

OFF-SEASON FOOTBALL LEAGUE NEWSLETTER
Vol. XXVII• No. 11 November 30, 2008

OFL CALENDAR OF EVENTS • ACTUAL EMAIL DUE DATES

SUN-DEC 28 th	Deadline for 2008 Articles, Photos & Formal Amendments
THR-JAN 1 st	1 st Day 2010 draft picks can be discussed or traded
	Newsletter No. 12 shall be published, complete with Final Amendments
MON-JAN 19 th	Emergency Draft List [EDL] due
SAT-JAN 24 th	Live 8-round Rookie Draft via AIM chat room begins promptly at 1 PM EST

Free Agency Waiver Claims Inside

Review & report corrections ASAP

The remaining unclaimed players listed under 2nd Cuts on the current OFL Game File shall be returned to the Rookie Draft Pool and are eligible to be drafted.

Amendment Proposal Reminders

Deadline for formal proposals is Sunday, December 28th

Formal Proposals shall be published in December Newsletter with voting in January
By rule, adopted amendments would take effect about March 1st (1 month prior to start of season).

Proposals must include specific relevant sections of the Constitution you seek to revise

Constructive comments on rule proposals are encouraged. Even the seemingly best of ideas may have overlooked something, creating a new loophole while attempting to close an old one. An excellent venue to express your views is thru an article in the December Newsletter, and it may earn your franchise \$1 million in the process.

Never too early to begin your Draft Preparation

Our draft will start promptly at 1 PM EST on Saturday January 24th. All teams that own at least one draft pick MUST submit an Emergency Draft List (EDL) to the designated coach by Monday, January 19th. Your EDL must contain sufficient names of eligible players to cover your last pick. I.E. If your last pick is 79th overall your EDL must be 79 players, if your final selection is 140th your list must be 140 eligible players.

Your EDL will only be used if you're unable to participate Live in our Chat Room format (similar to Live Free Agency.) You can expect the draft to last about 3 ½ - 4 hours, more or less. Be prepared! Your EDL should be a very good guide as to how you plan to draft, though the actual selections and direction of the draft may encourage you to alter your strategy.

Eligible players: All players appearing on the disk that are not on an OFL roster. On the OFL disk they can be found under "Free Agents". This is the 2007 NFL draft class

<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/football/nfl/specials/draft/2007/>

along with a ton of journeymen players. If a player does not appear on the OFL League disk, he is NOT eligible to be drafted.

Your Rookie Draft preparation now also gives you a head start on the optional Supplemental Draft (see Unrestricted Free Agent Draft on Pg 8 in your Constitution) that follows about 10 days later, with the hundreds of players not selected on January 24th.

COMMISSIONER'S CORNER..... By Matt Farmer

Matt requested I convey to everyone the Commissioner's Corner will return next month. Unfortunately Matt suffered the loss of a brother last week with funeral services the day before Thanksgiving.

Quite understandably he's not up to penning a column for this issue and our condolences go out to Matt & his family.

MONEY MATTERS..... THIS MONTH

Report errors in Money Matters ASAP to Mike Jaime

OFL FRANCHISE	1st Article	2nd Article	3rd Art/Photo	Traded Money	Total XXVII-11
Antelope					
Baltimore	FEB		OCT		
California	MAR	MAR	MAR		
Denver	JULY	OCT	OCT		
Durham				- 2000	- 2000
Florida	DEC	JAN	DEC		
Fresno	JAN	FEB	JAN		
Kutztown	FEB				
Las Vegas	JAN	APR	FEB	+ 50	+ 50
Malvern	FEB	+ 1000	MAR	+ 1200	+ 2200
Medicine	AUG				
New Jersey	SEPT	SEPT	SEPT		
New York					
Pittsburgh	FEB	AUG	OCT		
Prairie		FEB			
Ringgold				- 50	- 50
Round Rock	SEPT	SEPT	+ 1000	+ 800	+ 1800
Sacramento		FEB	FEB		
San Francisco					
Winnipeg	JAN	JAN	SEPT		

NOTES: Teams enjoy 1 more month to submit their 2008 articles/photos to earn \$1 million each, for up to maximum of \$3 million total for the franchise. Article/Photo credits are earned January thru December. Month 2008 credits earned are shown above.

Current Superstar Salaries are immediately raised if dictated by trade acquisitions. Player Contracts are very important factor in valuing trade proposals. Their impact on your current & future finances should weigh in all your trade decisions.

Review Pg. 15 in Constitution for upcoming Bonus opportunities.

