.
- Alison Wood, our IWFFA Head Coach, writes the "Let's Talk Flag Football" section each month in our IWFFA Flag Football News (emailed directly to each member). Alison also offers coaching clinics for competitive and highly competitive teams on Zoom and is a wealth of information regarding coaching and flag football. Alison also contributed an interesting article in this issue, so check it out.
- Ms. Raina, our philosopher, also

writes regularly in our flag football news and is my co-host each month on our radio podcast, "On the Air with the IWFFA," where we talk about current events, issues related to flag football, and stories of interest for women.

- Maria Jose Eguigure hosts the Spanish version of the radio show three times a year and brings together our Spanish-speaking members.
- Gabriella Jimenez Rodriguez, our videographer, has created dozens of IWFFA videos which can be seen on YouTube if you search "IWFFA."
- Sarah Gazi of The LMC Groups works with me on social media and helps in managing the IWFFA. LMC is our management group whom we recently partnered with. You can see their contributions and influence from our new IWFFA flag football news design to the new look on our more mobile-friendly IWFFA website.
- I myself offer coaching clinics for the beginner coach as well as player clinics for the beginner on Zoom.
- Our Regional Directors Elisa Chavez Montalvan (Latin America) and Zeba Hussain Manzoor (Asia) work tremendously hard and are the glue for these regions' flag football teams and leagues.

• Each country has IWFFA Ambassadors who represent their country's flag football and communicate with their teams and all of us. I commend all the league presidents, team managers, coaches, women and men, who organize their team's and women's programs. It takes a lot of work, heart and soul and UNITY!

Think of the IWFFA as a union of players around the world, since 1997. We are an enormous network of women, growing and becoming an even stronger force for the quality and unity of female flag football. Women should rule their own sport.

For those of you who are not a member of the IWFFA . . . the time for you to sign up and join is now!

I hope you enjoy this issue of the 2021 IWFFA Forward Pass Magazine. Next year the IWFFA will produce two issues for the year. If you would like to share your flag football stories with us, please do.

I hope you play your best flag football in your next season. Stay safe and strong.

Sincerely,

Diane Beruldsen

**PRESIDENT /
FOUNDER IWFFA**



Interview with IWFFA AFGHANISTAN Flag Football Players

BY: MAXINE KROLL

On August 15, 2021, Amara* awoke, filled with excitement, anticipating the camaraderie and joy of playing in a flag football game. By sunset, she, and all 39 women playing in her flag football league were scattered, terrified, alone, and in hiding for their lives.



In 2018, the International Women's Flag Football Association established a league in Afghanistan. The United State government, understanding the importance of sports to the physical, emotional, and cultural growth and independence of women, supported these games and protected the women that participated. Unfortunately, the day the US left Afghanistan in late August this year, that protection ended, and the nightmare for these women began. According to Taliban law, females are going against religious doctrine by participating in sports. The Taliban immediately banned all women's sports clubs and Taliban soldiers began actively hunting for women who were members of organized sports clubs and leagues. A female volleyball player in Kabul was beheaded on August 13.

"If a Taliban soldier suspects you, they drag you out of your home without due process. In their eyes because we play sports, we are not real Muslim women. We are nothing. They feel justified, and in 100% of these cases they will kill us, or use us, and usually both." Aliyah*, IWFFA member currently in hiding

"The Taliban has taken everything from me. Now I must hide out of the sight of anyone who knows me. I spend my days and nights in an unknown and stressful situation. I cry every day. I hate it. The sun has faded in Kabul." Amara*, IWFFA member currently in hiding.

*Names have been changed for their protection.



"I spend my days and nights in an unknown and stressful situation. I cry every day. I hate it. The sun has faded in Kabul."

THE IWFFA IS WORKING RELENTLESSLY TO SAVE THESE WOMEN.

The good news is that these women are eligible for immediate special circumstance Visas under United States laws. Legal teams from the Aldea People's Justice Center are contributing their expertise without charge, to the monumental task of arranging for Visas and transportation for these 40 women. Plans are being made to move them from their individual hiding places in and around Kabul, to an airport where they'll take a plane to Qatar. Once safe in the country of Qatar, they will be flown to a medical facility in the United States and undergo a two week COVID quarantine. Soon after, it is hoped they will all be able to settle into the homes and jobs that we find for them. To date, we have found work and accommodations for 15 of the 40 women. We need your help to support the rest of these brave women.

We can do three things to rescue these women. While many people are giving freely of their time and resources, we still need money to transport them to safety, and we need the promise of jobs and a place they can live. Email IWFFA@iwffa.com if you can provide housing or a job. If you can donate any amount, please do:

[CLICK HERE TO DONATE.](#)

30th KELLY MCGILLIS Classic

THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL TEAMS EVER.

The IWFFA will host the “Official 30th Kelly McGillis Classic International Women & Girls Flag Football Championships in Key West, Florida, USA from January 27 - 30, 2022 (Games Only) and January 24 – 31 (Full Week of Events).

