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**FALL 2019 – SPRING 2020  
TACKLE FOOTBALL RULES**

## **ORGANIZATION**

National Youth Sports is a 501(C)3 Non-Profit organization that provides recreational and competitive sports for children ages 3 – 15.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of National Youth Sports is to strengthen the individual, the family, and the community through the participation in youth sports.

**Unless otherwise noted in the National Youth Sports Rules, all games will follow rules established by the National Federation of High School Rules (NFHS).**

## **Procedures/Personnel/Certification/Team Guidelines**

### **Rule 1 – Certification/Registration**

The registration process entails creating an account on our website at [www.nysaz.com](http://www.nysaz.com). The only way to register for the tackle football program is directly through our website.

The certification process involves uploading a player photo and an original proof of age onto your online player account (established when initially registering). NYS will print player sheets for all teams and produce team books for each team to utilize during the season.

Players will be officially assigned to rosters based on their age as of August 1, 2019. Players are allowed to play up one calendar age (i.e., an eight year-old can play as a nine year-old). Coaches, parent(s)/guardian(s), team representatives will assume all liability conducting practices prior to certification. League rosters are not official until each child completes the certification process.

### **Rule 2 – Team Rosters**

11-Man Divisions = Team rosters must be comprised of 12 – 40 players.

8 – Man Divisions = Team rosters must be comprised of 9 – 20 players

Players not listed on the roster or that are not registered with NYS cannot participate in any team practices. Coaches, parent(s)/guardian(s), team representatives assume all liability for allowing unregistered players participate in practices or scrimmages.

### **Rule 3 – Practices**

NYS does not reserve fields for tackle football teams. Each team is responsible for obtaining a practice facility. There are no stipulations in regards to when teams may begin practice and the amount of days and times teams wish to practice. A parent or guardian of each player on the team is strongly encouraged to be at each practice. Teams must protect all children against heat

related issues. All teams must provide enough water for all players and encourage each child to bring their own water bottle.

#### **Rule 4 – Game Day**

All parents and team volunteers are expected to participate on game day. NYS will set up all fields prior to the start of the first scheduled game and will clean up the facility at the end of the last scheduled game. Coaches are expected to encourage their players and parents to pick up any debris left on the sideline after the game to assist NYS staff with cleanup.

Visiting teams must provide a volunteer to run the first down indicator and two individuals to run first down chains selected prior to the game.

#### **Rule 5 – Pre-Game Checks**

Teams must be present at least a half hour prior to their scheduled game to check in and complete the pre-game certification. The NYS site director at the field will conduct player check-ins. Teams will lineup in alphabetical order. Player certification sheets will be matched up with names on the official roster.

If a player misses the initial check-in prior to the end of the second quarter, the player may check-in at halftime. Any player showing up after the second quarter will be ineligible to play.

#### **Rule 6 – Playing Time**

National Youth Sports strongly encourages coaches to focus on teaching players the fundamentals of football. Our goal is to make sure every player is getting a fair amount of playing time during every game. Although there is no mandatory play rule, we expect the coaches to make sure they're acting fairly and let every child have a chance to enter the game.

#### **Rule 7 – Overtime/Forfeitures/Cancellations**

Any forfeited game will result in a 42 – 0 score. If a team does not have the correct number of players to participate (11 v. 11), the game will be played with less players on each side. The score will be recorded as 42 - 0, but will be played as a scoreless scrimmage to provide the children the ability to participate.

NYS has the authority to reschedule games as necessary. Individuals from teams cannot reschedule games without league approval.

Mercy Rule: Once a team has the lead by 42 points the game will end.

NO OVERTIME in Regular Season Games. Overtime Procedures for Playoffs: In case of a tie each team will get one possession from the ten-yard line to score. First possession will be determined by coin toss (visitor calls), chooses offense or defense. There are no fumbles or interceptions. If the defense gains possession, the offensive set of downs will not continue (per NFHS overtime rules). Teams may elect to go for 1 or 2 on the point after attempt (PAT) in the 1<sup>st</sup> two overtimes. This will repeat if no winner is decided after 1st possession (the score

remaining tied). Above NFHS rules, after the 2<sup>nd</sup> overtime period, teams must go for 2 on the PAT. Overtime will continue until there is a winner.

