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**2024 Rules and Regulations**

**Section 1: Registration**

1. Copy of each player's birth certificate must be verified at registration. In the event of a protest, an original will be requested.
2. Players must be weighed in at a registration and/or the jamboree. The player's weight at registration and/or jamboree will determine their ball carrier eligibility for the entire season.
3. Players must play in the area where they attend school, pending approval by the roster committee. In the case of a player attending private school the player is assigned by the area junior high school zone where he/she currently lives.
4. Players’ age cutoff is August 1st. The player’s age on that day is their playing age.

**Section 2: Divisions**

1. **Flag:** 4-6 years old and they cannot turn 7 before August 1st. They must be 4 before October 1st. The Flag Division has a separate set of rules. Football size is Pee Wee.
2. **Midget:** 7-8 years old and they cannot turn 9 before August 1st. Ball carrier weight is 85 lbs. maximum at registration. Football size is Pee Wee.
3. **Minor:** 9-10 years old and they cannot turn 11 before August 1st. Ball carrier weight is 115 lbs. maximum at registration. Football size is Junior.
4. **Major:** 11-13 and cannot turn 14 before August 1st. No ball carrier weight limit. The Major Division will follow LHSAA rules for offensive and defensive game play but must follow all other RRYFL rules and regulations listed. Football size is youth.

**Section 3: Weight Limits (Midget and Minor Divisions)**

1. There is no max weight for a player to play in their age group. The Midget and Minor divisions have their own ball carrier weight limits as stated in Section 2.
2. A colored coded sticker will be placed on the bottom left of the back of the helmet to denote an over ball carrier weight player. Should any player over the ball carrier weight come in contact with a live football, the play will be blown dead. The ball will be spotted where the contact was made. **Penalty:** There will be a penalty of 15 yards if any player over the ball carrier weight comes in contact with a live ball and does not have a sticker on the helmet. A player with no sticker on their helmet will not be allowed to play until a proper sticker is placed on. The same penalty will apply if a player lines up in a position that is not mentioned in Section 3-C.
3. Any offensive player who weighs more than the ball carrier weight must line up on the offensive line. The player over the weight limit may play center. Tight End (TE) is also an allowed position, but they may not go in motion, or come in contact with the ball. An over ball carrier weight player lined up as TE should have normal lineman splits from the offensive tackle and may not be in the slot as a receiver or a wide out.
4. All players will be assigned a green or red helmet sticker. A green sticker represents the player is under the ball carrier weight. A red sticker means the player is over the ball carrier weight limit. If a player with a red sticker comes in contact with the ball after the snap, the ball is down at that spot. **Penalty:** If a player with a red sticker is running the ball, the game can be protested and the team running a red sticker player will forfeit the game with a one game suspension for the coach if deemed necessary by the board of directors.

**Section 4: Practice (All Divisions)**

1. Mandatory practices can be held on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Any other practice days are not mandatory.
2. Practices should be no longer than two hours and should include water breaks.
3. If a player misses a mandatory practice as listed above in Section 4-A, they may be benched during the next game. They can be benched one quarter per practice missed, however, the most a player can sit out during a game for missing multiple practices is 2 quarters.

**Section 5: Game Length (Midget, Minor and Major Divisions)**

1. All tackle games are 4, 8-minute quarters and the clock will operate according to LHSAA game clock rules. All flag games will follow flag rules.
2. Overtime: A coin toss will determine who is on offense or defense first. The ball will be placed on the 10-yard line and the offensive team will have 4 downs to score. After 4 downs or a score, the other team will go to offense with a chance to score. Game will continue until a winner is decided. During a second overtime, both teams must attempt a two-point conversion.

**Section 6: Scoring (All Divisions)**

1. Touchdowns will count as 6 points.
2. Points After Touchdowns:
   1. 1-Point Conversion from the 2-yard line counts as 1 point.
   2. 2-Point Conversion from the 5-yard line counts as 2 points.
   3. Extra Point Kicks will count as 2 points.
3. Field Goals will count as 3 points.
4. Safeties will count as 2 points.

**Section 7: Mercy Rule (All Divisions)**

1. Once a team gains a 25 point or more lead over the opposing team, the mercy rule will go into effect. The team with a 25 or more point lead must remove the starting backfield on offense. If there is a 25 or more point lead at the start of the 3rd quarter, the coach of the losing team may also elect to run the play clock for the remainder of the game. Once the clock is running there will be no going back regardless of the score.

