

# WILTON YOUTH FOOTBALL TACKLE/ROOKIE PROGRAM



VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE  
MAY 17, 2023



## WILTON YOUTH FOOTBALL & CHEER (WYFC) MISSION STATEMENT & PHILOSOPHY

- Wilton Youth Football is committed to developing athleticism, character and sportsmanship via competitive and recreational youth tackle, flag and cheer programs in Wilton, CT.
- WYF has been organized to inspire youth, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, color, or creed, to practice ideals of sportsmanship, mental fortitude, and physical strength, as well as to bring the area youth and parents closer together through the means of common interest in sportsmanship, teamwork, fellowship, and athletic competition.
- WYFC shall maintain a program focused on coach/player instruction and competition with an emphasis on team work, communication, sportsmanship, safety, citizenship, honesty, loyalty, and the development of the individuality of all participants.

**#WarriorFootballFamily**

# WYF TACKLE & ROOKIE TEAMS COMPETE IN THE FAIRFIELD COUNTY FOOTBALL LEAGUE (FCFL)

- Wilton has a long tradition of competing in the FCFL – we are one of the founding towns (5).
- The FCFL is a development league whose top two (2) focuses are player safety and skill development.
- The FCFL rules are unique to Fairfield County.
- The FCFL does not play by classic Pop Warner (or other youth football) rules.
  - *For example: There are no kickoffs, returned punts, or onside kicks in the FCFL.*
- The FCFL follows USA Football's 'Heads Up' philosophy, considered a 'Gold Standard' nationally for player safety and skill development.
- FCFL RULES/GUIDELINES GOVERN PLAY: <http://www.fairfieldcountyfootball.org>



# COMMITMENT, EXPECTATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

- WYF Tackle & Rookie players are encouraged to have a primary Fall sport that takes priority and are required to communicate any potential practice/game conflicts with their coaches upfront. This helps with planning for the season.
- Clear communication from coaches and parents/players at the beginning of the season is critical for the success and safety of the whole team.
- Game play: WYF coaches use their best judgement with regards to each player's readiness and safety at positions and time on the field.
- Generally, at each grade level, there are three (3) weekly practices and one (1) game each weekend
- Being on time and non-disruptive in practices is the primary ask of players. Our coaches understand each child progresses at different speeds.



# SUMMER CALENDAR AND KEY DATES

- **FALL REGISTRATION: OPEN NOW (\*EARLY BIRD PRICING ENDS JUNE 1)**
  - <https://www.wiltonyouthfootball.com>
  - New Uniforms in 2023! Register by 6/1 to request jersey number
- **EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION BY TEAM COACHES – JUNE 4**
- **SUMMER CAMPS & CLINICS: OPEN NOW**
  - *June 12 – 15 (After school)*
  - *August 14 – 17 (Mornings)*
  - *Monday Night Lights – Clinics run every Monday 6/19 - 8/7*
- **MANDATORY PRE-SEASON PRACTICES BEGIN: AUGUST 14**
- **WHS'S ANNUAL "BLUE & WHITE SCRIMMAGE" / WYF FIRST DOWN CLUB SEASON KICKOFF – AUGUST 19**





# ROOKIE FOOTBALL (GRADES 3 & 4)





# ROOKIE FOOTBALL PROGRAM INFO

- In 2019 the FCFL introduced Rookie Football for grades 2\* - 4. Enrollment in Football tripled within the towns that participated.
- Rookie Football focuses on all the skills of Tackle Football with full pads and contact – however there is no tackling. A player is considered down when a flag is pulled.
- The dramatic success and rapid growth associated with this FCFL program can be attributed to two things:
  1. **Coaches** - The game is made simpler for coaching purposes
  2. **Players** - More time is dedicated to teaching important skills, such as blocking



# 3rd/4th GRADE ROOKIE FOOTBALL

## • HEAD COACHES: BRAD SALVATORE & KEITH POISELLA

### Coach Brad Salvatore

#### Personal

- Has lived in Wilton since 2016 with his wife (Heather) and their three children - Jackson (9), Lyla (7) & Tatum (3)

#### Coaching Experience

- 2022 Rookie Head Coach (Wilton White)
  - Guided team to 7-3 record including playoff win
- 2021 Assistant Coach of inaugural Wilton Rookie team
  - Part of a team that won two playoff games
- WYF Flag Football Coach (Fall 2020, Spring & Fall 2021, and Spring 2022)
- Wilton Little League Baseball Coach & Board Member