### **Rule 8 – Team Set-up**

Head Coach MUST Register the team onto our electronic big board.

Since NYS offers programs across the state, players are not restricted by boundaries.

All NYS coaches and EMT representatives must be at least 18 years old.

All coaches will be subjected to a background examination conducted by Protect Youth Sports and MUST have a valid NFHS concussion certificate on file.

Teams are allowed a maximum of seven coaches. The visiting team will be allowed to have three parent volunteers on the sideline to run the first down chains and down indicator. All other individuals must stay behind the designated area.

For fields without stands, all individuals must be at least five yards off of the sideline during the game.

For facilities with stands, individuals not listed on the team certification report will have to be in the stands and cannot be on the sidelines. Individuals found in violation of this rule will be subjected to a one game suspension and possibly longer depending on the severity of the problem. Ladders are prohibited at game site to protect the children, fans, and staff.

### **Rule 9 – EMT**

Each team must have at least one volunteer staff that is first aid certified at all practices, games, and team events. The EMT must certify by uploading a photo to their account and uploading their first aid credentials to the team page.

All teams must have a first aid kit at all practices, games, and team functions.

If a major injury occurs during the game, the volunteer medical personnel for the game and NYS staff will make a discretionary call as to whether the game is to be cancelled. If the game is cancelled prior to halftime, the game will be made up on a future date and will be picked up where it was left off. If a game is cancelled after halftime, the game is considered final.

### **Rule 10 – Playoffs**

Playoffs will be determined by seeding. The team that finishes the regular season with the best record will have an easier path to the Championship because that team will face the lowest seed. The playoffs are single elimination. If 6 or less teams in a division, top 4 will make the playoffs, remaining teams will play a bowl game. In divisions higher than 6, NYS will evaluate standings at the conclusion of the regular season to determine number of qualifying teams. All teams with a team record higher than .500 (winning percentage) will qualify for a single

elimination playoff. Teams that do not qualify for the playoffs will not have any additional games/bowl games.

Regular season Tie-Breakers for seeding purposes (if W/L records are identical):

- A. Head to Head
- B. Least Amount of Points Allowed
- C. Random.org Generated Result based on 6 rounds.

### **The Field and Markings**

The game field will be played on a field 100 yds. long (80 yds. of playing field with two ten yard endzones) and 50 yards wide. Midfield will be set at 40 yards.

Each field will be marked with yard markers on the south or west sideline.

Yard lines will be painted or chalked with a continuous line every ten yards.

A soft, flexible pylon will mark all four inside corners of both end zones.

### **Game Equipment**

**FOR THE PIGSKIN, PEE WEE, AND MIDGET DIVISIONS:** The game ball must be a Pee Wee Size Football OR one comparable in size in a traditional brown or tan color. The officials will rotate balls from each team while they are on offense.

**FOR MINORS DIVISION:** The game ball must be a Junior Size Football OR one comparable in size in a traditional brown or tan color. The officials will rotate balls from each team while they are on offense.

**FOR JUNIOR HIGH DIVISION:** The game ball must be a Wilson Youth Sized Football (TDY) OR one comparable in size in a traditional brown or tan color. The officials will rotate balls from each team while they are on offense.

Each team will supply their own game football. Teams may use their own football when on offense. It is the responsibility of each team to provide their game ball to the officials when their team is on offense.

A kicking tee must be provided by each team to utilize during kickoffs.

The league will provide a down indicator and two first down markers attached to a ten yard chain. The visiting team is responsible in providing volunteers to run the down indicator and first down chains during the game.

## **Player Equipment – NYS Store Now Offers Player Tackle Equipment! Link on our website!**

Each participating player must wear the following pieces of equipment, which cannot be altered.