FINAL 2009 OFL DRAFT BOARD – Thru Trade #10
SAT-JAN 24th Live 8-round Rookie Draft via AIM chat room begins promptly at 1 PM EST

OFL FRANCHISE	# 1	# 2	# 3	# 4	# 5	# 6	# 7	# 8
01 California Quakes								
02 New Jersey Patriots				NY				
03 Round Rock Crusaders						MLV		
04 Ringgold Renegades								
05 Antelope Mud Fish			MLV	LV				
06 New York Cobras					LV			
07 Medicine Mad Hatters		FF			FF			
08 Florida Dragons								
09 San Francisco Buccaneers			RNG					
10 Sacramento Scorpions			NJ				NJ	BLT
11 Pittsburgh Assassins		FF	RC	FF	FF		FF	FF
12 Durham Thunder Lizards	FF			FF				
13 Kutztown Belchers	WPG	WPG	WPG	WPG	CAL	WPG	WPG	
14 Prairie Wildfire	NJ	PIT	NJ	NJ	NJ	FLA		
15 Denver Destroyers					PIT			
16 Malvern Monarchs			RC	RNG				
17 Las Vegas RatPack								RNG
18 Winnipeg Vigilantes	NY	NY		SF	NY			
19 Baltimore Slaughter								
20 Fresno Fuel	FLA	NJ	PIT	CAL	SF			

\$TEALS & DEALS.....

This 2nd Trade Period is open thru the 1st week in March

- MALVERN trades their 4th & previously acquired San Francisco's 3rd round picks to RINGGOLD for \$ 2 million.
- DURHAM trades their 1st & 4th round picks to FRESNO for CB Champ Bailey.
- PITTSBURGH trades their 2nd & 5th round picks to FRESNO for CB Rhonde Barber.
- MEDICINE trades their 2nd & 5th round draft picks to FRESNO for DT Pat Williams.
- MALVERN trades WR Roydell Williams and WR David Patten to DURHAM for \$1.2 million.
- PITTSBURGH trades their 4th, 7th and 8th round picks to FRESNO for G Mike Wahle.
- RINGGOLD trades \$50K to LAS VEGAS for DE Kenyon Coleman, TE Todd Heap & CB Justin Miller.
- DURHAM trades \$800K to ROUND ROCK for WR Shawn McDonald.
- PITTSBURGH trades T Eric Winston & previously acquired Prairie's 6th round pick to FLORIDA for OLB Greg Ellis.
- ROUND ROCK trades G Vince Manuwai to PITTSBURGH for their 3rd round pick and RB Ladell Betts.

MALVERN MONARCHS 2008 SEASON REVIEW

By- Colin Swanston

RECORD 12-4, lost 1st round playoff game to eventual champion Fresno.

OVERVIEW: Perennially strong team coming off disappointing non-playoff year. Got swept by division rival Winnipeg in season series to cost division title. The offense was rated #1 overall with the # 3 Michael Vick (56.8-2012-22-7) and #4 QB Kurt Warner (59.6-1621-14-4) QB's in the OFL. The number one ranked rushing offense featured 4 players in the top 29. Rookie Maurice Jones-Drew (167-1029-9) Corey Dillon (193-917-11), Vick (120-803-3) and Shaun Alexander (129-611-0). WR Chad Johnson led the league in receiving yards for the second straight year (79-1430-11). He and running mate Isaac Bruce (56-1024-9) were # 2 and 3 in the OFL in yards per catch. The defense was ranked #4 tied for the lead league in sacks and rated #1 against the run. Bart Scott was a tower of strength with 111 tackles and 3 interceptions.

TURNING POINT-Down 13-6 with under 2 minutes to go in a defensive struggle with Fresno the Monarchs for some bizarre reason tried a pass that Chris McCallister picked off and returned for a TD. Malvern never recovered.

OFFENSIVE MVP-A lot to choose from. Between throwing and rushing Vick produced the most yardage.

DEFENSIVE MVP-DE Derrick Burgess. The former 5th round pick for the second consecutive year. His 14 sacks led the team and were 4th in the league.

BIGGEST SURPRISES-The multiple big plays the team put together, especially in the passing game with both QB's.

BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT-The offense's performance in the playoffs.

ROOKIE RECAP: 1st rounder RB-Maurice Jones-Drew had a great season and was considered for offensive MVP. 2nd round S Daniel Manning started and contributed. 3rd round S-Antoine Beathe played in the dime packages and will push to start next year. 5th rounder DE Ray Edwards and 6th rounder Paris Haralson played special teams.

