

## **A Gatlinburg Tradition since 1972**

Established in 1972, the Gatlinburg Thanksgiving Bowl has been bringing high quality football teams to the Great Smoky Mountains for over forty years. Originally, the games were held at Gatlinburg Pittman High School, but as the tournament grew, the tournament spread to Mills Park in the 1990's.

Beginning in 2014, the Gatlinburg Thanksgiving Bowl is now hosted by Rocky Top Sports World in partnership with the Gatlinburg Highlanders Youth Athletic Association (GHYAA). Almost forty teams from ten states were involved in the 2014 tournament. These teams, along with their families and friends, enjoyed a great weekend of football and fun in the Great Smoky Mountains.

Beginning on Thanksgiving Day and continuing through Saturday, the tournament creates a high paced, high action event, not only for the players and coaches, but for their families as well. At the end of the tournament the winning team is awarded the National Championship trophy. Teams come from all over to participate in this event: Kentucky, Ohio, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and throughout Tennessee. The tournament can boast that throughout the years, Turkey Bowl alumni have gone on to play in a bigger arena - the NFL!

Those players include:

Mike Alstott, Ron Ninkovich, and Eric Steinbach who played for the New Lenox Mustangs

Steve Breaston, Lousaka Polite, and Shawnter Spenser of the Woodland Hills Wolverines.