

Ok ladies, here's the deal - It's about time you started to enjoy one of the best sports ever played... football! You either bought this book for yourself to learn about this great sport or maybe just to brush up on your football knowledge. Or perhaps your husband or boyfriend got it for you because they want you to learn about something they truly enjoy and want to share with you. Either way, you'll find this book is not a bunch of research and hum drum talk to bore you with over the next year while you try to read it. It's designed as a quick read, reference guide with all sorts of information and facts to fill your mind full of football knowledge. There are some parts that might be a little much for you to absorb all at once so I charmed it up a bit to help keep you involved and interested. You may even find yourself giggling and smiling as you read because funny things do happen in football (oh, and I'm a pretty funny and witty person).



Now I'm sure you're already a kick ass chick but I'll tell you, this book is going to make you even more cool. When I get done with you, you will not only know what "roughing the kicker" means but when you yell it out at the sports bar before the referee calls it, more than likely someone will be buying you your next drink. Trust me, being a girl, watching a football game, and knowing what you're talking about is not a bad thing. Football should be for everyone and, if you're not into it now, you've been missing out far too long.

I hope you enjoy this book - and then tell all your friends about it. It's about time we ladies took over the sports bars in this country.

Enjoy!

Margo Covolo

Introduction

I love the game of football. To me it's fun to watch, it's interesting, and I think it's as exciting as George Clooney hand delivering my mail (I mean, seriously, how many times has he been voted Sexiest Man Alive by People magazine?). I'm a 30-year-old, short, blonde bartender and have enjoyed watching ball almost as long as I can remember. I am a lady, but I am also the hugest football fanatic at heart. Now this guide can be considered one of two things (or both, I guess). It can be used to learn the basic rules of the greatest pastime in our lives or it can be used to help meet men by knowing about the greatest pastime in our lives.

Now, if you want a man in your life that has values and integrity, you'll more than likely find him at a more upscale bar than a sleazy karaoke dive bar that doesn't carry good tequila and only has two crappy beers on tap. You will find men who know what commitment is at a sports bar on a Sunday because, think about it, to be a true football fan they have to be fully committed to the game and their team. Many men live for and love football, and I feel that if they can live for and love a sport, then they can live for and love a woman. Especially a woman who knows the difference between offense and defense. Now, I'm not saying you'll end up alone with 12 cats and your house reeking of a litter box if you don't learn the game, but it is very impressive when a chick knows her stuff. It's a total myth that dudes don't like to sit and talk because they do - when it's about football. Yes, it is a man's sport but only because you'll never catch 45 women wearing the same outfit in public, especially with shoulder pads.

There are two things that men like most: women and sports. It's been proven. Sometimes men won't take a woman seriously when she says she loves football. I actually love to sit and school them with what I know (without making them feel like less of a man, of course) and send them on their way in front of all of their buddies. I don't giggle when players bend over right in front of the camera or make rude comments when the cameras cut to the cheerleaders like whether or not I think their boobs are fake. When I walk in on boys watching a game and ask what the score is (which is right up there with "Who's playing?"), they look at me like I'm the typical chick. They'll roll their eyes and tell me the score and then I'll drop a bomb on them by cracking a beer, prop my feet up, and say something like, "Why on earth is Taylor playing? Please tell me Peterson didn't get hurt," because then I'll hear nothing but crickets... until someone says, "Yeah, he's hurt, my name is Jay. Will you marry me?" I continue my coolness by saying something like, "That sucks, man, I got 50 bucks on this game," or "Crap! Peterson's on my fantasy team." *Continued...*

Did you know that George Clooney is the nephew of Rosemary Clooney, a famous singer from the Bing Crosby era? He is also the star in "Leatherheads," a very cute movie I highly recommend you check out.

The Object Of The Game

Believe it or not, this team sport is a mix of complex strategy and intense physical abilities. There are six basic skills in football: Passing, catching, running, blocking, tackling, and kicking. Here's your I-have-lived-under-a-rock-my-whole-life lesson:

Football is played with a brown oval shaped ball with white laces. Touchdown, good. Fumble, bad. The team with the most points at the end of the game is the winner. Yea! Go team.

For everyone else, here's the real deal:

The object of the game is to score more points than your opponent by moving the ball down the field into their end zone as many times as you can while trying to keep them from doing the same to you. There are more ways to get points than scoring touchdowns, but getting a touchdown gets you the most points.