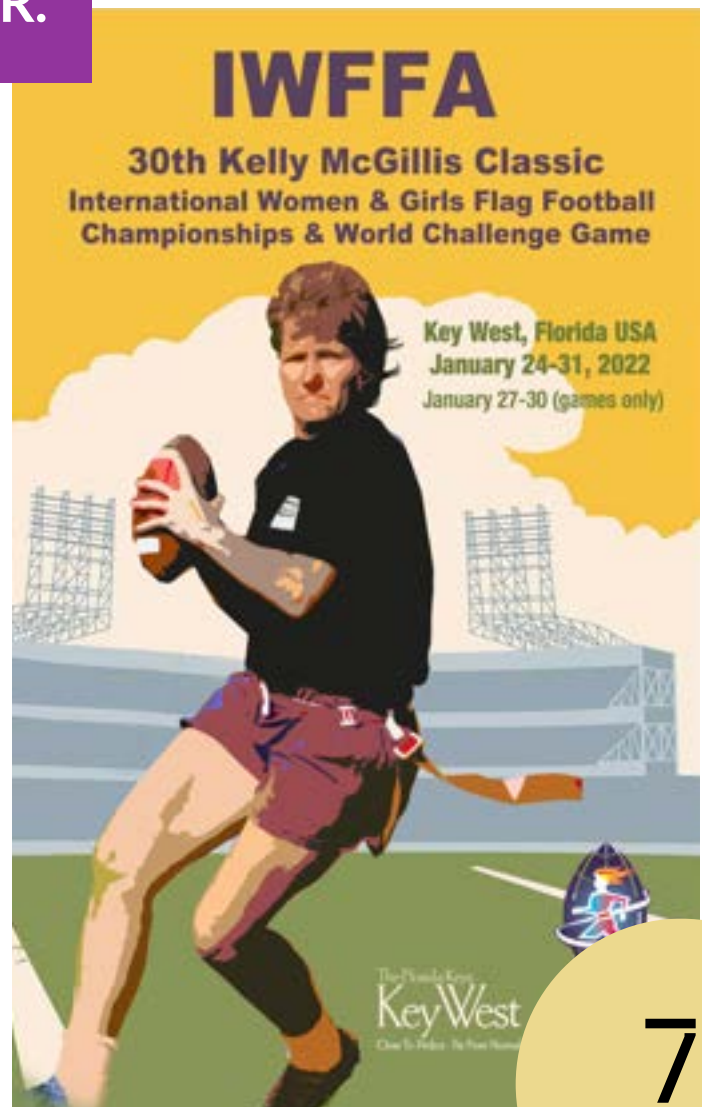
This upcoming event is exciting since the IWFFA will host more international teams than ever before. In addition to teams from across the U.S.A., Morocco, Spain, Mexico (2), India, Jamaica, Honduras, El Salvador and Sweden will be represented.

The Kelly McGillis Classic is a week filled with player and officiating clinics, flag football certifications, women’s speaker series, team contests, social activities and parties every night in addition to the tournament games. One of the highlights of the week will be acting classes taught by Kelly McGillis.

All teams are welcome to compete. Register your team today, or play as a Loose Woman (individual player) on the Loose Women’s Team.

EMAIL: IWFFA@IWFFA.COM

IWFFA.COM/KELLY-MCGILLIS-CLASSIC-2022





IWFFA FLAG FOOTBALL FESTIVAL

EL SALVADOR | APRIL 10-17, 2021





**2022 IWFFA FLAG FOOTBALL FESTIVAL
GENERAL WORKSHOP REGISTRATION
EL SALVADOR – APRIL 10 – 17, 2022**



IWFFA
International Women's
Flag Football Association

PRESENTER'S NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE-PROV / ZIP - PC _____

CELL PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

HAVE YOU DONE AN INTENSIVE OR GENERAL WORKSHOP IN THE PAST? YES NO

IF SO, WHEN AND WHERE? _____

PROPOSED WORKSHOP TITLE _____

DESCRIPTION OF THE WORKSHOP _____

LOCATION / PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS: _____

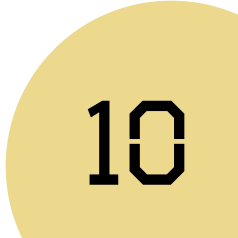
WILL THIS WORKSHOP BE PRESENTED IN ENGLISH OR SPANISH? _____

WILL YOU NEED AN ESPECIALLY LARGE AREA? _____

ANYTHING ELSE WE SHOULD CONSIDER WHEN SCHEDULING THIS WORKSHOP? _____

Please Email your application to: IWFFA@IWFFA.COM

Mobile and WhatsApp: +1 (305) 896 – 8678 | Web: IWFFA.COM





2022 WOMEN IN SPORTS

Year in review

BY: SARAH GAZI, CAE

In 2021 women's sports continued to grow. Women in sports made some great strides and had some huge successes. Unfortunately, there are still a lot of obstacles to be overcome in terms of equal pay, equal opportunity, and equal treatment. These inequities are being brought to light more and more. While we wish they didn't exist at all, at least we are finally getting the media's and the public's support so that hopefully these obstacles will become a thing of the past.

STRIDES TOWARDS EQUAL PAY

It was announced in October that South Carolina women's basketball coach Dawn Staley will receive a new seven-year, \$22.4 million contract, putting her on par with UConn's Geno Auriemma, the highest paid coach in women's basketball.

