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McEldowney finishes on top of River News Pigskin Pick'em Board



Todd McEldowney receives congratulations from River News associate editor Jeremy Mayo for winning the 2013-14 River News Pigskin Pick'em football prediction board. McEldowney won \$500 for charity, which he said would go toward the Hodag School Foundation's proposed renovation of the press box at Mike Webster Stadium, which will be rededicated in honor of Todd's father, Todd Sr., a longtime Rhineland educator and Hodag sports broadcaster. (Andy Hildebrand/River News)

The five-month professional football season is a long one and for the participants of this year's Pigskin Pick'em Football Board, it proved to be an up and down affair.

The 10-person panel was made up of people from around the community including defending champion Ed Orlikowski from the Claridge Days Inn, Lara Reed of Ministry Medical Group and our own Jeremy Mayo.

When the dust settled though, it wasn't only the Seahawks taking how the crown. Todd McEldowney won with an overall record of 174-92-1, knocking off Orlikowski and claiming his spot on top of the heap in the process.

McEldowney said he might have had some celestial help.

"My strategy was divine intervention," he said. "I was looking up to the heavens for my father's guidance when I was picking."

With the title comes a \$500 prize. McEldowney said he is putting the money toward a project that's very near to his heart.

"The charity I picked was the facilities foundation so we can use the money in part to build a press box at Mike Webster Stadium in my father's name," he said.

It was a competitive year overall, although McEldowney said he wasn't gunning for anyone in particular.

That may change next year though. Mayo has already started the trash talk, claiming he's going to claim the top spot for himself.

"Two years without a title is long enough," Mayo, who finished in a three-way tie for second with Oneida County Sheriff Grady Hartman and online contest winner Dennis Sievert, said, lightheartedly. "Congrats to Todd on his title and thanks to all the other board members for playing, but next year I'm bringing the title back to the River News office."

McEldowney wasn't fazed though.

"I'm not worried," he said. "I'm 100 percent confident that I repeat."

Other board members were Josh Clark of Culver's in Rhineland, Joe Dufek of WJFW-TV, Mike Michalak of NorthPro Video and WHDG-FM and the Shadow - Brian Cline of RMM Solutions and the son-in-law of a River News employee.

As the champion, McEldowney receives an automatic invitation to return to the prediction board next year,

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along with Mayo, the River News representative, and Rob Wadd of Billings, Mt., who won this year's online contest. The remaining board members will be announced prior to the first week of next fall's pro football season.

Andy Hildebrand may be reached at andy@rivernewsline.com.

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