Western Ohio Jr. Football Conference
Playing Rules: Tackle, 3rd Grade & Bantam Football

NOTE: We will be using Ohio High School Football Rules with the following modifications.

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Article I - General Rules (All Grade Levels)

1.1 Playing Rules

1.1.1 The National Federation of State High School Football Association rules, as adopted by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (O.H.S.A.A.), and the adopted WOJFC rules, will be the basic playing rules of the WOJFC for all grade levels.

1.2 Certification

1.2.1 All offensive players except tackles, guards, and centers must be certified prior to participating in any game. Players requiring certification as ball-carrier eligible include any and all members of the offensive backfield as well as the most distant member of the offensive line (ends) as aligned on both sides of center. Certification is accomplished at weigh-ins in accordance with the By-Laws.

1.3 Game Duration

1.3.1 There will be four (4) timed (stopped clock) ten (10) minute quarters, with three time-outs per team, per half. There will be a minimum ten (10) minute halftime, which is flexible to cover halftime events.

1.4 Scoring

1.4.1 Scoring will follow O.H.S.A.A. rules with the following exception: an extra point will be scored as one point for a run or kick and two points for a forward pass. For a team to score a two-point conversion on a forward pass, the receiver must catch the pass in the end zone. Any forward pass caught outside of the end zone and run across the goal line will be scored as one (1) point.

1.5 On-Field Coaches

1.5.1 Coaches are permitted on the playing field during play (see specific grade level for the number permitted at that level). Once a coach has given his instructions to his players, he must move and stay ten (10) yards behind the deepest players or official at all times and observe the action. He must not become involved with the play by any means or manners. No instructions can be given by any on field coach once the ready for play whistle is blown and any player on offense
m is at or moves towards the line of scrimmage. Applies to 4th, 5th, and 6th grade.

1st infraction - verbal warning
2nd infraction - 5 yards
3rd infraction - 15 yards and an automatic unsportsmanlike penalty against the HC

All other penalty yardage assessments will be in accordance with O.H.S.A.A. playing rules.

1.6 Ineligible Players

1.6.1 Any question of player ineligibility should be handled by sending a coach or league representative to the opponent's sideline with a roster to jointly determine the player's eligibility. The game will not be stopped for this matter unless either team elects to call a timeout to check for a possible violation.

1.6.2 If the player is determined ineligible, the Game Official shall be notified to stop play, the player shall be removed for the remainder of the game, the Head Coach will be assessed an unsportsmanlike 15 yard penalty, and the team if calling a time out, will get it back. In the event the questioned player is eligible, the team calling the timeout forfeits its time out.

1.6.3 If the player is determined to be playing in an ineligible *position*, the guidelines of 1.6.1 and 1.6.2 shall be followed, the Head Coach will be assessed an unsportsmanlike 15 yard penalty, the team calling the time out will get it back, but the player may continue to play in any position for which he is eligible.

1.6.4 If a coach cannot present a roster to support a child's eligibility, the guidelines of 1.6.1 and 1.6.2 shall be followed, the child must be removed from the game and the Head Coach will be assessed an unsportsmanlike 15 yard penalty. In the event that a coach refuses to cooperate by checking rosters, the Head coach will also be assessed a second unsportsmanlike 15 yard penalty and ejected from the game.

1.7 Penalties for Restricted Zone Infractions

1.7.1 At no time during regulation playing time shall any spectator or person be permitted in the end zones or at the goal posts. In the case of the first infraction, in a given game, it shall result in a warning given by the game officials and an announcement made to the spectators by the field public address.

1.7.2 A second infraction in a given game shall result in a penalty. If on the offensive team, 15 yards from the ensuing spot or line of scrimmage and loss of down. If on the defensive team, a 15-yard penalty yards from the ensuing spot or line of scrimmage and an automatic first down for the offensive team.

1.7.3 In case of repeated infractions, for a given game and/or at more than one (1) level of play on a given game day could result in a forfeiture of the game and/or games played that day and be cause for review and/or action taken as deemed appropriate by the Board of Trustees for the WOJFC. Any repeated infraction must be addressed in writing to the Communications Officer by the Monday meeting following the infraction. After proper warning has been issued, game officials can require that a person(s) including spectators be removed from the playing field and/or spectator area for a given game day. Game officials can delay the play of the game until said person is removed from the area.

1.8 Protests

1.8.1 A protest must be made to the Head Official at the time of the infraction of the rules (not judgment calls) prior to the next play, not at the end of the game or at the conference meeting.

1.9 Minimum Play Rule

1.9.1 Minimum Play Rule - All players must play a minimum of five plays per half. Non-contact plays such as kicking on PATs, field goal attempts, and punts at 4th grade (and below) do not constitute a play. This rule is subject to disciplinary action enforced by the coach or organization or due to player injury. Each team will complete, sign, and turn-in a league-provided play-rule verification form at the conclusion of each game. The head Coach of each team shall notify the opposing team's coach of any players who will not be playing in the game.

1.9.2 If you wish to track the Minimum Play Rule of your opponent, you must send a representative to their sideline to do so. The opposing team must allow your representative access to their sideline, and your representative must track plays with their designated person that tracks their plays. Punishment for not allowing an opposing representative access to your sideline is a one week suspension for the Head Coach on the first offense, and a one year suspension for a subsequent offense.