#### College Football Experience

- Duquesne University Football - All MAAC Offensive Tackle
- Two Time All-MAAC Offensive Tackle (2004 & 2005)
- MAAC Conference Champions (2003, 2004 & 2005)
- Duquesne 2003 Sports Network 1-AA Mid-Major National Champions
- Coached by current Las Vegas Raiders offensive line coach, Carmen Briscillo

#### High School Experience

- Two Sport Athlete (Basketball & Football) & 3-Year Starter at Trinity Catholic High School (Defensive End and Offensive Tackle)
- Team Captain Sr. Year Basketball & Football
- All FCIAC DE - 2000 & 2001
- Appeared in 4 state championships for Trinity Catholic Varsity Basketball team



### Coach Keith Poisella

#### Personal

- Grew up in Wilton, moved back in 2011 with his wife (Heidi), and two children - Rocco (7) and Cecilia (9)

#### Coaching Experience

- 2022 Rookie Head Coach (Wilton Blue)
- WYF Flag Coach (Fall 2020, Spring & Fall 2021, and Spring 2022)
- Wilton Youth Lacrosse Coach (2020 – Present); currently 2nd grade

#### College Experience

- Played Division 1 College Lacrosse for Johns Hopkins and Bucknell University

#### High School Experience

- Three Sport Athlete (Basketball, Lacrosse & Football)
- Played Wide Receiver & Free Safety
- Went to the Football State Championship Senior year
- Won 2 FCIAC and State Championships in 3 years of Varsity Lacrosse





# ROOKIE FOOTBALL FAQs

- 1). HOW IS ROOKIE DIFFERENT THAN FLAG?
- 2). HOW IS ROOKIE DIFFERENT THAN TACKLE?
- 3). HOW MUCH PLAYER CONTACT IS THERE IN ROOKIE FOOTBALL?
- 4). DO ALL PLAYERS GET EQUAL PLAYING TIME?
- 5). CAN ROOKIE PLAYERS PARTICIPATE IN OTHER FALL SPORTS?
- 6). WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT FOR ROOKIE FOOTBALL PLAYERS?
- 7). WHAT LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE IS REQUIRED TO PLAY ROOKIE FOOTBALL?
- 8). WHEN DOES THE SEASON START? END?
- 9). WHAT EQUIPMENT IS NEEDED?



# TACKLE FOOTBALL (5<sup>TH</sup>-8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE)



# TACKLE FOOTBALL: GENERAL PROGRAM INFO

- Participation growth of 30%+ over the last two seasons.
- Our volunteer coaches and parents (Managers/First Down Club) bring incredible passion, knowledge, and sacrifice to support Wilton's youth football players.
- Wilton Youth Football's Tackle Program is the feeder program for the Wilton High School Football Program.
- Our Warrior Football Family is strengthened by the close relationship between Wilton High School's Varsity Football Coach EJ DiNunzio and the High School Booster Group – GridIron Club.
- Wilton Youth Football Coaches & Board, the WYF First Down Club. This group of leaders are committed to working closely together to build tomorrow's football players today.
- We are focused on creating more consistency in playbooks, terms, strategies, expectations, character, and leadership.



# TACKLE FOOTBALL FAQs

- CAN BEGINNERS PLAY?
- HOW DO YOU PRACTICE PREVENTATIVE SAFETY MEASURES DURING PRACTICES & GAME PLAY?
- ARE THERE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GAME ACTION OF 5<sup>TH</sup>, 6<sup>TH</sup>, 7<sup>TH</sup>, AND 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE GAMEPLAY & RULES?
- DO PLAYERS GET EQUAL PLAYING TIME?
- WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT?
- WHEN DOES THE SEASON START?
- WHAT EQUIPMENT DO I NEED?





# 5<sup>th</sup> GRADE TACKLE FOOTBALL

- **HEAD COACH: MATT MCGOLDRICK (COACH GOLDIE)**

## Coach Goldie

### Personal

- Has lived in Wilton for 8 years with his wife (Caroline) and their two children - Tayton (9) & Madison (9)

### Coaching Experience

- Wilton High School WR Coach (4 years)
- 2022 Rookie Head Coach (Wilton Grey)
- 2021 Head Coach of inaugural Wilton Rookie team
- Head Coach for various WYF teams (7th & 8th grades) since 2012
- Prior WYF Flag Football Coach (Girls & Co-ed)
- Little League Baseball Coach & Board

### Playing Experience

- Fairfield University Football - 1998 MAAC Championship
- 2 seasons with CT Giants Semi-Pro – TE (nationally ranked)
- Fairfield University Baseball – All MAAC Academic Team (3 years)
- Three Sport Athlete (Football, Baseball & Basketball) & 3-Year Starter at Butler High School (WR & DE)
- 3 Football State Championships NJ Group 1
- Team Captain Sr. Year Football & Baseball
- All State NJ Group 1 Football



# 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TACKLE FOOTBALL

- **HEAD COACH: SHAWN MANBERG**
- **ASSISTANT COACHES: MARK MCANDREWS, GREG HALL, JEFF UNRUH, NIRAJ BHANDERI, DAN LINDENTHAL**

## Personal

- Has lived in Wilton since 2016 with his wife (JoeAnne) and their three boys (Brady 11, Cameron 9, and Rowan 5).

