

Monroe County Youth Football Association
Rules for 2015

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Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Monroe County Youth Football Association (MCYFA) is to maintain a properly supervised football program for children ages 6 through 12 within Monroe and surrounding counties. These goals as created by the board of directors are in the following order of priority:



- To create a safe learning environment.
- To see that all children have fun while participating through games, practices, or any events.
- To teach the fundamentals of football with an emphasis on blocking and tackling.
- To see that every child who participates on our program is coached well and shows improvement.
- To exercise a competitive spirit through good sportsmanship.

Section 1: Player Requirements

Full Uniform Flag Football League (FUFFL) is for players who are at least 6 years of age by the first week of September, will not reach the age of 9 prior to November 1 following the season and are in 1st and 2nd grade.

American Football League (AFL) is for players who are at least 8 by the first week of September, will not reach the age of 11 prior to November 1 following the season and are in 3rd and 4th grade.

National Football League (NFL) is for players who are at least 10 years of age by the first week of September, will not reach the age of 13 by November 1 of the year following the season and are in 5th and 6th grade.

In order to provide a maximum opportunity for all youths to participate in organized football, no one may play in the league if their school provides an organized football program.

An extra year may be given for a player under 65 pounds in the AFL, pending a written request from a parent or guardian to the board. That player may not carry the ball. With board approval a player may be granted an extra year in the intro league. These requests must be in writing and must be presented to the board prior to the night of the respective league draft.

Players in 2nd grade that have played tackle football in another youth football league may petition the board to play in the AFL.

Section 2: Weight Requirements

Any participant that exceeds ball carrying weight, and is known as a single black stripe player, cannot line up in any position that is eligible to receive a forward pass. An exception to this will be that anyone can line up as a punter in the AFL as the ball cannot be advanced. Any player exceeding the second weight limit (double stripe) will be restricted to playing as interior down lineman (center, guard, tackle or defensive end). The player must be in either three- or four point stance at the snap of the ball.

Striped players must either wear one or two horizontal black stripes on the front and backside of the helmet, unobstructed by decals. The stripes cannot be removed at any time throughout the playing season. If for any reason a black tape player gains possession of the ball during play the official will blow a whistle to signify the play is dead at the point of interception or fumble recovery. Coaches are responsible to ensure that all players display the proper tape stripes. Playing a player without proper striping may result in forfeiture of all games that the improperly striped player participated.

Weights Limits:

AFL: Ball Carrying Limit – 95 lbs. and under.

Single Stripe: Over 95 pounds-Cannot line up in any position eligible to receive a forward pass

Double Strip: Over 130 pounds-Restricted to interior line

NFL: Ball Carrying Limit – 125 lbs. and under.

Single Stripe: Over 125 pounds-Cannot line up in any position eligible to receive a forward pass

Down Lineman: Over 160 pounds-Restricted to interior line

Players must weigh at least 50 pounds to play in the NFL or AFL. Exemptions may be granted to this rule by a majority of the board of members voting via roll call.

If a player is determined to be a “striper”, they remain a “striper” for the rest of the season.

Section 3: Weigh-Ins for AFL & NFL

All players will be weighed in at registration. This will be for informational and draft purposed only. An additional informational weigh in can be held for any team which desires prior to the jamboree. The official weigh in for the season will be held prior to the first regular season game. All players must remove their shoulder pads and helmets. Football pants and cleats are optional; however players must wear at least a pair of shorts and t-shirt. Underwear only is not acceptable.

All players will be “striped” according to their weight. The coach will need to apply a black stripe to his player’s helmet on both front and back prior to the first game and record player eligibility for the opposing coach, board member on duty, and head official for the game.

There will be another weigh in prior to the first game of the play-off tournament for each team. The same procedure will be used as the first weigh in.

Players in AFL and NFL are allowed to gain up to five pounds during the regular season. At weigh-ins before the playoffs, AFL ball carrying limit is 100 pounds; the NFL ball carrying limit is 130 pounds.

If during the season the Board of Directors decide there are questions about the weight of any given player, they may request said players/s be weighed. This is up to the total discretion of the Board of Directors. If a player is found to be striped incorrectly at that time, changes will be made to correctly stripe said player/s.

Section 4: Participants Changing Teams

Players who are registered prior to midnight of league evaluation night will be placed on the team they previously played for unless their age/grade requirements place them in a league different from their previous year's team or in the event a previous year's team is dissolved through registration requirements. Any player who registers after that time will be placed based upon the order established draft night. This will be done to assure each team in the respective pool will have the same number of players if possible. All changes are subject to approval by a vote of the board of directors. If the Board of Directors feels players registered late intentionally to change the leagues balance of competition, they may place players as they deem appropriate to maintain league competitive balance.

