

A Message from the Founder

As we enter Championship Week, I want to take a moment to reflect on what this season truly represented. Reaching our 15th year is more than a milestone. It is a reminder that growth only happens when young men are pushed, challenged, and given the opportunity to rise. This season, they did exactly that.

At the start of the year, there was uncertainty about whether the fire from previous seasons would return. What we witnessed proved that the heart of this program remains strong. Week after week, our players competed with discipline, responded to adversity with maturity, and embraced the responsibility of becoming leaders on and off the field. For those who may not know, the urban dictionary defines YALD as giving maximum effort. This group embodied that meaning in every sense.

One of the most important parts of our program begins long before the first whistle of the season in September. Our Program Director leads a six week summer training camp designed to prepare athletes of all backgrounds. Whether they have never touched a football, come from another sport, or are returning veterans, every player is developed, challenged, and evaluated with the same purpose: to help them grow into competitors and leaders. Coaches and athletic staff attend these sessions, investing in players and studying their potential. These weeks shape the men who step on the field in September. This year, the effort was evident from Day One.



Leadership stood out above all. The way our young men supported each other, held one another accountable, and carried themselves through each challenge is the legacy we aim to build. Championships matter, but the character built along the way matters more.

To our coaches, referees, statisticians, commissioners, staff, parents, and volunteers, thank you. Your commitment is the heartbeat of YALD. Week after week, you show up with purpose, and because of you, these young men continue to have a place to grow.

To our players, thank you for reminding us why this program exists. You showed heart, resilience, and character. You proved that effort, discipline, and integrity will always outweigh standings.

As we approach the Championship, take pride in how far you have come. Whether you wear Heights green or Dyckman blue, this moment is about more than a trophy. It is about the lessons learned, the brotherhood formed, and the standard you raise for every player who will follow.

Championships are earned through preparation, teamwork, integrity, and heart. On December 13, we will witness one team rise, but every young man who stepped on the field this season stands as a champion in character.



YALD NEWSLETTER – CHAMPIONSHIP WEEK EDITION

PLAYOFF RECAP – ROAD TO THE 2025 CHAMPIONSHIP

Dyckman and Uptown stepped onto the field Saturday morning with one mission: earn their place in the 2025 Championship. What followed was a display of preparation, discipline, and heart, traits we expect from young men striving to become their best selves, not only as athletes but as leaders at home, in their community, and in life.

The weekend reminded all of us that preparation is the foundation of success. Dyckman arrived early, locked in and ready. Uptown arrived gradually as kickoff approached, but once the whistle blew, both teams made it clear that the championship opportunity would not be given. It would be earned.

Uptown opened strong. Veteran defender Jariel pressured Rookie QB Donovan early, forcing incompletions and setting the tone. Uptown struck first with the opening touchdown. Dyckman, however, stayed composed and answered back. In the closing seconds of the half, Donovan connected with Rookie Receiver Hector for a key touchdown, followed by an extra point to Rookie Receiver Jenderson, sending Dyckman into halftime ahead 7 to 6.

Whatever was said during halftime sparked both sidelines. The second half became a back-and-forth battle, each team trading scores as the pressure mounted.

Then came the defining moment.

Just minutes before the two-minute warning, Dyckman marched down the field. On what looked like a risky throw destined to fall incomplete, playmaker Max delivered the highlight of the day, a soaring, one-handed catch for the go-ahead touchdown. It was the kind of play that shifts momentum, ignites a sideline, and tests the heart of a team.

One more player deserves recognition: Jeremiah, Dyckman's hiker. Dominant all season, he secured the victory with a clutch defensive play, a safety on Uptown QB Joshua, extending the lead to ten and closing the door on Uptown's hopes.

Only one team could advance. On this day, Dyckman earned their place on the championship stage.

THE LEADERS BEHIND THE TEAMS

Championship Week isn't just about players. It's about the leaders who guide them.

Heights Head Coach: Robert "Rob"

Joined YALD in 2017 during one of our biggest expansions. His consistency, loyalty, and dedication have shaped countless young men. This is his first championship visit, and he now stands one win away from potentially earning his first title and etching his name onto the Miguel Guzman Championship Trophy.

Heights Assistant Coach: Eugene

Joined in 2022. The first couple of years were challenging, but he adapted, learned, and grew into the coach he is today. He reached the Championship last season but fell short against Coach Jason. Now he returns alongside Coach Rob, and together they enter Saturday with a shared mission: to earn their first championship and write a new chapter in YFFL history.



Dyckman Head Coach: Jason "Jay"

A proven leader and last season's championship coach. While Dyckman is not the defending team, Jason is the defending coach, once again guiding a new roster built through summer evaluation and the draft. He is looking to become only the third coach in YALD history to win three championships, and could possibly be the first to do so in five seasons. His roster includes three returning players from last season, with the rest of the team made up of rookies to the league, adding an extra layer of challenge and excitement for Championship Week.