Two of the most important facets to understanding the game of football are understanding "down" and "distance." Once you understand this, the rest will just come naturally. Please grasp the following concepts! It will make it easier to move on. A "down" is a play. The moment the ball gets snapped (the center giving the ball through his legs to the quarterback) is the moment the play starts. When the officials blow the whistle, the play is over. This is considered a down.

The team that takes possession of the ball (the offense) has four attempts, called downs, to advance the ball ten yards towards their opponent's (the defense's) end zone. When the offense gains ten yards, they get a "first down," which means they have another set of four downs to gain yet another ten yards or score (a series of downs). If the offense fails to gain a first down (ten yards) after four downs, the other team gets possession of the ball.

A down ends after the player with the ball gets tackled, the ball wasn't caught, the player with the ball goes out of bounds, or a team scores.

"If my mother put on a helmet and shoulder pads and a uniform that wasn't the same as the one I was wearing, I'd run over her if she was in my way. And I love my mother."
Bo Jackson, former Los Angeles Raiders

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Player Positions

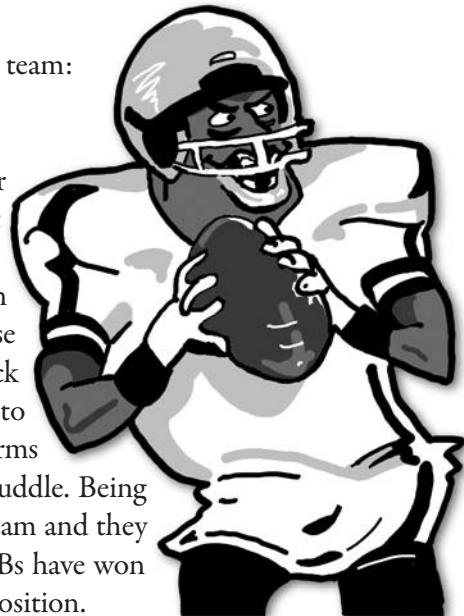
By the time the official season starts, each team is only allowed to have a total of 53 players. Each player specializes in a specific position, either offense or defense. When you talk about offense and defense in sports, offense generally refers to the strategies and tactics to score and to win. On the other hand, defenses are trying to prevent their opponents from scoring. Basically, offense is about how to win, while defense is about how to avoid loss. Both are essential for the ultimate victory.

There are only 22 players allowed on the field at any given time. Eleven of these players are on offense and the other 11 are on defense. The offense is the team that has possession of the ball. Their goal is to score as many points as possible. The goal of the defensive team is to prevent them from scoring or minimize the scoring by holding the offense to a field goal (three points) instead of a touchdown (six points - and a potential extra one or two point conversion).

Here are the positions that make up an offensive team:

Quarterback (QB)

The player who receives the ball from the Center at the start of each play. The QB has different options once he has the ball. He can hand it to the Running Back, throw it to a receiver, or run with it himself. The QB typically runs the offense on the field. (Oh, Dan Marino - best quarterback EVER!) The QB finds out what the play is going to be from the coach on the sideline and then informs the rest of the team when he has them in the huddle. Being QB is one of the most important roles on the team and they touch the ball on nearly every offensive play. QBs have won more Super Bowl MVP awards than any other position.



The QB is the leader of the offense and is the man in charge. The coach counts on the QB to use his better judgment in certain situations and relies on him to keep the rest of the team motivated while on the field. He must also be able to read the defense because he may need to change the play at the last second if he sees that the defense is ready for what he is about to do. Movies have directors, diners have waitresses named Flo, armies have generals, and football teams have quarterbacks.