TOKYO OLYMPICS

This year the women dominated Olympic events in medals and coverage. 59% of NBC's primetime coverage of the Tokyo Olympic Games was dedicated to women's sports. Women won two thirds of the U.S. medals in the first week of competition. Not only was this the fourth consecutive Summer Olympics in which U.S. women won more medals than U.S. men, it was the third consecutive Summer Games in which women outnumbered men on the U.S. team.

Unfortunately, none of this has equated to equal pay. Sponsors still greatly favor men. Forbes recently estimated that top athletes like Simone Biles and Katie Ledecky earn \$5 million and \$3 million a year from endorsements, just a fraction of the estimated \$32.5 million Usain Bolt made in 2016.

WOMEN IN THE NFL

In recent years women have made great strides in the National Football League (NFL). In 2015, Jen Welter became the first woman to serve in an NFL coaching role. In 2016, Kathryn Smith became the NFL's first full-time female coach. Less than a decade after Jen Welter took her position, there are a record 12 women coaches in the NFL in the 2021 season.

This year we also saw Sarah Thomas become the first female to officiate a Super Bowl.

AFGHAN WOMEN BANNED FROM PLAYING SPORTS

Afghan women have been banned from playing sports under the new Taliban government. According to the deputy head of the Taliban's cultural commission, women's sport is not considered appropriate or necessary.

SEXUAL ABUSE IN WOMEN'S SPORTS

On October 1, the National Women's Soccer League canceled its weekend games in response to reports of sexual abuse against its players. When playing resumed days later, players made a leaguewide protest with a show of solidarity. Players from both teams gathered together arm-in-arm in the center circle. A report by Meg Linehan of The Athletic revealed the alleged abuse carried out against former players Mana Shim and Sinead Farrelly over the last decade by Paul Riley, who was subsequently fired as coach of the North Carolina Courage.

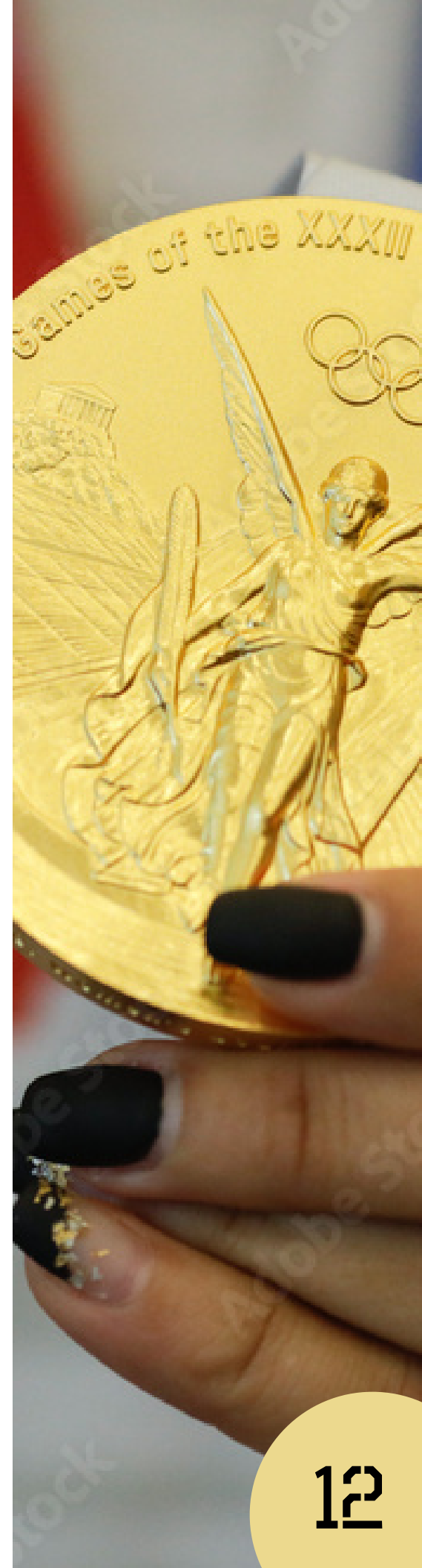
Allegations of abuse in women's football (soccer) surfaced in the US, Venezuela, and Australia. FIFA fears that these allegations might be just the beginning and more cases could be brought forth.

This scandal follows other high profile abuse cases in women's sports, most notably in USA gymnastics. In September of 2021, several of the most celebrated gymnasts testified before the U.S. Senate regarding the mishandling by FBI agents of abuse allegations brought against Larry Nassar.

SEXUALIZATION OF WOMEN IN SPORTS

In July, Norway's beach handball team was fined for wearing shorts instead of bikini bottoms to the bronze medal championship game in Bulgaria. This penalty gained international attention and condemnation.

