

CHICAGO BEARS ANNOUNCE HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS' FLAG FOOTBALL COACH AND PLAYER OF THE WEEK AWARD WINNERS - WEEK 4

The Chicago Bears have officially named Erin Pruitt, head coach of Simeon High School in Chicago, as the Chicago Bears Girls' Flag Football Coach of the Week and Aribella Spandiary, quarterback from Main South High School in Park Ridge, as the Chicago Bears Girls' Flag Player of the Week for Week 4.

These awards recognize excellence in leadership and team commitment, highlighting efforts to support young female athletes and expand girls' flag football throughout Illinois. As part of this program, the Chicago Bears will make a \$2,000 donation to the Simeon football program and a \$500 donation to the youth football program of Spandiary's choice.

Erin Pruitt

Since the establishment of the girls' flag football program in 2021, Head Coach Erin Pruitt for the Simeon Wolverines' program has made a profound impact on the sport, her community and her team. With an 8-4 record to the season, despite facing one of the toughest schedules in the state, Pruitt has led the Wolverines to a successful winning-record regular season. This past week was a standout as the Wolverines went 5-1, securing dominant victories over Morgan Park High School (35-0), Rich Township High School (38-20), Back of the Yards High School (43-0) and Mansueto High School (28-0). Riding this momentum, the team is eyeing its first Chicago Public League (CPL) championship. In just two seasons, the Wolverines have advanced to the CPL postseason, reaching the semifinals last season. Pruitt serves as a role model for her players, who have fully embraced her philosophy of continual improvement, often participating in clinics and training opportunities to enhance their skills. A key factor in the team's success is Pruitt's supportive coaching methodology, which empowers players to express themselves and take calculated risks on the field. Beyond coaching, Pruitt plays a pivotal role on the CPL Girls Flag Football Leadership Council, promoting the sport and advocating for increased opportunities for young women in athletics. As the regular season concluded with a senior night matchup victory against the Stagg Chargers on Sept. 24, the Wolverines now turn their focus to the CPL playoffs.



Aribella Spandiary

This past week, junior quarterback Aribella Spandiary led the Maine South Hawks to a 4-0 record, extending their perfect season to 13-0 overall and 8-0 in conference play. The team is currently ranked first in Illinois and 10th in the country. Over her last four games, Spandiary has thrown for over 900 yards and 12 touchdowns, adding to her season totals of over 3,000 passing yards and 33 touchdowns. As a dual-threat quarterback, she has also rushed for more than 150 yards and five touchdowns on 22 carries, further solidifying her status as one of the top quarterbacks in the state. Thriving under the lights at Maine South's Wilson Field, Spandiary's journey in flag football began in 2014, inspired by her two older brothers. Her connection to the sport and her team has only deepened since. As both quarterback and captain, she exemplifies leadership, fostering trust, sportsmanship and respect among her teammates. Spandiary's leadership extends beyond her on-field performance, as she actively engages with her community by organizing food drives for a local pantry. Both a standout athlete and a role model, Aribella Spandiary continually inspires those around her to reach their full potential. The Hawks are now set to face the Stevenson Patriots at Stevenson High School on Friday, Sept. 27.



About High School Girls' Flag Football Coach of the Week & Player of the Week

The Chicago Bears launched the High School Girls' Flag Football Coach of the Week and Player of the Week programs in 2024 to recognize outstanding high school coaches and players in the rapidly growing sport of girls' flag football. The Coach of the Week award honors coaches who excel in developing players' skills, leadership, teamwork and advocating the growth of the sport. The Player of the Week program highlights players for their on-field game-changer performance, sportsmanship and community involvement. Winners are selected weekly throughout the IHSA flag football season by a panel of local sports journalists. For more information, please visit ChicagoBears.com/Community/High-School-Football.

