



FINALISTS NAMED FOR 2009 'THE HOME DEPOT' NFL YOUTH COACH OF THE YEAR AWARD

Winner of national grassroots program to receive \$5,000 in new equipment and a \$1,000 gift card from The Home Depot for their football program; Runners-up to receive \$2,000 in new equipment and a \$500 gift card from The Home Depot

Toronto, ON – November 10, 2009 – Ten finalists have been named for the 2009 *The Home Depot NFL Youth Coach of the Year Award*, the NFL announced today. The award, now in its eleventh year, is designed to recognize community or high school level coaches across Canada who share a passion for football and dedicate themselves to the development of young players both on and off the field.

The following **10** youth coaches (coaching organized teams of tackle football players under the age of 19) are this year's finalists:

Coach	Team/Program/Community
Ivan Yurgan	Assumption Catholic Secondary School, Burlington, ON
Mike Darling	Oakridge Secondary School, London, ON
George Knowlton	Clarington Tigercats, Central Ontario Minor Football League, Clarington, ON
Mark Townsend	Victoria Renegades (Greater Victoria Minor Football Association) & Mount Douglas Secondary School, Victoria, BC
Jeff MacLean	Truro Blue Bombers, Truro Minor Football Association, Truro, NS
Lyle Evanisky	Martensville High School, Martensville, SK
Bruce Marlow	Columbia Valley Bighorns (Kootenays), British Columbia Community Football Association, Columbia Valley, BC
Paul Brown	St. Mark High School, Manotick, ON
Geordie Wilson	Charleswood Broncos, Manitoba Minor Football Association, Winnipeg, MB
Bruce Waddell	Shoal Lake School, Parkwest School Division, Shoal Lake, MB

More than 500 coaches from across Canada were nominated for the award. Football players, volunteers, fans, administrators and fellow coaches submitted short essays recognizing the positive impact a coach in their community has on young players. Nominators were asked to consider how their coach taught respect, safety, motivation, leadership and appreciation for the game of football when drafting their nominations.

Over the past ten years the program has contributed more than \$130,000 in equipment and facility upgrades to deserving programs, and put the spotlight on the grassroots-level coaches who are the backbone of football in Canada.

Acting as a spokesman for the program in 2009 is **BRIAN BILLICK**, coach of the Super Bowl XXXV Champion Baltimore Ravens. During the month of October a public service announcement aired during NFL broadcasts in Canada and featured Billick encouraging Canadians to nominate a local coach.

“Youth football coaches are some of the hardest working volunteers out there,” said Billick. “This program is our way of saying ‘thank you’ to these leaders of young men and women.”

“Passionate amateur coaches are the engines that drive the growth of football in this country,” added **MIKE DANISCHEWSKY**, Manager, Events and Communications, NFL Canada. “Together with The Home Depot we are proud to recognize these community leaders who prove that good coaching is not about wins and losses, but rather the positive impact coaching can have on young players.”

The winning coach will be selected by a panel of journalists from across Canada, NFL and The Home Depot representatives. The winner and runners-up will be announced via press release on **Thursday, November 19, 2009** in Toronto.

\$5,000 of new football equipment will be donated to the winning coach’s program. The winning coach will also receive a \$1,000 gift card from The Home Depot (for ‘football program related renovation projects’, such as field repair, fixing bleachers, painting a locker room, etc.). If required project assistance will also be provided by local The Home Depot associates through Team Depot.

Two runners-up schools will each receive **\$2,000** in equipment and \$500 gift cards from The Home Depot.

The winning coach will also win a trip to Quebec City as a guest of the NFL at this year’s Desjardins Vanier Cup celebrations, and will be honoured at the CIS coaches breakfast on Friday, November 27, 2009, and attend the Desjardins Vanier Cup, scheduled to be played the following day.

The NFL is a long-time supporter of the game of football at the grassroots level in Canada. Other grassroots initiatives include community ‘Flag League’ and Junior Player Development. For more information visit www.NFLCanada.com.

For more information on **The Home Depot NFL Youth Coach of the Year Award**, to receive details from the essays used to nominate the above listed coaches, or to find out how many times each coach was nominated, please contact:

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