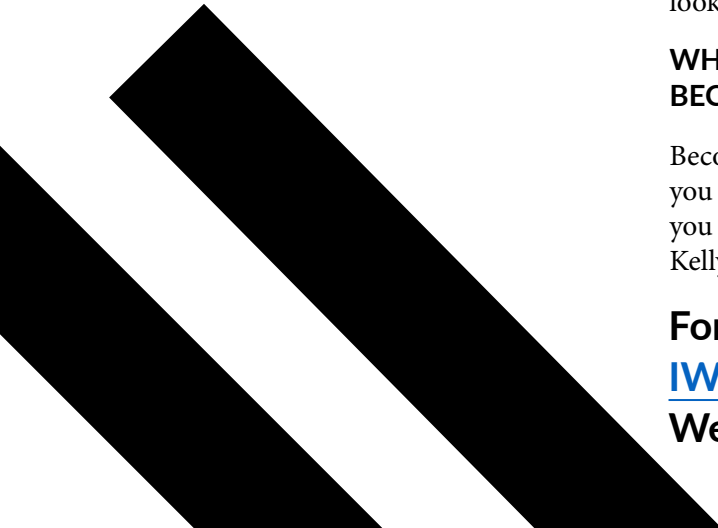
The German women's gymnastics team decided to wear full-length unitards instead of traditional leotards at the Tokyo Olympics in an effort to combat sexualization in the sport. "We wanted to show that every woman, everybody, should decide what to wear," said team member Elisabeth Seitz.





CERTIFYING PLAYERS TO BECOME OFFICIALS

BY: BRISEIDA BELTRAN



Being an official might not seem important when we start playing football, but after becoming a player, it should be our next step. Why? Because besides becoming a better player, we become part of a growing family. When we start officiating games and tournaments, we can teach other women to do the same. That is the way we can rule our own sport.

Since the IWFFA is an organization that helps women through flag football, we created the FOFFA (Female Officials Flag Football Association) to teach women how to officiate. We noticed a need for more women to get involved and to have better flag football. When officials have only had experience with tackle football, they sometimes can have trouble with the unique rules used in flag football and by the IWFFA. Seeing a need for change, we decided to get more players involved. .

Any woman can become an official: a coach; a player who will no longer play because of an injury or because she is retired from playing; a woman who wants to learn for the first time about flag football; and of course, any player within the IWFFA umbrella.

Since 2018 the IWFFA has increased the number of clinics for players to become officials. Due to the pandemic during 2020 and 2021, our goal was to get more people involved in these clinics, and the best way to do it was online. So far, we have certified 45 women from many different countries, and we are looking for more to join.

WHAT IS THE 1ST STEP IN BECOMING AN OFFICIAL?

Become a member of the IWFFA if you are not already. Next, you can take an online clinic and then pass a test. If you are not an online learner, we will have the option for you to learn at the Kelly McGills Class in Key West in January 2022.

For more information, please email:

IWFFA@IWFFA.COM

We want YOU to become an official.





DEI STATEMENT APPROVED

IWFFA Board of Directors Approves Official Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

Earlier this year the IWFFA Board of Directors set their strategic plan for 2021. Within that plan they outlined the need for an official DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) statement.

WHY HAVE A DEI STATEMENT?

A DEI statement is a reflection of an organization's values. While we know that the IWFFA has purposed to be diverse, equitable, and inclusive since its founding, it was imperative that our DEI statement declare that and to hold IWFFA to that statement each and every day.

IWFFA'S DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

Since the IWFFA was founded in 1997, our primary focus has been one of equality - equality in sports and in life.

At the IWFFA our goal is to make flag football more accessible and inclusive across the globe. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are at the heart of how we started and at the heart of who we are and what we do every day.

Diversity is about understanding and valuing what makes us different. Dimensions of diversity include race, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical abilities and appearance, socio-economic status, religion, political beliefs, etc. We are committed to bringing flag football and all that it offers to more countries, people groups, and regions of the world. We are committed to an IWFFA that embraces individual differences and the rich dimensions of diversity. We are committed to developing a team of stakeholders and people from differing perspectives and backgrounds to drive innovation and increase cultural awareness. This is exemplified even in the demographics of our Board Members.

Equity is about fair treatment, opportunity, access, and advancement for all. Flag football helps develop relationships, self-confidence, life skills, and an overall sense of empowerment. IWFFA is creating spaces and removing barriers so all people are treated fairly and have the same access to opportunities. On and off the field, we ensure that our

players feel that they are valued and safe.

Inclusion is about creating an environment where individuals and groups feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued. IWFFA is committed to an organization where players know their value, are empowered to positively support each other, and are recognized for their individual and team contributions.

The IWFFA is so proud to have members and players across the world and represented in over 20 countries. Each year we continue to expand, bringing this incredible sport to those who might never have had the opportunity to play, officiate, or coach. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are cornerstones in our founding and will continue to be so with each passing year.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The IWFFA Board of Directors will be setting DEI goals to continue to improve and increase our diversity, equity, and inclusion. Having a statement isn't enough. While we pride ourselves on being inclusive, like any organization, we can do better, and we can always do more.



THE *joy* OF GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL

and How Adults Can Lend Support

Barry Gaukel
ShadyPalmPhotography.com

BY: CONNIE TARPLEY

Just enough time has passed that many alive today do not remember the time when many competitive sports were not open to girls. Now that girls have the opportunity to compete in leagues of their own, the adults in their lives have the opportunity and responsibility of helping the girls find joy, fun and meaning in competing.