Section 5: Registration of Participants

The Board of Directors will announce the registration period prior to the start of the season. The final day of registration will be the end of enrollment and registration will be closed and skills evaluation will begin. However, the MCYFA Board of Directors retains the right to extend and/or reopen the registration period, if just cause prevails.

Registration will be held under the following guidelines:

- Any youth wishing to play football will be required to prove age via birth certificates and school district via previous year report cards.
- There will be a weigh-in of each youth at registration.
- At registration, all youths must pay a registration fee, which is determined each year by the Board of Directors.
- Each youth will be issued a helmet, shoulder pads, and jersey to participate.

No player is allowed to participate in any MCYFA practices or games prior to being officially registered (with registration fees paid). All players must be on the official team rosters prior to practicing. Exemptions must be approved in writing by the MCYFA Board. Non-compliance with this rule may result in a coach(s) being suspended from the league

The league will make every appropriate effort to fit all players with properly fitting and safe equipment. However, MCYFA is not responsible if a participant cannot be fitted correctly for any reason. The team coach will be responsible for ensuring that equipment is returned at the end of the season.

A coach, assistant coach or representative from each team will be required to participate in registration procedures.

Section 6: Placement of Youths/Participants on Teams

Skills Evaluation – All youths who register will participate in a skills evaluation. All Coaches will be given a listing of all youths registered in their league. This listing will be used to grade the youths and aid the coaches in the player draft. Each player will go through a series of drills for the purpose of judging his or her abilities. These drills are at the discretion of participating coaches.

Any youth who participated in the program the previous year will be automatically placed on the same MCYFA team in the current year, if the youth meets all requirements needed to be placed in the same league as the previous year **and they are registered prior to midnight of the skills evaluation night**. No youth will be automatically placed on a team to participate, unless they are considered designated players or sibling options.

Designate – The Designee/Option policy is as follows: The head coach gets his child (or the child of which he is the legal guardian) automatically. If the head coach does not have a child on the team, the head coach may designate a player. In any case, designates replace a team's first round draft pick and remains with the team. Coaches must select their child in the first round of the draft for his/her grade/age level.

Sibling Option – Any youth entering the AFL or NFL league that has a brother or sister already playing for a given team in that league, will automatically go to that team. Also in the course of player draft, a team picking one of a set of siblings in the open draft will automatically get all other siblings of the selected youth. The additional sibling(s) will count as the next succeeding draft choice(s).

Section 7: AFL & NFL Player Draft Procedure

The player draft will be conducted and overseen by the Board of Directors. A draft cannot be executed without a board member present. The participating board member will resolve all questions and problems that might occur. Any coach not represented at the player draft will have random players drawn for them by a nonpartisan board member whose judgment and choices will not be questioned.

The draft will proceed as follows:

The Board of Directors will provide the naming and placing of all returning players to their respective teams. This will also include the listing of the head coaches and siblings of other players. The designated player will be assigned to the appropriate team immediately before the start of the draft and removed from the draft pool.

A list of players eligible for the draft will be provided to each coach prior to skills evaluation and the draft. The list will be arranged by birth date and divided into two pools from each high school district. The AFL pools will consist of: (A) draftees who have turned 9 prior to the June 1st preceding the season and (B) all others (generally 7 and 8 year olds). The NFL pools will consist of: (A) draftees who have turned 11 or 12 prior to the June 1st preceding the season and (B) all others (generally 10 year olds).

The pools will be consistent with the league wording in section 1.

The Board of Directors will provide a written draft count tallying all participating players eligible for selection. This list will include returning players and players open for selection. This number will indicate which round a team will enter and exit a draft round. All teams will receive a first round and second round draft choice. The third round will begin catch up rounds for teams with fewer players. Other teams will re-enter draft once teams with fewer players have selected enough players to make the number of participating players even on all teams.

Draftees NOT attending the skills evaluation: The draft is used primarily to provide a balance of experience and talent on league teams thereby providing parity in competition and enhance enjoyment for our participants. Often players are unable to attend skills evaluation. In order to reduce the possibilities that players not present may be unequally distributed, an attempt will be made to rate absent players. The rating and discussion is done to assist coaches (who may not know a player) gain some understanding of the player's experience and abilities.

Prior to the draft, all draftees who did not attend the skills evaluation will be reviewed and rated, if possible, by all head coaches in attendance. If possible the absent draftees will be rated as draft- eligible players by a majority of the head coaches present. If at least a majority of the present head coaches are able to rate a player and discuss his abilities, the player will be placed in the draft. Those players who are not capable of being rated by at least a majority of the head coaches present will be assigned to a blind draw after the draft as discussed below.

