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MEDIA RELEASE

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Action Sports Medicine - Champions Classic's 7th year Puts Area Teams in the Spotlight

The field is set for the 2011 Action Sports Medicine Champions Classic at Shotwell Stadium in Abilene, Texas. The event is back to Zero Week this year after a stint at Week One in 2010.

The Stamford Bulldogs and Munday Moguls get the action kicked off Thursday night, August 25th, with a game between two of the Big Country's toughest Class 1A teams. Coach Wayne Hutchinson's Bulldogs return 3 starters on both sides of the ball including quarterback Haden Hutchinson who accounted for 39 total touchdowns as a sophomore last season. The 2010 state finalist Munday Moguls bring back nine offensive starters and seven defensive starters including Dave Campbell's *Texas Football Magazine* preseason defensive MVP for district 8-1A Blanford Paul.

That's followed Friday night, the 26th, with the always powerful Abilene High Eagles hosting El Paso Hanks. This will be the Warbirds' 6th appearance in the annual event, missing only the 2006 version. A fresh offensive backfield for the Eagles will be led by running back Paxton Grayer who had 17 TDs last season. Along with all the fresh faces are some recognizable returners including Jake McMillon, who stood out last year as the only freshman during Coach Warren's tenure to start on varsity. Hanks comes into the 2011 season with 14 returning starters including speedy wide receiver Patrick Pettis who accounted for more than 475 yards and seven touchdowns in 2010. In the Champions Classic Abilene High has averaged more than 43 points per game and has never lost at the Classic.

The finale is Saturday night as the Merkel Badgers and Colorado City Wolves meet on the field. Both Class 2A powers made it to the playoffs last season. Coach Keith Mullins Badgers return seven offensive starter as well as seven on the defensive side of the ball. Running back Frankie Harris is poised for a great year after being named preseason offensive MVP by *Dave Campbell's Texas Football*. The Wolves of Colorado City also return numerous starters from their 2010 regional semifinal team. QB/DB Derek Gainey returns as a two-year starter to lead the Wolves into the 2011 campaign. The defense is anchored by DT Rafael Gonzales. The game promises to be a real slugfest for both teams.

The Classic is entering its 7th year and is promoted by the Sports Alliance, a committee of the Abilene Convention and Visitors Bureau, which is an affiliate of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce. The Sports Alliance was formed to increase the economic impact in the Abilene community through sporting events. One goal is to raise money for scholarships awarded each year to graduating seniors from each of the local high schools. To date, the Sports Alliance has awarded \$54,000 in scholarships to graduating seniors from Abilene High, Cooper High, Wylie High and Abilene Christian High schools. These funds have been generated primarily by the success of the Action Sports Medicine Champions Classic.