1.9.3 Also, if this rule is violated during the Tournament, the punishment will be an automatic one year suspension for the Head Coach. Your representative, on the opposing sideline, will track the plays on the pink copy given to your coach prior to the game, and the opponent will track plays on the White copy with the remaining yellow carbon. You must do this together. Once the game has started, your representative may not leave the sideline at any time. This is to prevent anyone from "sideline scouting", and reporting back to their team at the half, etc. After the game, both Coaches must sign and turn in their White copies of the Minimum Play Sheet to each site's designated area (usually the Concession Stand). The coach should keep the remaining Yellow copy for his own records. Failure to turn in your White copy of the Minimum Play Sheet will result in a one week suspension for the Head Coach for the first offense, and a one year suspension for a subsequent offense.

1.10 Clock Procedures

The following timing procedures shall be used by the Officials to time all WOJFC games.

1.10.1 The clock shall stop on plays that result in an incomplete pass, a ball carrying players goes out of bounds, and will not start until the SNAP OF THE BALL.

1.10.2 The clock shall stop (if live, stops when the play is whistled dead) on all penalties, and will start with the referee's READY FOR PLAY whistle, unless Rule 1 applies.

1.10.3 The clock shall stop on all first downs, and start after the chains reset, teams have 11 players on their side of the ball, and the ball is MARKED READY FOR PLAY.

1.10.4 The clock shall stop on all NON PUNTING team change of possessions (fumbles, interceptions, 4th down plays, penalty loss of last down), and start after the chains reset, teams have 11 players on their side of the ball, and the ball is MARKED READY FOR PLAY, unless Rule 1 applies. The clock shall stop after every team punt is completed (all grades), and will not restart until the SNAP OF THE BALL of the new team's possession.

NOTE: Teams need to be aware that after any "ready for play" whistle, they only have 40 seconds for Bantam and 3rd Grade, and 30 seconds for 4th, 5th, and 6th Grades, to snap the ball.

1.10.5 The clock shall start for each new team possession after touchdowns or successful field goals, when teams set with 11 players, chains are set, and ball is MARKED READY TO PLAY.

1.10.6 The clock shall stop for the start of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarters until the SNAP OF THE BALL.

1.10.7 The clock shall stop for all injuries, and remained stopped until the injured player has cleared the field and has been replaced with a new player.

1.10.8 The Home Team announcer shall call the next game's teams to the end zones before the game start time. Home Team shall announce team rosters 10 minutes before each game time, or immediately after the existing game is over, if there are less than 10 minutes remaining until that game's start time.

1.10.9 Suggestion for Timekeepers, any official on the field can stop the clock, (waving both arms above the head), but the referee WILL ALWAYS start the clock (winding arm in a circular motion).

1.10.10 For consistent timekeeping at each site, clock operators and the home team's chain gang should meet with the officials prior to the start of the game(s).

1.11 Inclimate Weather

The purpose for these guidelines is to provide a default policy to those responsible for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of contests based on the presence of lightning. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

1.11.1 Proactive Planning: Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during events. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play: A 30-second or less flash-to-bang count calls for removal of the athletes from the field to an appropriate shelter.

1.11.2 Thirty Minute Rule – Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming play.

1.11.3 Guidelines for game continuation after game suspended: If a game has had 3 plays into the second half and the game is suspended and the next game's start
time is current or past, the suspended game shall be declared a completed game. (ie. 10:00 game suspended after 3 plays into the second half and weather clears at 11:30, 10:00 complete and start 11:30 game. If 10:00 game only in 1st half or less than 3 plays into second half, and its 11:30, 10:00 game suspended to Sunday.)

1.11.4 No game shall start later than 90 minutes after its original start time. (ie. 10:00 game suspended in 2nd half (play 5) weather clears at 12:50, 10:00 game complete and 11:30 game shall start at 12:50 and all following games moved back approximately 80 minutes. The 10:00 game suspended in 2nd half (play 5) weather clears at 1:00, 10:00 game complete, and 11:30 game suspended to Sunday and start 1:00 game. This same guideline would apply to night shift games that start at 2:00, but no game may start after 9:30pm without WOJFC Executive Board approval.) No day game may start after 5:30pm without WOJFC Executive Board approval.

1.11.5 If there are several weather delays the same rule applies. (i.e. 10:00 game suspended 1st half, weather clears at 12:35, 10:00 game suspended to Sunday and start 11:30 game, 11:30 game suspended 2nd half (play 5) weather clears at 2:45, 11:30 game complete, 1:00 game suspended to Sunday and start 2:30 game.)

1.11.6 The same weather delay schedule shall be followed on Sunday except that suspended games may not be made up. No game shall start later that 5:30 on Sunday. Suspended games moved to Sunday shall be contacted by the WOJFC Representative for their time and place on Sunday.

1.11.7 Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby shelters. Hold periodic reviews for appropriate personnel. For more detailed information, refer to the "Guidelines for Lightning Safety" contained in the NHFS Sports Medicine Handbook, which can be obtained by calling 800-776-3462.

PLEASE NOTE:
Any suspended games on Saturday will be moved to Sunday. If Sunday's games are rained out, they will simply be cancelled and not made up during the week unless we are in tournament time. ALL SUNDAY GAMES BEGIN WITH A "DAY" SCHEDULE, BEGINNING AT 10:00am, FINISHING WITH THE 6TH GRADE GAME AT 4:00pm.

1.12 Kicking (Kickoffs, PAT's, Field Goal's) Bantam, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th Grades

1.12.1 There will be no kickoff. The ball will be placed on the 35-yard line to start play for the 1st & 3rd quarters and after all touchdowns and field goals.

1.12.2 The kicking of extra points and/or field goals is permitted. There will be no weight limit restrictions placed on the kicking team. Any team lining up to kick the ball must kick. A muffed field goal attempt inside the 20 yard line will result in the ball being placed on the 20 yard line and turned over to the opposing team, outside the 20 yard line the ball will be returned to the original line of scrimmage and turned over to the opposing team. A muff is defined as the placeholder having to move their pivot point (one foot) to retrieve the ball. The holder on field goals and extra points may kneel or stand to receive the snap but must immediately go to the kneeling position for the kick. A holder may rise to catch a snap and the ball may roll to the holder. The holder may use a 2 inch tee and can not place the ball on their shoe as a tee.

