

## Gladiators join the EFL battle

### Season to kick off with Bridgewater new kid on semipro football block

---

ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

Posted Jul 08, 2009 @ 12:58 AM

Last update Jul 08, 2009 @ 10:02 AM

---

The start of the 2009 NFL season may be more than two months away, but for those who crave an early football fix, fear not — the 2009 [Eastern Football League](#) season is set to kick off this weekend.

Among the eight squads battling for the EFL championship this season are two local standbys, the [Brockton Buccaneers](#) and [Randolph Oilers](#), along with the first-year [Bridgewater Gladiators](#).

The Gladiators are coached by former Randolph Oilers head coach Bob Turner and his son, Bill, a former defensive lineman for the Patriots, who coaches the defense.

While the father-son coaching duo has a wealth of experience in the EFL, the two admit that it has been difficult putting together a team completely from scratch.



Bridgewater Gladiators' Rahim Bowman, New Bedford, speaks with his head coach Bob Turner over a play.

“We’re a brand new team,” said the elder Turner. “We have had a good turnout, there’s no doubt about that. The team is working very hard. We’re not sure how far we will go because we’re going to have to play some experienced football teams.

“We have some good athletes, so we’ll see what happens.”

Putting together a depth chart has been a challenge, said Bill Turner.

“When you have no history to work off of,” he said, “you have to do a pretty quick job of evaluating and then start putting people into positions and make some pretty quick executive decisions right away.”

The younger Turner has used his NFL experience to build what he calls an “attack” defense that can freely shift between a 5-2 and a 4-3 formation.

Led by 6-foot-3, 270-pound defensive tackle Benson Faroul of Brockton and defensive back Jason Garcia, both captains, Bill Turner is confident that his aggressive style of defense will be able to stifle opposing offenses.

“I’m not a sit-and-read guy,” said Turner. “There’s no sitting around and waiting. I want to play on their side of the line of scrimmage. I want to make sure everyone’s going forward at 110 mph. We force them to do what we want them to do, to go where we want them to go.”

With the likes of Faroul, 6-foot-3, 285-pound Joseph Kearny and 6-foot-2, 310-pound Joe Desrochers holding down the line of scrimmage, the Gladiators’ defense could turn out to be a formidable presence in 2009.

Bridgewater opens its season against the Seacoast Vipers Saturday at 6 p.m. at Bridgewater-Raynham High School with the game to be dedicated to former Marine Lance Corporal Kevin Preach of Bridgewater, who died from injuries sustained in Afghanistan in February.

Preach will be made an honorary member of the team, and will have a scholarship presented in his name for a future Bridgewater-Raynham graduating senior.

## **BROCKTON BUCCANEERS:**

Despite winning the EFL Super Bowl in 2007, the Bucs had a disappointing 2008 season.

This season, some new additions to the team has co-owner Tony Rodrigues and head coach Larry DeVoe excited about getting back to the league’s title game.

The biggest addition for the team so far has been former Marshall University quarterback Mark Reale, who should provide some stability at a position that was far from reliable in 2008.

Reale was a four-year high school varsity football player at South Shore Voke and the starting quarterback for the Vikings when they went unbeaten in the 2005 regular season and made it to the Div. 6 Super Bowl. He was also a three-year starter in basketball where he was an Enterprise all-scholastic his senior year.

“The kid, Reale, is really going to help us,” said DeVoe. “He’s a welcome addition to our offense. If we can protect him, I think we’re going to be OK with him at quarterback.”

“Last year, we basically beat ourselves,” added DeVoe. “Our defense played great last year but we were just giving up offensive points when we were on the offensive side of the ball with picks going back for touchdowns. That was the story of every game last year. We shot ourselves in the foot.”

Reale will have the help of veteran wide receiver Greg Anderson, a former Boston College player who Rodrigues describes as, “a little Wes Welker.”

“The kid works hard,” said DeVoe. “He runs great routes and he returns punts. He does it all. He’s a good little football player, he does anything you ask him. He’s nothing but a credit to the game.”

Brockton's biggest strength may lie in its pass rush where the Bucs have 6-foot-7, 300-pound defensive end Rasheed Chinn coming off the edge, followed by 6-foot-2, 260-pound linebacker Deondre Kennard.

"We do a lot of blitzing," said DeVoe. "Coming off the edge a little bit and try to rush the passer — we have decent pass rushers."

"Our defense has always been top-notch," said Rodrigues. "The defense is unbelievable with Deondre Kennard at linebacker and Rasheed at defensive end."



Brockton Buccaneers Alan Bercy throws a pass to one of his wide receivers during a scrimmage.

Brockton opens Saturday at 7 p.m. against the defending EFL champion Charlestown Townies at Charlestown High School.

### **RANDOLPH OILERS:**

Ed Penn is entering his 12th year as Oilers head coach, and is looking forward to a balanced attack on offense, led by a mix of veterans and newcomers, including long-time quarterback Ryan Myers of Holbrook.

Myers is entering his eighth season at the helm of the Randolph offense and was named offensive MVP of the EFL in 2008 after throwing 22 touchdown passes.

"When we won the championship in 1990, he was our water boy back then," said Penn. "He's well rounded, has a real good arm and he's elusive. He just knows how to make things happen, whether it's running or throwing the ball."



Randolph Oilers head coach Ed Penn.

Heading up the defense will be defensive back Dan Carroll, who won EFL Defensive Player of the Year in 2008 and was named team MVP. Carroll was also named a Minor League News second team defensive back.

“He really had a great season last year,” said Penn. “We’re looking for some big things from him.”

Carroll will be joined by 42-year-old John O’Brien, a veteran middle linebacker, who has been with the Oilers for three seasons.

“He’s a big, physical presence in the middle of our defense,” said Penn. “Whether it’s blitzing or going back on pass coverage, he’s just a great all-around player for us and a team leader.”

The offensive line will be anchored by returning All League offensive tackles Pete Hogan and co-captain T.D. Thompson.

Randolph finished last season 7-2, but lost in the playoffs. Despite a successful regular season, owner Peter O’Kane thinks the Oilers will have their work cut out for them in 2009.

“We’re going to have to work very hard to have as good a season,” said O’Kane. “We won a lot of close games last year and this year you hope to be just as successful. All those games last year, five of those games could have gone either way.”

The Oilers open against the Clinton Irish Blizzard on Friday at 8 p.m. at Randolph Memorial High School.