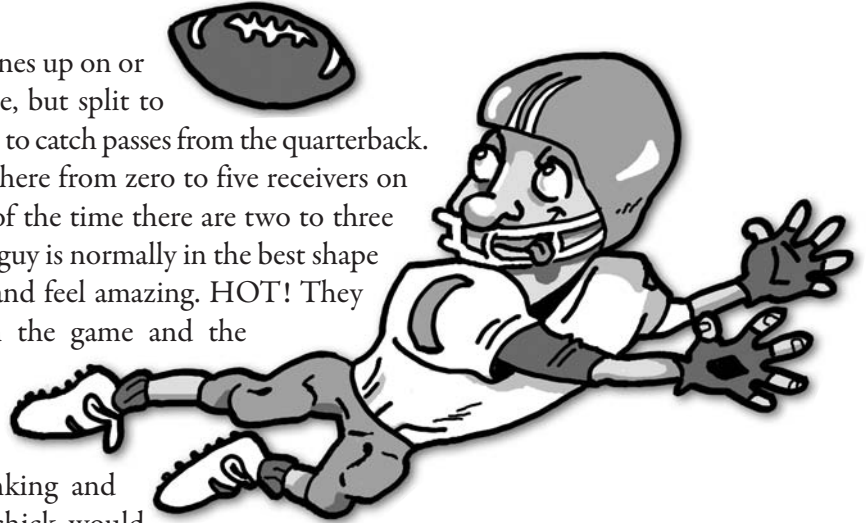
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Fullback (FB)

An offensive player who lines up in the backfield and generally is the big ass dude responsible for blocking for the RB and/or the QB. FBs are usually monstrous compared to the RB. They are used to serve the same purpose as RB, but in recent years the position has become more of a blocker than a runner.

Wide Receiver (WR)

An offensive player who lines up on or near the line of scrimmage, but split to the outside. His main job is to catch passes from the quarterback. An offense can have anywhere from zero to five receivers on each play although most of the time there are two to three of them on the field. This guy is normally in the best shape ever. I bet their abs look and feel amazing. HOT! They are the fastest players in the game and the media loves them.



Tight End (TE)

I know what you're thinking and this is what the typical chick would think and giggle about. This is not you anymore. When an announcer says Tight End, you immediately look for the guy on the field with the nice ass (get this is out of your mind, this is what regular girls think). They are actually talking about an offensive player who serves as a receiver and also a blocker. The TE lines up beside the offensive tackle either to the right or to the left of the quarterback. They are a slightly different build than the rest of the offensive linemen. The role of this position is whatever the hell the head coach wants it to be. Their main jobs are to block for ball carriers or catch passes and haul ass down the field. Then you can check out their tight end. *Continued...*

What states have two or more football teams?

Most people will automatically say New York with the New York Jets and the New York Giants. Wrong – they are **New Jersey** teams. The Buffalo Bills are in New York, though. The rest of the answer would be:

Florida: Miami, Jacksonville, and Tampa Bay

Pennsylvania: Pittsburgh and Philadelphia

Texas: Dallas and Houston

Missouri: Kansas City and St. Louis

California: San Diego, Oakland, and San Francisco

Ohio: Cleveland and Cincinnati

Famous Games Throughout History

THE HEIDI GAME aka THE HEIDI BOWL

New York Jets vs. Oakland Raiders – November 1968

Check this out, the Jets were leading 32-29 and there were only 65 seconds left. The game went to a commercial break and when the commercials were over, all of a sudden, across the nation, the new made-for-TV version of Heidi comes on. Meanwhile, the Raiders scored two touchdowns in nine seconds and won the game, 43-32. Back in the day, typical football games lasted about 2 hours, 45 minutes. The game was running late, mainly because of all the touchdowns, field goals, time outs, commercials, fights, and penalties. The game went past its three hour time slot and the network, being contractually bound to start the next program on time, did just that.

“When we won the league championship, all the married guys on the club had to thank their wives for putting up with all the stress and strain all season.

I had to thank all the single broads in New York.”

Joe Namath

Fans were freaking furious when they couldn't watch the end of such a great game. It was a showdown between the top two teams in the AFL and both had a record of 7-2 going into the game. Twenty minutes into Heidi, when Heidi's paralyzed cousin Clara fell from her wheelchair and had to gain enough courage to stand (cry me a river), the ticker on the bottom of the TV announced the ending to the game. NBC's phone lines were blowing up with complaints and threats and when the public couldn't get through to the network, they started calling the police, telephone companies and the newspapers. Man, some people even went so far as to send Heidi dolls with knives in the back or disturbing pictures and images. Psy-cho. Come to find out, because the nation was trying to call and complain, the NBC executives couldn't get through to tell the guys at the network to switch back to the game. It was too late once the president of NBC finally got through to give the order, because the video link to the stadium had already been disconnected and to get it back it would have needed the help of a lot of telephone switching stations from all around the US. It would have been a huge pain in the butt, all for 65 seconds. So technically, it's all the fans' fault for tying up the phone lines not to mention blowing like 25 circuits on the station switchboard. That is precisely why nobody got to see the end of that game. Way to go.

