

TURNING BACK THE CLOCK

Toland brothers digitizing old game films, for profit and posterity

The black and white images ramble smoothly across the screen as the camera pans from left to right showing the fans three and four deep around the field.

Seconds later a voice chimes in: "It was a cold chilly day with a light dusting of snow."



JOE ZEDALIS

NFL
Films?
ESPN
Classic?

Nope.

It's
the 1959
Brick-
Central
game
coming

to life on a VHS cassette.

Want to see Manasquan coach Vic Kubu playing quarterback for the Warriors?

Want to see Wall coach Chris Barnes as a running back at Middletown North?

Want to see Matawan coach Joe Martucci play for the Huskies or Central coach Dan Duddy play for Brick?

Want to see Brick coach Warren Wolf wearing the same gray suit he wears today in 1960? Want to see if your dad was really as good a player as he says he was in his Al Bundy-like war stories?

Pat and Rich Toland can make it happen for you.

The Toland brothers, both Middletown North graduates now living in Richmond, Va., have approximately 1,000 game films — the oldest a 1952 Manasquan-Lakewood game — and are in the process of digitizing them for both profit and posterity.

"Some of these films are historic," said Rich Toland, 30, a Rutgers University graduate. "Some of



Special to the Press

Brothers Pat (left) and Rich Toland are wrapped up in their work digitizing old Shore Conference game films.

these old films would either have been thrown away or allowed to sit and rot. We want to preserve them."

The Tolands marvel at what they've seen.

On old Brick films, the scoreboard was in the shape of a Dragon, painted green.

"Kids sat on it and turned the numbers by hand when somebody scored," Pat Toland said.

"We've seen classic cars from the 1950s and '60s surrounding fields, we've seen fields surrounded by buildings today when there was nothing else there."

And, of course, they have seen some of the greatest games and finest players in Shore Conference history.

"It was just cool going to pick the old films up," Rich Toland said. "Warren Wolf had the films in his garage, we went into Vic Kubu's film vault and we had to help Joe Martucci blow the dust off some of his."

The Tolands have canisters of 8-millimeter and 16-millimeter film they will eventually convert to VHS and CDs.

"If someone calls and wants a specific game, we

will convert it immediately," Rich Toland said. "Otherwise we will do it in our spare time."

"There are so many possibilities," said Pat Toland, a former fullback at the University of Virginia. "We've talked about doing the best players of the 1960s, or the best plays of the 1970s. With the video editing software we have, anything is possible once a film is converted."

Pat and Rich Toland have not settled on a price for a converted film.

"Maybe \$50 to make the first one and then \$15-20 per copy," Pat Toland

said. "I know people who get old family films converted to VHS pay \$75."

Pat Toland said that when film is modernized, they add the two teams playing in the upper right corner, the quarter in the upper left corner of the screen, the date in the lower left corner and the score in the lower right corner every time someone scores.

"We tried to make it professional," Pat Toland said. "This is the opportunity for a dad to show his kids just how good he really was."

"Then again, there may be some dads who really

don't want the truth to come out," Rich Toland quipped.

The process of converting one game film to digital takes approximately 20 hours.

"People talked about doing something like this all the time," Pat Toland said. "We said the hell with the talk. We got the films and started doing it. Somebody had to start someplace."

Pat and Rich Toland, founders of www.shoreconferencefootball.com and many of the team websites used by Shore Conference football teams, have an updated list of available games on the website.

"The 1952 Manasquan-Lakewood game is 50 years old," Pat Toland said. "A player in that game is what, 68 years old now? He could see himself playing a high school game if he wanted to. That, to me, is what makes this process so exciting."

"The other thing," Rich Toland said, "is you can finally sit down and watch a game film without a coach screaming in your ear."

"It's great to go back and see men you see now as young bucks," Pat Toland said. "It's a flashback in time."

Fans interested in purchasing a tape can contact the Tolands at www.shoreconferencefootball.com.

Pat Toland said they have approximately 2,000 reels of tape and about 1,000 games.

"And we pick up more films every time we come to New Jersey," Pat Toland said.

Joe Zedalis is an Asbury Park Press staff writer.