The ability to compete offers girls and young women the opportunity to learn physical, mental and emotional skills that they would otherwise not have. As the adults in their lives we have the responsibility to help guide them in a direction that will benefit them and society as a whole.

This must cause us to consider what kind of meaning we want to give the sport. While it is important to teach the girls to do everything they do to the best of their ability, that must be balanced with teaching them to be happy with doing their best and to not expect perfection from themselves, other team members or even the officials who referee the game. Mistakes are made by everyone and to teach the girls that and that the mistakes can be used to learn is a gift that the adults in their life can give them.

We do not have to follow in the footsteps of boys' sports. How many time do you read about a parent in a little league game getting ugly, calling the umpire names, even cursing little kids on the other team? We have the opportunity to teach our girls that even though it is certainly fun to win, there is no shame in losing when you have done

“ We have the opportunity to teach our girls that even though it is certainly fun to win, there is no shame in losing when you have done your best and there is even no shame when you are not up to your best at one point or another in the game. ”



your best and there is even no shame when you are not up to your best at one point or another in the game.

For girls, playing Flag Football should primarily be about having fun and the joy of the game. Yes, we want them to learn skills, both the physical skills of throwing, passing, catching and running along with the mental and emotional skills of staying cool under pressure. Adults can help them practice the physical skills. The way the adults

can help them with the mental and emotional skills is by setting an example. If an adult in the stands has a meltdown about an official's call that is a very poor example of keeping cool under pressure. If an adult in the stand makes nasty comments about what the coach is doing that is a very poor example of good sportsmanship. And even worse if a parent makes remarks about a child's lack of ability or even just a mistake that shames the child, that can be extremely damaging to the child. And sadly it drains all the joy out of the game for that child.

As adults we can help keep the joy and fun in girl's sports by understanding that is the main goal of playing. All the skill building and winning is secondary to having fun.

If we keep our cool even when disappointed in a particular play, then the girls learn that making a mistake is human. Childhood is about learning and having fun. Let's keep the fun in flag football for our girls.

Zeba Hussain

MEET OUR REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR ASIA

BY: ZEBA HUSSAIN

I am Zeba Hussain, and I feel really proud to introduce myself as a Pakistan women's flag football representative and Asian representative. Today, I would like to share my short journey with IWFFA. This game was introduced to me by a man who was a football player in Pakistan. I don't want to mention the name of the person, but I remember that he didn't want me to be in charge or in leadership. During some discussions he tried to demean me. That was weird to me, and I decided to quit. He even tried to stop me to be in contact with Diane.

Here I would like to say a special thanks to Diane who showed trust in me, gave me respect and guided me during this hard time. The IWFFA bond with Pakistan is very strong, I continued to work during this time period and introduced this game to some girls. Everyone here is very excited to play and wants to get the coaching to learn this and to become a professional player in it. I invited Diane to Pakistan for coaching, but unfortunately due to COVID everything stopped.

Although we haven't taken part in any tournament so far, we are still very active in all virtual activities. We have attended online clinics and trivia competitions and won the title also. Here I would like to mention the names of my female



“
WE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO SHOW THE WORLD THAT WOMEN CAN BE LEADERS.
 ”

stars: Ume Omema, Quratulain, Sajida Batool, Zainab Riaz, Aisha Qazi, Zeba Zulfiqar, and Zarina Habib. They all are very energetic and are passionate to learn and enhance their skills and always showed interest to do something for this organization.

I feel prouder in becoming part of this organization because on the Asian side there is not a single sport which is led by a woman. This is the first sport of the world in which a woman is leading, and it's very much inspiring for all of us, especially for younger girls who want to

pursue their careers in this sport and become inspiration for other fellow national girls.

During my leadership I faced many problems, but here I would like to give credit to Mr. Muhammad Qasim who supported me all the way without demanding leadership. I really appreciate his support. I wish to introduce this game in every country especially in Asia because there aren't many examples of women in leadership there. I am still facing pressure from some groups, especially males who are part of Pakistani

sports. They want to lead this and not allow their women to play under my leadership. Secondly, India has a good team but they still facing the same issue that they don't want to introduce any woman as a leader. Afghanistan is facing difficult problems as we all know. Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and many more deal with similar issues. We should work together to show the world that women can be leaders.

IWFFA PROMOTIONAL TOURS 2021

USA, FLORIDA, FT. LAUDERDALE MAY 22 | MEXICO, MEXICO CITY JUNE 11-21 | JAMAICA, KINGSTON AUGUST 16-23

BY: DIANE BERULDSEN

Our promotional tours have become very busy through the years. Recognizing our work to develop flag football in countries where the sport does not exist, and also the fact that we are a women-run organization that focuses on women and girls, many groups want to be a part of the IWFFA. When we develop the sport, we not only instruct how to play flag football, but also how to officiate and how to run their league. Our philosophy is that knowing your position on the field so you can make the best decisions during the game is more important than winning. When you play your best, and your team plays their best, that's when you feel the "Magic." Camaraderie, friendship and supporting one another and other teams are more powerful than numbers on a scoreboard.