Just shy of the 35th year anniversary of the game/incident, the chick that played Heidi in the movie, met Joe Namath (Jets' QB in that game) on an American Airlines flight. They later got married and had 12 kids. Just kidding. My sources tell me that they did meet, though. Because of that game, all games must now be televised in their entirety. *Continued...*

Penalties And Referee Signals

There are so many different kinds of penalties. I will list some of the more frequently used ones. Knowing the most common penalties also helps to understand what's going on when you're watching a football game (and makes you sound like you know what you're talking about when you yell out, "C'mon ref, are you freaking blind, where's the flag? That was clearly pass interference. You damn idiot!!") It's important to be accurate because dudes can spot a fraud from a mile away. It's only cute for so long for a chick to make semi-retarded comments. You better bone-up on football knowledge if you want to hang with the boys. I can definitely hang with the best of them, but I get along better with guys anyway.

At one time the original owners of the Cowboys purchased the rights to "Hail to the Redskins," the fight song of the Washington Redskins, and threatened to not let the Redskins use it.

Offensive Fouls

- False start (5 yards) - any player that moves before the ball is snapped
- Delay of game (5 yards) – the QB takes longer than the allowed 25 seconds to get the ball into motion
- Intentional grounding (10 yards) – when the QB deliberately throws an incomplete pass
- Pass interference (10 yards) – when an offensive player pushes off or contacts a defensive player in order to catch a pass
- Holding (10 yards) – using their hands or arms illegally in order to block

Some more serious offensive offenses:

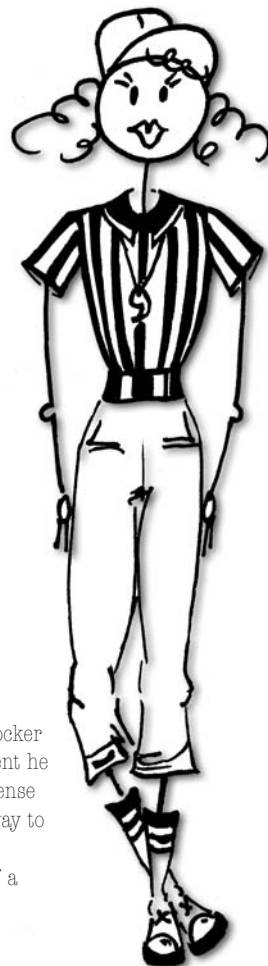
- Illegal block in the back (15 yards) – blocking an unaware player from behind and above the waist
Only allowed to do to the ball carrier
- Blocking below the waist (15 yards) – blocking a player, from any direction, below the waist
- Tripping (10 yards) – exactly what it sounds like
Tripping a player with the lower leg

Tripping

Right foot behind left heel.

You can see this on offense when a blocker attempts to drop his blocking assignment he just missed... and occasionally on defense when tripping the runner is the best way to cover up a missed tackle.

Either one results in a minimum of a ten yard penalty.



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NFL Legends

There are too many NFL Legends to mention them all, but I'm going to list a few. There may even be some names you have heard of.

Troy Aikman

QB for the Dallas Cowboys from 1989-2000 and, man, they were absolutely amazing. Aikman was one of the key players in that franchise for many years. He is referred to as one of "The Triplets," along with teammates Michael Irvin and Emmitt Smith.

Marcus Allen

He played college at USC and won the Heisman Trophy back in 1981. He got drafted in the first round by the Oakland Raiders. Not only did he win the Heisman, but during the years he played he was named NFL Rookie of the Year in 1982, Super Bowl XVIII MVP and NFL MVP in 1985.

Terry Bradshaw

By far one of the best players for the Pittsburgh Steelers ever. In a six year span, he won four Super Bowls, even though he was ridiculed by the media and fans for his "lack of intelligence" when he threw the ball. Once he adjusted, he became a premier QB. Not that I recommend it, but you can see his bare butt in the romantic comedy *Failure to Launch* with Sarah Jessica Parker and Matthew McConaughey.

