

Tyler Polumbus Dedicates Season to Children

{ Polumbus will be donating funds to children affected by a parent's cancer with every pancake block he delivers. }

Author: Via Camp Kesem

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Tyler Polumbus, right tackle for the Washington Redskins, announced today with Camp Kesem, a national network of free summer camps and supper programs for children affected by a parent's cancer, the launch of "Scoring for Good" – a novel fundraising program that will send children to Camp Kesem every time participating NFL players make a qualifying play. Polumbus will donate funds to send kids to a new camp in Colorado, corresponding with the pancake blocks he makes during the 2013 season.

"Scoring for Good" will allow donors to match Polumbus's contributions, and encourages other NFL players to join the effort. SF 49ers outside linebacker Aldon Smith is also participating. "Camp Kesem is doing amazing work, helping an often-overlooked population of kids," said Polumbus. "Getting a chance to play and have fun is so important for children, and so for this season, as I score pancakes, I will help send kids to Camp Kesem. My true passion is helping kids realize their potential, and so I am thrilled to join Scoring for Good."

"We are so grateful for Tyler Polumbus' and the Tyler's Kids Outreach Program's support in launching 'Scoring for Good,'" said Jane Saccaro, Camp Kesem CEO. "We have a big job to do, as there are more than 3 million children living with a parent who has cancer, and far many more that have lost a parent to cancer. Tyler and TKO's support will help us bring more life-altering services to kids in need, and also help more families learn that this resource exists."

Saccaro also shares, "Camp Kesem will host its first Boulder, Colorado based program in summer 2014, and funds raised by Tyler and his fans will go to support this expansion."

It costs Camp Kesem \$1,000 to give a child one year's worth of support, including attending 1 week of summer camp and year-round reunions with their network of friends "just like them." For \$5,000, Camp Kesem can support an entire cabin. Camp Kesem will engage its donors in making contributions to Camp Kesem for every sack, every pancake, and for every touchdown scored, by participating NFL players. Players have the option to donate their own funds through "Scoring for Good" as well.

About Camp Kesem

The ever-expanding Camp Kesem provides children affected by a parent's cancer with a supportive, lifelong camp community that recognizes and understands their unique needs. Since its establishment in 2000, Camp Kesem has provided over 5,000 children ages 6-16 with free, college-student run camps, offering the chance to escape from reality and an opportunity to just be kids. Camp Kesem currently has programs at 41 campuses, and will expand to 54 campuses by summer 2014. In addition to non-stop excitement and laughs, Camp Kesem campers are provided with an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to engage in a much needed emotional support system. Camp Kesem operates off donations and community support and requires no cost to families and children attending. Programs like "Scoring for Good," are extremely important to the expansion and continuation of these camps. For more information on Camp Kesem, please visit www.CampKesem.org or call 260-225-3736.



Packers roster glance: Special teams

Mason Crosby tries to keep level head after disastrous season

By [Rob Reischel](#), for the Journal Sentinel
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Green Bay — So much has happened since the summer of 2007 for Mason Crosby.

There have been game-winning kicks. Several costly late-game misses. A Super Bowl championship in the 2010 season. And a 2012 campaign that was worse than any Green Bay Packers kicker in 24 years.

Now, as Crosby tries to save his career in Green Bay, he hopes to turn back the clock.

Six years ago, Crosby — a rookie — and incumbent Dave Rayner went head-to-head in a heated training camp battle. Crosby made 101 of 118 field goal attempts that summer (85.6%) and edged Rayner (95-of-117, 81.2%) for the job.

For the first time since 2007, Crosby's job is on the line. He'll face competition from street free agent Giorgio Tavecchio and presumably any kicker in the NFL that winds up on the street.

"Obviously I excelled then and I'm planning on doing that again," Crosby said of his 2007 battle with Rayner. "This offseason I feel like that's happening and I feel good with it.

"I'm thankful for competition, I always am and I think that's good. That's how guys grow. Throughout this whole team that's how we're all going to grow is by looking at the guy next to you, competing, and going out and trying to get better."

Crosby's a bright individual. He knows if he doesn't get better, someone else will have his job soon.

Crosby made just 21 of 33 field goals a year ago, a miserable percentage of 63.6. The last time Green Bay had its primary kicker connect at a poorer clip was Max Zendejas in 1988 (56.3%).

