

Fanning interest in the pigskin

By Debbie Sklar
Special writer

To be or not to be a football widow. That is the question you ladies out there have to ask yourself.

You see, if you haven't noticed, it's definitely time to store the white shoes, bathing suit and suntan oil. It's the time of year you either love or hate. It's called football season.

What's worse is "bowling" season is just around the corner. And we're not talking about thoroughly cleaning the bathroom. We're talking about some 20 college games spanning much of the Christmas season and capping off with six, counting 'em six, on New Year's Day.

But before you try and steal your significant other's remote control, listen up. A real expert on the subject has some good news. As the adage goes, "If you can't lick 'em, join 'em."

Donna Poole Foehr, author of "Football for Women" (\$9.95 from National Press Books) is a woman and, yes, an avid football fan.

"I love the Detroit Lions, always have," she said. "Personally, I think baseball is a more brutal sport than football."

Foehr's way of thinking?

"Monday night football! Sunday football! Professional football and college football! Ladies, Face it. From late summer through mid-winter football is king of TV," she said. "But if you feel left out because the sport seems so complicated, I have something to help you."

Her book has 191 pages, including a back glossary, that explains the complicated game in simple terms so every woman, and every man for that matter, can quickly learn and understand the game.

THERE'S THE complete rules of football and what each players does, diagrams of the field and alignments, offensive and defensive fundamentals, referees, penalties, signals and much more.

Everything you'll every need to know about the game is clearly explained. You'll learn how points are scored, how and why penalties are handed out, the difference between offensive and defensive teams, plus the roles each player has on the field and the way referees control the game.

From the unique viewpoint of a woman, football suddenly seems so

easy... and uncomplicated. Maybe that's why Football News said Foehr "has done a remarkable job... of making all aspects of football understandable."

How and where in the world did she get this idea of writing a book to show and tell women about football?

"It's not my intention to coerce you into liking football because it's the 'in' thing to watch and talk about all fall," she said. "But I'll bet the more you learn and understand what's happening on the field, the more fun you'll have, and you'll see how the game can be addictive."

As for herself, Foehr "could sit and watch these NFL games — just ask my husband — and never be bored."

AN INSATIABLE football fan since her days at Ohio University, Foehr got hooked on the NFL when she and her husband Donald began attending Detroit Lions games, using his company's tickets. When the Lions moved to the Pontiac Silverdome, the Foehrs bought season tickets. Foehr hasn't missed but one home game in 15 years.

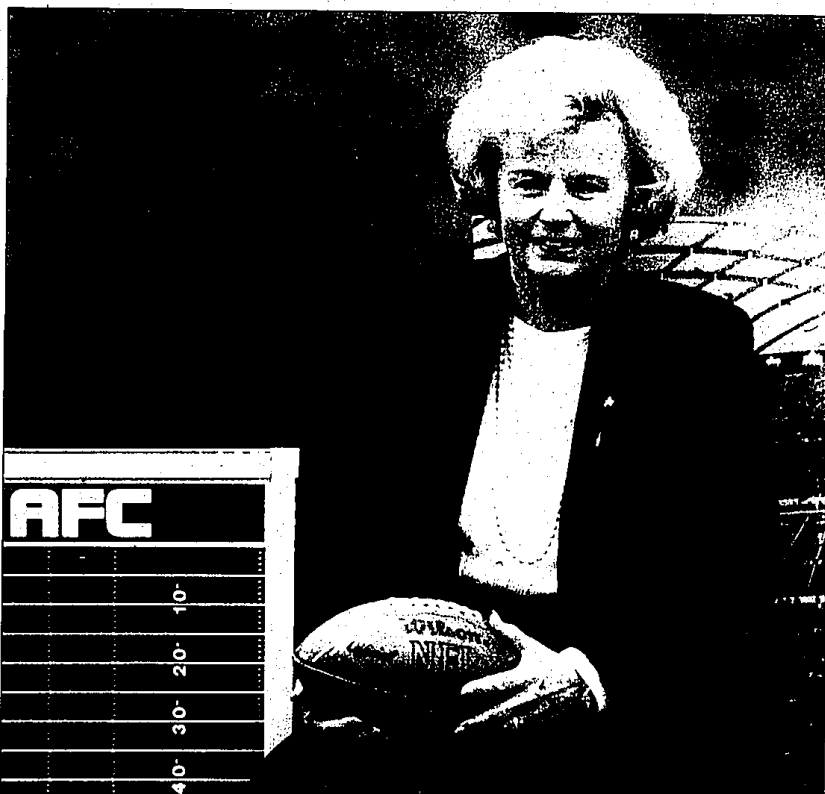
"We would always take another couple with us because we had four tickets," she said. "It usually was so obvious that the other woman did not know much about the game. She was mostly people watching or bored to death. I was having such a good time."

She later taught a football class for women at the Birmingham Community House. In addition to meeting with rousing popularity, it gave her a chance to stockpile her football knowledge.

Four years ago, she took a course on writing for publication and hit the word processor. It took her book about nine months to hit the 10,000 copies sold mark.

"Let's face it, football is a game you're either going to love or hate," she said. "If you read the book and still feel that you don't like the game, then forget it. But at least you tried."

So break out the runchies — and don't forget the dip — cuddle up to your significant other and watch the game(s). But, one thing. If at all possible, get control of the remote control. That way you'll get to see an entire game, instead of part of the game, some of a Winston Cup stock car race and a smidgeon of a movie.



From electronic board games to the real thing at the Pontiac Silverdome and her football autographed by members of the Detroit Lions, Donna Foehr is a football fan.

STEVE CANTRELL/staff photographer



An invitation to schools, libraries, churches and non-profit organizations in The Observer & Eccentric Circulation area.

You can help spread the message of a safe and happy holiday season for all. For the second year, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers have joined efforts with the Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) by distributing red ribbons in all of their newspapers during Thanksgiving week. The red ribbons are a reminder for all not to drink and drive. An extra supply of red ribbons were ordered this year.

If your group would like a supply of red ribbons to distribute, call our Promotion Department at 591-2300 Ext. 441. Supplies are limited.

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