FREE AGENT/TRADE RECAP-Vick was acquired fairly cheaply and produced major short-term dividends. What his future holds is the big question. Corey Dillon and TE-Randy McMichael were big parts of the offense. Starting OT Tra Thomas came over on draft day and solidified the o-line's weak link. Jeremiah Trotter was solid in the middle. Pass rusher Bert Berry joined the team in week 2 and was part of the league's best pass rush.

Initial Amendment Ideas By- Mike Jaime

As first suggested back in the April Newsletter I will be offering some formal amendments for a vote. I've thought these thru for quite a while and believe they're positive improvements but I won't go to war over any. As much as I'd like to see all of these changes adopted, if none are, so be it.

#1 GAMEDAY: Remove the current ability of every coach to selectively "deactivate" any players. As it is now, this seemingly harmless feature is misused to circumvent the Action Game Engine's random injury system. It's plain foolish for us to be able to determine months in advance that to avoid costly injuries vs. key opponents we can selectively deactivate players in April & May to get their 1, 2, 3 or 4 missed games "out of the way".

Let's restrict the ability to de-activate players until you've either clinched your Division or AFTER Week 14, whichever ever occurs first. (An exception will be the League Statistician on directive from Commissioner may de-activate injured and/or uncarded players if the Game Engine does not recognize their correct status.)

#2 ENCOURAGE H2H: Modify our existing Bonus for In-Season Monthly Gameplans & Reporting Game Results = \$150K per week of Play for maximum total of \$2400K to apply only to games actually played H2H.

If a team (other than coach-less) cannot for whatever reason find the 90 minutes each week to play their game H2H they forego their weekly bonus. Not a huge thing but a Lil' Something to nudge them along.

H2H play is far more fun & competitive, and most importantly nurtures interactive friendships. My suggestion would permit a sub coach to sit in. Thus if you can't play H2H (for whatever reason) but are able to find a sub to coach on your behalf your franchise still earns the bonus. If not, and your opponent winds up playing vs. your robot coach you forfeit your \$150K bonus for that week.

#3 OFFER NEW COACH A RUNNING START: I've racked this around my brain for months and determined a simple "5 Restructuring Moves" flexible approach addresses the three most common roadblocks facing an incoming coach: High salaries, few prime draft picks & pending free agents.

Overpaid over-the-hill players are often challenge #1 facing new coaches. Lack of prime draft picks is usually a close 2nd (and often 1st). Free agency initiation by fire frequently seals their doom.

My suggestion is to offer new coaches up to 5 Restructuring Moves, which they can apply in any combination of the following 3 ways.

#1 They can cut any player (including Superstars) for free, period. Self-explanatory.

#2 They can claim a compensatory draft pick at the end of ANY round in which they don't own a pick. This will be based on the draft picks they inherit, and they would not be permitted to trade their way into this. Obviously if an incoming coach did not have a 1st, 2nd or 3rd round pick this proposal would help them. Doubtful they'd leap for a pick beyond the 3rd round, but in some years maybe a 4th rounder would be more attractive than a free cut.

#3 They can buy out any player (including Superstars) for 100% remaining contract value and re-sign him to a standard OFL contract. This also includes players whose contract expired, effectively the buy out cost of those is zero dollars and the player BYPASSES upcoming free agency. We've seen too many new coaches overwhelmed with free agency their first year and offering them an opportunity to protect a few players from it their initial year can only help them.

Again, new coaches would enjoy the opportunity to exercise a total of up to 5 Restructuring Moves involving any of the above 3 means. For some it might be cutting 5 players. For others, cutting a couple, and not owning any early draft picks taking advantage of a couple of those, and maybe buying out one player and re-signing him to 5 more years. It's their choice to exercise on up to 5 players/picks.

My suggestion is bold medicine indeed and likely meets with strong opposition. I myself would have opposed it until recently, falling back on the old argument, "we all were Baptized under fire". I simply don't buy into that any longer. The sooner we can get a franchise up off the mat & competitive the better off we all are, and the more fun it is for everyone.

What to do with the players cut? The answer to that I think is subject to discussion. Foremost its dependent on when the moves are exercised. If a new coach takes over BEFORE the January draft I suggest any cut players that appear on the disk be tossed into the draft pool. That's a clean & simple administrative move.

It gets a bit dicey if a coach takes over after the rookie draft, much like when Vince took over in March after the final trade & claim periods. Maybe in this case we simply place them in the free agent pool subject to claims. Better yet, extend their 5 Restructuring Moves to the start of the next off-season. I'm open to ideas.

