



# MUDSOCK YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

## Modifications for Rookie Tackle/7-Player Rules

Revised June 2023



Proud partner of:



**Rookie Tackle incorporates the Mudsock Youth Football League 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade rules, which are modified from the National Federation of State High School Association (NHFS) football rules. All Mudsock Youth Football League Codes of Conduct and eligibility rules apply. These further modifications are made to ensure the best experience for 7-player football:**

### **Player Eligibility**

1. To be eligible to play in the MYFL, all children must meet the following requirements:
  - a. Meet the residency and registration requirements of the Mudsock Youth Athletics organization.
  - b. Attend 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade
  - c. There is one (1) year of eligibility for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade rookie tackle league. Any situation where a player is eligible for a 2nd year of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade rookie tackle will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Any youth player having a 2nd year of eligibility for the 3rd grade tackle league due to false information provided about age in a previous season will be automatically ineligible for a 2nd tackle season.
  - d. Players younger than 3<sup>rd</sup> grade may not “play up” in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade rookie tackle.

### **Game Administration**

1. A coin flip will occur pre-game with the visiting team choosing heads or tails. The winner of the coin flip can choose to receive the ball or defer.
2. Each team will play “smalls” at skill positions in the first half and “bigs” at skill positions in the second half
3. Game shall consist of 4 quarters of 10 minutes each that will be on a running clock with the exception of change possession and injury. Each team will also be given 2 timeouts per half.
4. Whichever weight class plays skill positions first will remain at those positions for the remainder of the half and the other weight class will play the skill positions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half.
5. There are no restrictions on jersey numbers or player positions.
6. A Pee Wee sized football will be used for this league.
7. Players are required to play multiple positions.

There are:

  - a. No weight restrictions for carrying the ball.
  - b. Players are required to rotate positions within offense and defense.
  - c. Skill positions on offense consist of a QB, 2 RB's, WR/TE. A team can choose to have one WR or TE. Teams must always have 4 players on the line of scrimmage. The line positions include Center and two Guards. If “smalls” are at the skill positions the “Bigs” will be on the line and if the “Bigs” are at the skill positions, then the “Smalls” will be on the line.
  - d. Skill positions on defense include one inside LB, both cornerback positions and safety and the line positions include one inside LB and both defensive line positions.
  - e. Bigs and smalls will be determined during the draft process and based on the median weight of the league. If a player is at or above the median weight, he or she will be considered a “Big.”

8. The home team will sit on the east side of the field matching the home side of the scoreboard. The visiting team will be on the west side of the field. Each game, the home team is responsible for providing two (2) individuals to operate the chains. The visiting team is responsible for providing one (1) individual to operate the scoreboard and one (1) to work the chains.

### **Team Designations:**

1. Each team will be divided equally into 2 squads – Bigs and Smalls
  - a. Bigs and smalls will be determined during the draft process and based on the median weight of the league. If a player is at or above the median weight, he or she will be considered a “Big.”
2. Once players are assigned a designation after the draft the designation cannot be changed, unless the commissioner of the league approves the change.
3. Each player on the Bigs will have their helmet marked with a stripe before the Jamboree.
4. Skill positions on offense include QB, 2 RB's, WR/TE and the line positions include a Center and two Guards.
5. Skill positions on defense include one inside LB, both cornerback positions and safety which must play at least 7 yards off the line of scrimmage. The line positions include one inside LB and both defensive line positions.
6. If a player is playing out of position, the first offense will be a warning. The second will be a 15-yard penalty. The third will be a forfeiture of the game.

### **Special Teams Adjustments:**

1. There are no special teams.
2. There are no kickoff or punts. Each possession starts with the ball on the 40-yard line, regardless of whether there is a score, turnover or turnover on downs.
3. There are no extra points by a kick.
4. All PATs are attempted through a run or pass try. Coaches can choose to go for one point from the 3-yard line or two points from the 5-yard line.

