

Gridiron invasion: bring it on

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The Super Bowl stops the American nation every year, so it is little surprise that the sport of gridiron is invading our suburbs.

Bring It On Sports director Paul Manera, a former University of Hawaii gridiron player and Australian national head coach, is the founder of a new junior gridiron competition in the south-eastern suburbs of Sydney.

The purpose of the competition is to increase the participation in American football and provide a pathway for children to go on to play in their local Sydney gridiron competition as well as NSW and Australia, Manera said.

"We really want to develop a grassroots program that allows youngsters to get involved in a game that is

Kristina Poulos, Luca Brundu and Christian Dunne, from Chifley and Mascot, get ready to rumble.

not readily available to them," he said.

"This in turn will build a base for the sport and ensure the future growth of it within Australia."

The program will focus on ages six to 17, and girls and boys will be taught the basics through a non-contact "flag gridiron game".

"It is very similar to Oztag, except we will be using gridiron rules, plays and moves so that the kids' skills base is increased. The players will then have the option, once they are competent, to move into the tackle gridiron game. Everyone will be playing in full padding that includes shoulder pads, mouthguards and helmets," he said.

The senior national team, the Australian Outbacks, is ranked in the top 15 countries out of 50 who will compete in the American football World Cup.

For more information on the junior gridiron competition contact Bring It On Sports at info@bringitonsports.com.au.

