



YOUTH FOOTBALL & CHEER

PARENT HANDBOOK POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL

2015

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DEL NORTE NIGHTHAWKS YOUTH FOOTBALL & CHEER, INC.

MISSION & PURPOSE

MISSION

It is the mission of the Del Norte Nighthawks Youth Football & Cheer, Inc. (DNYFC or Del Norte Nighthawks) to provide a safe and positive environment to teach the fundamentals of the sports of football and cheer. In doing so, the Association and its members will instill in each participant the principles of dedication, hard work, community, honesty, scholastic achievement, teamwork and sportsmanship.

PURPOSE

The Del Norte Nighthawks were formed to:

- Inspire youth, regardless of race, creed or national origin to practice the ideas of scholarship, sportsmanship and physical fitness
- Familiarize all players with the fundamentals of football
- Provide an opportunity to participate in a supervised, organized and safety-oriented manner, and
- Keep the welfare of participants free from any adult ambition and personal glory.

DEL NORTE NIGHTHAWKS 2015 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Board:

President - Mike Skinner
Vice President - Kristine Hunt
Treasurer - Kathleen Carscadden
Secretary - Laura Hart
Cheer Director - Kristi Shanks

Auxiliary Board:

Coaches Representative - Alex Vasel
Eligibility - Laura Majalca
Equipment - Craig Fournier
Marketing & PR - Jason Kaimer

Parent Code of Conduct

All parent/guardian who has a child(ren) participating within the San Diego Youth Football Conference and Del Norte Nighthawks Youth Football and Cheer, Inc., must abide by a code of conduct, which includes provisions that follow. Any violation of these rules may result in the revocation of privileges in the Association. **I, therefore, agree to provide an environment with positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following the Parent Code of Conduct stated below:**

- ✱ I will not force my child to participate in sports and I will remember that children participate to have fun and that the game is for youth, not adults.
- ✱ I will inform the coach, in writing, of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
- ✱ I will read and accept the policies of the SDYFC.
- ✱ I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game, practice or other sporting event.
- ✱ I (and my guests) will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting; refusing to shake hands; or using profane language or gestures.
- ✱ I will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well-being of the athletes.
- ✱ I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- ✱ I will demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability.
- ✱ I will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches at the game field. I will take the time to speak with coaches or officials at an agreed upon time and place, after a game and off the field.
- ✱ I will remind and encourage my child that he/she is part of a team and therefore must support his/her teammates, encourage each other and play like a team; that this is not an individual sport, both on and off the field.
- ✱ I will be financially responsible for the association's equipment issued to the applicant, other than normal wear and breakage during games and practice. Further, I will reimburse the association for the loss and/or damage to said equipment.
- ✱ I will not replicate the DNYFC logo for profit in any way.

CODE OF CONDUCT from DNYFC, Inc. Bylaws-ARTICLE XV)

Parents/Guardians shall sign the Del Norte Acknowledgement form at registration and adhere to the Parent Code of Conduct, Registration Fee and Refund Policy information contained herein the Parent Handbook.

SDYFCC Rules list Adult, Juvenile, Team, and Association Offenses, including violating the mandatory play rule, and utilizing an illegal player, etc. In addition to those offenses, this Association has adopted additional prohibitive conduct that will not be tolerated and are considered as a detriment to good order and sportsmanship. A Member of Del Norte Association MAY NOT:

1. Lay a hand upon, push, shove, or be guilty of physical contact as an aggressor upon any official, participant, coach, or spectator.
2. Verbally abuse any official, participant, coach or spectator, whether on the field or off.
3. Bait or be guilty of objectionable demonstration or dissent at any official's decision.
4. Refuse to abide by a coach or an official's decision.
5. Disobey or attempt to circumvent rules and regulations or the intent thereof.
6. Use tobacco, alcohol or illegal narcotics in front of participants during practices or games or be present during practices or games under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

2015 POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL & PARENT HANDBOOK

Any time a Board member, coach, volunteer or participant is representing the AYFL, this rule applies.

Improper conduct by a Board Member, Coach, Volunteer, participant or other should be reported to the Board for appropriate action.

