

Ex-coach becomes publisher

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

Heath Weir has played high school and college football.

He has also coached at the collegiate level and was responsible for reviving the sport at Stouffville District Secondary School after a 30-year hiatus in 2001 before it was temporarily put on the shelf this year.

The title of publisher and author can be added to his portfolio. He has just published *Weir's 2003 Ontario High School and University Football Preview Magazine*, a 176-page listing and preview of each varsity team in the province.

He has sold around 1,600 copies from a press run of 2,000 for \$5 a pop.

'KIDS LOVE IT'

"The kids love the magazine. The coaches and parents who have seen it like it and I have had a number of calls from coaches and people in football saying it's about time someone did something like this in Ontario," he said. "In the end, it's all for fun."

Mike Feasby, a Stouffville resident who is the head coach of the Markham District High School Marauders senior team, feels the publication was long overdue.

"It's a good magazine. He has done a lot of work and it's good for high school football in this province," said Mr. Feasby.

The idea for the book came to Mr. Weir in 1998 when he did his graduate

school work at Arkansas State University.

"I read a similar magazine down there and said 'wow'. I thought this was a great idea," he said.

Returning to Toronto last winter after finishing his masters degree in history while serving as a strength and conditioning coach at the University of Memphis fall, he started work on the book.

He learned the business side of publishing and discovered high school football is gaining popularity in the province.

With 28 high school football leagues currently operating in Ontario, Weir compiled a listing for 321 schools that have varsity teams, up from 260 he was told had teams.

"Now that the magazine is out a lot of the skeptics will want to jump on board and I now have some companies that want to get in on it," he said. "Next year it will be bigger and better."

Although Weir is no longer teaching at Stouffville Secondary, he was disappointed to hear the football program was shut down this fall.

"It's unfortunate, but hopefully, they will get the program running next year and I'm sure that in two to three years they'll be back running at full speed," he said.

For more information on the publication call 647-227-5543 or log on to weirfootball.com

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