

## Park Ridge Falcons Announce 2021 Fall Travel League

More information can be found at <https://www.bgyfl.org/> and <https://parkridgefootballandcheer.com/>

It is with great excitement and energy that Park Ridge Sports Inc. announces that our Travel Falcons Tackle Football Program will be joining the Bill George League beginning in the fall of 2021. Over the past 5 years our Tackle Football Committees have spent hundreds of hours exploring all possible options within the Chicagoland Area of Leagues for which we could choose to play. This year's committee included well known Youth Football Leaders in the Park Ridge Community such as Roy Hoffman, Robert Leach, Matt Colleran, Garry Abezetian, John Capesius and Jim Toulon . Combined, this committee has well over 100 years' experience in Youth Football.

The decision of where to send one of the States Perennial Travel Football Programs THE PARK RIDGE FALCONS was not taken lightly. Our 54 years of experience and success has allowed us the good fortune of being one of the largest and most sought-after programs in Illinois and throughout the Midwest. Choosing a League starts with the children of our community. With over 50,000 young student athletes served by our program, the decision is centered around the young student athletes themselves. We then marry that thought process with the Pillars of our program (Sportsmanship at the center) and then the 4 Pillars of Fun, Safety, Skill Development and Education as the foundation of our organization. Next, we analyze criteria such as ages, weights, team or programs who participate, geography, philosophies of the programs in the league and capacity to find enough teams to be able to take on our 200-250 tackle football players as well as a number of other criteria.

While the size, success and reputation of our 54-year history allow us many options, it is that intense focus on our young student athletes that causes us to stress over decisions like this and we do not take them lightly. Our options in the Chicagoland Football Community are numerous. We researched at least 6 viable Leagues all whom have many positive attributes. We leave UYFL after over 10 years and many great memories as well as a few Championships (both Locally and Nationally) including our 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Falcons Championship in the last season allowed in Illinois. We thank the UYFL for the lifelong friendships and many great experiences

Park Ridge Falcons and our over 50,000 legacy student athletes take the sports of football and cheerleading extremely seriously and we are blessed that High Schools like Maine South who has played in 9 State Championships since 1995 (winning 6 of those) look to us as their main source of football players. We do not also forget that at least 9 other High School Playoff Football Teams in the past 10 years boast starters that came from our programs. This is an honor and one that we at Park Ridge Sports Inc. are proud of.

To continue the tradition for the next 54 years we must look at our options. Our committee unanimously voted to recommend to the 11 Member Park Ridge Sports Inc Board to Choose Bill George and that vote was unanimously approved by the Board. You can find out more about Bill George at this link <https://www.bgyfl.org/> but here are some of the Highlights. Bill George has over 20 programs who feed some of the most competitive and successful High School Football Programs in the State of Illinois (many of whom our players later compete against in High School Football Playoff Games). Bill George was the Chicago Bears' second-round draft pick in 1951. The Bill George Youth Football League

began in 1963 around the time that Park Ridge was beginning its now 54 year run as one of the largest and most respected **Programs** in Illinois they were beginning their run as one of the largest and most respected **Leagues** in Illinois. An invitation to join a league like Bill George is an honor and one that we officially accepted on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2021. A few of the programs such as Arlington Heights Cowboys, Tri-City Chargers, Palatine Panthers, Downers Grove Panthers, Oak Park Huskies, Elk Grove Eagles are programs we have competed with in different leagues throughout our 54 years. Others such as Elmhurst Eagles, Hinsdale Falcons, Naperville Saints, Wheaton Rams and Hanover Park Hurricanes (to name a few) are some of the most respected youth football programs in the state.

Our competition will be tough as we will be facing some of the (best of the best). The Age-Weight Metrix seems ideal for Park Ridge Falcons (Players will group with kids their own ages and play with their friends) as well as the Leagues philosophies, history and proximity for traveling.

It is with great excitement that we make this announcement. Park Ridge Falcons are the Falcons whom you have watched for 54 years, **we are the only Football Affiliate of the Park Ridge Park District** and have been for 54 years and we look forward to having the opportunity to serve your young student athletes in Football and Cheerleading. Our foundation is strong with over 200 parent volunteers helping us on any given weekend in the fall as well as our volunteer coaching staffs that range from Former Park Ridge Falcons, Former Maine Hawks (3 this Spring are coaching each who earned 3 State Championship Rings when they played at Maine South and former College football players. Our talent is deep both at the playing and coaching levels and for that we thank you all.

Jim Toulon

President

Park Ridge Sports Inc.