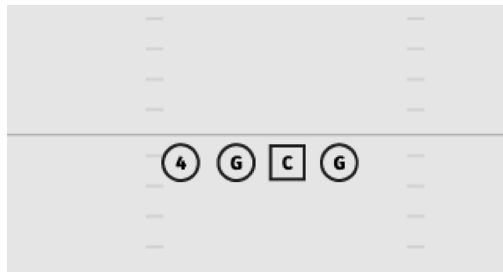
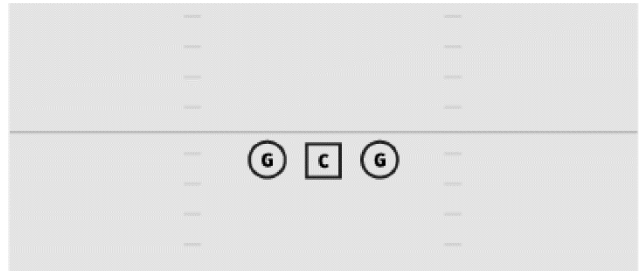
### **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Game Play Adjustments:**

For 3<sup>rd</sup> grade only, all linemen will be in a 2-point stance. This includes both offensive and defensive lineman.

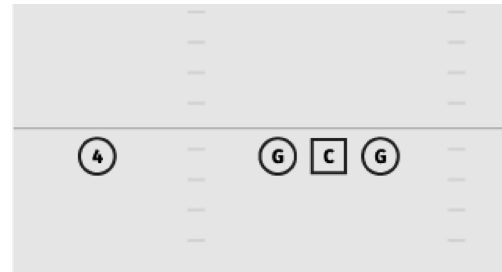
Also, in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, there will not be a Center/QB exchange. Instead, the quarterback will place the ball on the center's back. He will perform his cadence and play will begin when the QB moves the ball. A false start can occur if players move before the QB moves the ball.

## Offensive Adjustments:

1. Each play must include three offensive linemen — a center and two guards, one on either side of the center. These players are ineligible for first touch as the receiver of a pass, regardless of the numbers on their jerseys.
2. The distance between a guard and center may not exceed three feet (1 yard) but may be closer.
3. Players must rotate positions:
  - a. The three offensive linemen must identify themselves on each play by raising their hands as they break the huddle and approach the line of scrimmage.
  - b. Once identified as an offensive lineman, players may not shift to another position.
  - c. All three offensive linemen are ineligible for first touch on a pass, including a guard who is uncovered by an end.
4. Quarterback sneaks are prohibited in all situations because the defense is not allowed to have players aligned over the center or in the center-guard gap.
5. The offense must have four players on the line of scrimmage. No more, no less. The fourth player can be a tight end or split end. See figures below.



or



6. The four offensive players who are not playing guard or center may be deployed in positions at the coach's discretion so long as one is on the line of scrimmage (see rule 9).
7. No twins formations are allowed.
8. No motion is allowed by any player in the backfield.
9. All blocks below the waist, in any situation, are illegal.
10. After each play, the ball is spotted in the middle of the field. Hash marks are not used

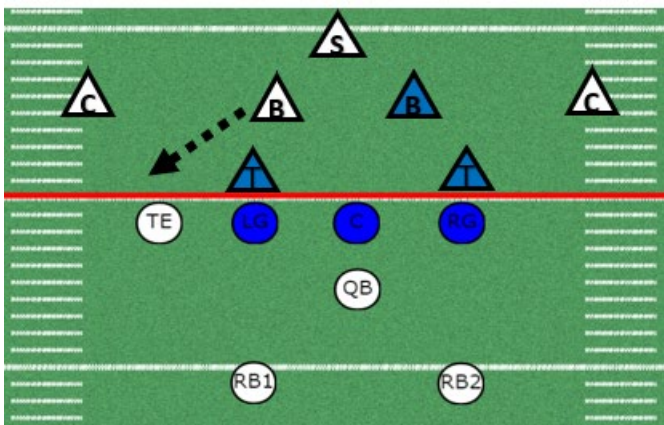
## Defensive Adjustments:

1. Defenses may only have two defensive linemen unless an offensive formation includes a tight end. In that case, a third defensive lineman may line up over the tight end, but that defensive lineman must match the size class and line up head up.
2. Defensive linemen over guards must be aligned in a head up or outside shade position.
3. Players in an outside shade must always have one foot aligned inside the stance of the opposing Guards
4. The defense must have one player at least 7 yards from the ball.
5. The remaining four players can be deployed at the coach's discretion but must be four yards off the line of scrimmage unless covering a tight end or split end on the line of scrimmage.
  - a. Example: If the offense aligns with its fourth line—of—scrimmage player as a tight end, then the defense may align a player directly over the tight end on the line of scrimmage to balance the Running surface but that player must match the size class and line up head up.
  - b. Defenses are not required to match the fourth player on the line of scrimmage but have the option to do so.