Dyckman Assistant Coach: Luis "Dyckman Lou"

Luis joined YALD as an assistant coach and ended his first year as a champion. He remained in the spotlight in 2022 and 2023, contributing to the growth of the program and its players. After stepping away in 2024 to volunteer and run weekly training sessions, he has returned to the sidelines, aiming to claim his second championship.

As one pair of coaches chases their first championship, the other aims to add another to their legacy.

CHAMPIONSHIP MATCHUP

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Heights vs. Dyckman

Heights, the number-one seed at 7 - 2, have been waiting for this moment. Dyckman is motivated, disciplined, and ready. Records don't win championships. Preparation does. Integrity does. Teamwork does. Heart does.

Expect intensity.

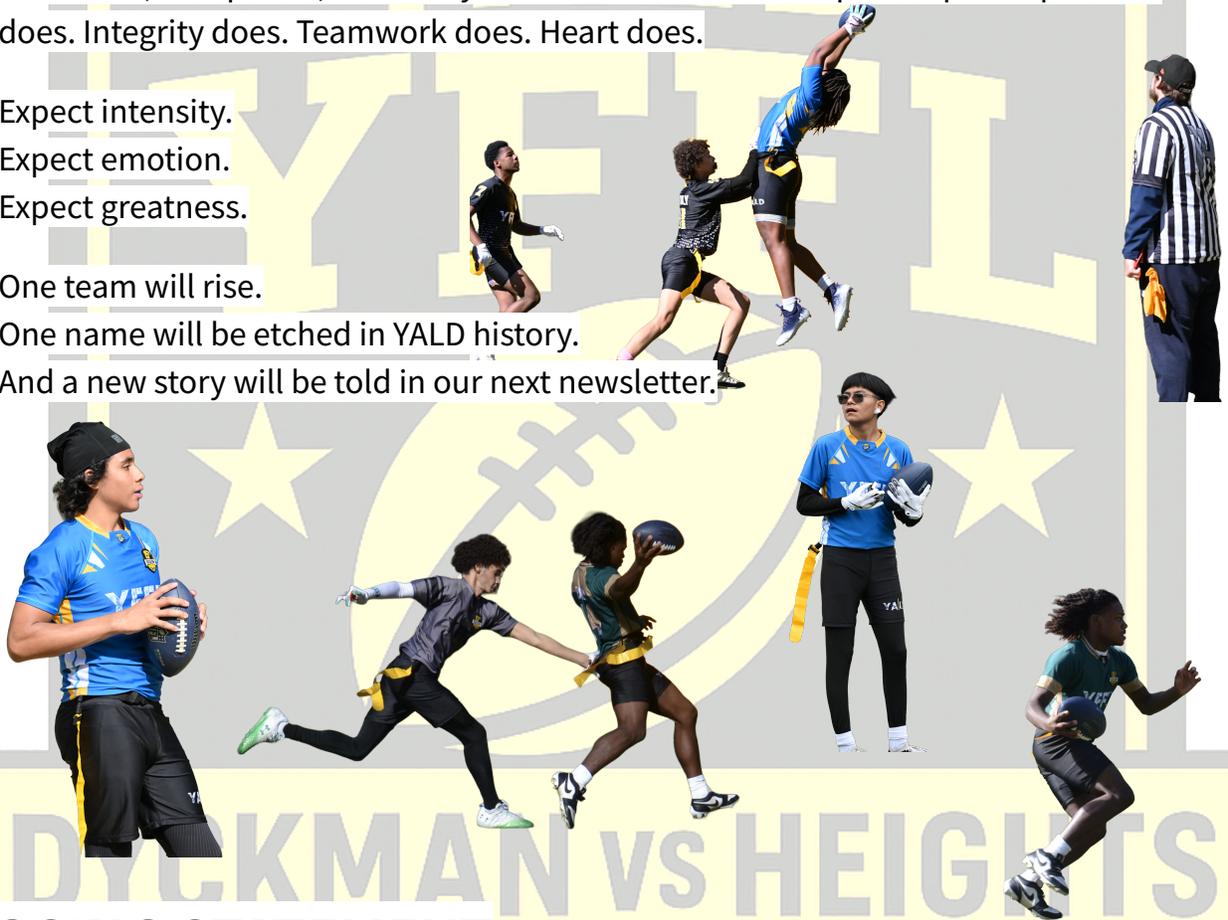
Expect emotion.

Expect greatness.

One team will rise.

One name will be etched in YALD history.

And a new story will be told in our next newsletter.



CLOSING STATEMENT

Thank you to everyone who contributed to an unforgettable season. The dedication, effort, and leadership shown by our players, coaches, families, and volunteers reflect everything YALD stands for. As we head into Championship Week, we celebrate the achievements of all and look forward to the excitement, energy, and history that will unfold this Saturday.