- A. A NOCSAE standard helmet and facemask. The helmet must be properly secured with a four snap chin strap.
- B. A seven piece pant pad set consisting of hip pads, thigh pads, knee pads, and a tailbone protector.
- C. Football pants that cover all pant pads.
- D. Enclosed shoes comprised of rubber cleats or regular tennis shoes.
- E. Shoulder pads that are fully covered by the player's jersey.
- F. A mouthpiece.
- G. Any player that wears a visor or glasses must make sure the equipment is clear and does not tint at any point.
- H. No jewelry.

The head coach is responsible for checking with a game official that all players are properly equipped.

If a player is missing equipment or participating with illegal equipment, the player must make the proper correction before participating any further in the game.

An unsportsmanlike conduct penalty of 15 yards will be enforced for player's wearing improper equipment during a play.

### **Coaches Field Rules**

Electronic communication devices are prohibited.

Coaches are not allowed on the field of play in the Midget, Minor, Major, and Jr High divisions. The Pigskin and Pee Wee divisions may have one coach on the field of play. Each team may have one coach on the field during play. Before the snap, both offensive and defensive coaches must be a minimum of ten yards off the line of scrimmage. Both coaches must exit to the sidelines prior to the snap of the football in the red zone. The coach may not interfere with the play of the game or they will receive a fifteen-yard penalty.

### **Blocking**

Blocking below the waist is prohibited at all times on all areas of the field. This is to protect all players on the field at all times.

## **Length of Quarters**

In the presence of each team's captains and one coach from each team, NYS staff/referees will conduct the coin toss fifteen minutes prior to kickoff. No team may have more than four captains and only one player shall be designated as the team spokesperson. In some instances, coin tosses will be conducted on the field with the referees. The Game Officials, in the presence of both teams' field captains, will toss a coin to determine possession at the start of the game. The home team will call "heads" or "tails."

The winner of the coin toss will then choose whether to kick or receive (no deferment) and the losing team will choose which side of the field they would like to defend. After halftime the teams will switch roles.

The home team will occupy the north or east sideline, whichever applies. The visiting team is responsible for obtaining volunteers to run the sideline chains and down marker.

**PIGSKIN DIVISION:** The game shall consist of four ten minute quarters. The game clock will continuously run until the final 2 minutes of each half. NFHS rules regarding the stopping of the clock will apply during the final 2 minutes of each half.

**PEE WEE AND MIDGET DIVISIONS:** The game shall consist of four fifteen minute quarters. The game clock will continuously run until the final 2 minutes of each half. NFHS rules regarding the stopping of the clock will apply during the final 2 minutes of each half.

**MINOR AND JUNIOR HIGH DIVISIONS:** The game shall consist of four ten minute quarters. NFHS rules regarding the stopping of the clock will apply throughout the game.

There will be a one minute intermission between the first and second quarter, as well as, the third and fourth quarter. There will be a 5 - 10 minute halftime between the second and third quarters. NYS Staff & Referees may shorten the length of halftime based on the day's game schedule. Each half of the game will be started by a kickoff.

## **Substitutions**

Players can be substituted only on a dead ball.

Substituted players must leave the field at the sideline in which his or her team occupies.

## **Kickoffs and Punts**

Kickoffs to start the first or third quarter and after a touchdown will take place from the forty-yard line. Free kicks after a safety will take place from the twenty-yard line.

Rushing the punter is legal in the Minor and Junior High/Middle School divisions. Teams in the Pee Wee and Midget divisions cannot rush the punter and everyone must be set until the ball is kicked.

Onside kicks are prohibited in the Pigskin, Pee Wee, and Midget divisions.

### **Timeouts**

Each team will receive two thirty second timeouts per half. Timeouts do not carry over.

### **Extra Points/Field Goals**

FOR MINOR, JUNIOR HIGH, and HIGH SCHOOL DIVISIONS ONLY: Kicking of Field Goals and Extra Points are allowed. Teams are allowed to rush and block per NFHS rules. NFHS rules apply to PAT's. Teams can elect to kick the PAT for 2 points. If a PAT is faked, the offensive team can still convert the PAT with a score worth 1 point. Field goals are worth 3 points.

