

## **THE HISTORY OF FLAG FOOTBALL**

The game of American football has been played since the mid-1800's. The first College game occurred between Princeton and Rutgers on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1869. And the professional game has been played in some form since 1895.

The game of Touch and Flag Football has been around nearly as long as tackle.

The first remembrance of organized Touch and Tail Football being played was in the 1930's. Flag football was developed on military bases in the early 1940's as a recreational sport for military personal. Recreational leagues soon developed in the late 40's and early 50's. They were patterned around the softball league format and the game we know and love to play in PE class was born.

The college intramural game of the 60's and 70's was a 7 man contact game that in no way resembles the non-contact "screen flag football" game played today. The annual National Collegiate Flag Football Championships are played each December at the University of New Orleans. There has been a National College Champion crowned on the UNO campus every year since 1979.

The first major competition to the NTFL was formed in 1988 as an outgrowth of the NTFL when it's regional director Mike Cihon broke free to create the United States Flag Touch Football League. The USFTL National Flag Football Tournament in Orlando is the largest non college tournament in the nation. It drew 175 teams in January 2002 and crowned 11 national Champions.

The AFTFL was formed in 1991 by George Higgins after a dispute between Higgins and USFTL director Mike Cihon. The league has grown from it's Long Island roots to host a competing national championship tournament in Atlanta in February.

Many other "national organizations" have formed since the mid 90's to take advantage of the more than 20 million players participating in flag football programs.

In 1999, the Professional Flag Football League, Inc. PFFL played the first ever professional flag football travel schedule with teams in Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo, and Indianapolis. The league was not successful but perhaps a try to unite the league will happen in the near future.