Any coach, manager, or player who is ejected (removed) from a game is automatically suspended from the next game his team plays, except for physical abuse (fighting) which will result in immediate suspension from the team until reviewed by the Board. This rule is not subject to protest or review. (Removal from a game shall be interpreted to include the playing field and the spectator area). A second offense of all the above, by the same person, will be handled by the Board. While on suspension, the coach may not attend any practice or games that his/her team participates in. Suspended persons must take the initiative to contact the Board to apply for reinstatement.

If you have a problem or issue with a coach, player, team member or team parent, please bring it to the attention of a board member immediately. **PLEASE DO NOT GO TO CONFERENCE WITH A PROBLEM/ISSUE WITHOUT FIRST GOING THROUGH A BOARD MEMBER.** If you do, it will be sent back to the board for review. If your problem/issue is not handled to your satisfaction, you can then take it to conference for help.

Registration Fees

Registration fees for all applications are payable online or at in-person sign-ups. No applicant will be given equipment, placed on a team, or cleared by Eligibility Chairperson until all required documents and fees are received and paid in full, unless other arrangements have been made. Participants cannot participate on two (2) current rosters at the same time (i.e. Del Norte High School and Del Norte Youth Football).

THERE IS A \$25 LATE FEE FOR REGISTRATION AFTER JUNE 15th FOR ALL OUR PROGRAMS.

*Registration fees include end of the season award, league picture packet, and operating costs, such as league insurance, referee fees, field rentals and other costs, as well as itemized equipment below:

- ✱ Tackle football – use of certified tackle helmet, shoulder pads, practice jersey, belt and game jersey. Equipment contracts must be signed at time of issue and all equipment shall be returned at the end of the season, with the exception of fall game jersey only (spring jersey must be returned).
- ✱ Flag football – use of flag helmet, flags, game jersey and game shorts. Equipment contracts must be signed at time of issue and all equipment shall be returned at the end of the season, except for game jersey and shorts (fall only).
- ✱ Cheer – local competition fees, practice gear (participant keeps).

*Other items may be included at Board discretion.

Cheerleaders will purchase their own uniforms, which can be bought back after the season for a reduced fee or used for the following season.

Refund Policy

Request for refund will be considered only for medical reasons that would exclude the athlete from participation and must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Request must be made in writing (e-mails not accepted) and submitted to the DNYFC Vice President or Treasurer no later than 14 days after first practice of season.
- Signed Physician's Statement detailing why participant is excluded from participating July – October, must accompany refund request letter, including physicians contact phone number.
- Any approved refund will be issued for Registration Fee paid, less an administrative fee equal to 25% of the total Registration Fee, whether paid in full or not. This fee will not be waived for any reason.
- NO REFUNDS will be processed, for any reason, after August 21st.

Refunds will be processed within four weeks of submission of the request. Date of submission shall be determined by the date received by the Treasurer and approved by the DNYFC Executive Board.

Equipment Care and Replacement Cost:

All equipment must be maintained in a clean serviceable condition throughout the season. If any of the equipment issued by DNYFC is not returned, lost, stolen or excessively damaged, parents will be responsible to pay full replacement cost or risk player termination from the Association. Normal wear and tear is to be expected.

Proper care and cleaning of uniforms is of paramount importance to attain desired appearance and longevity. Parents and players are advised to clean uniforms as prescribed on the labels. Heavily soiled spots on game/practice pants and jerseys should be sprayed with spot-cleaning agent, presoaked and washed in warm water. **NO BLEACH!!!** All uniforms may be tumble dried in cool air/ permanent press cycles or hung to dry.

The following list is for NEW, SINGLE-ITEM replacement costs:

Tackle Helmet \$200

Flag Helmet \$75

Shoulder Pads \$150

Spring Game Jersey \$60

Practice Jersey \$50

Tackle football players are required to purchase integrated pants, compression shorts, cleats, colored, tethered mouthpiece and socks.

Links to purchase these items will be posted on our website, www.nighthawksyouthfootball.org, as well as available at any local sporting goods store.