1.12.3 The coach on the field must advise the referee of his intent to kick. There will be no rushing by the defense on PAT's or field goals. Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty re-kick or re-declare.

1.12.4 When attempting field goals, or PAT's, the kicker will have ten (10)seconds and punts five (5) seconds to kick the ball, after the snap from center. Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty re-kick or re-declare.

1.12.5 There will be no fake punts, field goals, or extra points, immediate dead ball whistle.
Violation: Dead Ball 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty levied against the Head Coach and loss of down.

1.13 Tournament Overtime Procedures

1.13.1 First possession in overtime will be determined by a coin flip, as if to start the game. Winner of flip chooses which end of field to start play or take first possession. The start of overtime shall remain at the one end of the field until there is a winner. Team losing first flip gets second overtime chouse of first possession or defense and it alternates with each overtime.

1.13.2 Each team will take first possession of the ball at the opponent's 20-yard line, and be given four downs to either score, or make a first down. If a first down is made, the team will receive four additional downs to try and score. Both teams will get a chance to score in overtime.

1.13.3 If, at the end of the first overtime period, the score remains tied, each team's subsequent possession will begin at the opponent's 10-yard line, and each team will be given four downs to try and score.

1.13.4 There shall be only 1 time out per team in all Overtime periods. No carry over of time outs from regulation into overtime or overtime to overtime.

1.14 Play of the Game

1.14.1 No player on offense or defense shall purposely charge over another player not attempting to make a play standing in the open field. (Open field means no player within a five-yard area.)
Violation: Dead ball, end of play enforcement, 15-yard unsportsmanlike penalty.

1.14.2 No player shall tackle above the shoulders (clothesline). Tackles may still occur around the helmet area which are legal as long as no helmet opening is grasp or unnecessary force is used to tackle around the helmet.
Violation: Personal foul penalty - 15-yard unsportsmanlike.

1.14.3 All face mask penalties shall follow OHSAA rules.(5 or 15 yards.)

1.14.4 Unsportsmanlike Penalties: (15 yards) may be assessed for misconduct by players, coaches, or fans (including swearing by players or coaches and abuse of players or officials by coaches).

1.14.5 Qualified personnel should operate the clock, chains and down markers and they must be a minimum of fifteen (15) years of age. A 15-yard penalty will be enforced against the home team for failure to have a chain gang *or clock operator* in place at the start of game.

1.14.6 Any coach, player, or sideline personnel receiving two (2) individual USLC penalties shall be ejected from the game. Any team receiving two (2) USLC penalties, (i.e. One coach, one player), the Head Coach will be required to attend the next scheduled WOJFC meeting for probationary review by the WOJFC Board of Trustees.

1.14.7 For a list of penalties and yardage, see Appendix A.

Article II - Tackle Program Rules

2.1 Play Clock

2.1.1 The offense is allowed thirty (30) seconds to initiate the next play, after the ball is marked ready for play by the Head Official.

2.2 On-Field Coaches

2.2.1 Each team is permitted One (1) coach on the field of play giving instructions during the course of t the game.

Violation 1st infraction Verbal warning
2nd infraction 5 yd. penalty
3rd infraction 15 yd. USLC penalty assessed to the HC

2.3 Punting – All Tackle Grades (4th, 5th and 6th)

2.3.1 You must notify the official (who in turn notifies the opposing team) of intent to punt. Failure to do so is a dead ball foul 5 yards. Defense must be given the opportunity to set. Notification of intent to punt must be given within 10 seconds after the ball is whistled ready for play. Failure to inform the official within the 10 seconds of intent to punt would require the offense to take a time out if they still wish to punt or be penalized a five-yard delay of game. (If a time out is called after notification is given; the offensive team must re-declare their intention to the Head Official after time out is ended. The defense is notified by Head Official and given time to set.

2.3.2 No weight limit on kicker (intended receivers must meet weight restrictions).

2.3.3 Both defense and offense must have seven (7) men on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. 5 Offensive and Defensive Players (from tackle to tackle) must be no farther apart than fingertip to fingertip. Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty.

2.3.4 Punter must be a minimum of five *(5)* yards from the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap.

2.3.5 There are no muffed snaps on a punt. The ball must be kicked within five (5) seconds after the snap. Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty re-kick or re-declare.

2.3.6 Offense and defense shall have No line contact or crossing the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap and until ball is kicked. Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty re-kick or re-declare

2.3.7 Prior to the snap for punt, there are no loud noises or yelling permitted by the receiving team or kicking team. Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty re-kick or re-declare.

2.3.8 If the punted ball strikes an offensive player (behind the line of scrimmage), or does not cross the neutral zone, the ball is dead and will be spotted at the original line of scrimmage, and results in change of possession, if 4th down.

2.4 Punting – 5th and 6th Grades Only

2.4.1 Following the kick of the ball, O.S.H.A.A. rules apply.

2.4.2 No offensive or defensive players can move until the ball is kicked.

2.4.3 Ball is live if first touched by the receiving team after it crosses the neutral zone. Muff of punt by receiving team and recovered by kicking team can't be advanced by the kicking team.

2.5 Punting for Fourth (4th) Grade Only

2.5.1 There are no punt returns in 4th grade.

2.5.2 No minimum yardage shall be given. Actual spot of the ball will be actual yardage gained via the kick. The ball is declared dead once downed by the receiving team or blown dead by an official. The downed deepest spot, will be the point of first touching by receiving team or ball goes beyond first touching and downed by receiving team.