FT. LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

MAY 22, 2021

With COVID shutting down travel to and from international countries, we could not make it to Pakistan, Sierra Leone, or Honduras this year. Instead, early in the year we headed up to Ft. Lauderdale, FL to join Coach Lee at University of Ft. Lauderdale for a day of flag football tryouts. It was a day of training and skills assessment to decide if the women were skilled enough to play on the school's varsity team and also to receive a college scholarship for flag football.

[Check out our video](#) to see what the try outs were like.



EARN FULL SCHOLARSHIP

TRY OUTS & FLAG FOOTBALL CLINIC

SATURDAY, MAY 22, 2021

CLICK BARCODE TO REGISTER

19

MEXICO

JUNE 11-21, 2021



I arrived in Mexico City, Mexico on June 11. The purpose of this trip was to train the Mexican players 8 on 8 and IWFFA rules, teach how to officiate, and conduct a Friendship Game. The Mexicans wanted to join the IWFFA to become officially a sanctioned IWFFA league, so the IWFFA wanted to support the Mexicans as much as possible. Our arrangement was made by IWFFA Ambassador Dolores Orozco Cruz, and I was hosted by Mexico's Women's Flag Football League President, Alexandra Sanchez and also Chino Del Rocio. Before arriving I had to have proof of a negative COVID test taken three days before my arrival. Everyone in Mexico wore masks.

In Mexico, 5 on 5, non-contact flag football is prevalent. I attended some regular league games and 5 on 5 tournaments and saw many strong flag football teams and exceptional athletes. I soon saw that my job as IWFFA Trainer

would be to teach elements of the 8 on 8 game not included in the 5 on 5 game. So for the two Mexican teams Linces and Bacardiosas, we focused on blocking, running plays, kicking, punting, play calling and huddles. Also, the strategy is very different between the two styles of flag football play. The non-contact flag football is a fast game and develops great Quarterbacks and Receivers, but there are no huddles for play calling. The player trainings were excellent. And our officiating clinics, with 7 women, went very well. IWFFA Officiating Director Briseida Beltran followed up on additional Zoom clinics for certification in the coming weeks, and the women used our Friendship Game to practice their skills as officials. They were great and did an excellent job. The friendship game ended with Linces 13 vs Bacardios 6, and we had halftime games to make some more fun.



AWARDS:

MVP

Linces
Barcardios

OFFENSE

Miriam Martinez Hernández
Margarita de Jesus Vallejo

DEFENSE

Valeria Espinosa
Mariana Cardenas



MEXICO ALL STAR TEAM

OFFENSE ALL STAR

		TEAM
QB	Alexa Cermeno Sanchez	Linces
RUNNING BACK	Ariana Lizeth Sánchez	Linces
RUNNING BACK	Itahi Lazcano	Bacadios
RECEIVER	Margarita de Jesus Vallejo	Bacadios
RECEIVER	Miriam Martinez Hernández	Linces
OFFENSIVE LINE	Ana Sanchez	Linces
OFFENSIVE	Karla Daniela Cortés	Bacadios
CENTER	Fernanda Valdes	Bacadios
PUNTER	Alexa Cermeno Sanchez	Linces

DEFENSE ALL STAR

		TEAM
PRIMARY	Gabriella Martinez	Linces
PRIMARY	Miriam Martinez Hernández	Linces
PRIMARY	Martha Leticia Vera	Linces
SECONDARY	Helen Gonzalez Vargas	Bacadios
SECONDARY	Claudia Gonzalez	Linces
SECONDARY	Mariana Cardenas	Bacadios
SAFETY	Ariana Lizeth Sánchez	Linces
SAFETY	Valeria Espinosa	Linces
KICKER	Alexa Cermeno Sanchez	Linces



Lots of organization and volunteers made this tour successful. We had photographers and videographers, and all necessary arrangements were made. Every evening we enjoyed delicious food at a variety of Mexican restaurants. My last day was spent riding horses, shopping for gifts and enjoying Mexico City. Mexico is a lovely country. The Mexican Women's Flag Football League will host their first sanctioned IWFFA tournament next year on May 28 – 29, 2022. I suggest you consider bringing your team. And for those of you competing in the Key West Kelly McGillis Classic International Women Flag Football Championships next January, you'll see the Mexico team competing as well.

Many thanks to all the women and men who worked hard for this tour: Alexa Sanchez, Chino Del Rocio, Dolores Citalli Orozco Cruz, Brenda Gutierrez, Paola Valdes, Salvatore, Rodrigo, the photographers, videographers, and the Linces and Bacardiosas teams.