FOR PIGSKIN, PEE WEE AND MIDGET DIVISIONS ONLY: NO kicking of Field Goals or Extra Points. A team will receive one extra point from scoring from the five yard line. A team will receive two extra points from scoring from the ten yard line.

### **Play Clock**

The offense is given thirty seconds from the spotting of the ball to the time they must snap the ball to begin the next play.

### **Interceptions, Fumbles, Dead Balls**

Pigskin and Pee Wee Division Interceptions and Fumbles

On Interceptions, Ball will be considered dead at the point of the interception, ball cannot be advanced. No Fumbles, dropped balls are considered dead at the spot of the drop.

Midget, Minor, Jr High Division Interceptions and Fumbles are live.

If anything other than a hand or foot of the ball carrier touches the ground the player is down, whether touched by a player or not.

### **Line-up Formations**

11 Man Divisions = The offense must have at least seven players lined up on the line of scrimmage for every play. Five offensive linemen are ineligible receivers. The defense does not have a minimum number of players required to be on the line of scrimmage.

8 Man Divisions = The offense must have five players lined up on the line of scrimmage for every play. Three offensive linemen are ineligible receivers and must be in a three-point stance. The defense must have a minimum of two and a maximum of four players in-between the tackles on the line of scrimmage for every play. These players must be in a three-point stance. No individual player may be lined up directly over the center, the center cannot be hit directly from the front (in order to allow snap exchange and center time to raise head).



## **Disciplinary Issues**

Any issues with a coach, parent, staff, contractor, or league policy must be made to the league coordinator in writing to [info@nysonline.net](mailto:info@nysonline.net). Video Documentation, Photos, or any other evidence to support your claim will be required, so please attach with original email.

All participants, parents, guardians, and coaches are required to abide by the league's code of ethics (agreed to at the time of registration). Any violation of the codes of conduct may result in suspension or removal from the league.

The league will have final judgment in all rulings. NYS has the authority to suspend or permanently remove any individual to uphold the mission and focus of NYS.

### **Automatic Disqualifications:**

- Second unsportsmanlike facemask penalty
- Fighting whether it is a player or spectator
- Striking, kicking, or kneeling any player or spectator
- Intentional contact with a game official
- Two un-sportsmanlike fouls by a player or spectator (Referee may eject a player, coach, and spectator for one unsportsmanlike conduct depending on severity of action).
- Any other act that is unruly, rough, and/or flagrant
- A spectator violating the parent line or cautioned parent area.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND PENALTIES**

- 1. The players, head coach, and assistant coaches can be in the coach's box on the sidelines. The coach's box is between the twenty-five yard lines. These individuals must have proper identification to be on the playing side of the parent line. Failure to comply with this rule will result in a fifteen-yard unsportsmanlike conduct. All other parents, friends, and/or relatives must stay in the designated area, even if you are filming. Ladders are prohibited at each site to protect the children, fans, and staff.**
- 2. Profanity and arguing with any game official, NYS staff, or opposing parent/coach is not allowed, ZERO TOLERANCE. This will be strictly enforced. Failure to comply will be handled as follows:**
  - Coach will be ejected from the game and suspended by the league for up to three games. Coaches can only be reinstated at the league coordinator's discretion.**
  - Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be ejected from the game and suspended for the following week's game. If the problem persists then the child of the parent/guardian may be suspended for one game.**
  - Players will be ejected from the game and suspended for the following week's game. If the problem persists then the child may be suspended for the season and banned from future participation in the league.**
- 3. In addition, any individual who is ejected from a game for any reason is subject to banishment from the league. NO REFUNDS WILL BE GIVEN FOR THOSE IN VIOLATION.**
- 4. Any parents found engaging in verbal or physical violence with other parents, coaches, referees, or NYS staff will be suspended indefinitely from the league.**
- 5. Any player, coach, or parent that is ejected from a game is automatically suspended for the next game played by their team. This suspension is mandatory and cannot be reduced or removed, though it can be lengthened at league discretion.**