Players will be broken into draft groups based upon their districted school in their home school corporation. Students who attend private school or a different school from the school their home address would be assigned to will be placed in the draft according to where they would be assigned to school. Players with parents or guardians living in multiple school districts will be assigned to the player pool for where they attend school. The MCYFA board will have final say on situations in dispute.

Teams shall be capped when they reach 18 players. At that time, remaining players or new registrations in that school pool shall be allowed to fill other pools until all teams have reached a maximum of 18 players. This fill will start with the pool that has the fewest number of players. The leagues ultimate goal is to have all teams with an equal number of players.

Order of draft:

Newly-formed teams (expansion teams) or teams with no returning players will receive an exclusive first pick prior to the first round beginning the order of which will be determined by a blind draw by a nonpartisan board member.

Each team shall have one first round (unless a designated player selection is used from the Pool A draftees) with the order of selection to be determined by a blind draw or coin toss when applicable. This draw will be the order of the draft. All teams shall receive a second round pick (unless a designated player selection is used from the Pool B draftees). The first round pick must be made from the older pool of draftees (Pool A). The second pick must be made from the younger pool of draftees (Pool B).

Each team (both returning and expansion teams), gets one choice per round, an alternating sequence is used for each round after the first round. Draft procedures may be altered, due to the number of youths available.

After the first and second round all draft choices must be made from the older pool of draftees (Pool A) and once the older pool is exhausted, the players the younger pool of draftees (Pool B) will be selected. Unless waiting to "catch-up" and re-enter the draft, a coach must select in each round. He may not "pass".

Only one coach may be involved in the draft until or unless their child is on the team. Head coaches may not have projected assistant coaches with them during the draft. In any case no more than two coaches may be in the draft meeting for any team.

Once the director conducting the draft announces that a team is eligible to select, the coach must announce a draft selection within three minutes. Failure to select within three minutes will cause the board member to select on behalf of the team a draftee from the appropriate age pool. After all youths who attended the skills evaluation or those not attending but are rated, are selected, the draft for non-attending, non-rated players will continue in order using a blind draw. The blind draw will take place after each age group pool.

Players registering late will be assigned by blind draw in the continuing draft order. This draw will take place immediately after late registration. Players may be allowed on to a team after final registration day at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

*** Special Note on SECTION 7 – Board of Directors retains the right to alter any and all aspects of the skills evaluation and/or player draft in order to overcome any unplanned or unforeseen obstacles that may occur.

Section 8: Practices and Games

Practice – American and National League team practices start at least two weeks prior to the first scheduled game. Practices shall not exceed two hours in duration. Practices during those two weeks shall be limited to one per day and no more than five per week.

After those two weeks MCYFA teams are limited to three contacts per week. MCYFA will consider a week to begin on Sunday and end on Saturday. After preseason camp has ended, teams are allowed three contacts per week. The exception to this would be when they have a weeknight game they are allowed one additional contact that week for no longer than ninety minutes. This contact must be a noncontact shorts/helmets type of practice.

Evening practice sessions shall not begin before 5:00 p.m. and must terminate no later than 15 minutes after sundown as designated by the Herald Times, the Weather Channel, or listed on the MCYFA Web page. These time limitations apply to indoor and outdoor practices. No artificial lighting may be used to conduct outdoor practices. This is an extraordinarily dangerous situation. Coaches will receive a one-game suspension if practices occur beyond curfew time. Friday and Sunday practices are not allowed. Extra practices are not allowed. Report any unauthorized practices to the MCYFA president.

The board may approve changes to the practice rules in order to accommodate post-season tournament schedules. Coaches should not assume these changes and unless otherwise informed should expect to follow the rules as stated above.

At the time of the player draft, each team will be asked to report which days of the week they will be practicing and times. This will assist our communication efforts when trying to find a coach at the right place and the right time. **The Board of Directors must approve practice sites.**

Games – If in the event there is a storm delay, the delay of the game may not last any longer than 30 minutes. If no more than two quarters have played then the game must be rescheduled. If two quarters have been played the game is considered final. If a game is canceled due to weather and rescheduled, the game will be considered a new game and played in its entirety.

Section 9: Schedules for the Season

Game schedules will be distributed to the coaches prior to the start of the season. The schedule shall show the playing time and location. Any association team may accept post-season invitational games from other football leagues, but the Board of Directors must approve participation. Each year there will be a league playoff to determine a league champion. Tournament brackets (seeded based on regular season record) will not be finalized until the last game of the regular season play. In case of a tie in the standings for any divisional or league playoff spot, the following tie-breaker format is used:

- Head to head competition
- Won/Loss record versus common opponents
- Defensive points allowed during the season
- Offensive points scored during the season
- Average point differential.