## Coaching Experience

- Head Coach 5th Grade Tackle 2022
- Asst Coach Inaugural Rookie Football Season 2021
- Head Flag Coach K-5th grade 2017-2022
- WYFC Board Member 2020-Current

## College Experience

- Graduate of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

## High School Experience

- *2 Sport Athlete (Football & Track) at Mansfield High School (MA)*
- *3 Year Starter (OG/DE)*
- *#1 in the State of Massachusetts (1996)*
- *Senior Captain, All-Hockomock Conference & Shriners Allstar*



# 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TACKLE FOOTBALL

- **HEAD COACH: CARL SGRITTA**
- **ASSISTANT COACHES: TBD**

## Personal

Grew up in Darien, CT and went to college at Elon University in NC.

Has lived in Wilton since 2014 with his wife Ellie and their three children, Olivia (14), CJ (12) and Lucas (7)

## Wilton Youth Football Experience

WYF Flag Football Fall 2018, Fall 2019, Fall 2020

2021 5th Grade Tackle Head Football Coach

2022 6th Grade Tackle Head Football Coach

## Sports Experience

*Three sport athlete (Football, Basketball, Lacrosse) at Darien High School*

*Played Running Back/Fullback, Tight End and Guard in Football*

*1996 Football CIAC State Champion & 1997 Football FCIAC & CIAC State Runner Up*

*Played Midfield in Lacrosse*

*1997 Lacrosse FCIAC & CIAC State Champion & 1998 Lacrosse FCIAC Champion*

*Club Lacrosse Player and Manager at Elon University*



# 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE TACKLE FOOTBALL

**HEAD COACH:** NICK GEMELLI

**ASSISTANT COACHES:** CASE KORPAN (AHC), BRYAN ENNIS, JAMES LANE, IAN ASH,  
CHRIS KAISER, JR SHERMAN

## Personal

- Wilton resident since 2016 with his wife (Christine) and their two boys (Callum, 13 and Grayden, 9)

## Coaching Experience

- Head Coach Class 2028 Tackle Team Since Grade 4
- Head & Assistant Flag Coach Multiple seasons
- WYFC Board Member 2018 -Current

## College Experience

- Graduate of Williams College
- Football Team (4 seasons) & Graduate Assistant (2 seasons)







## **FOOTBALL SKILLS & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT** **IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WILTON HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PROGRAM**

- 1). We are focused on creating more consistency in playbooks, terms, strategies, expectations, character, leadership, and fun.
- 2). We host monthly meetings with Youth and High School Coaching staff to discuss playbooks, programming, program needs, strategy, etc.
- 3). We collaborate to provide meaningful, skill-focused Football Camps and Clinics year round - which are run in partnership with WHS Football Staff and Varsity players.
- 4.) The First Down Club (Co-Chaired by JoeAnne Manberg & Heather Salvatore) is focused on strengthening the bond between the high school and youth programs. Please email [WiltonWarriorFDC@gmail.com](mailto:WiltonWarriorFDC@gmail.com) if interested in getting involved/volunteering at any of our 2023 events.
- 5). The annual "Blue & White Scrimmage" is our unofficial Fall Tackle Football season kickoff. All WYF players are invited and granted exclusive front row access on the turf with the WHS Varsity program to view the scrimmage from various vantage points during game play and establish relationships with the coaches and team.







# 2023 ROOKIE & TACKLE COACHES

**3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> GRADE ROOKIE HEAD COACH:** Brad Salvatore; bradsal55@gmail.com

**3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> GRADE ROOKIE HEAD COACH:** Keith Poisella; keith.m.poisella@gmail.com

**5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TACKLE HEAD COACH:** Matt McGoldrick; mattmcgoldrick@gmail.com

**6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TACKLE HEAD COACH:** Shawn Manberg; shawn.manberg@gmail.com

**7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TACKLE HEAD COACH:** Carl Sgritta; carl.sgritta@gmail.com

**8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TACKLE HEAD COACHES:** Nick Gemelli; nickgem@icloud.com





**Thank you, Warrior Football Family!**  
**We look forward to a winning Fall season –**  
**both on and off the field.**

[www.wiltonyouthfootball.com](http://www.wiltonyouthfootball.com)