

Former Leonard High football players to lace up cleats again: Leonard team looking for players

Written by Betsy Blevins

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MAY 5, 2011 - Texas Alumni Football is coming to the DFW area in May when former high school players from Leonard and Whitewright will put on the pads again with former teammates. The games are open to all alumni and the ages of the players will likely range from nineteen to mid-forties.

Most former high school football players never thought they would play again. "You don't just play pickup games of full contact football when you graduate. For many guys, football is the biggest thing in the world in high school and then it's taken away forever. People tell us all the time about how they've literally dreamed about the chance to play again," says Tim Bishop, Director of Texas Alumni Football.

Based in Austin, Texas Alumni Football has suited up over 5,000 former Texas high school football players last year in places such as Amarillo, Lubbock, Odessa, Big Spring and Sweetwater. The alumni games have been popular with players and fans.

"We've heard from several Texas towns that the biggest crowd they ever had was for the alumni game," says Bishop. Over 3,000 fans came out to watch the alumni games at 2A schools Crane and Big Lake earlier this year.

Local communities enjoy a rare opportunity to watch their former gridiron stars in action again. Schools benefit by having the opportunity to re-engage alumni and to gain financially. Schools keep 100% of concession revenues and often find other ways to raise funds for their schools during the games.

"We raised over \$3,000 for our Project Graduation through the alumni games and it was an overall very positive event for our community," said Larry Lee, Crane Schools ISD Superintendent.

Texas Alumni Football is now organizing alumni teams for a Leonard vs. Whitewright game. Team Coordinator is Melissa Manzelmann and she may be reached at (512) 809-8765. The team registration deadline is set for Friday, May 20. All players who have already signed up or are interested in playing are encouraged to contact the coordinator. The game will be Saturday,

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May 28, with a location to be determined.

Former players can register to play at www.dallasarea2011.com or contact the Team Coordinator for their region. Fans and players can link to individual team Facebook pages to discuss and reminisce about rivalries, players, games and other high school memories through the website www.AlumniFootballUSA.com.