2.5.3 If the ball is kicked or downed inside the 10-yard line, the ball will be placed on the 10-yard line and marked ready for play (change of possession takes place). If the ball is kicked in the end zone, the ball will be placed at the 20-yard line and marked ready for play.

Article III - 3rd Grade Program Rules

3.1 Play Clock

3.1.1 The offense is allowed forty (40) seconds to initiate the next play, after the ball is marked ready for play.

3.2 On-Field Coaches

3.2.1 Each team is permitted to have Two (2) coaches giving instructions on the field of play during the Course of the game. Violation 1st infraction verbal warning
2nd infraction 5 yd. penalty
3rd infraction 15 yd. USLC penalty assessed to the HC

3.3 Kicking

3.3.1 There will be no punting. The ball will be advanced twenty-five (25) yards, but not inside the opponent's twenty (20) yard line.

3.3.2 All punts shall have 15 seconds counted off the clock from the time the Head Official gives the start the clock signal for punts and clock shall stop at the end of 15 seconds, and clock shall not **re-**start until the snap.

3.3.3 Offensive Coach must notify the Head Official of intent to punt. Coach must notify the Head Official before their 40 seconds from the Ready for Play whistle expirers.
Violation: Dead Ball delay of game, 5 yard penalty re-kick or go for 1st down.

3.4.4 Play of the Game

3.4.1 A defensive noseguard will not be allowed over the center or in the "A" gaps until the ball is inside the 10-yard line. Any player over the center or "A" gaps must be two yards off the line of scrimmage. Only Defensive lineman head to head with offensive guards must be in a 3 or 4 point stance at the snap. Lining up in all other offensive gaps is OK. A player can rush any/all gaps after the snap of the ball. Once inside the 10-yard line, there are no restrictions for lining up in the A gaps. Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty

3.4.2 A maximum number of defensive linemen on the line of scrimmage (sideline to sideline) at the snap of the ball will be six (6). All other defensive players must be two (2) yards off the line of scrimmage at the snap. Once the quarterback is in cadence or has placed his hands under the center and/or the offense is set and/or the quarterback from shotgun position starts a cadence**.** a live ball foul will be called if more than six (6) defensive linemen are on the line of scrimmage. Once inside the 10-yard line, there are no restrictions for the number of defensive lineman on the line of scrimmage. Violation**: Live Ball 5 yard penalty.**

3.4.3 The offensive linemen (tackle to tackle) must be spread no farther apart than fingertip to fingertip on the line of scrimmage. Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty

3.4.4 Blitzing - there will be no timed blitzing allowed. All players must be in a set position at the snap of the ball. Blitzing defined as moving toward the line of scrimmage at the snap.
Violation**: Live ball penalty**, 1st infraction 5 yard penalty
Additional infractions 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty against the Head Coach.

3.4.4 Exemption "If an offensive player is in motion prior to the snap a (1) defensive linebacker or defensive end may be in motion with the offensive motion player. If the offensive player becomes set prior to the snap the defensive player must stop his motion."

3.4.5 Fumbles- fumbles are live at the Third grade level. The ball can not be advanced upon recovery. There is no stripping of the football allowed.

Article IV - Bantam Program Rules

4.1 Play Clock

4.1.1 The offense is allowed forty (40) seconds to initiate the next play, after the ball is marked ready for play.

4.2 On-Field Coaches

4.2.1 Each team is permitted Two (2) coaches on the field of play giving instructions during the course of the game. Violation: 1st infraction verbal warning
2nd infraction 5 yd. penalty
3rd infraction 15 yd. USLC penalty assessed to the HC

4.3 Kicking

4.3.1 There will be no punting. The ball will be advanced twenty-five (25) yards, but not inside the opponent's twenty (20) yard line.

4.3.2 All punts shall have 15 seconds counted off the clock from the time the Head Official gives the start the clock signal for punts and clock shall stop at the end of 15 seconds, and clock shall not **re-**start until the snap.

4.3.3 Offensive Coach must notify the Head Official of intent to punt. Coach must notify the Head Official before their 40 seconds from the Ready for Play whistle expirers.
Violation: Dead Ball delay of game, 5 yard penalty re-kick or go for 1st down.

4.4 Play of the Game

4.4.1 A defensive noseguard will not be allowed over the center or in the "A" gaps until the ball is inside the 10-yard line. Any player over the center or "A" gaps must be two yards off the line of scrimmage. Defensive lineman head to head with offensive guards must be in a 3 or 4 point stance at the snap. Lining up in other defensive gaps is OK. A player can rush any/all gaps after the snap of the ball. Once inside the 10-yard line, there are no restrictions for lining up in the A gaps.
Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty

4.4.2 A maximum number of defensive linemen on the line of scrimmage (sideline to sideline) at the snap of the ball will be six (6). All other defensive players must be two (2) yards off the line of scrimmage at the snap. Once the quarterback is in cadence or has placed his hands under the center and/or the offense is set and/or the quarterback from shotgun position starts a cadence**.** a live ball foul will be called if more than six (6) defensive linemen are on the line of scrimmage. Once inside the 10-yard line, there are no restrictions for the number of defensive lineman on the line of scrimmage. Violation**: Live Ball 5 yard penalty.**

4.4.3 The offensive linemen (from tackle to tackle) must be spread no farther apart than fingertip to fingertip. Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty

4.4.4 Blitzing - there will be no timed blitzing allowed. All players must be in a set position at the snap of the ball. Blitzing defined as moving toward the line of scrimmage at the snap.