Minor detail.... When does the clock start for a "new Coach"? Depending on when he comes aboard (remember Vince last year, not everyone starts in August) I think we need to offer him 30 days or so to announce his decisions if he takes over in the off-season. If he takes over during the season it seems to make the most sense to wait until that is over. Since we can't predict the numerous scenarios of when a new coach actually comes aboard we may have to exercise some flexibility here and leave it up to the Commissioner.

If more than one new coach comes aboard and seeks the compensation picks they'll be slotted (at the end of the round) based on the final standings. Easy enough.

While you weigh my suggestion understand not all new coaches will exercise their 5 Restructuring Moves the same. Look at Denver this year and its not unreasonable to see Frank may have limited his moves to less than the available 5, because he inherited a franchise in decent overall shape. Mean while Jim in Florida would not have had to liquidate quality players last year to get into the draft. Vince woulda saved a bundle on the dead wood cuts he otherwise was forced to buy out. Each franchise will have unique challenges, thus offering flexibility to deal with them is imperative.

A theme common to many of my ideas is freedom of choice. I always prefer offering coaches choices rather than mandating what they must do.

#4 ADD A MARCH CLAIM PERIOD: After initial cut-down to 53 players in March I'd like to add a one week claim period to permit teams to pickup players PRIOR to the start of the season, thus making such claimed players eligible to be retained beyond the one season. These claims would not be "automatic release" because they'll be signed to contracts (1-5 yr standard OFL contracts) prior to the start of the season. We could do it on either a round-by-round, or first-come first-serve, whichever has the majority support.

There is ample time available to permit such a claim period, so that should not be an issue.

Teams would have to maintain 53 players at this stage, so to place a claim would require a cut. Once this claim period has concluded teams would then submit their final 53 man rosters to start the season.

#5 RESSURECTING OLD IDEA/SAME LOGIC: I'm hopeful more of you will join Bobby Elder & myself in endorsing the bold & innovative concept first proposed a couple of years ago to encourage teams to assemble the best 53-man roster they can muster, put their most talented personnel on the field every game and play to win each week by revamping the Rookie Draft to:

The non-playoff team with the best win percentage drafts first down thru the non-playoff team with the lowest win percentage drafts 12th

This simple stroke will remove much of the [current] incentive to liquidate franchises and encourage more members to field better teams, which can only make for a more balanced & competitive league.

I fully expect the first organization to tackle this controversial issue head on in this manner will be a pioneer for others to follow.

A lottery won't do it. As I've pointed out several times, all a lottery does is expand the problems as lotteries encourage more teams to join in the hunt. The more you lose the more lottery tickets you earn!

As always the input of every OFL member is encouraged. We don't have rules committees here, and regardless of your tenure your viewpoints deserve respectful consideration.

**Upon Further Review.... OFL Free Agency works quite well as it is
By- Mike Jaime**

Some comments during free agency the past two years suggested changes are required. Ideas ranging from revamping the Live Bidding portion to a "true auction" to dropping the \$50K bid fees, to eliminating 1st refusal rights & requiring teams to bid on their own players.

Colin wrote an excellent response (OFL Post #9485) to many of the concerns, pointing out how we've evolved to our current system. The modest \$50K bid fee has served its intended purpose very nicely in reducing (virtually eliminating) the previously HUNDREDS of minor bids we had to wade thru over a month long period.

Some discussion has suggested a need to go to a “true live auction” where the hammer does not come down until the last bid is made. In reality, such a system does not reflect what transpires in the NFL. While our current live bidding doesn’t either it’s net effect does. Most highly sought after NFL free agents compile a short list of teams they’d consider playing for after discussions with their family & agent. They visit one, two or three NFL facilities and just as often accept the first offer as the last. The reason is simple; In these strapped-for-cash days of the NFL cap system teams put their best offer on the table while the coveted free agent is there and take it off the table once he decides to visit another team.

The OFL’s Live Bidding is designed to focus on the most sought after free agents. In a matter of 3 hours we’ve cleared an agenda that used to transpire over weeks. It offers the multiple benefits of permitting teams to prioritize their bids, adjust their strategy based on actual player gains & losses, and eliminate unwanted & unintended bid duplication (see Denver’s pursuit of an OT this past October in the Phase 2 bids) that we all used to suffer thru.

If I could make one change it would be to move ALL BIDS TO A LIVE BID FORMAT. Clearly, time restraints prohibit that and so we attempt to dispose of the 40 most sought after free agents in 3 hours and the next 3-dozen or so “fillers” within a week. Not a bad system & reasonably efficient.