IMPORTANT WEBSITE LINKS

American Youth Football – National Site www.AmericanYouthFootball.com
San Diego Youth Football & Cheer Conference www.sandiegoyouthfootball.net
Del Norte Nighthawks Youth Football & Cheer, Inc. www.nighthawksyouthfootball.org

PRACTICES AND GAMES

Practice dates, times and locations will be announced by coaches before the beginning of the season. The first two weeks of practice will be 4 days a week for conditioning. After conditioning, practice will be 3 days a week in full pads.

CONDITIONING WEEKS, 5:00 PM-7:30 PM (Mon-Thurs for first two weeks)

a. Tackle football players should wear their helmet with colored, tethered mouthpiece, athletic shorts, t-shirt, and cleats. Each player must complete 10 hours of conditioning before they are allowed to practice in full gear (every division of football + cheer).

b. All physicals and missing paperwork must be submitted by first day of conditioning or your child will not be allowed on the practice field.

REGULAR PRACTICE SCHEDULE, Approx. 5:00 PM-7:00 PM (3 days per week)

a. If the player has completed 10 hours of conditioning, he/she should suit up in full practice gear. More information to follow, per your coach's instructions.

Game schedules will be posted on our website as soon as the information becomes available. There may be one pre-season game and 8 regular season games, with playoffs announced toward the end of the season, depending on standings. Locations for games could be at any of the home fields for any association within our Conference. Please check county website for a list of Associations.

All schedules are subject to change.

ADDITIONAL GAME INFORMATION –

Game Clock Details / Playing Requirements:

- Only 10 minute quarters will be utilized in all tackle divisions/class of play within AYF. Maximum half time allowed will be 15 minutes. Three (3) timeouts per half in all AYF games, Timeouts are not charged against a team for injuries or game officials' timeout.
- Flag games will consist of two (2) 20-minute halves with 10 minutes for half-time.
- A maximum of 14 regular season games including Conference championships are allowed.
- A minimum of 12 players eligible and able to participate is required to start and maintain a regulation game.
- Football games are to be scheduled no more than one (1) game per week with a minimum of 48 hours (2 days) between games. The AYF National Office reserves the right to waive this rule when extenuating circumstances exist or to accommodate a championship tournament.

TEAM ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES

All division teams have no weight limit, with the exception of Tiny Mite division (weight limit of 85 lbs.), and will be assigned to teams by age.

National American Youth Football Rules, San Diego Youth Football Cheer Conference (SDYFCC) and our Association Policy are to place all players on the youngest division team possible that their age and weight (if applicable) will permit. This permits a balance of weight, maturity and leadership on all teams.

Football (Tackle) Team: Consists of no more than 36 players and 36 cheerleaders

Football (Flag) Team: Consists of no more than 24 players and 24 cheerleaders

The Del Norte Board of Directors reserves the right to limit rosters to numbers below the maximum number in order to better serve our players by maintaining lower roster sizes.

In an effort to ensure that every participant has an opportunity to play, the Association may move players up a division, with the consent of the family, when needed.

TEAM MEMBERSHIP

Team Membership shall be in accordance with SDYFC & AYF rules and requirements and further defined as follows:

- Each youth shall be required to pay a registration fee established annually by the Board of Directors (unless waived by a majority vote)
- Each youth must meet the age requirements (and weight, if applicable) set forth by AYF & SDYFC
- Each youth must show a willingness to learn and progress in development while maintaining a satisfactory scholastic record
- Each youth must have on file the following; copy of birth certificate, passport-size photo of participant, proof of medical insurance, completed original physical form (must be valid through December of this year), copy of report card for entire previous school year, completed contract for the current season, DNYFC Acknowledgement, and any additional forms that may be required.

DRAFTING

There is no drafting of players in youth football.

PHYSICAL FITNESS REQUIREMENTS ARE MANDATORY

All Participants must have 10 hours of required physical fitness training scheduled by conference/association, commencing on **first day of fall practice**. A football player may not wear full gear or participate in hitting or catching drills until the 10 hours of conditioning is completed. A Cheerleader must meet the conditioning requirements before performing any stunts or starting competitive routines. Your position on the team or squad **may not** be held open if you miss the first week of the season, unless you have cleared the time away with the Head Coach for your team.