Violation**: Live ball penalty**, 1st infraction 5 yard penalty

Additional infractions 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty against the Head Coach.

4.4.4 Exemption "If an offensive player is in motion prior to the snap a (1) defensive linebacker or defensive end may be in motion with the offensive motion player. If the offensive player becomes set prior to the snap the defensive player must stop his motion."

4.4.5 Fumbles - In the event of a fumble, the ball is dead where it hits the ground. There is no change of possession (except 4th down). Players may not steal (strip) the ball from the ball carrier.

Violation for stripping: Live Ball 5 yard penalty from spot of the foul repeat the down.

4.4.6 Interceptions - In the event of a defensive interception of an attempted forward pass *or* airborne lateral, the defense may assume possession and may advance the ball. (no weight restrictions)

4.4.7 Blocking - No offensive player may block below the waist at any time. Defensive lineman shall not dive block below the waist of offensive lineman at the snap.

Violation: Live Ball 5 yard penalty, repeat the down

APPENDIX A – Penalties and Yardage

FIVE YARD PENALTIES

1. Offside in neutral zone or false start on offense.
2. Encroachment, on defense in neutral zone.
3. Delay of game, on offense or defense.
4. Illegal substitution, by offense or defense, more than 11 players on the field at the snap or 12 men in the huddle.
5. Excessive time out(s).
6. Delay of game, on offense or defense
7. WOJFC kicking game rule violations
8. Illegal formation or illegal procedure at snap, on offense, players not set 1 second or not 7 men on the line at the snap.
9. Illegal shift on the offense, 2 men in motion at the snap.
10. Illegal motion on offense, man in motion before all 11 players are set for 1 second.
11. Invalid or illegal fair catch signal. (5th and 6th grade only)
13. Any member of offense or defense on kicking teams going beyond line of scrimmage before ball is kicked.
14. Loss of team time out(s) or five yard penalty on the defense for excessive crowd noise prior to the snap.
15. Ineligible offense player downfield during passing down.
16. Intentional grounding of pass, also loss of down.
17. Illegally handing ball forward, also loss of down.
18. Running into kicker or holder.
19. Helping the runner, teammate pushing or pulling runner.
20. Non-player outside of team box, but not on field.
21. Failure to properly wear equipment, prior to snap or during down (chin strap not fastened).
22. Illegal forward pass (If by a), beyond the line of scrimmage, loss of down.
23. Illegal touching by offense, forward pass touches or is caught by an ineligible receiver on or behind the line.
24. Forward pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage after ball once crossed the **scrimmage** line.

TEN YARD PENALTIES

1. Illegal blocking technique, illegal use of hands, arms, or body by offense.
2. Holding.
3. Illegal block in the back.
4. Interlock blocklng, on offense, locking feet by two players.
5. Runner grasping a teammate.

FIFTEEN YARD PENALTIES

1. Unsportsmanlike conduct by player or non-player.
2. Chop block on offense.
3. Clipping below the waist by offense, or defense if not on runner.
4. Kick catching interference, fair catch situation.
5. Late hit, piling on, also dead ball fouls.
6. Roughing the passer, kicker, holder, snapper, also a first down.
7. Grasping an opponents face mask or any helmet opening.
8. Unnecessary roughness.
9. Delay of game at start of either half.
10. Illegal block below the waist or on freekicker or holder.

FIFTEEN YARD PENALTIES (cont.)

11. A player using his helmet to butt, face tackle, spear, or ram an opponent.
12. Tripping, the runner can be tripped, but not as a personal foul.
13. Forward pass interference (If by A), loss of down, (If by B), first down.
14. Any player who removes his helmet after a play while on the field.
15. Taunting an opponent.
16. Charging into an opponent obviously out of the play.
17. Non-player illegally on the field.
18. Illegal participation, 12th player involved in the play on offense or defense.
19. Illegal block after valid or invalid fair catch signal, on offense.

FIFTEEN YARDS AND LOSS OF COIN TOSS OPTION WOJFC

1. Team's late arrival on field prior to scheduled kickoff.
2. Captains not appearing for coin toss.

DISQUALIFICATION WITH CERTAIN 15 YARD PENALTIES WOJFC

1. Striking, kicking, or kneeing an opponent.
2. Any act of unduly or malicious or flagrant act of roughness.
3. Palpably unfair act. (Distance penalty determined by the referee after consultation with other officials.)

FIFTEEN YARDS AND AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATION WOJFC

1. Using any equipment (not worn) as a weapon.
2. Striking or purposely shoving a game official.
3. Two (2) unsportsmanlike penalties by a player or non-player.
4. Any players leaving the team box during a fight.

SUSPENSION FROM GAME FOR ONE DOWN

1. Illegal equipment. (Player may return after one down when legally equipped.)

TOUCHDOWN AWARDED (PALPABLY UNFAIR ACT)

1. When referee determines a palpably unfair act deprived a team of a touchdown. (Example: player comes off bench and tackles runner apparently en route to a touchdown.)

APPENDIX B – Rules Interpretations

The information included within this document has the endorsement of the WOJFC and the Kettering Football Association.

The purpose of the information provided to coaches and officials in this document is to establish guidelines for rule interpretations by Ohio High School Football Federation and the adopted playing rules of the WOJFC. These guidelines are required reading for all coaches and officials that participate in the WOJFC program. The goal is to establish a program of better communication between coaches and officials which will benefit the players and parents that participate in the youth football program.

A. Rule Interpretation

1. Whistle at end of play

   It happens every year that officials hear "hit until you hear the whistle". This basically is the wrong way to teach players to stop play. The play has ended for the runner with the ball, when he is down. A player with the ball is down when any part of the body contacts the ground (except for the runner's hand), or forward progress is stopped. The whistle is always after the play is already dead. Officials are trained to only use the whistle when they see the ball in possession of the player down. Sometimes the whistle may be several seconds after the player is down.

