

Battle of the Big Butts: Prep grid linemen to compete in 8 contests

One of Illinois' top summer contests for prep football linemen, "Battle of the Big Butts Lineman Challenge," will pit players from about 20 Chicago-area high schools against each other at 3 p.m. Friday, July 21, at West Aurora High School, 1877 W. Downer Place in Aurora.

The public is invited. Admission is free.

Mike Runge, West Aurora offensive line coach, directs the 19th annual contest. Varsity and fresh-soph teams will compete in eight events:

1. Bench press: Varsity: 185 lbs.; Frosh/Soph: 135 lbs. Total reps=team score.
2. 40-yard dash: teams will run at the same time. Total time=team score.
3. Medicine ball throw: (2 throws, best one counts) Total distance is the team score.
4. Agility run: Chutes, bags, cones, hurdle, ladders. Total time is the team score.
5. Tractor-tire relay: Each team will flip a tire for 10 yards. Time is team score.
6. 5-man sled drive: Teams will drive a sled for 5 seconds.
7. Tug of war: Pool play, double elimination.
8. Watermelon eating race: 1 man against the clock (non-scoring event).

Runge said, "Offensive and defensive skill players have many opportunities to show their stuff during summertime 7-on-7 camps. Linemen do not."

"Mike Powers, former West Aurora offensive line coach remedied this while serving as Buck Drach's line coach at St. Charles High School. When Drach took over at West Aurora, Powers brought the competition with him.

"Until his retirement after last season, Powers maintained the challenge during Blackhawks' Coach Nate Eimer's tenure at West Aurora,"

The 2016 challenge was canceled due to excessive heat.

For more information, email mrunge@sd129.org or neimer@sd129.org.

PHOTO: St. Charles High School linemen compete in the 2014 tractor-tire relay at West Aurora High School's Battle of the Big Butts Lineman Challenge. (Al Benson photo)