FOOTBALL PLAYER - AGE/WEIGHT TABLES

The Divisions for the 2015 season are as follows:

Division	Age	Weight
Flag	5,6,7	none
Tiny Mite	6,7,8	Up to 85 lbs.
9U	8,9	none
10U	9,10	none
11U	10,11	none
12U	11,12	none
14U	12,13,14	none

***A child's age on July 31st is his/her age for the season.**

American Youth Football Strongly Supports High School Football And Will Encourage All Participants To Join Their Local High School Team Over Any Youth League.

INSURANCE

Our insurance for the Association is provided through SDYFCC. SDYFCC carries liability insurance only.

Claims must be filed within 30 days of injury. All injuries must be reported to your General Manager or Board Member within 72 hours. **Players sustaining injuries which require a visit to the hospital or doctor must have a doctor's release in order to resume participation.**

Parents with medical insurance other than Youth Football liability should be aware of how their provider bills when their child is taken to a hospital not covered under their plan. In case of injury, your child will be transported to the nearest hospital.

Del Norte Youth Football IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY MEDICAL BILLS.

PICTURES

Picture Day for fall football will be announced shortly after the season begins, if not before. Times will be scheduled and monitored by the Association. Team Managers and Coaches will handle their particular team. Keeping your time schedule will be important. Individual pictures will be taken at this time, as well. Please wear complete game uniform.

Picture packages generally consist of:

- 1 – 5 x 7 Team Picture
- 4 – Wallet Individual Pictures
- 1 – Individual Picture Button
- 1 – Designer Memory-Mate Frame

The cost of this package is included in your child's registration fee. The photo vendor has a variety of other optional photo packages. All orders must be paid in full at the time the pictures are taken. Reorders will be available.

Teams and squads must report to the photo site at least 15 minutes prior to their scheduled time. It will be the responsibility of the General Managers/Head Coach and Team Parents to maintain the orders.

Retakes or make-ups may be scheduled on a subsequent day.

TEAM MANAGERS

Adults associated with each segment of Youth Football consist of Board Members, Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Parent/Manager, and other volunteers. These adult **“volunteers”** have assumed the responsibility of making this Del Norte AYF Season a positive experience for all children participating in Youth Football. Each volunteer involved in our association is subject to a criminal background check each year.

The delegation of duties will vary from Head Coach to other volunteers. However, the goal in all cases is to develop and practice the ideals of scholarship, sportsmanship and physical fitness and to instill “positive moral and character traits” in each individual participant and the adult volunteers.

A Team Parent/Manager, more often than not, will be the liaison between the parents, Head Coaches and the Association. These volunteers will make calls or send e-mails to notify families of practice and schedule changes, schedule transportation if needed, and assign parents to work in concessions, etc. When these individuals or any other authorized team representative ask for your help in any way, ***please*** provide the assistance and make a positive effort to assist.

Parents are required and needed to contribute their fair share of time and support all functions of the team and the LEAGUE whenever they can. There are many ways to volunteer. Here are some of the opportunities:

1. Asst. Coach
2. Minimum Play Monitor (on field during game), to assist coach in monitoring plays
3. Work the yard chains/down markers at home games
 - *No cell phones or cheering from play monitors or chain gang
4. Set-up field for home games
5. Announce players and plays for home games
6. Run clock at home games
7. Take Game video and save to CD for coach to review
8. Offer to pick up or take home other players when needed
9. Become a Board Member (description of positions are in the Del Norte AYF bylaws)
10. Work concessions
11. Organize Picture Day
12. Team Photographers (when playing away, must get clearance from Board of visiting field)

CONCESSIONS

Concessions are operated solely on “volunteer” efforts. Every team will be scheduled to work shifts during home games. These shifts will not be during your child’s game. The Concession Coordinator will contact your Team Parent/Manager regarding scheduling.