   The whistle in High School games is more of a tool to let players away from the downed player, know the play is dead. It is the coach's responsibility to train players to know when a player is down and when to stop contact. Teaching to continue hitting until the whistle is blown causes more late hit penalties in Youth programs than any other age group combined. Officials that participate in youth programs tend to have a faster whistle than they are trained to do, which causes inadvertent whistles and some loose ball fumbles to become dead. This is done to protect players because they don't have the physical ability to stop play as quickly as do older players. Coaches teach players to know when a player with the ball is down and to stop play and when players go down on their own, they do not have to be touched to be down. Officials use good common practice to know the ability of players in youth play, and the judgment for late contact penalties.

2. Substitutions and Change of Possession

   This is always a problem in youth football due to the age of the players, especially in Bantam and 3rd Grade. Coaches, try to devise a system that allows your players to know when they are on offense or defense. Most officials are lenient on change of possession, but the game should not be held up for extended lengths of time for substitutions. The WOJFC rules state that once the chains are set, the ball is set in place and the "ready for play" whistle is sounded. That leaves 40 seconds for Bantam and 3rd Grade and 30 seconds for 4th, 5th and 6th Grades to snap the ball. Most time is always lost trying to count players in the huddle and getting players into position at the line. Coaches, you can help set players at the line. Officials use time judgment for the players not against the players. If the snap is imminent and the "ready for play" time is about to run out, let the play continue, but do not allow extended time between plays or change of possession with the clock running, penalize those situations. Officials are to consistently enforce the rules for time between snaps and change of possession.

3. Wide out Receivers and 7 on the line of Offense

Coaches, teach your offensive wide receivers to hold their hand up in the air and look at the Line Official if they are to be on the line of scrimmage. This will indicate to the official that the receiver is to be on the line of scrimmage. The official will motion the receiver to either move up or back to be on the line of scrimmage and signal with a hand stop signal to the receiver when they are on the line. If the receiver does not hold his hand up and look at the official, the official does not know if the receiver is to be on the line or not and could cause and unnecessary penalty. Line Officials, it is required of you to help position wide receivers with hands up.

Coaches, there must ALWAYS be 7 players on the offensive line of scrimmage. You can have 10 on the line, but with 10 players on the line, only the last player on each end of the line would be an eligible receiver. Coaches, when you have 2 wide receivers on the same side of the line, 1 player must be off the line to have both players as eligible receivers. Remember, officials won't know which receiver is to be on the line . So coaches be sure to have the player required to be on the line have their hand up. If both players are on the line, the inside receiver will be ineligible. The same situation works with having slot backs.

4. Offsides and Encroachment

Offsides always applies to offense and encroachment applies to defense. Officials will always use lenient enforcement for the requirements of offsides and encroachment at the Bantam and 3rd Grade levels. If a helmet, hand, or finger are in the neutral zone at the Bantam or 3rd Grade level, officials will almost never call these penalties and they should not. If a player is slightly moving their rear or fingers it will not be considered a false start or a non set position in the Bantam and 3rd Grade level. Coaches, know at this level it is almost impossible to get all 11 offensive players still at the same time, common sense should prevail at this level for the benefit of the players. At these levels you try to get the play off cleanly. Officials should use verbal direction for both offense and defense as much as possible at these levels to help players start the play cleanly. Coaches should expect officials to use lenient judgment for these penalties at these levels.

As the levels progress, the rule for enforcement of offsides or encroachment becomes tighter. By the 5th and 6th Grade level, players should be able to comply with all requirements for offsides , encroachment, 3 point stance, motion and players set at the snap. Remember, if a man is in motion, ALL 11 players MUST be set for 1 second prior to the man in motion that includes the quarterback. No 2 players can be in motion at the same time of the snap, if 2 players shift, or are in motion at the same time, all 11 players must become set for 1 second prior to the snap or placing another man in motion.

5. Leading with the Helmet

You may NEVER lead with the helmet as an offensive or defensive player. Runners must not lower their helmet to ram a tackler (illegal helmet contact penalty) and offensive blockers may not use their helmet to deliver a blow (butt blocking penalty). Defensive players can not lead with the helmet to tackle and offensive player or runner (spearing penalty). Coaches, always teach your players to keep the helmet up and never lead with the helmet as runners, blockers, or tacklers. Officials, these acts should always be called as penalties.

6. After Touchdown Attempts of Field Goal Attempts

Coaches, the time allowed to kick the point after touchdown of field goal is 10 seconds after the snap. Officials are to consistently enforce this rule. Coaches, the holder can not place the ball on the top of their shoe, the holder must place the ball on the ground or tee only. Officials must enforce this rule by blowing the play dead immediately, if the ball is placed on the holder's shoe, or if time goes beyond 10 seconds. Holder may raise up to catch the snap, but must immediately return to his knee to place the ball. Holder may not leave his spot to get the ball, immediate dead ball whistle.