B) **Penalty:** It is the responsibility of the head coach to make sure to follow the

mercy rule. If the mercy rule is not followed, the team will forfeit the following

scheduled game.

**Section 8: Playing Time (All Divisions)**

1. Every team shall have a minimum of 15 and maximum of 25 players on a team. Team numbers may be adjusted as needed in special circumstances by the RRYFL Executive Board.
2. All teams with 22 or less players must play every player all game long; the only exception is injury. No player should be substituted during a possession. Players cannot be changed for 3rd and 4th down situations.
3. All teams with more than 22 players must substitute in those players without a starting position every other possession. No player may sit on the bench for more than one change of possession.
4. If a player is not playing due to disciplinary problems, sickness, or injury, the head coach must notify the clock operator, opposing coach, and the head official before the start of the game. Otherwise, the child must play that day according to RRYFL mandatory playing time rules. A player can only be sat out a maximum of two quarters for missing multiple practices.
5. **Penalty:** First Offense-One warning given for not following the playing time rule. Second Offense-Forfeiture of game. Third Offense-Forfeiture of game and head coach will be relieved of his coaching duties for the season.

1. During post-season play (Play-Off, Super Bowl and All-Star games), coaches may play to win and will not be held to regular season playing time requirements.

**Section 9: Offense (Midget and Minor Divisions)**

1. Offensive possessions will begin on the 30-yard line.
2. Any offense can be used so long as it starts with a O O X O O formation with normal lineman splits (0-2 ft). Offensive linemen may use a 2, 3, or 4-point stance. No swinging gate plays.
3. QB sneaks may notbe used. The QB may not run the ball between the guards. Direct snaps to a running back follow the same rules as a snap to the QB. It will be the judgment of the official if the player breaks outside the guard’s box at any point during the play. Once the guard’s box has been broken the player may choose to cross any point of the LOS. **Penalty:** 5 yards and replay down.
4. The Head Coach or acting HC must identify himself to the referee before the game. A 35 second play clock will be used during play. The referee on the field will be in charge of starting the play clock.
5. Two coaches can be on the field for the Midget Division. NO coaches on field for Minor or Major Divisions. One coach on the field if there is a Minor JV.

**Section 10: Defense (Midget and Minor Divisions)**

1. 4-Man or 6-Man (4-3, 6-1, 4-4, 6-2-3, 4-2-5) front defenses are to be used. The first number in the formation is the defensive linemen. The second number includes the linebackers and cornerbacks. The third number is the safeties. Exception: Inside the 10-yard line, an 8-man front may be used. The formation would be 8-1-2.
2. Defensive Tackle (DT) linemen that are lined up over the offensive guards must be head up in a 2 tech. He may stunt the gap but may not line up in the A gap. DT must be in a 3pt or 4pt stance.
3. Defensive End (DE) linemen must line up head up to no further out than the outside eye of the OT/TE (Depending on formation). DE must be in a 3pt or 4pt stance. In the case of a 6-man defensive front and the offense lines up with no TE or 1 TE, the uncovered DE will have the spacing as if the offense has a TE (GHOST) on that side. Same is required with an 8-man front.
4. Linebackers must be at least 3 yards off the line of scrimmage at the snap.
5. Cornerbacks and Safeties are able to play up on the LOS against a wide receiver (Bump and Run coverage) as long as they are away from the tackle box.
6. You are able to audible the defense depending on the offensive set. Example: Switching from a 6-man front to a 4-man front. If you are caught between switching defensive fronts (4-Man to 6-Man) the full DL has to have hand on the ground (NO STANDUP DL/DE) before the offense snaps the ball.
7. **Penalty:** Penalty for not following the rules for defense described in sections 10-A through 10-F is illegal defense called and 5 yards.
8. Coaches in midget division should line up 5 yards behind the safeties. There are no coaches on field for the major or minor divisions. Coaches should always attempt to avoid the play. Coach interference during a play will be a judgment call by the referee. **Penalty:** Unsportsmanlike 15 yards.
9. All fumbles may be advanced so long as the player meets ball carrier weight.

