



FOOTBALL TOP HIGH SCHOOL SPORT; MORE COLLEGES ADD FOOTBALL

More boys play football in high school than any other sport, according to the most recent statistics released by the National Federation of State High School Associations. In the 2003-04 school year, 1,032,682 boys played 11-man football, showing a 9,340-person increase in participation and marking the fifth year in a row that 11-man football topped the one-million participant mark.

This total nearly doubles boys' basketball, which was second with 544,811 participants. Another 24,978 boys participated in 6-man, 8-man, or 9-man football, bringing the total number of boys playing high school football to 1,057,700.

MOST POPULAR BOYS HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAMS

<u>SPORT</u>	<u>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</u>
1. Football (11-man)	1,032,682
2. Basketball	544,811
3. Track and Field (outdoor)	504,801
4. Baseball	457,146
5. Soccer	349,785

While football continues to thrive in high school, the sport continues to grow at the collegiate level. Three schools have concrete plans to add the sport or bring it back to varsity status.

SETON HILL COLLEGE in Greensburg, Pennsylvania will kick off its first football season ever in September. The Griffins hired head coach **CHRIS SNYDER** from nearby Bethany College. The team's inaugural schedule will feature a combination of NAIA and NCAA Division III and II schools. The young program has over 100 recruits ready to suit up and is currently a member of the Mid-States Football Association. Snyder and his staff are exploring the possibility of joining the NCAA Division II or III ranks in upcoming seasons.

WHILE STARTING A FOOTBALL PROGRAM requires a lot of energy, it usually doesn't require learning a new language. But for **GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY** coach **ED HOTTLE**, the only way he will be able to communicate with his players will be through sign language. Gallaudet is a Washington, DC-based school whose student body consists solely of deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The school recently decided to take steps to move its program from club status to varsity (NCAA Division III) in 2007.

Hottle said he has been taking Sign lessons for two hours every morning and that, since being appointed in June, he can now have a basic conversation. He still has to learn the football playbook in sign language, however. Hottle sees coaching at Gallaudet as a unique challenge and knows how much football means to the students there.

"You can say 'well, it's exclusively a deaf and hard-of-hearing school,'" the coach says, "or you can say, 'hey, there's no competition because we are the only exclusively deaf and hard-of-hearing school in the country.' I think the students are excited for the change."

AFTER 65 YEARS the board of visitors at **OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY** in Norfolk, Virginia voted 14-0 to bring back football by 2009. The school would play at the Division I-AA level in the Colonial Athletic Association. University President Roseann Runte has set several requirements the athletics department must meet before the sport is officially added but noted that there are definite advantages to adding the sport.

"Everybody we've talked to has been in favor of it," says Alonzo Brandon, vice president for development and alumni relations. "We have a huge untapped market out there."

Following is a list of colleges that have initiated football programs since 2000:

<u>COLLEGE</u>	<u>START DATE/LEVEL</u>	<u>COLLEGE</u>	<u>START DATE/LEVEL</u>
Paul Quinn College	2000-NAIA	St. Paul's College (VA)	2003-NCAA, Div. III
Southern Nazarene	2000-NAIA	Huntingdon	2003-NCAA, Div. III
Florida Atlantic	2001-NCAA, Div. 1-AA	Southern Virginia	2003-NAIA
Christopher Newport (VA)	2001-NCAA, Div. III	Webber International	2003-NCAA, Div. III
Erie Comm. College (NY)	2001-NJCAA	North Carolina Wesleyan	2004-NCAA, Div. III
Southern Maine	2002-NCAA, Div. III	Ohio Dominican	2004-NAIA
Florida International	2002-NCAA, Div. 1-AA	Seton Hill	2005-NAIA
Coastal Carolina	2003-NCAA, Div. 1-AA	Gallaudet	2007-NCAA, Div. III
Southeastern Louisiana	2003-NCAA, Div. 1-AA	Old Dominion	2009-NCAA, Div. I-AA

In other college football news...

The alumni at **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE** want to see the school's storied football tradition return. UMES, which cancelled football in 1980 as a sport for budgetary reasons, has produced many successful NFL players including Pro Football Hall of Famer **ART SHELL**, now the NFL's senior vice president for football operations and development. Alumni have started raising money to pay for new equipment, scholarships and facilities.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY recently unveiled plans to build a new \$85 million football stadium that will feature a new design and a stadium capacity of 50,026.