



The History of the International Games at the Pop Warner Super Bowl

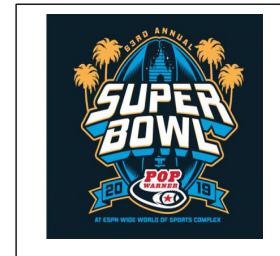
Since 2010, Global Football has partnered with Pop Warner to provide American football youngsters from around the world with an opportunity to participate at the youth organization's annual Super Bowl event.



As Global Football celebrates its 25th anniversary, 2020 will be the 11th time that groups of enthusiastic young players, coaches, parents, families and friends from such nations as Canada, Finland, Mexico, Panama and the United Arab Emirates make the trip of a lifetime to the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Florida to take part in the International Super Bowl.

Away from the field of competition, they enjoy additional sporting pursuits and all the excitement of the Disney theme parks and Central Florida's welcoming warm weather, while interacting with thousands of other football enthusiasts.

In 2019, four returning Varsity-aged teams from Canada, Mexico Oriente, MX Football and Mexico Queretaro competed in an international bracket, while Oriente and Queretaro also faced American opposition from Mid Florida Pop Warner. The Panama Sharks Junior Varsity team from the Kiwanis Club of Panama also matched up against local Florida-based teams, the Oviedo Lions and East Manatee Bulldogs.



An indication of how much international teams have progressed as a result of participating at the Pop Warner Super Bowl came when both Queretaro and the Sharks won against American opponents.



In 2018, the Varsity and Junior Varsity teams from Panama emerged triumphant from the ninth annual Pop Warner Super Bowl international games. The Panama Sharks finished with a 2-0 record at the Varsity level as they won their final game 18-0 against Queretaro Mexico, having opened with a 20-0 win over Mexico Oriente. Queretaro finished with a 1-1 record having won the battle with fellow Mexicans Oriente 33-6. In the Junior Varsity Division, the Sharks twice beat Finland by 43 points, while Oriente became the first international team to take on American opposition and put up a brave fight, eventually losing 32-6 to a more experienced Harmony Longhorns team from Florida.

In **2017**, the Finland Blue Lions won the Varsity Division of the Pop Warner International Super Bowl in Orlando, Florida, in only the European team's second time entering the eight-year-old tournament. In the Junior Varsity section, Oro y Azul posted wins of 20-7 and 14-7 over Team Mexico to claim the championship at the younger age group.



The Finns and Mexico's Queretaro were the competition's only unbeaten Varsity teams going into the weekend's winner-takes-all final and it was the Blue Lions who emerged as 24-6 victors, to post an overall 3-0 record.

Queretaro finished the event at 2-1, along with Oro y Azul, who claimed their second win in three games with a 20-point shutout of the EAFL Falcons from the UAE, who finished the week's action with an 0-3 record. Team Mexico and Panteras tied 14-14 and both finished with a 1-1-1 record.



In **2016**, the third time competing at ESPN's Wide World of Sports was a charm for both Queretaro of Mexico and the EAFL Falcons from the United Arab Emirates as each claimed a Pop Warner International Super Bowl championship for the first time.

Queretaro finished with a 2-0 record in the Varsity division and took the title by virtue of an unbeaten record and Thursday's win over Canada. JV champion EAFL was the only unbeaten team at that level with a 3-0 record.

The Finland Blue Lions celebrated its nation's first visit to the Pop Warner International Super Bowl with a win at both the Varsity and JV levels, beating EAFL 18-0 and Puebla 18-9 respectively.



2015 saw a Canadian team retain the sixth annual International Bowl Midget Division title with a hard-fought 8-6 win over Mexico Azul. The Canadians, whose team has participated in every year of the international games, held an 8-0 halftime lead they managed to protect, while cheered on by large traveling support, despite a determined comeback attempt launched by Azul.

Mexico scored on an 80-yard touchdown run with 3:36 remaining, but the extra point kick, worth two points under Pop Warner rules, was blocked, denying overtime and sealing the win for Canada. Mexico City, winless before Saturday's final games, secured victories in both the Midget and Junior Midget categories, beating Queretaro 6-0 in the Midget age group and then the EAFL Falcons 9-6 in the Junior Midget Division.

Mexico Azul's younger team claimed the Junior Midget title in dramatic style with a 70-yard touchdown pass as time expired, having trailed the EAFL Falcons 7-0. Azul won the game and the division with a two-point kick, while the Falcons took the runners up spot over Mexico City.

In **2014**, Mexican team Toluca emerged unbeaten to be crowned champions of the International Bowl Midget division. A record number of nine international teams traveled to Florida and for the first time, the United Arab Emirates was represented at the 58th prestigious annual event, alongside regular regular competitors from Canada and Mexico.



Toluca posted a 3-0 record with a 29-0 victory over Queretaro, adding to wins earlier in the week over the Emirates American Football League Falcons from UAE and fellow Mexicans Puebla. Mexico City posted a final record of 2-1 having blanked the previously unbeaten Team Canada 26-0 on Saturday, while Puebla also finished at 2-1 by beating the EAFL Falcons 26-0. In the Junior Midget division, Mexico City and Puebla were both unbeaten with 2-0 records, with EAFL finishing 0-2 on their first venture at the Pop Warner Super Bowl.

The championship remained north of the border in **2013** as Canada East had too much firepower for their Canada West rivals and stormed to a 36-point shutout victory in the final of the championship game.



Canada East (3-0) controlled the line of scrimmage against Canada West (2-1) and their dominant running game proved the difference after both teams had entered the final with a 2-0 record and 54 points scored.

The games featuring teams with a 1-1 record going into the finale saw Mexico I (2-1) edge a Toluca (1-2) team that was involved in three close games this week by a score of 18-14.

Toluca, who won their opening game 26-20 in overtime and lost a heartbreaker in the second round in the dying minutes to a late touchdown were edged out again despite some impressive passing displays. Panama (2-1) won for the second straight game, beating Queretaro (1-2) from Mexico 28-6 to tie for third overall in the final standings. Completing the final day of games, Puebla (1-2) beat the international section's youngest team Mexico 2 (0-3) with 34 unanswered points against FEDEMAC.



In **2012**, the Canadian all-star team selected from across Ontario triumphed, having been dominant throughout the event after surviving a brief scare in a 12-6 opening game win over the eventual second-placed Puebla from Mexico. Puebla recorded a 2-1 finish, with their athleticism proving too much for all but the Canadians.

FADEMAC produced an inspired performance against Canada but had committed too many turnovers in an earlier loss to Puebla, so finished third with a 1-2 mark. Despite drawing from a squad of only 14 players, fellow Mexican team Xalapa fought hard in every game, finishing 0-3.

In **2011**, the Marlins from Panama won the International Friendship Bowl gold medal with a thrilling 22-14 overtime victory over Team Ontario from Canada at the 55th annual Pop Warner Super Bowl.

In the Bronze Medal battle between two Mexican teams, Tec CEM came out on top against Tec Puebla with a 36-point shutout. The Team Ontario Midgets played in an uncategorized game against New England, losing 43-13, having won earlier in the week against Mid-America. Panama's Marlins had defeated Tec Puebla 28-0 on Thursday and scored a combined 62 points and conceded only six on their way to the final. Their Canadian opposition saw off the challenge of Tec CEM by a score of 38-0 on Thursday.



The Global Football-organized international division of the Pop Warner Super Bowl kicked off in **2010** with Canada's representatives emerging as winners over Mexico.