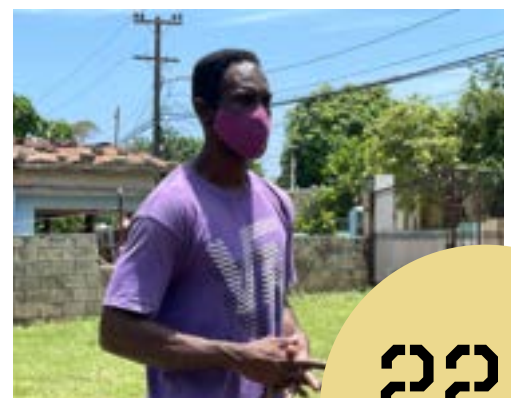


JAMAICA

AUGUST 16-23, 2021

Our trip to Kingston, Jamaica was an unexpected surprise because travel had been restricted the whole year until June 2021. IWFFA attempted to travel the previous year in 2020, but now was our chance. Our purpose for the travel was League Development. There was no female flag football program in Jamaica and we were contacted by JAAFA – Jamaica American Football Association founders, Roger Reece Salmon and Kevaun Hinds. They wanted IWFFA to assist in their league development for women and girls, and also for JAAFA to become a sanctioned IWFFA league. This was also a special promotional tour as I was joined by future Trainer Claudia Merino Gonzalez from Spain. Claudia would learn our training methods and philosophy and would learn to be a future trainer by participating and watching. Claudia would prove to be an excellent athlete as well as fast learner as a future IWFFA Trainer. IWFFA's outreach has expanded greatly around the world, and we are developing new Trainers to travel to other countries to introduce the sport and help develop leagues. Before arriving to Jamaica, Claudia and I had to show a negative COVID test taken three days before arrival, and then when we landed we had to take another COVID test so that we would not have to be quarantined for 14 days. Everyone in Jamaica wore masks.

We were picked up at airport by President of JAAFA Roger Salmon, who hosted our stay along with wife Reisha and their two children. The temperatures were high, and we were busy with two, sometimes three trainings a day with a variety of groups. During the week we solicited new players, inviting women to join this new sport. Roger would pick up many of the girls to take to our trainings, and it was a community activity. Our trainings had to be done before 6PM, due to COVID Curfew at 7pm, when everything would shut down and everyone had to be in their homes. We had a Zoom meeting for the women during the week to go over the rules. Friday we had games for the girls and half time contests to win prizes. Saturday was the big day and the women's Friendship Game between the two teams: Strikers and Warriors. In the morning, we met indoors to share information about the IWFFA, its philosophy and what needs to be done in Jamaica for the development of the sport. Late morning we practiced some plays, and in early afternoon, we played our Friendship Game. The Jamaicans caught on quickly; they were athletes who had played other sports and smart flag football players. The game was fun, the Jamaican women were fun, and the game ended in a tie. We gave out awards and special recognition to Roger for his efforts in bringing women's flag football to Jamaica.



MOST VALUABLE PLAYERS

IWFFA JAMAICA WOMEN'S FRIENDSHIP GAME

Score: Jamaica Warriors - 0 vs Jamaican Strikers - 0



JAMAICA WARRIORS

MVP OFFENSE Amoy Green Julie

MVP DEFENSE Tanisha Ann Green



JAMAICAN STRIKERS

MVP OFFENSE Latoya Jody-Ann Brown

MVP DEFENSE Tudian Campbell



Because of the curfews and lockdowns, we gave the Jamaicans officiating clinics via Zoom conducted by our director of female officials, Briseida Beltran. Many of the players will officiate, and that will create very smart flag football teams. Everyone should keep an eye on the Jamaicans.

There was a lot of work put into this promotional tour. Special thanks to: Roger Salmon, Dr. Staci Roach – league representative for the women, Claudia Merino Gonzalez, Aishamarrow – IWFFA Ambassador to Jamaica, Coach Robert (James Williams), Tyrece Thompson, Kevaun Hinds, Javier Mendoza, Jose Brown, Floyd Francis, Reisha, Reisha-Rae, and Renaud Salmon and all the extraordinary Jamaican flag football women. We look forward seeing them competing at the 30th Kelly McGillis Classic International Women's Flag Football Championships next January, in Key West, Florida and I encourage teams to travel to Jamaica next year to compete in their first sanctioned IWFFA tournament on November 12-13, 2022. Jamaica is a gorgeous Caribbean island, the people are fun, and the tournament will be great.

Check out the IWFFA – [Jamaican Video](#)



LET'S TALK Flag Football

RUNNING ROUTES AND GETTING OPEN

BY: HEAD COACH ALISON WOOD

I find it curious that many receivers in flag football run routes as opposed to getting open. They run a five yard out regardless of where the defense is on the field. Many of these women played soccer, basketball, field hockey, or lacrosse. In any of these sports I can guarantee you they did not run to the defense, they didn't run a certain yardage: they ran to where the defense wasn't so they could receive the ball. Why this hasn't transitioned to the receiving core has been a curiosity of mine for quite some time. I believe it is because they were not coached properly, they practiced running routes without defense due to low turnout at practices, and/or they haven't transitioned their knowledge from one sport to the next. Many younger players may have only played one sport so may believe another sport to be very different. I played three sports in college for four years, and outside of softball they are all pretty much the same. You work with your team to move a ball down field to score and try to stop the other team from doing just that.

To that end, flag football has a term for getting the defenses to move in one direction so you can go the opposite way. If you played or watched basketball you'll see a player jab step, get the defense to move left (for example), and then they will quickly go right. They make the defense move and they change speed. That is what a receiver **MUST** do to get open in a tight coverage situation. If the player is on the right side of the field and gets the defense to move right (toward the outside of the field) it is called **INSIDE LEVERAGE** because as a receiver you just opened up the inside of the field. The QB can throw the ball into the opening you created (known as throwing you open). But what the QB needs to do is a subject for another day. If you as a receiver get the defense to move left (and you are on the right side) toward the inside of the field, you have **OUTSIDE LEVERAGE** (you should get the ball on the outside of the field). In both instances (just like in basketball) when the defense moves, you change speed and explode in the opposite direction.