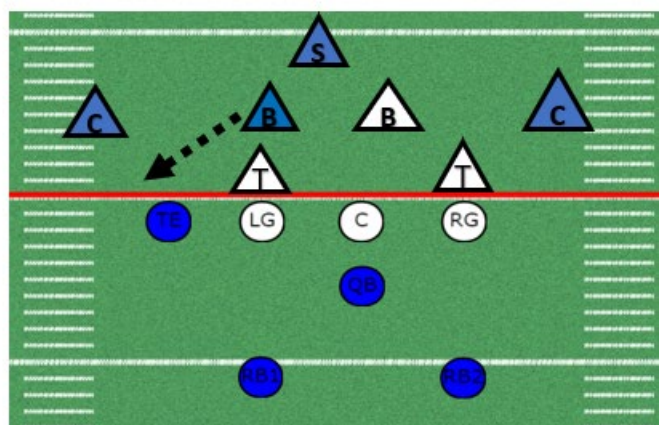
## **Summary**

See below diagrams (Blue = Bigs, White = Smalls)

When Smalls are at the skill positions the defense must have 2 defensive tackles lined up over the two offensive guards. Both LBs must be inside the Guard box unless the defense decides to cover up the TE. In this case the small LB must be the one on the line of scrimmage and is allowed to rush the QB. LBs and Corners must be 4 yards off the line of scrimmage and Safety must be at least 7 yards off the LOS



**Smalls are at skill positions**



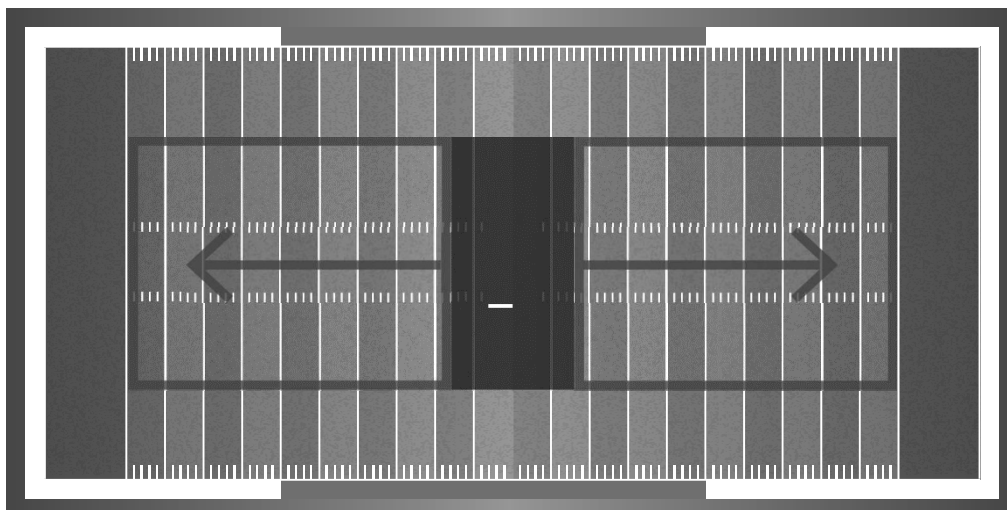
**Bigs are at skill positions**

6. **No blitzes are allowed.** Players within the box at the snap can penetrate upon the snap. Linebackers, safeties and cornerbacks (both on the line and at depth) can flow to the ball naturally after a handoff is made, but predetermining penetration to a specific gap is illegal.
  - a. The box includes offensive players who line up within two yards of the ball and on the line of scrimmage along with the defensive players lined up directly over them.
  - b. On pass plays, anyone playing off the line of scrimmage on the snap cannot rush the quarterback unless the QB leaves the pocket (defined as guard to guard) and must remain behind the line of scrimmage in pass coverage.
  - c. NOTE: The restriction on blitzing is intended to encourage skill development within the passing game and allow young players to execute a successful handoff with limited penetration.
7. If the ball is inside the 4-yard line, the four non-linemen, non-deep players may align on the goal line.
8. There are no defensive safeties. Tackles behind the 40-yard line are spotted at the 40-yard line

**Penalties:**

1. Because of the limited field size, all 15-yard penalties are enforced as 10-yard penalties
2. No penalty on the offense can take the ball beyond the 40-yard line into the administration zone.
3. Penalties on the offense that are called and accepted on or behind the 40-yard line result in a loss of down.
4. Penalties on the offense called between the 40-yard line and the end zone in which yardage is lost, even if limited in enforcement by the 40-yard line, are enforced as written in terms of down lost or replayed.
5. All personal foul penalties include an immediate substitution from the field for a minimum of one play to allow coaches to address misconduct and promote good sportsmanship.

