



HERstory of the Las Vegas Showgirlz

The Las Vegas Showgirlz is a professional women's tackle football team here in the city of Las Vegas. They were started in the Summer of 2005 by CEO and Head Coach Dion A. Lee, and on November 19th 2005, the Women's Professional Football League board members and owners voted the franchise into the league. Mr. Lee started the Showgirlz after seeing for himself the WPFL's Championship Game in the fall of 2004, "It was a great experience to see women playing football, the skill level was incredible, and I said right then and there, that Las Vegas needs a team. Vegas has had a very warming welcoming for the team, we have been conducting Football 101 Camps for the ladies for the past 8 weeks, to prepare the ladies for the May 6th tryouts. Interest as grown from 7 ladies the first week, to over 55 participate each week, with more calling and emailing on a daily bases", says Lee. "We are growing everyday as more and more people are hearing about and see us at the parks practicing. In this town there are not many outlets for women to play sports outside of high school and college, let along playing tackle football. The team is comprised of women that played sports in high school and college and want to live out a dream of playing football on an equal field against other women. The minimum age is 18, with the average age in the league being 28. We had 6 ladies that have played tackle football before with one being an all-pro player in 2004 with the Houston Energy, and with the increasing numbering people moving to the valley, we are able to seek more athletes that have played the game", states Lee. "Las Vegas locals are dying for a local team to cheer for".

The resurgence of efforts that began in the 1960s to make women's American tackle football part of women's professional sports is alive. Many articles have been written about the WPFL barnstorming tour of 1965, the NWFL of Oklahoma City Dolls fame of the 70s, and other attempts before the 80s to establish a credible and viable women's tackle football league, all of which have been fairly regional in nature. Magazine, newspaper, radio, and television stories have flooded America with news of the emergence of Women Playing Football.

Yes, women want to play, and people want to see women's full- contact tackle football. The Players? Who are they and where do they come from? Where does a professional caliber female tackle football players come from? There is no feeder system per se, yet the quality of play is extremely high, hushing all nay Sayers into exclamations of, Dang these gals can really play. Most are former Division I, II, III athletes who played soccer, basketball, fast pitch softball, lacrosse, hockey, and track & field, as well as club rugby players and flag football players from local leagues and national leagues such as the NWFFA and IWFFA which have offered league play opportunities to women for years. There exists a plethora of top athletes from across the country dreaming of playing football since childhood, and craving contact games such as football and hockey.

Resistance? There has been very little resistance to women's tackle football. Male athletes who have practiced on the same fields with women for years, shrug heir shoulders, yawn, and say, Yeah, we have known they could play for years, what's the big deal? Even diehard NFL fans, skeptical at first, come out of Showgirlz games inquiring, when is the next game? How refreshing to see the girls stick around and sign autographs after the game, stop in at tailgate parties prior to the game and talking with the fans. This is reminiscent of the old days in the NFL, with buses pulling up after grueling rides to the stadium, fun, optimistic, and underpaid players piling off full of vim and vigor and friendliness.

Where is Women's Football Going? There are currently over 85 teams playing nationally. Many national corporations have already recognized the value of women's professional sports. Come to one game, talk to one player; any businessperson will see the practicality of becoming involved and reaping the phenomenal exposure the dream has already garnered. The national media continues to arrive in droves. Crews and reporters from television, film, magazines, and newspapers are coming for great player personal interest stories and stories on the League in general. The Showgirlz will continue to be the leading Women's Football Team on and off the field, garnering the nation's top female athletes, while attaining local and national media coverage.

"The time is right for us to display the women of Las Vegas to the world and bring together unity amongst Las Vegans to cheer and root for a professional sports team of our own, right here, right now, in Vegas!!!