7. Punts 4th, 5th and 6th Grade

A field coach MUST declare to the Head Official within 10 seconds after the 3rd down play and the ready for play whistle has sounded (first down was not made) if their team is going to punt or go for first down. If the team is going to punt or go for first down they must still get the play off within their 30 second time limit between plays (30 seconds begins with ready for play whistle). If a coach declares to either go for first down or punt and 10 seconds has past since the ready for play whistle, the coach MUST call time out in order to change their mind to either punt of go for first down. After the time out is over the coach must now declare to the Head Official to either punt or go for first down and again have 30 seconds to punt of go for first down. All punts in the 4th, 5th and 6th grade have 5 seconds from the time of the snap to get the punt kicked. If the punt is declared dead because 5 seconds expired the whistle will be blown and the new team possession for the defense will be the previous spot. In the 4th grade if the punt hits the offensive line and does not cross the neutral zone, the ball will be placed for new team possession at the previous spot. In 4th grade, the deepest touch or deepest point where ball comes to rest or downed will be the new team possession spot. In 4th grade the punt can not go inside the 10 yard line of the opponent. In the 5th and 6th grades, offensive players may pursue the punt after the punter has kicked the ball. All punts in the 5th and 6th grades will be by Ohio Federation rules after the ball is kicked.

8. Punts Bantam and 3rd Grade Tackle

All punts in Bantam and 3rd grade will be 25 yards, but the punt can not go inside the 20 yard line of the opponent. The field coach has 40 seconds to either declare to punt on 4th down to the Head Official or run a play. If the field coach goes past 40 seconds from the ready for play whistle on 4th down, a Delay of Game penalty will be assessed (5 yards) and the clock will start with either the coach declaring to punt or snap to run a play. If the clock is dead (for a time out, out of bounds, incomplete pass, penalty, etc.) and the field coach declares to punt, the Official shall march off 25 yards and 15 seconds off the clock from the time the field coach said punt. After the field coach says punt, they can not call time out to change their call or stop the clock for the administration of the punt. Either team may call time out after the punt administration is complete.

9. Time Outs

Coaches, when time out is called after a third down in order to save time on the clock to cause a walk off of the 25 yard punt at the Bantam and 3rd Grade level, the clock will re-start at the "ready for play" whistle to walk off the 25 yards and the clock will stop when the ball is placed at the new team possession spot. Clock will remain stopped until new team possession snap, either 40 or 30 seconds after the "ready for play" whistle. If a coach disagrees with the application of a WOJFC rule or a Federation Football rule, he may call a time out and ask the Head Official to review the rule in the Federation rule book, or the WOJFC Adopted Rules for that level of play. If the application of the rule stands as applied on the field, the coach will be charged with the time out, if the rule has been misapplied, the time out will not be charged.

10. Injury Time Outs

Coaches, if you have an injured player you are sending out of the game, immediately notify the official so the clock can be stopped for the injured player to leave the field and a replacement player to come onto the field. Many coaches just send the player off without notifying the official and this could cause a delay of game penalty because the official was not notified of the injured player.

11. Unnecessary Roughness

Coaches, players must be participating in the play when making contact with opponents, i.e. play is down field on a long run and blocker on offense drives defensive player to the ground 25 yards from and behind the play, penalty for Unnecessary Roughness. Penalty 15 yards. Same works for defense. A defensive player can not tackle or hit unnecessarily and offensive player away from the ball who is out of the play. Penalty 15 yards. Officials should always enforce this penalty for the safety of the players.

12. Coaches on the field of Play

Coaches that are on the field of play are there to help their offensive or defensive team call plays and set players into positions. Coaches are to be 10 yards behind the deepest player on their team at the snap. Coaches on the field may not talk during the entire play (until whistle is blown). Coaches, please remain out of the play until officials have recovered the ball and cleared the players from the area where the runner was tackled. If a player was injured, the official will immediately call you in to care for your player. Coaches on the field, it is not your right to question officials calls on the field or direct officials as to what you feel they should be calling. Your responsibilities are for your players. Coaches, if you have a general question about a WOJFC or football rule, and it won't interrupt the game, try to ask it during a dead ball or time out. Once the quarterback is under the center, or in cadence in the shotgun formation, coaches may give no communication to their players on offense or defense. On the field coaches may not call time out once the quarterback is under the center or in cadence in the shotgun formation. Officials, use common sense in providing helpful information to field coaches to better inform coaches on game, Officials are to provide either the on field coach or side line coach the number of the player, for penalties. Any ejection of a player, the Head Official is to tell the Head Coach the reason for the ejection.

13. Flag Clues

There are some general clues to watch for when a flag is thrown. If the offense and defense are set and the flag is thrown and whistle is blown before the ball is snapped, always a dead ball foul, clock stopped, penalty assessed from the line of scrimmage. Same situation if ball is snapped. Flag is thrown, but no whistle, live ball foul. 99% of the time, the foul is on the offense, motion, 6 on line, etc. If a flag is behind the offensive line of scrimmage and the foul is on the offense, the yardage will be marked from the flag most of the time. This is also true on long runs; 40 yard run but holding on offense, 10 yards behind the run, flag is spot where yardage is marked off from. Flags on defense are almost always marked off from the end of the run. Defensive clipping, and offense gained 30 yards, 15 more yards are marked off against the defense at the end of the run. Any flag that is thrown during a loose ball will go back to the previous line of scrimmage. All dead ball penalties will be yardage against the offense or defense and the down will count.

14. Adopted Timing Rules for WOJFC Games

Coaches, study and become familiar with the 2008 Rules Interpretations and WOJFC Clock Procedures for the adopted timing rules that are to be followed for all WOJFC games. Officials, you are required to follow and know all of the adopted timing rules that are required in WOJFC games. If a situation occurs that an official or Team Timer is not following the required procedures, at the first dead ball opportunity (time out, end of quarter, half time, injured player, touchdown, punt) the League or Team Representative will talk with the Head Official about the problem, or if it is a timer problem, the Head Official will meet with the League or Team Representative about the problem. The problem should be discussed privately and at low voice between the Head Official and Team Representative ONLY. Both the League or Team Representative and the Head Official should have a copy of the timing procedures with them at all games so the problem can be quickly resolved. It is required that the Team Timer have a copy of the WOJFC Clock Procedures at the clock station for every game, and be trained or informed by the Home Organization on how to properly run the clock. This should alleviate problems in the timing of WOJFC games.