**Playing Field and Clock:**



1. The playing field is 40-by-35 1/3 yards, allowing for two fields to be created on a traditional 100-yard field at the same time.
2. The sidelines extend between the inside of the numbers on a traditional football field and should be marked with cones every five yards. Use traditional pylons, if available, to mark the goal line and the back line of the end zone.
  - a. Additional cones can be placed between the five-yard stripes and in line with the inside of the numbers to further outline the playing surface if desired.
  - b. We will be using orange sidelines and markings
  - c. It is the coach's responsibility to keep his team's parents and fans off the traditional 100-yard field for safety reasons.
3. The rules of the clock will be administered in accordance with NFHS rules and consist of four (4), ten (10) Minute quarters that will be on a running clock with the exception of change possession and injury. Each team will also be given 2 timeouts per half. 2-point conversions are untimed downs.
4. All possessions start at the 40-yard line going in toward the end zone.
  - a. This leaves a 20-Yard buffer zone between the two games for administration and safety purposes. Game officials, league personnel, athletic trainers and designated coaches are the only people allowed in this space.
  - b. Players not in the game stand on the traditional sidelines with one or more coach to supervise. On the change of possession, every player on the bench rotates onto the field.
  - c. All plays are blown dead and the ball is returned to the 40-yard line if an offensive ball-carrier or a fumbled ball crosses over midfield or at the official's discretion if coaches, administrators, or players from the multiple fields and the dead zone become close enough in proximity to be a concern for safety.
5. First downs, down markers and the Chain gang are administered in accordance with National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) or ISHAA rules — starting from the 40-yard line.

### **Overtime:**

- a. A coin flip will determine first possession. The visiting team shall call the coin flip. The winner of the coin flip shall choose offense or defense.
- b. Each team will receive one possession
- c. Both teams will use the same end zone for overtime possessions.
- d. The offensive team will be given a first down on the 10-yard line.
- e. The play clock runs as normal. There is no game clock, and all play is otherwise untimed.
- f. A team's possession ends when it scores (touchdown or field goal), misses a field goal, or turns over the ball (either on downs or by the defense otherwise gaining possession).
- g. During an overtime period, the defense cannot score or advance a turnover.
- h. If the offensive team scores a touchdown, they may choose from among the Point After Touchdown options.
- i. After the initial offensive team completes their possession, regardless of whether, or how much they score, the opposing team is given an offensive possession.

- j. Each team shall receive 1 time out in overtime. Timeouts do not carry over from regulation.
- k. If the tie is not broken after the first overtime period, the above rules repeat
- l. with the following changes:
- m. The team who began on defense in the first overtime period shall be on offense to begin the second overtime period.
- n. The offensive team will start 1st and goal from the 5-yard line.
- o. If the score is still tied after the second overtime period, then the tie shall stand as the official game result.

### **Practice Rules and Practice Plan:**

- 1. All practices have a one and a half hour time limit. No exceptions.
- 2. You may not scrimmage more than once per week and for no more than 45 minutes.
- 3. Practices are only allowed at league approved sites. A list will be provided to coaches prior to the season.
- 4. Prior to the first game:
  - a. Each team is permitted a total of three (3) practices per week.
  - b. "Week" is defined as Sunday through Saturday.
- 5. After the first game:
  - a. Only two (2) practices per Week will be permitted. No exceptions.
  - b. Sunday practices will not be allowed after the first game.
  - c. No more than three (3) football events are allowed per week (2 games, 1 practice, 1 game 2 practices).
- 6. Teams shall not warm-up or practice until one hour prior to their game.
- 7. Each Head Coach will be required to download the Coaches Practice plan and Guide from the Mudsock Youth Football Website. Without exception, the first hour of every practice must follow the Practice Plan and the drills included in the practice plan. The Practice Plan and drills will ensure each youth player is learning the fundamentals of a proper stance, blocking and tackling.