Section 10: Participating Coaches

All coaches will be chosen or approved on a yearly basis by methods determined by the Board of Directors. Head coaches and on-field assistants must submit an application each year. Other assistant coaches do not have to submit an application, but a list of coaches for each team must be submitted to and approved by the Board of Directors before the first seasonal game. All coaches must complete a back ground check prior to the start of practices

Each team must have one coach (head or on-field assistant) certified through USA Football. Age limits for coaches will be determined by the requirements of the certification program. The Board of Directors reserves the right to discipline or remove a coach from the association for the violation or misconduct in accordance with the rules of the league.

Coaches are responsible for ensuring that all participants wear mandatory equipment.

Coaches are responsible for maintaining and cleaning the field before, during and after games and practices.

Coaches are responsible for the sportsmanship of their fans. If an official stops play due to the actions of fans, including being past the fences, a time out shall be charged to the offending team.

A head coach can be suspended from one game for a single infraction. This would include all directives by the board of directors and the officers of the board of directors must approve any suspensions in majority. The board of directors reserves the right to discipline any coach in whatever measures they deem appropriate for the situation.

Any coach who is ejected from a game is automatically suspended for a minimum of one additional game. If the suspension is from a team's final game, the suspension would be served in the first game of the next season that coach returns to the MCYFA league.

Teams will be allowed no more than four assistant coaches in the coach's box during games. These coaches must be on the coaches' list submitted at the beginning of the season and approved by the board.

MCYFA does not allow any form of electronic communication during games. Any coach who is found to be using cell phones, radios, or any type of communication device during a game will be ejected. If the coach is not the head coach, the head coach will also be ejected.

The Board of Directors holds the right to amend or change any qualifications or requirements of coaches as needed to ensure the quality and integrity of the league.

Section 11: Game Officials

It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to arrange for a minimum of two licensed officials for each game and provide each official a copy of the MCYFA Rules and Regulations. All rules, unless stated differently, will be standard National Federation Football Rules. Officials are responsible for verifying the usage of mandatory equipment with the head coach. All officials will be under the direct supervision of an appointed board member who may not overrule a call, but will bring all pertinent matters before the rules infraction process governed by an appointed board member.

Section 12: Sideline Personnel (Field Marking Crew) & Scoreboard

The MCYFA will provide personnel to run the game clock and operate the scoreboard. The visiting team shall provide three adults (at least high school age) to run the down marker and the line to gain equipment. These adults must be selected and ready prior to the captain's meeting and the coin toss. Failure to results in a 15-yard penalty (NFL) or 12-yard penalty (AFL) at the start of the game and forfeiture of one time-out per half, including any overtime.

Section 13: Equipment

All MCYFA teams must be fully equipped with a complete line of high quality, league sponsored and league approved equipment for each participating youth. This includes all practice sessions, scrimmages, games, etc. The following equipment items are mandatory in all MCYFA divisions; failure to have all mandatory equipment means forfeiture of participation, as well as penalties as prescribed by the National Federation rulebook.

Helmet with 4 point chin strap, Shoulder pads, Hip pads, Thigh pads, Knee pads, Tail bone pad, Pants covering the knee, Teeth Protector.

The MCYFA also strongly recommends soft-cup athletic supporters and rubber-cleated shoes for quality participation. No metal or metal-tipped cleats are allowed.

Section 14: AFL and NFL Modified Youth Football Playing Rules

Kickoffs

American League (AFL) division will have no kickoffs prior to offensive possessions. A team's offensive possession will take place on their own 30- yard line to begin each offensive series at the start of the halves and after a score. After a safety, the ball will be placed at midfield.

Extra Points

The AFL will award 2 points for any extra point made after a touchdown from the 5-yard line and 1 point for any extra point made after a touchdown from the 2½ yard line. Extra point kicking is not allowed.

The NFL will reward 1 point for any extra point run after a touchdown from the 2½ yard line and 2 points for any extra point run after a touchdown from the 5- yard line. A successful extra point kick will be awarded 2 points.

Defense

Both divisions will have a defensive heads-up rule. Each defensive player must line up "heads up" on an interior offensive lineman and cannot play in a gap. Head up shall be defined as having at least ½ of the helmets overlapping. This shall be a judgment call of the officials and may not be contested by the coaches. This will encompass all defensive linemen. The defensive tackles are required to line up over the offensive guards and the

defensive ends have the option of lining head-up over the offensive tackles or ends. A down lineman may not cover an offensive player who is not lined up in the free blocking zone. All offenses must be balanced in the formation in that three people must be on the line of scrimmage on each side of the offensive center. Offensive guards and tackles cannot have any more than a two-foot split. Defenses will be allowed to match the number of offensive down lineman with a defensive down lineman and must have at least four down lineman. The AFL does not allow a nose tackle. The offensive center must be uncovered.