Twenty six kickers in the league made at least 80% of their attempts last season, including eight who eclipsed 90%. Only six teams had their main kicker below 80%, with Crosby bringing up the rear. In fact, of the NFL kickers with at least 10 field goal attempts, Crosby's percentage ranked 35th.

Packers coach Mike McCarthy didn't do Crosby any favors. Crosby went just 2 of 9 from beyond 50 yards (22.2%) and 19 of 24 on all other kicks (79.2%).

On the flip side, though, Crosby's nightmarish percentage on lengthy kicks simply doesn't cut it in today's NFL. So enter Tavecchio — and perhaps someone else — if Crosby fails to deliver.

"I've had this job for six years now, and when someone comes in, it's the job that I want and the job I want to have and I'm going to compete for it and I'm going to play for it every day," said Crosby, a sixth round draft pick in 2007. "Regardless if there's a guy here or not, that's what I'm doing.

"I'm always competing, always trying to get better and always trying to be the best I can in my job. And that's my focus. If Giorgio's hitting the ball well, then it's up to me to do even better."

Crosby, who is entering the third season of a five-year, \$14.75 million contract, has never been one of the NFL's top marksmen. Still, his 2012 slide was something no one saw coming.

During Crosby's first five seasons (including playoffs), he made 139 of 175 field goals (79.4%). He ranked 24th in field goal accuracy his rookie season of 2007, then 26th, 23rd, 22nd and 10th.

A year ago, Crosby endured a brutal stretch when he went 12 of 24 (50%). He also went nine consecutive games with at least one miss.

Crosby tried not overhauling anything this off-season. Instead, he tried to focus on what's worked in the past, while fine-tuning the other elements of his game.

"I have a long track record of doing things the right way," said Crosby, who's made 76.8% of his career kicks. "So for me, I just stuck to the things that worked well.

"I do that every off-season. I fine tune everything. I look at everything that happened and just move on. And I'm in 2013 now. I'm just trying to get ready for the season and for training camp and trying to be prepared for a great one."

First, he'll have to hold off Tavecchio and perhaps others.

Tavecchio, born in Milan, Italy, made 48 of 64 (75%) kicks at the University of California. But he also missed nine extra points during his four seasons with the Bears, including six his senior year.

The left-footed Tavecchio spent last summer in the San Francisco 49ers' training camp, but lost out to David Akers. Tavecchio got a part-time job at Cal last season, kept working out at the university, and was ready when the Packers brought him in for a tryout in March.

"After all the feedback from last year, I just decided to stick with it," Tavecchio said. "And I was fortunate enough to be on good terms with the athletic department back at Berkeley...and keep on living this dream as long as I could. I came up here for a workout and I feel very blessed to have been given a locker at Lambeau Field. That's something I can tell my grandkids about someday."

The rest of Green Bay's special teams were solid in 2012 and helped the Packers finish 12th in the Dallas Morning News' annual ranking of special teams units.

Punter Tim Masthay ranked 21st in net average (38.9) last season, 27th in gross average (43.5) and sixth in inside-the-20 percentage (42.9%). Masthay's net average was Green Bay's best in 39 years.

Return ace Randall Cobb was terrific and helped Green Bay finish 10th in the NFL in kickoff returns (25.0) and eighth in punt returns (11.0). Cobb will have a bigger role at receiver in 2013, though, and might be taken off special teams.

Green Bay ranked 18th in opponent kickoff return average last year, eighth in punt return average and tied for seventh in punts inside the 20. Long snapper Brett Goode was also a rock.

But as training camp unfolds, all eyes will be on Crosby — and his attempt to recapture past magic.

"I try not to get too high or too low and that's certainly worked well throughout my career," Crosby said. "I'll just continue to have that mindset of go out, perform, hit the ball the way I hit it, evaluate it and move onto the next one.

"For me it's about the process and doing things the right way and my strength mentally is not getting too high or too low with situations. Stay in the moment because those fluctuations can wreak havoc. I kind of stay even keel and make sure I take care of my business every day."

If he doesn't, someone else will soon have his job.

This story appeared in our weekly Packer Plus Magazine.

Find this article at:

<http://www.jsonline.com/sports/packers/mason-crosby-tries-to-keep-level-head-after-disastrous-season-b9957396z1-216686771.html>



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