

FORTUNA BOWL

With team names like *Beast Mode* and *Bedazzlesaurus Rex*, it's tempting to take this event less seriously than, say, the Orange Bowl. But don't you dare underestimate the Fortuna Bowl. More than 5,000 people are expected to attend this year's game. And rest assured, the competition will be fierce.

What started out as a night game with a few lights and a microphone over 20 years ago, the Fortuna Bowl has grown to become the main event of CBU's Homecoming Weekend. This year, it will be bigger and brighter than ever, with painted end zones, grand stands, and fireworks. And maybe even some guys dressed as Sumo wrestlers.

"When I try to explain to people what Fortuna Bowl is, they always say, 'it's just a flag football game,'" said Chris Hofschroer, CBU's Director of Community Life. "I tell them, 'no, you really gotta see it to understand.'" While the event is certainly about fun and tradition, it is first and foremost an epic battle for the championship. And to fully appreciate what's at stake, there are a few things you should know.

LEGACY TEAMS

These are teams that return year after year, recruiting new members to keep the tradition going. The *Webelos* are the longest standing men's legacy team, and perhaps the most beloved. "They have a pretty specific dress code, which is cut-off jean shorts and a white t-shirt," Chris explained. Last year, the *Webelos* made it to the Fortuna Bowl for the first time. Sadly, they lost in the fifth overtime. But, maybe this will be their year.

And of course, another beloved team is the *Bus Drivers*. These women are unstoppable. Their play book is thick. Each fall, they strategically scout and recruit the strongest, the

fastest, the smartest. And if you work or attend class in the James Building, you know they practice often, and loudly. "As the Fortuna Bowl draws closer, you'll see them doing full walk-throughs with their play-book," Chris said. They have won eight Fortuna Bowl championships, and they are the team to beat.

PASS-PUNT RULE

"We do have one funky rule that some of our freshmen teams learn the hard way. It's called the punt-pass rule," Chris said. "In traditional football, a player catches the punt and then runs with it as far as he can. The punt-pass rule allows the punt receiver to pass the ball forward to one of the blockers on the front line."

The rule is intended to discourage offensive linemen from making illegal blocks. And if we're being honest, it serves to be pretty entertaining as well. "Seniors lick their chops when they see a freshman team that hasn't read the rule book," Chris said. "You can guarantee that first punt they receive, they're going to pass the ball, and typically they score on it."

SPORTSMANSHIP POINTS

Perhaps the most important thing to keep in mind during the Fortuna Bowl; CBU does more than just encourage good sportsmanship – they live by it. "If a student gets kicked out of a game for some reason – a cheap block, swearing, or arguing with the referee – we'll deduct a sportsmanship point from their score," Chris explained.

"It's not about slapping their hand. If someone gets kicked out of a game, they have to come and talk to one of the staff before they can play again. Not so we can tell them don't do that again, but so we can ask, why did

you do that? Is it home life? Is it your girlfriend, or school? And then we try to partner with them to address the issue."

In addition to point deductions during the games, sportsmanship is also heavily weighted in the ranking process. As with other leagues, the teams are seeded by their win/loss record. But the tie-breaker is sportsmanship. "We consider sportsmanship before strength of schedule and who beat who," Chris explained. "And if a really great team is ranked #1, but we've had a lot of issues with them, we may rank them lower."

"We had a student a couple years ago that I kicked out of the game for a cheap shot, and then cussing right afterwards," Chris recalled. "Afterward, we had a conversation, and I wasn't really sure how he took it – he just got quiet."

Chris recalled that the player's team made it to the Fortuna Bowl that year. During his speech at the pre-game spaghetti dinner, this is what that player had to say: "I think my biggest victory this year was getting kicked out by Chris Hofschroer. It was eye opening that my character had been questioned, and I feel like I'm a different man now."

"Some people say sports build character," Chris said. "I think it does, but oftentimes, it reveals character as well. And we try to address that as it comes up."

