

NGFFL Toolkit Module: Gay Bowl Team Prep	Original Issue Date: 2018	Most Recent Version Issue Date: 06/04/2018
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National Gay Flag Football League (NGFFL)



Local League Toolkit Module VIII: Gay Bowl Team Prep



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1.0 Overview and Purpose

The National Gay Flag Football League (“**NGFFL**”) is committed to proudly fostering community, comradery and inclusivity by providing opportunities to engage in competition through flag football. As part of this vision, the NGFFL has a supporting agenda which includes driving local membership growth and development.

The purpose of the Local League Toolkit (“**Toolkit**”) is to provide lessons learned and resources that can help start or strengthen a local flag football league. Each city and league will be different, but there are common elements that will make this Toolkit useful to local leaders and other stakeholders who organize and run local leagues. This Toolkit is meant to share best practices, examples and lessons learned, all in an attempt to make organization and execution as efficient and as high of quality as possible.

The purpose of this module is to discuss recommended strategies for managing a Gay Bowl team, but may be leveraged for use at other national and regional tournaments.

2.0 Responsibilities

The importance of clearly establishing responsibilities for team captains, coaches and travel coordinators cannot be emphasized enough. You may need one person to fill all three roles or you may have three individuals fill the separate roles—it will all depend on your local situation. Coordination with the local league will also be key as the Gay Bowl team captains, coaches and travel coordinators must be aligned with the leadership of the local league in terms of responsibility and accountability.

Coaches may delegate some of their play-calling and strategy to offensive and defensive coordinators. The same could be done for team captains to delegate to offensive and defensive captains. If you choose to have these positions, be clear on what the responsibilities and authority these individuals have or do not have.

3.0 Team Formation

You will need to determine how the Gay Bowl team will be selected—draft or open registration. This may be determined by the local league leadership or by the team captains or coaches, but it needs to be consistent with the agreed-upon responsibilities.

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You will also need to decide upon any deadlines for team selection and if/how additional players will be added post-deadline (due to injury or drop outs).

It is very important that you make it clear to players what their responsibilities will be when they are selected for the Gay Bowl team. You will need to determine if a registration fee is required to secure a spot on the team and whether that registration fee should be refundable or used towards other Gay Bowl costs. You will also need to make clear what player's duties are in terms of fundraising (*see Section 5.0 below*). Additionally, you will need to set clear expectations around attending team practices and other events, as well as any consequences for missing practices, team events, or failing to complete other responsibilities.

The team captain, coach or local league leadership should also determine a Gay Bowl Team philosophy. Will only the best players on the team get playing time? Will every team member have equal time? Is the team going to Gay Bowl to compete for a championship or just to have a good time? Whatever is determined for a team philosophy will need to be clearly communicated to everyone so that all are aware of the expectation.

You will need to determine where and when to hold team practices and ensure that it does not conflict with local league play. You may also want to leverage local league teams/players that are not going to Gay Bowl to scrimmage against. Captain/coach should decide if each practice will focus on offense or defense and how to run practices. Captain/coach should also determine if players will play a specific position and to deal with players that will be injured at the tournament (backup quarterbacks should have sufficient practice time to ensure they are familiar with the offensive scheme).

You should also confirm that all players have been formally registered to play in the tournament and that any player that resides outside of the PAUGA (as defined in the NGFFL Bylaws) follows the process to get approval to play.

4.0 Communication

You will need to establish reliable communication channels to keep all team members informed of practices and other events. Consider utilizing the GroupMe app or a private FB Group (or both) to ensure messages are properly relayed to all.

You may also want to utilize other social media platforms to keep non-player supporters and sponsors up to date to the team's progress and success at the tournament.

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Also recommended is to download the app that was launched at Gay Bowl XVII in Boston in 2017, which will be updated each year for the tournament.

5.0 Budget & Fundraising

You will need to create a budget and determine fundraising options. You will need to determine what costs the team will pay, what the local league will pay and what individual players will pay (you may have to back into this number after determining all the costs below).