**Section 11: Blitzing (Midget and Minor Divisions)**

1. Midget Division: No blitzing is allowed. Only the defensive lineman with a hand on the ground can attack the QB at the snap of the ball. No Linebacker, Cornerback, or Safety can cross over the LOS before the handoff or while the QB is still in the tackle box on a drop back pass. Linebackers can come up to LOS after the snap to read the gap but are not to cross the LOS before a handoff or while the QB has the ball and is still in the tackle box. Telling a player to take one step backwards, then hit the gap or to count to two then go, is also considered blitzing.

B) Minor Division: Blitzing is not allowed inside but is allowed outside of the tackle

box. Linebackers and Defensive Backs may blitz around the outside of the widest

man on the LOS. Linebackers must start 3 yards off the LOS as they normally

would be lined up. A LB or DB who is up on a WR may blitz from their position

in front of their WR.

C) Coaches who suspect the defense of blitzing illegally should immediately alert the

head official.

1. **Coach Penalty for Illegal Blitz:** First offense-warning; Second offense-one

Game suspension; Third offense-coach is relieved of their coaching duties.

1. **Game Penalty for Illegal Blitz:** 5 yards and automatic 1st down. Players who

blitz shall sit out the next play to be coached, no warning.

**Section 12: Special Teams (All Divisions)**

**Kickoffs:**

1. There are no kickoffs for any age group due to player safety. Offensive possessions will start on the 30-yard line.
2. On-Side Kick: Starting in the second half, the team that is down in points and “kicking off” may elect to run a (simulated onside kick). Kicking team will run a 4th and 15-yard offensive play from their own 30-yard line. If the play results in a first down, it will be considered successful and the team will retain possession at the point the ball is downed and begin with a fresh set of downs. If the play is unsuccessful, the defense takes possession where the ball was downed.

**Extra Points and Field Goals:**

1. Extra points can be kicked for two points. For extra points, the ball will be placed on the two-yard line and kicked from the seven-yard line. If the holder needs to pick up his knee from the ground to obtain the ball, the play will be called dead. There will be no rushing by the defense on extra-point kicks.
2. Field goals will be kicked from the spot of the ball for three points. If the holder needs to pick up his knee from the ground to obtain the ball, the play will be called dead. There will be no rushing by the defense on field goal attempts.

**Punts:**

1. All punts are 30-yard walk offs with a 10 second runoff. No 30-yard walk off punt will be placed inside the 10 Yard line. The play clock will start on the official’s signal.
2. Major Division: The major division will physically punt the ball. Defense will not rush the punter. There will be no return and the ball is dead at the spot where the receiving team touches it down. Only safeties can be back deep to receive the punt. Punts may be downed inside the 10-yard line. Any punt that enters the end zone will be spotted on the 20-yard line.

**Section 13: Tie Breakers (All Divisions)**

1. Head-to-head is the only tie breaker used. Point differences are no longer used to avoid running up the score. Should two teams tie for any position in the play-off positioning, an extra game may be played so long as both coaches and the RRYFL Executive Board agree.
2. If both coaches do not agree a coin flip will take place. Both coaches must be present or the one that does not show automatically loses the flip. Winner chooses the seat they want.

**Section 14: Play-Offs (All Divisions)**

1. The top four teams will move on to the playoffs. The regular season standings will determine playoff seedings. Playoffs will be set with #1 VS #4 and #2 VS #3 matchups. Winners advance to the Super Bowl.
2. In the event there is a tie for the final seed, tie breaker rules persist. Playoff format may change depending on the total number of teams.

**Section 15: Protests (All Divisions)**

1. All protests must be made by the head coach in writing to the board within 24 hours of the game and require a $100.00 fee.
2. In the event of a successful protest, the game will be forfeited and the $100 fee will be given back to the protesting coach.

**Section 16: General (All Divisions)**

1. Any rule not specifically covered herein, shall be governed by LHSAA rules. Should a conflict exist between RRYFL rules and LHSAA rules, the RRYFL rules and By-Laws will apply.
2. Players may play in multiple leagues during the same season. All leagues, recreational, travel, or otherwise are allowed.
3. A coach may not be a head coach for RRYFL and a head football coach for any other recreational league. A coach may be an assistant coach for RRYFL and coach for another recreational league.

D) The RRYFL board reserves the right in all disputes, rule infraction, and activity

detrimental to the league or its’ reputation to force a team to forfeit any and all

games or remove a coach from his duties at any time.