The penalty for any defensive violation will be enforced from the end of the run or the line of scrimmage; whichever benefits the offense the most.

Defensive backs and linebackers must be lined up a minimum of three (3) yards from the line of scrimmage and may not get any closer than three (3) yards from the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped. However, they will not be required to be more than one yard into their own end zone at any time. Only down defensive lineman may be within three yards of the line of scrimmage. They also cannot move closer until the snap of the ball. Failure to stay at least three yards off the ball will result in an encroachment penalty. The defensive backs may move only sideways or backwards. The penalty will be enforced from the end of the run or the line of scrimmage; whichever benefits the offense the most.

Coaches during Game Day

Both AFL and NFL will allow one coach on the playing field at all times. The coach is not considered part of the play and must make every attempt to avoid the action. If a coach interferes with the action the officials may enforce any penalty they deem fair to remedy the situation. This judgment is at the discretion of the game officials. Any field participating coach must be 10 yards deeper than the deepest man on his team.

Field coaches are not allowed to communicate with their players after the quarterback has begun his snap count. They may resume communication when the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage and can only use encouraging commentary. The penalty for an infraction of this rule is 15 yards, NFL, or 12 yards, AFL. These fouls would not automatically count towards a coach's disqualification.

Playing Field/Game Time/Overtime

Playing fields for NFL will be 100 yards goal line to goal line. Playing fields for the AFL will be 80 yards - goal line to goal line.

Both leagues will play eight-minute quarters. Overtimes will be conducted by Indiana High School Athletic Association Rules. Only one overtime period will be played during regular season games. Regular season games tied after one overtime period will be recorded as a tie. Playoff games will continue until a winner has been determined.

Punts

No rush will be allowed on punts in the AFL division. The AFL punter must line up at least five yards behind center. The center must "shotgun" snap the ball. If the ball is dropped, it must be kicked from where it is picked up. The play becomes live when the ball makes

contact with the kicker's foot. The NFL division will allow rush attempts on punts, but not on extra point attempts. Extra points and field goals will be attempted in the NFL without rush. However, the center must long-snap to the holder who must start out on one knee. The holder must catch the center snap without the ball touching the ground and place immediately on the place kicking tee for the kick. If the ball touches the ground in any manner prior to the kick the ball becomes dead and the down is over. The ball must be kicked within five seconds of the snap.

Clock

Both leagues will play eight-minute quarters. MCYFA will use a modification of NCAA timing rules. Until the last two minutes of a half, the game clock will start on the ready for play signal if stopped for an incomplete pass or an out of bounds play. Overtimes will be conducted by Indiana High School Athletic Association Rules. Only one overtime period will be played during regular season games. Regular season games tied after one overtime period will be recorded as a tie. Playoff games will continue until a winner has been determined.

Running clock

Running clock options – if for any reason a team is behind by 2 touchdowns and playing the 4th quarter of play, the losing coach can ask the officials for a continuous running clock. In order to remain on schedule, the officials will mandate a running clock once a team falls 18 points behind in the second half.

A team that is the beneficiary of a running clock forfeits their time outs for the half as well as the ability to throw a forward pass. If they attain of lead of 24 or more points, the team shall not use misdirection plays that go outside of the free blocking zone. This is a judgment call of the officials. The penalty would be returning the ball to the previous spot and the down would be lost. A team that is the beneficiary of a running clock may choose on 4th down in lieu of a punt to move the ball downfield 20 yards in the NFL and 16 yards in the AFL.

Penalties

AFL division will have reduced game penalties of 80% of the normal distance.

For each:

15 yard penalty – 12 yards will be assessed

10 yard penalty – 8 yards will be assessed

5 yard penalty – 4 yards will be assessed

Thunder and Lightning

The MCYFA will not allow any play (practices or games) during lightning or thunder. National Federation guidelines will determine the beginning or resumption of play after a stoppage due to thunder or lightning.

