"All men are created equal; some just work harder in the preseason." That quote began YALD’s ninth season and as we approach its conclusion nothing has resonated more. This season has been filled with excitement, passion and joy for some and unfortunately for others it’s been riddled with disappointment and despair.

The 49ers had an amazing season and look to continue that success heading into the playoffs. Veterans like Gabriel Guareno and Devon Valley had a phenomenal season on both sides of the ball. Turning heads this season was the play of young quarterback Colin Rodriguez. During his time at YALD, Coach Mike Tineo has a history of developing quarterbacks and this year was no different.

Led by longtime assistant and now head coach Fernando Portilla, the Giants have exemplified what hope and leadership is. Their attitude, demeanor and body language are the opposite of what we saw last year. Newcomer Sean Carter proved to be a dominant force. This young man is dangerous every time he touches the ball. Quarterback Michael Rodriguez has put in the work during his time at YALD and it’s all coming to fruition now. Katherine Rodriguez, YALD’s first active female player proved that she belongs in this game.

The Falcons are The Falcons. This team is very consistent, and Coach Leandro Castellanos has always found a way to win. Rookies Joseph Appiah and Jaylen Izquierdo have blended in nicely with veterans Allen Campos and Christian Guzman. Elijah Santos, who led the league in sacks again, will be a force to recon within the playoffs.

Longtime coach Miguel Guzman had a good overall season. First year quarterback Dylan Castellanos progressively got better as the season went on. Dylan took direction from one of the greatest quarterbacks to ever play in YALD, Austin Guzman and the difference showed. Anthony Sabater and GianCarlos Taveres were very consistent, and their veteran leadership was on full display.

The Panthers had their struggles. Due to prior engagements, the team was not at full strength. But when their players were there, they were ready to compete with anyone. Head Coach Adalberto Fernandez led by example as he juggled academics and coaching. Mason Rivera, who has been a staple in not only the Panthers but in YALD, had a good season. Frankie Correa distributed the ball well and Miguel Grullon was a force on defense.

The Bears had their ups and downs. While not translucent, the Bears are team with tremendous potential. Head Coach Robert Valley brought on Ismael Guadalupe to call the shots on offense. Quarterback Christian Firpo at times seemed to flourish in the intricate play calling. Sean Medina showed off his tremendous speed and Justin Fernandez finished in the top 3 in sacks.

The 2019 YALD season was memorable. Hopefully the playoffs will culminate the year.

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