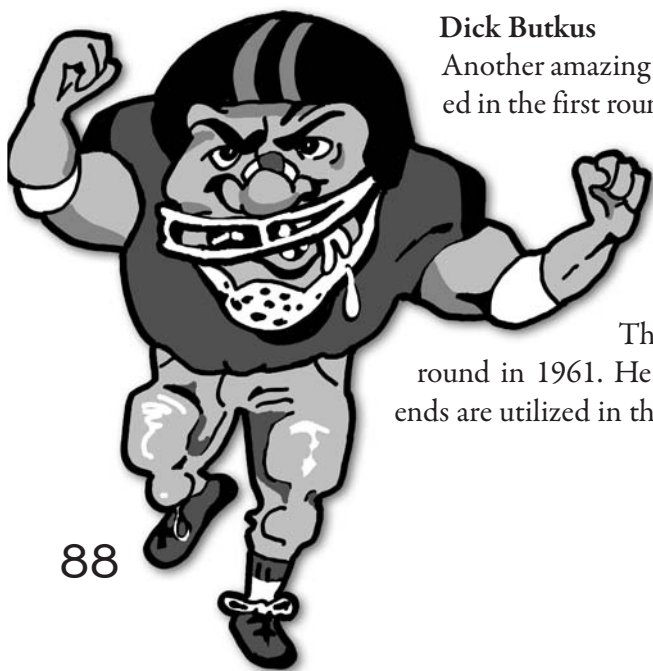
Dick Butkus

Another amazing player for the Chicago Bears. He was drafted in the first round in 1965. In the eight years he played he was best known for his punishing tackles and for wreaking havoc on the opponent's backfield.

Mike Ditka

The Chicago Bears drafted him in the first round in 1961. He is responsible for changing the way tight ends are utilized in the NFL.

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Legendary Statistics

Rushing Yards (season)

Back in 1984, a young kid named Eric Dickerson played for the Los Angeles Rams and set a nice little NFL record that he still holds to this day with 2,105 rushing yards.

Rushing Yards (career)

Emmitt Smith leads this category with 18,355 yards.

Rushing Touchdowns (season)

Emmitt Smith once held this title in 1995. Since then Priest Holmes and Shaun Alexander broke the record and now LaDainian Tomlinson holds it with 29 touchdowns in a season.

Rushing Touchdowns (career)

Cool guy Emmitt Smith also heads this statistic with 164.

Receptions (career)

Jerry Rice tops the list with 1,549 catches. He also holds the record for most yards gained in a career with 22,895.

Receiving Touchdowns (season)

Was held by good ol' Jerry Rice for the longest time with 22 touchdowns until Randy Moss went awesome on us and beat it with 23 TDs in 2007.

Receiving Touchdowns (career)

To date Jerry Rice is the only wide receiver ever to score more than 200 touchdowns in a career. 207 to be exact.

Passing Yards

Only my favorite QB EVER - Dan Marino. Oh wait, that damn Favre guy broke it, but don't ever forget that Dan holds or has held every NFL passing record. I think Brett Favre has over 61,000 passing yards. I guess that's pretty good.

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Q: There are four Dallas Cowboys in a car, who's driving?

A: The police.

Some Things To Know About Men

Here are some things you should know about men. Ladies, please don't get mad at me for speaking the truth, but I have met, poured drinks for, and listened to thousands and thousands of men and women. For some reason people have no problem drinking, fighting, mingling, and making out right in front of me. Some just come out and tell me all their problems or I just eavesdrop (I'm sorry, I meant overhear - hey, this is all entertainment for me), and this is what I think all women should know about men.

- They are NOT mind readers.
- Learn to work the toilet seat. We are big girls. If it's up, put it down. They need it up, we need it down. They don't complain when we leave it down and they have to lift it each time they need to hit the head.
- Ask for what you want. Let me be clear on this one: Subtle hints do not work! Strong hints do not work! Obvious hints do not work! Just say what you mean, because they will never get it otherwise.
- You have to admit, "yes" and "no" are perfectly acceptable answers to almost every question.

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CRAB DIP

- 1 (6 ounce) can crabmeat, drained and flaked**
- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened**
- 1 tablespoon prepared horseradish**
- 1 dash Worcestershire sauce**

1. In a medium bowl, mix the crabmeat, cream cheese, horseradish and Worcestershire sauce.
2. Microwave on high 2 to 3 minutes, until warm and bubbly. Stir well and serve.

A great tasting, very easy and quick creamy dip.
It'll taste like you actually spent time making it!