Section 15: Player Participation Rule

It is a league policy that all healthy players should play a minimum of 25% of the plays from scrimmage in a regulation length game. In order to practically monitor compliance with this policy, the following rules will apply:

- Each team member will be assigned to either an offensive unit or defensive unit before the start of each game. A player may be assigned to both an offensive and defensive unit. However, each player must play either all offensive or all defensive plays during both the 1st and 3rd quarters of a game (kickoffs and kickoff returns are excluded).
- In the event a player is injured during the first two quarters, the player will be released from having to play either all offensive or defensive plays until the league-appointed trainer has approved the player's return to the game. In the event the coach has determined that a player is unable to comply with this rule, the coach must obtain approval from the league president for each game or the board member on duty. In the event the individual is related to the coach, the city vice-president must approve suspension of this rule on a game-by-game basis. After obtaining league approval, the coach is responsible for informing the player's parents (guardians) that the league has waived the player's compliance with the Participation Rule.
- Enforcement of this rule will be monitored during each game. Accordingly, when the ball changes possession during the first half, all players on the bench must enter the game for playing all downs during the next series of downs.
- Before the start of the game, coaches will exchange a list of player numbers showing assignment to either offense or defense in the 1st and 3rd quarters for all players. Players should be assigned to only one team that will qualify them under the participation rule. However, a player may play on both offense and defense, but must play either all defense or offense plays for the unit to which they are assigned at the start of the game. Coaches may change 3rd quarter assignments during half time by notifying the opposing coach.
- Players may not be substituted during the 1st and 3rd quarters except for injury.
- An opposing coach, believing an infraction has occurred may request the director on duty or his designate to ask the referee to review the assignment sheet during a dead ball situation. Upon finding a violation, the referee will assess an unsportsmanlike penalty from the spot of the ball.
- Continued failure to comply with this rule will result in the executive board taking appropriate further action such as is warranted, but will at least involve the suspension of the coach for one game and forfeiture of the game in which the infractions occur. The executive board will consider appropriate further disciplinary action for the offending coach if warranted.

- If in the event any participating player has blood on his skin or jersey he will be removed from participation of the game. If the injury is to the participating player, the injury must be cleaned and completely covered. No blood can be visible. If blood is on a participating player's jersey it must be washed and ultimately approved for participation by the referee of the game.
- A player with an injury requiring a hard cast may play with written permission from a physician if the cast is padded to National Federation Rules specifications.
- If a player fails to attend multiple practices, coaches may petition the MCYFA Board for permission to limit a player's game participation. Please note this must be in advance of a game and must be in writing.

Section 16: Verification

This document covers the rules for the 2015 Monroe County Youth Football season. The Board of Directors holds the right to amend or change any of the existing rules. If any rules are changed during the season, it must be done through a board meeting and any changes or amendments must be submitted in writing to all directors and coaches of the association.

MCYFA FUFFL (Flag) Football Rules 2015

Philosophy

- FUFFL football is a game of skill and agility. It is not intended to be rough and physical. It is up to each individual coach to continually express this idea to each player. The objective is to teach the fundamentals of the game and to have fun!
- The FUFFL league is designed for 1st and 2nd graders only. Kindergartners may be allowed at the board's discretion
- FUFFL is an instructional non-competitive league that prepares players for the next level

Sportsmanship

- Players, coaches and spectators are expected to display good sportsmanship at all times. Unsportsmanlike conduct of any kind shall warrant dismissal from the game. This includes players and coaches. Any coach removed for unsportsmanlike conduct will not coach the rest of the season.

Player Equipment

- Helmet, Shoulder pads and pants with pads/integrated pads
- Any type of rubber soled shoe may be worn by players
- Rubber cleats are allowed (No Steel Cleats)
- No hard padding of any kind may be worn
- All players must wear a protective mouth piece that attaches to the helmets
- No player is allowed to play without properly fitted equipment

Field Size

- Goal Line to 30 yard line. Hash Marks to side line
- 4 quadrants will be used each game

Time Limits

- 25 minute non-stop halves. The clock runs continuously without stopping.
- 5 minute half-time
- 30 seconds between plays- 5 yard penalty if team exceeds 30 seconds between plays

Enforcement of the Rules

- Board member or an Official will officiate
- Each Coach will be accountable for reading the entire rules package

Responsibilities

- Referees will bring a watch, whistle and coin
- The referee will enforce the 30 second rule between downs and watch the offense while ruling out holding, illegal player down field, lining up off sides and spotting the ball
He/she will also keep time for time outs and announce the 2 minute warning
Additional tasks include verifying flags are outside of shirts and fully visible
- The referee will enforce the 5 minute half time period. In addition, he/she will watch the defensive lineman and defensive backs to rule out off sides,
 - pass interference, complete/ incomplete pass, out of bounds location and
 - spotting of the ball
- A head coach and two assistants for each team are allowed on the field for flag football

Time-outs

- One-1 minute time out per half. However, the clock still runs.
- The referee will call time out for injuries.
- No time outs will be granted during the two minute warning unless injuries exist

Size of Teams

- Maximum of Eight (8) players per team on the field at one time
- Minimum of five players. (Four or fewer players will be a forfeit=game is over)
 - If a team has only five players and the opposing team has seven, they are allowed to play their seven players as an advantage unless waived by the advantage teams head coach (Remember sportsmanship)