Costs to consider:

- Airfare to/from host city (or other cheaper travel alternatives)
- Hotel rooms
- Tournament Registration Fee
- Transportation around host city (depends upon transportation to/from fields as offered)
- Uniforms
- Equipment
- Team dinner
- Other team swag (socks, t-shirts, bags, hats, etc.)

You will want to explore fundraising opportunities and sponsorships, including local businesses being the title sponsor for the team, the uniforms or specific equipment (i.e., flags or balls). Consider doing Gay Bowl-specific fundraiser events (pool parties, shot boys at local bars or beer busts, car washes, etc.)

6.0 Uniforms, Equipment & Team Swag

You will need to decide on a team name—will you use the name of prior years' teams from your city or will use a new name? **You should make this decision sooner than later as other elements depend on this decision** (logos, uniforms, and other team swag).

If you choose a new name, you will need to make sure that a new logo is created and sent to both the NGFFL Gay Bowl Liaison and the host committee for inclusion with other teams' logos.

If in the budget, determine who will be responsible for getting new uniforms ordered and transported to Gay Bowl. Ordering new uniforms take time to produce so make sure you order them with plenty of production time—you'll have to know sizes, numbers and quantities for all your players (so your roster should be finalized before you complete this step).

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Whatever uniforms that you use, please make sure that both the jersey and the shorts/pants are in conformance with the Gay Bowl rules around uniforms.

You should also ensure you have sufficient flag belts and balls for use at Gay Bowl, as these are not provided by the tournament. You should also clearly assign a resource to ensure that this equipment is transported to Gay Bowl (either as a team or as individuals).

7.0 Travel Arrangements

You may decide to have a dedicated resource to make all or selected travel arrangements (travel coordinator). This travel coordinator could make the following reservations:

- Airfare for players
- Hotel rooms
- Local rental cars (if necessary)

If you determine no to make travel plans as a league, you still should have someone confirm that players have made their own airfare and hotel reservations.

8.0 Team Videos

Chances are you have access to an aspiring amateur moviemaker – a player or supporter who lives with a go pro and loves to use it. YouTube videos, from game highlights to fun-filled short movies featuring team players and activities, can be placed on your social media to highlight the players and build excitement for future teams.

9.0 At the Tournament

At the Gay Bowl Tournament, ensure that either you or a responsible representative attends the Captains Meeting held on the Thursday afternoon/evening of the Gay Bowl weekend. This is helpful to hear how the tournament will be structured and other key information points, which can then be communicated out to the entire team.

You should also confirm that all your players have signed in during the registration process and encourage them to attend the Opening Ceremonies wo you know when and who you will be playing on the Friday of the tournament.

During play, it is vital that you develop a good relationship with the referees—make sure you introduce yourself at the beginning of the game. **You are responsible to manage team members during the games** so working with the referees helps tremendously. Coaches and

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captains help to communicate and diffuse situations on the field, so don't think your involvement ends when your team kicks off.

As stated above, utilize social media channels to document your team's progress through the tournament. Encourage team members to use a particular hashtag for all social media posts.

If in your budget, schedule and hold a team dinner on the Friday or Saturday night of the tournament. Even ordering pizza to the hotel room for the entire team is a fantastic way to unwind and build camaraderie off the field.

You should encourage team members to attend the social events of the tournament, including the Closing Ceremonies.

10.0 After the Tournament

After the tournament, collect all the equipment and uniforms that will be used for future tournament teams (if applicable).

It is strongly recommended to hold a team dinner or closing party a few days or weeks after the tournament to celebrate successes—and allow supporters who did not travel to the tournament to show their support.

Write down (for future reference) any lessons learned as captain/coach for either yourself or next year's captain/coach so you don't make the same mistakes again next year!

11.0 Revision History

Version	Version Issue Date	Description of Changes:
1	06/04/2018	Original issue

12.0 Appendices

N/A