EXAMPLE: *Your son/daughter is on the 12U team and the 12U team is scheduled to play at 1:00 pm ~ you will work the 11U game at 11:00 am, or the 14U game after the 12U game. .*

Proceeds from our concessions help reduce the costs you pay for your child to participate in our program. It is **MANDATORY** that we have help in concessions to prevent the need for fundraisers and/or out of pocket expenses from parents to get through the season.

CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 14 YRS. OLD ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE SNACK BAR.

PLEASE VOLUNTEER – WE CAN’T OPERATE WITHOUT YOUR HELP!

SCHOLAR ATHLETE

American Youth Football and Cheer requires all participants to have at least a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA). The final report card must be turned in to show GPA. Participants who do not meet this eligibility requirement may still be able to play if certain conditions are met. A form is required to be completed by the school. If the school administrator agrees that participation would be beneficial to the child, the child will be placed on Academic Probation with our Association. During this period the participant will have the school complete a weekly progress report. These reports will be turned into the Eligibility Chairperson (as appropriate for division of play). These reports are then turned in monthly to the county association. Participants on probation, who do not turn their weekly reports, may not participate in that week’s game. This includes play-off games, as well.

These requirements are mandatory, but only require a minimum GPA. The Del Norte Board of Directors encourages all football players and cheerleaders to perform their very best at school and on the field. Athletes achieving a high standard at school are rewarded for their performance off the field. With a GPA of 93% or above the participant may qualify for the AYF Academic Achievement Alliance Award. Details will be provided to your child if they qualify.

Another award for high achievement is the SDYFCC Scholar Athlete Award. This requires a GPA of 96% or above and involvement in at least two community service/extracurricular activities, other than sports. The Scholar Athlete Director will work with the parents whose children meet these criteria to assist in the nomination process. The deadline is TBD.

The entire organization, from National, to County, and here at the local level, places great emphasis on academics and athletic performance.

As an association, we will recognize our Little Scholars at a banquet we put on at the end of our fall season. All players, parents and siblings are invited to attend this banquet. Date and location will be announced later in the fall season.

YOUTH FOOTBALL STUDY

A 2002 Mayo Clinic study of youth football showed that most injuries that occurred were mild, older players appeared to be at a higher risk and that no significant correlation exists between body weight and injury. The study, which appears in a previous issue of Mayo Clinic Proceedings, found that the data for athletes grades four through eighth indicated that the risk of injury in youth football does not appear greater than the risk associated with other recreational or competitive sports.

“Our analysis showed that youth football injuries are uncommon,” said Michael J. Stuart, M.D., a Mayo Clinic orthopedic surgeon and the principal author of the study. Dr. Stuart and his colleagues studied 915 players aged 9 to 13 years, who participated on 42 football teams in the fall of 1997. Injury incidence, prevalence and severity were calculated for each grade level and player position. Additional analyses examined the number of injuries according to body weight.

A game injury was defined as any football-related ailment that occurred on the field during a game that kept a player out of competition for the remainder of the game, required the attention of a physician, and included all concussion, lacerations, as well as dental, eye and nerve injuries. The researcher found a total of 55 injuries occurred in games during the season—a prevalence of six percent. Incidence of injury expressed as injury per 1,000 player-plays was lowest in the fourth grade (.09 percent), increased for the fifth, sixth and seventh grade (.33 percent). Most of the injuries were mild and the most common type was a contusion, which occurred in 33 players. Four injuries (fractures involving the ankle growth plate) were such that they prevented players from participating for the rest of the season. No player required hospitalization or surgery.

The study’s authors said risk increases with level of play (grade in school) and player age. Older players in the higher grades are more susceptible to football injuries. The risk of injury for an eighth-grade player was four times greater than the risk of injury for a fourth-grade player. Potential contributing factors include increased size, strength, speed and aggressiveness. Analysis of body weight indicated that lighter players were not at increased risk for injury, and in fact heavier players had a slightly higher prevalence of injury. This trend was not statistically significant. Running backs are at greater risk when compared with other football positions, the researchers reported.

Football is a collision sport and even the best gear may not prevent an injury due to the many random factors involved in contact sports.