Playing Time

- Every player must play. Coaches should attempt to give all players equal playing time
- Free substitution is permitted
- Players must rotate carrying the ball. No player shall carry the ball for a 2nd time until all team members have carried the ball
- Strive to have each player play every position

Choice of Possession

- The referee will flip a coin
- The winner will choose to play offense or defense

Start of the Game

- To begin a game, the ball is placed on the 30 yard line. There are no kickoff's

Flags

- All flags must be worn outside of clothing and clearly visible. Shirts must be tucked in at all times
- If a flag is accidentally lost, that player becomes ineligible to handle the ball
- If a player without a flag handles the ball, the play is immediately dead

Downing the Ball

- In order to down a ball carrier, a flag must be clearly withdrawn from the waist by the defense
- The defensive person who pulled the flag must stop at that spot in the field and hold the flag up in the air so that the referee can see it
- The runner cannot touch his own flags or defend himself in any way.
- The referee shall make all decisions regarding flags

Dead Ball

- To start any play, the ball must be snapped between the center's legs, not off to one side. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- The ball is deemed dead if the ball carrier fumbles the ball. The ball will be spotted where the ball first hits the ground
- The ball carrier steps out of bounds
- The ball carriers flag is pulled
- A touchdown is scored

First Downs

- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at the 30 yard line and has four (4) plays to cross the 15 yard line. Once a team cross the 15 yard line, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown
- If the offense fails to make a first down or score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on the 30 yard line
- All possession changes start on the offense's 30 yard line

Fumbles

- When the ball hits the ground (fumble), the play is over. There are no lost fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball first hits the ground and the offensive team retains possession, unless there is a turnover on downs
- If the ball hits the ground during the hike from center to the quarterback, the play is repeated without loss of down

Tackling

- TACKLING IS NOT PERMITTED
- The tackler must not hold, push, or run through the ball carrier, but must play the flag rather than the runner
- Any action against the runner other than pulling the flag will result in unnecessary roughness and will result in a 10-yard penalty or half the distance to the goal if the ball is inside the 10-yard line

Carrying the Ball

- The ball carrier may not run through a defensive player. The ball carrier must attempt to evade the defense
- It shall be a penalty if the ball carrier hacks, pushes or straight-arms another player.
- The center cannot pick up the ball and run
- The ball must exchange hands
- The quarterback may not run the ball. Only direct handoffs (no pitch sweeps) behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. But the offense may use multiple handoffs.
- The quarterback may receive a pass back from another player and then run- he would then become a receiver
- The ball carrier may not jump over another player
- No laterals or pitches of any kind are permitted at any place on the field
- However, a receiver can directly handoff to another player backwards or sideways (not forward) after he catches a pass. The player who takes a direct handoff behind the line of scrimmage can still throw the ball before crossing the line of scrimmage
- Once the ball has been handed off (regardless if the three (3) count has been reached), all defensive players are eligible to rush
- Spinning is allowed and players can leave their feet to avoid a defensive player. Diving is also permitted, but an offensive player may only use a spin or dive to avoid a player and not to purposefully initiate contact. The ball is spotted where the ball carriers feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- A shot gun snap is not permitted, only a direct snap to the quarterback from the center. If a snap is fumbled by the quarterback, or the quarterback drops the ball before he passes it or hands it off, he can still pick it up and complete the play and the defense cannot rush (but the three (3) count continues)
- There are no negative yardage offensive plays and if a play results in a "loss", and the ball has not crossed the original line of scrimmage, the ball is returned to the original line of scrimmage for the previous play

Rushing the QB and Defensive Alignment

- The Quarterback has a 5 second “sack count” in which to throw a pass or hand the ball and no players shall rush the quarterback during the first 3 seconds. If a pass is not thrown (the ball leaves the quarterback’s hand) or a handoff completed within the first 3 seconds, the play is dead and results in a loss of down
- Once the ball leaves the quarterback’s hand by pass or hand-off, the 3/5 (pass rush/sack count) second rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may cross the line of scrimmage
- A “belt line” (defined as three yards back from the line of scrimmage, tackle to tackle) shall be in effect for the defense. A minimum of four (4) players must be positioned on the belt line. One of the four players may be able to rush on runs or drop back 10 yards max on the pass
- The extra defenders must be positioned a minimum of 6 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. When the ball is on the 3 yard line on in, then the goal line becomes the “belt line”. The on field defensive coach will be responsible for positioning his players at the appropriate distances
- The on field Offensive coach is responsible for clearly and loudly announcing the 3/5 second “pass rush/sack count” (counted in a normal, brisk cadence as “one thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three...etc.)
- The defensive coach will mark where the flags are pulled and will spot the ball for the next play (unless a referee or league official is present)

