

BERGEN HAWKS CAPTURE TGI BOWL III



BNEFF CEO Dexter Girven, Bergen Hawks' owner Bud Cutitto and BNEFF Vice President Al Alston

By Rob Cuttito



Vince Lombardi Field the venue for the Big Federation's 3rd Annual Game (TGI BOWL III) Sunday (December 20).

With a foot of snow having fallen and help from the Bergen County Parks Department's Rey Dressler and John Biale plus their snow removal staff, the playing field was cleared leaving a wall of snow around the field. The frigid cold day and snowy surrounding set the stage for a classic setting of an Ice Bowl pitting the Tacony (PA) Eagles (11-0) against the Bergen Hawks (11-1).

in Palisades Park was North East Football Championship Bowl on a cold and snowy day. With a foot of snow having fallen and help from the Bergen County Parks Department's Rey Dressler and John Biale plus their snow removal staff, the playing field was cleared leaving a wall of snow around the field. The frigid cold day and snowy surrounding set the stage for a classic setting of an Ice Bowl pitting the Tacony (PA) Eagles (11-0) against the Bergen Hawks (11-1).

The rough terrain, brutally low temperatures and wet ground made for an encounter destined to be pounded out on the ground. The Eagles put the first points on the scoreboard following a punt that had pinned the Hawks near their own end zone. The Eagles forced a fumble in the end zone for the TD and followed with a successful two-point conversion. The Hawks answered with a three-play TD drive of 61 yards, but a bobbed snapped on the extra point left the score 8-6. The Hawks continued their momentum and rally with a 17-play drive that ended with Phil Marfuggi's 29-yard field goal putting the Hawks up for the first time at 9-8. Late into the second quarter the Eagles intercepted a pass placing them on Bergen's 46-yard line and scored to regain the lead at 14-9. The Hawks next drive took three minutes off the clock and set up Marfuggi's 40-yard field goal with only 10 seconds left in the half that narrowed the gap to 14-12 by the halftime intermission.

With the temperatures dropping, the second half opened with dimming sunlight. On the opening drive the Hawks flew 54 yards in two plays, landing the end zone. The conversion was good and the Hawks were in front at 19-14. The Hawks had momentum and the crowd pumping up their defense that shut down the Eagles. Their drive ended on a blocked punt that was recovered by the Hawks in the end zone making the score 26-14. The next scoring came when the Eagles were forced to punt again deep in their territory. The snap went over the Tacony kicker's head and ended with an attempted pass that was intercepted by defensive lineman Steve Colasurdo in the end zone. Marfuggi's kick extended the Hawks' advantage to 33-14. The teams traded TDs late in the game, making the final 40-22 for the Bergen Hawks.

Louis Aboyoun (RB/Wildcat) was named MVP with 200 yards and three touchdowns while the Hawks jumped up in the National Rankings to end their season at No. 15.

For more information, check out www.BergenHawks.com. ■

DOMINGUEZ TO ATTEND U PENN

Academy of the Holy Angels senior, Meredith Dominguez, has committed to attend the University of Pennsylvania in September 2010 and row for their nationally ranked women's crew team. The Closter resident is a charter member of the parent-funded squad of 20 girls who row as a club at AHA in Demarest, NJ under the leadership of Thomas Curry of the New York Rowing Association. Meredith had never rowed before Curry came to the Academy with a trailer load of rowing machines, otherwise known as "ergs."

"Meredith sat down and pulled one of the fastest first-time 2K erg scores, the standard by which rowers worldwide are measured, that I had seen in 20 years of rowing and coaching," noted Curry.

With her 5'11" muscular stature and years of playing the demanding and competitive sport of ice hockey, Curry was certain Dominguez would be a natural. He didn't have to work hard to convince her of the opportunities crew could present for her; Meredith loved the sport from day one. By July 1, the annual start of the official NCAA recruiting season, Meredith had shaved enough time off her 2K to spur a bevy of phone calls and e-mails from D-1 and Ivy League recruiters. After two more months of dedicated training and conditioning, her 2K time ranked her among the top rising senior women rowers in the country, and promises of full scholarships started rolling in.

"My head was spinning," remembers Dominguez. "Every time we looked at each other, my Mom and I just grinned from ear to ear." After carefully reviewing all her options, which included Princeton, Cornell, Duke, Stanford, Harvard and others, Meredith made official visits only to Northeastern and UPenn. "I had already decided that I wanted a career in the field of healthcare, so that narrowed my choices to Northeastern's 6-year Doctor of Physical Therapy program and U Penn's Bachelor of Science in Nursing program." In the end, she fell in love with U Penn and received their Ivy League "likely letter" in October, followed by an Early Decision acceptance on December 11th. Meredith will matriculate into Penn's prestigious School of Nursing in the fall. Her parents and four older

siblings could not be more excited and proud of her. "She worked hard for this and we know she will make the most of this amazing opportunity."

Dominguez, who never imagined herself in the "full-ride" club of college athletes, heartily recommends all girls, especially those blessed with height, to give rowing a try. "Ice hockey was always my favorite sport, and I will probably play it until I'm too old to skate, but crew opened doors for me I never dared to imagine." ■

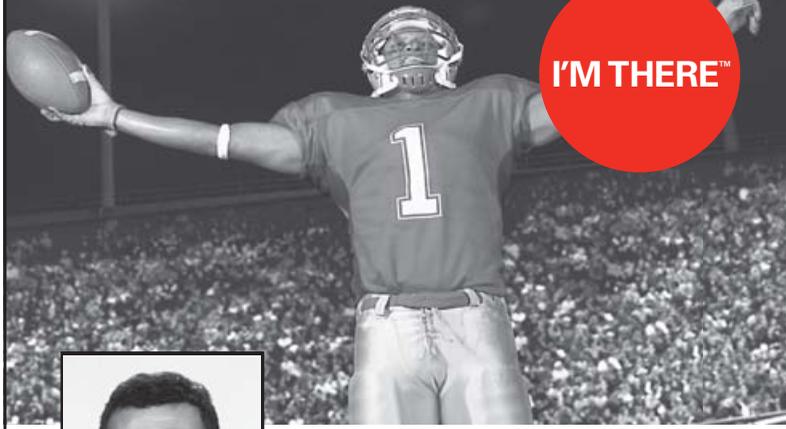



NJSports has teamed up with Sports In The USA and will share an exhibit as the Nets Basketball Career Fair that will be held at the Izod Center on Wednesday, March 31st from 2:00PM until 4:30PM. To obtain additional information, e-mail your questions to info@sportsintheusa.com.



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