15. Weather Problems

Coaches and Officials should read and know all of the weather related procedures in the case of weather interruption of games (WOJFC Inclimate Weather Policy). League or Team Representatives and Head Officials must have a copy of the weather procedures at every game.

16. Official Sign In

All Officials shall immediately sign in prior to officiating any WOJFC games. Teams shall have all forms necessary for officials at the home field site. Teams shall have game report forms at all home sites for each game. All unsportsmanlike penalties are required by WOJFC to be documented on the game report form by the Head Official. Head Official shall list game time, team involved in penalty, number of player or name of coach, and facts that lead to the unsportsmanlike penalty (be as specific as possible).

17. Bantam and 3rd grade Motion rule

3.4.4 Exemption ; This rule would not change any part of the rule about blitzing or the other 10 defensive players set at the snap. The defense has a choice to follow the man in motion or not to follow. But they have the opportunity to do so and must be done without a man running toward the line.

18. Coach and Official Communications

The key for this communication first is that coaches respect officials and officials respect coaches. Each person involved on these WOJFC contests are important to the success of the program. There are several key elements for both sides to follow. Coaches, officials are not required to explain every penalty to you, that are required to give you the number of the player and the penalty called. That is the same requirement in High School. Most officials in youth football, if there is time, will give a brief explanation if time allows. Officials are trained to ignore constant requests by coaches from the sidelines. If you watch games on TV, you see that official being yelled at and just standing there with his back to the coach. They do that for a reason. If an official constantly replies to a coach, the coach always expects a reply. When they don't get one, then the coach gets mad and usually leads to more words. If a coach realizes an official won't answer them, they learn not to address the official. Most High School coaches realize the official will not answer them. For officials, the less said the better. The more said usually leads to penalties on the coach. Usually officials will always walk away from coaches

after a game to avoid conflict, whether the game went good or bad. Coaches, remember, if you feel an official is using poor judgment in making calls, he is using that same poor judgment for both sides. Officials must realize that most coaches at this level will not have the experience with the rules as do High School coaches.

Coaches, we're sure you have never seen an official change his call during a game (except NFL replay). A call is made based on the angle the official had at the moment in time and he has only split seconds to make decisions one way or the other. Officials are trained that they must see the entire act of the penalty, not just part of it. No official makes a call saying, "well I was bored so I threw a flag". If they don't see it all, its not a penalty, so the angle and timing of play, all play into the penalty being called. No coach would want an official to say "well I saw part of his hand grab your player". So protesting wildly about a call will always get a coach nowhere and continuing on about a call you didn't like may lead to an unsportsmanlike penalty. If you didn't like a call, state your claim mildly and move on; the officials will respect you more and most likely work with you more. You get more with honey than vinegar. Officials should use more tolerance with youth coaches and explain, when possible, unique penalties and situations that occur, especially when they cause loss of down, loss of possession, large loss of yardage and odd penalties. Officials, you are in charge of the game and should make every attempt to control the game so that coaches are informed when penalties are called and WOJFC rules are followed. Both coaches and officials are at the game for the benefit of the children and parents involved in the program.

19. Guidelines for offensive situations to assist in keeping the score down.

Management of the score is a requirement in this organization. A team cannot exceed a 35 point difference. If you find you're easily scoring on a team there are several things you can do.
Punt on first or any down.
Run non-starters only into the A gap.
Take a knee to kill downs to run time off of the clock.
Replace key positions on defense and offense with non-starters
From the sideline, instruct players that if ball is intercepted or a fumble is recovered, to go down immediately.
Don't run the score up in the 1st half, save some scores for the 2nd half.
Don't get within 6 points of a 35 point difference.
Use your players and manage your situation, have a plan in advance so that you are prepared for the situation.
Remember, you could be on the receiving end of a lopsided score and how would you want the opposing team to act in that situation. Use good sportsmanship as your guideline. Officials will not throw flags to help you keep scores from happening.

20. Rules of WOJFC

Officials and coaches are expected to know all of the adopted rules of the WOJFC that are listed in Attachment 3. League or Team Representatives and Head Officials shall have a copy of the WOJFC rules at every game.

Appendex C - 2009 New Rules – All Grade Levels

1. Only one forward pass per down, even if behind the line of scrimmage. Old rule was two. (ie. Screen pass would be one forward pass)

2. Loss of down penalty does not extend a period. (ie. Intentional grounding is a loss of down by offense and the clock ran out during the play, period would not be extended for penalty.)

3. After the quarterback releases the ball for a pass, there is NO pass interference on the defense for contact with any receivers that are away from the pass. (ie. Pass thrown to left side of the field, and during pass, defense makes contact with receiver on right side of field, no interference for contact on receiver on right side of field. But there could be defensive holding or unnecessary roughness.)

4. All chin straps must be fastened during the play. In 2006 it will be required to have 4 point chin straps.

5. Starting in 2006 all mouthpieces must be a color and attached to the helmet.
No mouthpiece can be clear or white.

6. The new substitution 9 yard rule WILL NOT be used in the WOJFC in 2006, but all players in the WOJFC must be within 15 yards of the ball prior to the snap.

7. Qualified personnel should operate the clock, chains and down markers and they must be a minimum of fifteen (15) years of age. A 15-yard penalty will be enforced against the home team for failure to have a chain gang in place at the start of game.

8. Any player with a cast of any kind may <u>not</u> practice or play in a game until the cast has been removed and a doctor has granted a clearance for the child to resume play.