Requiring teams to bid on their own free agents (another idea floated) goes against the NFL grain as well. It’s not unusual for NFL free agents to re-sign with their existing teams after a few weeks of exploring their options around the league. Ditto here in the OFL. Following two rounds of Live Bids, another round of email bids, if a FA fails to garner any interest we’re allowed to retain him for minimum. Makes sense.

1ST REFUSAL RIGHTS is the sticky issue that seems to have divided a few. On one side the Draftniks view it as the linchpin to OFL’s unique format, and on the other the argument can be rightfully made it goes against everything in the real NFL.

Its no surprise teams that have little at risk are more likely to support elimination of 1st Refusal Rights while Draftniks who’ve built their franchise thru the draft want no part of changing the status quo.

It’s possible some middle ground may satisfy these concerns if they’re shared by a majority. (And that remains to be determined.) Maybe limit 1st Refusal Rights to a maximum number of free agents each year? Maybe that number should be 3? Maybe not.

About every 2-3 years someone suggests compensation draft picks for teams losing players. Bad idea. It guarantees dilution of the rookie draft while subsidizing the better teams (over time the better teams tend to have the better free agents).

I’m not advocating a single change to the current system, nor supporting any change. I agree with all of Jason’s comments in his OFL Post #9477, within which he points out how 10 of the 12 free agents receiving a Live Bid were released to the high bidder. That’s a whopping 83%!

Last thing we want to do is wither into “just another sim league”. After all, we’ve been quite successful for 27 years so clearly the OFL has been doing a few things right for a long time. That said, I’m always open to constructive viewpoints that improve the overall competitive balance & strength of the OFL while retaining our unique format.

OFL 2008 FREE AGENT WAIVER CLAIMS
(2nd Period Cut Claims)
Coordinated & Prepared By – Jason Findlay

Round 1

#	Claiming Team	Player	Team	Pos
1	California	No Players Claimed		
2	New Jersey	Harris, Napoleon	Denver	ILB
3	Round Rock	Branch, Deion	Denver	WR
4	Ringgold	Kelly, Reginald	California	TE
5	Antelope	No Players Claimed		
6	New York	No Players Claimed		
7	Medicine	No Players Claimed		
8	Florida	Lowry, Calvin	Las Vegas	S
9	San Francisco	No Players Claimed		
10	Sacramento	Stallworth, Donte'	California	WR
11	Pittsburgh	Hall, Dante	Antelope	WR
12	Durham	No Players Claimed		
13	Kutztown	No Players Claimed		
14	Prairie	Janikowski, Sebastien	Malvern	PK
15	Denver	No Players Claimed		
16	Malvern	Pace, Orlando	Denver	T
17	Las Vegas	Lynch, John	Florida	S
18	Winnipeg	All other claimed players selected		
19	Baltimore	Johnson, Jeremi	Medicine	FB
20	Fresno	Morency, Vernand	Medicine	RB

Round 2

#	Claiming Team	Player	Team	Pos
1	New Jersey	All other claimed players selected		
2	Round Rock	All other claimed players selected		
3	Ringgold	Harris, Nick	San Francisco	P
4	Florida	Weaver, Anthony	Ringgold	DE
5	Sacramento	Hagan, Derek	Baltimore	WR
6	Pittsburgh	Graham, Ben	Round Rock	P
7	Prairie	All other claimed players selected		
8	Malvern	Morgan, Dan	Winnipeg	ILB
9	Las Vegas	All other claimed players selected		
10	Baltimore	All other claimed players selected		
11	Fresno	Allen, Larry	Florida	G

Round 3

#	Claiming Team	Player	Team	Pos
1	Ringgold	All other claimed players selected		
2	Florida	All other claimed players selected		
3	Sacramento	Parker, Samie	California	WR
4	Pittsburgh	All other claimed players selected		
5	Malvern	All other claimed players selected		
6	Fresno	Miller, Fred	Antelope	T

Round 4

#	Claiming Team	Player	Team	Pos
1	Sacramento	All other claimed players selected		
2	Fresno	O'Callaghan, Ryan	Medicine	T

Round 5 - 9

#	Claiming Team	Player	Team	Pos
1	Fresno	McKinley, Alvin	Medicine	DT
1	Fresno	Ulbrich, Jeff	Medicine	ILB
1	Fresno	Hobson, Victor	New Jersey	OLB
1	Fresno	Blackstock, Darryl	Ringgold	OLB
1	Fresno	Williams, Jimmy	Florida	CB

The remaining unclaimed players listed under 2nd Cuts on the current OFLb Game File shall be returned to the Rookie Draft Pool and are eligible to be drafted.