Interesting Facts about Injuries Compared to Football Injuries

- **Organized football among 5 – 15 year-olds has 12 percent fewer injuries per capita than organized soccer in the same age range**
- **Organized football among 5 – 15 year-olds has 50 percent fewer injuries per capita than bicycle riding in the same age range.**
- **Organized football among 5 – 15 year-olds has 74 percent fewer injuries per capita than skateboarding in the same age group.**
- **Injuries in youth football are normally mild, and older players have a higher injury rate than younger players**

TEN THINGS PARENTS CAN DO TO HELP A COACH

1. Deliver + Pick up your child to practices and games on time. Please stay to support your kids at home and away games.
2. Say only positive things on the sidelines.
3. Communicate with the coach – not on the field.
4. Don't shout instructions to your child during a game.
5. Call the Coach if your child is going to miss a game or practice.
6. Make sure your child has adequate sleep and water the night before a game.
7. Focus on effort, not winning.
8. Support the coach, especially regarding lineup choices and discipline.
9. Provide a nutritious meal before games and practices.
10. Volunteer when needed.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS FOR 2015 SEASON

ALL MEMBERS OF Del Norte AYF, PARENTS/GUARDIANS, WHO ARE IN GOOD STANDING, ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND OUR MEETINGS. THEY ARE CURRENTLY HELD ON THE SECOND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH, FOLLOWING THE SECOND TUESDAY, AT APPROXIMATELY 7:30PM. PLEASE CONTACT OUR SECRETARY FOR CORRECT TIMES AND LOCATION. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK AT MEETING, PLEASE SUBMIT AGENDA ITEM TO SECRETARY AT LEAST 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE: LauraH@nighthawksyouthfootball.org.

DEFINITIONS

A) National Office:

American Youth Football (AYF) established in 1996, is an international youth football organization established to promote the wholesome development of youth through their association with adult leaders in the sport of American football. Rules and regulations are established to ensure that players play in an atmosphere of safety with a competitive balance between teams. Scholastic requirements for participation ensure that each participant understands that schoolwork comes first. Being all-inclusive AYF encourages Independent Local Leagues to join in order to receive the same benefits and services as our National Tournament members.

B) Region:

A Region is defined as a geographic territory. The geographic territory is determined by the AYF National Office. The regional territories that make up AYF can be found online at www.americanyouthfootball.com. A Region is comprised of Member Conferences within a territory that has applied for and has been granted membership, by the National Office.

C) Conference:

A Conference is defined by the geographic boundary of its membership. A Conference membership is comprised of the Associations that have applied for, and have been granted membership, by the Conference's governing body. In keeping with the American Youth Football's Goals and Philosophies no application for membership should be unreasonably withheld. Del Norte Youth Football & Cheer is part of San Diego Youth Football & Cheer Conference (SDYFC). For associations that are part of the SDYFC, please see the SDYFC website.

D) Association:

An Association is an organization, whether legally formed or not, assembled for the purpose of organizing and operating a youth football and/or cheer program. Associations may be organized by locales, cities, towns or community groups. The Association must be restricted by its Conference from drawing participants from certain geographic territory/boundaries. The acceptable method and determination of what participants can register within any given Association will be governed by the Conference/Region to which it is a member. The movement of a participant from one member Association to another must be strictly governed and enforced by the Conference/Region to which it is a member and or by this rulebook. When controversy exists over player movement or territorial boundaries or draw areas the national office will have the final say.

An Association's members are the Participants that have applied for and have been granted membership by the Association's governing body. In keeping with the American Youth Football's Goals and Philosophies, applications must be taken on a first come, first served basis and teams must be formed regardless of player ability. No application for membership should be unreasonably withheld and under no circumstances will a participant be discriminated against.

E) Participant:

A Participant is defined as a minor child that has applied for and has been granted membership within a given Association.

F) Division:

A division is defined as a grouping of teams in specific grade-based class. AYF now offers the following divisions: National, United and All-American.

G) Team/Classification:

A Team is defined as a grouping within a grade class such as: 10U, 11U, 12U, 14U.