

Katy's "Real Men of Genius"



Local Church Offers Fellowship Through Football

Written by Cathy Sze

Even in the sweltering Texas heat, you can find them sprinting back and forth across the field by CrossPoint Church. As their flags sway from their waists, they shelter the ball between their arm and side, dodging through their opponents as they maneuver their way through to make a touchdown. Though they seem to be playing an ordinary game of football, there's something that puts these teams in a league of their own – it's all for fun and the love of the Lord.

DADS WANT TO PLAY, TOO

Like few of Katy's churches, CrossPoint Community Church on South Westgreen has taken to an additional form of ministry— one that requires a good pair of sneakers and the willingness to work up a sweat. In the spring of 2006, CrossPoint organized its first adult flag football team. Sports Director of CrossPoint, John Moore, says that the fathers of some of the children on the kids' league at CrossPoint wanted to make a fun league for adults, and they have had a lot of success doing just that. "The league started as a result of some dads of our NFL Kids' League wanting to have some fun," says Moore. "We have been blessed to have a great group of people who have gravitated to that."



The first flag football team at CrossPoint was organized in 2006

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Each team must have an average age of 30 to keep the talent level even

AN INGENIOUS NAME

Every league needs a name and a way to identify themselves from other area leagues. CrossPoint doesn't use any ordinary, fierce mascot. This flag football league has two reasons for taking to a more creative and friendly approach, calling themselves The Real Men of Genius. "We want the name of the league to reflect the tone of the league," says Moore. "It's lighthearted and not overly competitive. It's about having fun and fellowship."

Despite its name, The Real Men of Genius is open to all adults in the community over 18, including women. "Ladies are welcome and we had some very athletic ladies participate last season," says Moore. However, there are a few requirements to ensure fair athletic ability for each team. Moore says the average age of each team must be 30 years old to prevent one from loading up on young men and women. "If they get a bunch of them, they will need a bunch of us old geezers as well to balance out the team," says Moore.

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

Following the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation rules, The Real Men of Genius create teams of 12 to 16 players each. They are refereed by the Texas Association of Sports Officials, the same referees for youth and

high school football. "This past spring we had 10 teams which made for a lot of fun," says Moore. An active player since The Real Men of Genius was formed, Paul Marsh has played for Band of Brothers, one of the 10 teams. "We are all competitive players who like to win, but we do have a lot of fun," says Marsh. "Also, we all have a realistic expectation of our level of play and work to encourage each other to do better each week."

From Average Joes to Thrown Together, Moore says teams are encouraged to create silly names. "I always get a kick out of the names some of the teams come up with such as The Thunder Chickens," says Moore. An active teammate for the Thunder Chickens, Ozzy Silva believes his team's silly name has no reflection on their performance. "We have been the defending champions since the league has begun," says Silva. "Go Chickens!"

The league follows rules set by the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation



Despite the name of the league, women are invited to participate as well



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FUN AND GAMES

Having a silly team name isn't the only funny aspect to flag football. The Real Men of Genius have their own jokes and silly chants that have formed over the years. "My favorite is 'Run Forest, Run!' which you hear often when a player who is 'speed challenged' breaks into the open, usually because the offender fell down," says Moore. League member Sam Robles also recalls some funny times. "We have one guy on our team who is only known to everyone at CrossPoint at 'Preacher,'" says Robles. "I don't think anyone there knows his real name."

With all the fun The Real Men of Genius have, you might wonder about the talent. Moore says the fun doesn't get in the way of letting the players show their skills. "For all of the fun we have had with this league, there have also been some great games," says Moore. "Some of the guys are very talented and can still play. I have seen some highlight-reel-type one handed catches, sheer speed, and incredible moves. It's neat to watch."

Sound like you might be missing out? Marsh recommends joining the league to experience it for yourself. "I would definitely encourage someone to come out and play. Being with a group of guys all working with a common goal makes it fun," says Marsh. "The league provides healthy competition and a great outlet to play the game. John Moore has done an excellent job of providing a place that is competitive with the rules of the game. It is a league that you can have fun and be serious at the same time."

EYES ON THE PRIZE

As a whole, CrossPoint flag football is about more than having fun, and there is a greater purpose to the sport than winning. "The object of any game is to win and that is not a bad thing. What is important is how you go about playing to win," says Moore. "Our tag line is 'Play to Win, Honor God. We try to honor God as we compete.'"

But how do The Real Men of Genius go about doing that? "We do this first by giving thanks for the opportunity and then, win or lose, showing Christian love and respect to our teammates, our opponents, and the referees," says Moore. "It's all about fun and fellowship."

CATHY SZE has written for Katy Magazine since she attended Cinco Ranch High School. She is currently a sophomore at the University of Texas at Austin where she is majoring in Journalism and Business.

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