I hope that all players will start using the same terms so that we can talk flag football and all of us understand what we are talking about. More importantly I hope to see athletes transition their knowledge from one sport to the next. But most of all I hope receivers stop running to the defense.

STRETCH ROUTINE FOR FLAG FOOTBALL PRACTICES & GAMES

BY: EDUARDO GONZALEZ

COACH BLUE WAVE WOMEN FLAG FOOTBALL TEAM

Stretching your body before working out or playing sports is a must. These exercises will help you prepare for an intense physical activity. Stretching helps your muscles and joints get ready for your flag football challenge. It will help you become more flexible, and it reduces the risk of cramping or straining your muscles during the activity. If you don't do stretching exercises before playing sports, the soft tissues surrounding your joints may get damaged beyond repair. These tissues include muscles, tendons, ligaments, skin, and joint capsules.

Pre-Game Warm Up Routine for Blue Wave Women Flag Football Team

1. Lineup the entire team in one line then slow jog one lap around the football field.
2. Finish the jog at one of the goal lines, then do Dynamic Stretches between Goal line and 10 yard line.
 - a. [High Knees](#)
 - b. [Drum Majors](#)
 - c. [Back Pedal](#)
 - d. [Side Shuffle](#)
 - e. [Cariocas](#)
 - f. [Walking Lunges](#)
 - g. [Sumo Squats](#)
 - h. [In-Outs](#) – Similar to a Capoeira kick Meia Lua de Frente
 - i. [Outs-in](#) – similar to a Capoeira Kick Queixada (the last two are modifications of the capoeira move, but there are no videos of them)

3. Once Dynamic Stretches are complete, line up in either a circle or a grid and make sure all players are spaced so that they have enough space to stretch. Do the Static Stretches for the following muscles:
 - a. Neck
 - b. Shoulder
 - c. Biceps
 - d. Triceps
 - e. Wrists
 - f. Elbows
 - g. Back
 - h. Hip and Waist
 - i. Hamstring
 - j. Quad
 - k. Calves
 - l. Ankles

[STANDING ROUTINE](#)
[FLOOR ROUTINE](#)



4. Divide Team into Line Players and Backs Players
 - a. Line Players will do “Hit and Drive” drills to further warmup critical muscle groups to blocking activities.
 - b. Backs Players will do Pass Patterns to further warmup critical muscle groups to run/catch activities.
5. If times allows, run basic offense plays prior to game
6. If times allows, Go over defense schemes prior to game.

IWFFA AWARDS 2020

SPECIAL AWARD

RECIPIENT

PORTER WILSON 2020

KRISTIE BAREIKA - ARTIGUE

IWFFA SPORTSWOMAN AWARD NORTH AMERICA REGION 2020

MICHELLE FRANCES RIZZUTO

IWFFA SPORTSWOMAN AWARD LATIN AMERICA REGION 2020

MARIA JOSE EGUIGURE TORRES - HONDURAS

IWFFA SPORTSGIRL AWARD 2020

EMILY CANO - USA

2022 IWFFA TOURNAMENTS

January 25 – 31, 2022

(Games only January 28 – 30)

Kelly McGillis Classic

International Women & Girls Flag

Football Championship

Key West, Florida

February 26, 2022

(Clinics Feb 16 – 25)

1st Quetta Women's Flag Football

Tournament

Quetta, Pakistan

March 19 - 20, 2022

(Clinics March 15 - 18)

2nd Honduras Women's Flag Football

Tournament

Tegucigalpa, Honduras

March 26 - 27, 2022

2nd New Orleans Women's Flag

Football Tournament.

New Orleans, Louisiana

April 10 – 17, 2022

IWFFA Flag Football Festival

El Salvador

May 28 – 29, 2022

1st Mexico City Flag Football

Tournament

Mexico City, Mexico

May 28 – 29, 2022

(Clinics May 1 – 28)

1st Sierra Leone Women's Flag

Football Tournament

June 25 – 26, 2022

5th San Salvador Women's Flag

Football Tournament

July 24 – 25, 2022

(Clinics July 19 – 23)

5th Havana Women's Flag Football

Tournament

Havana, Cuba

August 6 – 7, 2022

8th Readington Women's Flag

Football Tournament

Readington, New Jersey

August 20 – 21, 2022

(Clinics August 8 – 19)

1st Spain Women's Flag Football

Tournament

August 27 – 28, 2022

17th Gothenburg Women's Flag

Football Tournament

Gothenburg, Sweden

September 16 – 19, 2022

16th IWFFA Ptown Classic Women's

Flag Football Tournament

Provincetown, Massachusetts

October 12, 2022

1st Dayton Women's Flag Football

Tournament

Dayton, Ohio

November 5 – 6, 2022

7th Guatemala City Women's Flag

Football Tournament

Guatemala City, Guatemala

November 12, 2022

1st Kingston Women's Flag Football

Tournament

Kingston, Jamaica

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