Hand - Guarding

- Hand Guarding is defined as an offensive player with the ball using their hand to block or fend off a defensive player’s hand from grabbing and pulling his flags. If this occurs, the ball shall be deemed as dead, the runner shall be deemed downed at the point of the foul as if the defender had successfully pulled the offensive player’s flag and a five yard penalty will be assessed
- Repeated offenses should result in stronger measures being implemented by the offensive player’s coach, including being pulled for the remainder of that quarter or game

“Impedance” and “Regular” Line Blocking

- In order for line players to block, they must grab the front of their jersey with both hands and remain in that position until the block is completed
- Elbows can be extended outward from the body, but not in a forward direction
- Impedance blocking (similar to setting a “pick” in basketball is permissible)
- The Line players may use their hands to block. However, the arms must be locked out within the width of the shoulder pads and in the numbers area.
- The defensive player can use his/her hands to try to “shed” the block or move the blocker out of the way, but throwing the blocker down is not permitted.
- No blocking above the shoulders or below the waist
- A player cannot leave his/her feet when blocking

- In the open field the block must resemble a screen type block with the blocker remaining in an upright position
- Any rough tactic such as attempting to run over an opponent will be penalized as unnecessary roughness

Forward Passes

- Forward passes may be thrown from any point behind the line of scrimmage
- All offensive players except the center, guards and quarterback are eligible to receive a pass
- The passer is down if an opponent pulls his/her flags, or if they fall off before the throwing motion begins
- No screen passes for example are allowed
- Only the quarterback can receive the snap directly from the center and the center can't hike to another player. A team can throw a pass off of a reverse or after a handoff, but only 1 pass per play is permitted

Defensive Players

- The Defense must count to three (1001-1002-1003) before crossing the line of scrimmage
- Once the quarterback hands off the ball, defensive players can then cross the line of scrimmage (even without the full count being completed)
- If a defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage without the appropriate count or ball being handed off, the offensive coach can elect to have the play repeated

Punting

- No Punting. On the change of possession, the offense gets the ball at the 30 yard line

Pass Interception

- Pass interception by the defense results in a dead ball and change of possession. The defensive player cannot advance the ball. The ball starts for the new offense on the 30 yard line

Scoring

- Six points for a touchdown
- Extra Point= 1 point from the 5 yard line if successful
- Extra Point= 2 points from the 10 yard line if successful

Penalties

- All penalties except unsportsmanlike conduct and pass interference will be 5 yard (5 steps)

Pass Interference

- Automatic first down at the point of contact, if penalty occurs in the end zone it will be first and goal from the 1 yard line

Other Penalty Information

Although the players are wearing full uniforms, this is still a minimal contact flag league with its primary purpose to teach the fundamentals of football in a safe and fun environment. Some physical contact is to be expected during normal play and is also permissible under the rules. It is illegal to tackle, knock or throw another player off his feet or otherwise play in an overly aggressive manner. During optional tackle practice later in the season this type of play is permitted in accordance within normal football rules in a safe and controlled setting but coaches must guard against what is learned and practiced during those practices being used in later FUFLL games.

Unsportsmanlike contact is illegal. If the field monitor, a board member or a referee witnesses any acts of hitting, elbowing, cheap shots, any other unsportsmanlike or dangerous acts, or hears any trash talking or profanity, the game should be stopped and the situation addressed immediately, but not by the opposing coach or parents.

The first violation of the above conduct rules (although the person in authority may choose to go directly to the 2 level for a more serious infraction or conduct) will result in the player receiving a warning and having to sit out the next two plays. The second violation during the same game will result in the player being removed for the remainder of the quarter and a 5 yard penalty will be assessed. Any additional violation during the game will result in the player being removed for the remainder of the game and a 10 yard penalty will be assessed. Repeated willful violations in more than one game may result in a stricter sanctions being imposed against the offending player including possible game suspension (s) and even expulsion from the league with no refunds.

*****Illegal play or foul language will not be tolerated under any circumstances. All penalties (unless otherwise specified) will be 3 yards and a loss of downs.**

In addition to the specialized rules for this league, basic football rules still apply, but this is a teaching league and there are bound to be frequent violations of certain rules (such as off-sides, illegal movement, encroachment, etc.) just due to the players ages. If such violations occur and does not affect the outcome of the play then the offending player's coach is to give instruction to correct the situation which should be done in a non- embarrassing manner such that hopefully all players on both teams will see how not to be penalized in the future.

Specialized Rules

Illegal flag pull (before the intended receiver has the ball) or encroachment in the belt line which impacts the play and illegal forward pass (pass received behind the line of scrimmage) will result in a penalty of 5 yards and a loss of that down.

Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.