

CYO VARSITY FOOTBALL RULES

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Football Rules apply in this league with the exceptions contained within. CYO game contest rules may not be altered by mutual consent of the coaches. Only the CYO office may issue authorized changes.

OFFICIAL TEAM

- Defined as an individual or group of children from one or more parishes listed on the team roster who meet the eligibility rules and are approved by the Parish Designee, Pastor and CYO Office. Eligibility Rules, as defined in Bylaw 4 of the Charter & Bylaws, shall be followed to determine all questions regarding eligibility.
- A CYO Team refusing to continue playing a scheduled contest for any reason without the consent of the referee or CYO representative may be subject to a suspension for one calendar year. This also applies to CYO Sanctioned Events.

OFFICIALS

- Officials have the power to warn or disqualify from the game anyone who commits act intended to influence their decisions.
- Each team must pay the official fees before the start of the game. Failure to comply is grounds for forfeit.
- Officials have the authority to call or suspend a game if conditions warrant.
- Three (3) or Four (4) officials will be assigned for each game.
- The head coach and the team captain are the only persons the game officials are compelled to speak to during or after the game.

EQUIPMENT

- An intermediate size ball shall be used. The ball shall be made of a composite or leather material.
- See the “Uniforms” for player equipment.
- Electronic Devices
 - Walkie-talkies or any other electronic communication systems are not permitted.
 - Teams are permitted to only videotape their games. Coaches, Fans, etc. are not permitted to videotape an opponent. This is a violation of Ohio High School Athletic Association & CYO Rules.

UNIFORMS

- Numbers on the jersey are MANDATORY. A number shall be printed on the front and back of each jersey. The number on the back of the jersey shall be 10 inches in height, while the number on the front of the jersey shall be 8 inches in height. The bars or strokes should be approximately 1-1/2 inches wide.
- All players must have the CYO Emblem on their uniform either sewn or stenciled.
- All participants must be properly equipped and fitted by the member with the following items:
 - Headgear. Helmets must be NOCSAE certified. All helmets must have the certified imprint and special warning stickers related to injuries. ***Starting in 2010 at least a four snap chin strap shall be required to secure the helmet***
 - Shoulder pads
 - Football pants with pads for the hips, tailbone, thighs and knees.
- Rubber sole athletic shoes or molded shoes with half (1/2) inch cleats are permitted. Half-inch screw-on plastic molded cleats and metal cleats are prohibited. The coach as well as the player in violation of the uniform standards will be ejected from the game and a 15-yard penalty assessed. A player equipment violation will not result in a second game suspension.
- A mouthpiece must be secure in the player’s mouth during the game. If a mouthpiece is not orthodontist designed it must be attached to the face-guard and be of any readily visible color. A mouthpiece cannot be white or clear in color.
- Chains, earrings, other jewelry, glitter, face paint or other inappropriate items may not be worn during the game.

- An American flag and or a commemorative/memorial patch not to exceed 2 by 3 inches and with the approval of the CYO Administration may be worn on each of the uniform apparel provided neither the flag or patch interferes with the visibility of the player's number.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

- It is up to the discretion of the officials to postpone a game.
- If a game in progress is postponed, it will be continued from the point of interruption at the earliest possible date.

PRE-CONTEST COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES

- ***Coaches must be CYO Certified***
- Coaches are responsible for the supervision of their team before the contest.
- At each contest and practice, coaches to have in their possession; an official team roster, a copy of each player's Preparticipation Form and Emergency Medical Authorization Form, and a first aid kit.
- Chains and Down Marker Crews are to be coordinated by the head coach
 - Each program area will determine the method by which the responsibilities of chains and down markers will be implemented. (The personnel must be at least a high school senior or older.) The crew must report to the game officials at least ten (10) minutes before the start of the game.
 - If the team assigns the people serving in this capacity, the head coach is responsible for the actions, verbal or otherwise, of the people assigned.
 - Where applicable the chains and downs marker shall be placed on one side of the field for the first half and on the opposite side for the second half.
- ***CYO Credentials are to be worn and visible at all times.***

TEAM BENCHES

Bench personnel are limited to uniformed players listed on the eligibility roster, ***and a maximum of six (6) CYO certified coaches wearing game credentials.***

PARTICIPATION

- Each player must be treated with dignity regardless of his or her ability.
- A player on a CYO team may not participate on any other football team during the CYO season. For purposes of defining eligibility, a player may not be on another team from the published CYO roster due date and the completion of the team's final game.
- Participants may only play and be rostered on one CYO team in the same sport in the same school year.
- Combined Division Participation Requirements
 - Each team will provide the opposing coach and referee/site supervisor a roster of all eligible players and those players on the official team roster that may be unable to play.
 - If, before the start of the game both teams decide to play a focus game; each player must play a minimum of two (2) non-penalty plays per half of the regulation game.
 - If, before the start of the game both teams decide not to play a focus game; Each eligible player on the team participation form must play a minimum of non-penalty plays based upon roster size.
 - 30 or fewer players able to play – Each player must play a minimum of eight (8) non-penalty plays per game. At least four (4) of the plays must take place in the 1st half of the game.
 - 31 or more players able to play – Each player must play a minimum of six (6) non-penalty plays per game. At least three (3) of the plays must take place in the 1st half of the game.
- Middleweight Division Participation Requirements
 - Each team will provide the Play Counter, opposing coach and Site Supervisor a completed team participation form which will indicate all eligible players and those players on the official team roster that may be unable to play.
 - Each eligible player on the team participation form must play a minimum of non-penalty plays based upon roster size.
 - 30 or fewer players able to play – Each player must play a minimum of eight (8) non-penalty plays per game. At least four (4) of the plays must take place in the 1st half of the game.
 - 31 or more players able to play – Each player must play a minimum of six (6) non-penalty plays per game. At least three (3) of the plays must take place in the 1st half of the game.

- Upon violation of the Participation Rule, the Play Counter will notify the Game Officials, and Site Supervisor. The Site Supervisor will notify the CYO Office. The CYO Administration will determine what penalties need to be assessed to the coach or team.
- Age and Grade Requirements
 - Participants must be between the ages of 11-14 before October 1st and in the 8th grade or under.
 - Participants must be 11 years of age before the start of the season. A participant who reaches his 11th birthday during the season may be placed on the roster and weighed in. The player is not permitted to dress for the games or participate until reaching their 11th birth date. The player may practice with the team.
- If a coach will not play a player because of missed practice, unsportsmanlike conduct, academics or injury, the coach must inform the official scorekeeper before the game begins and record the player as not participating.

GAME & TIME LIMITATION

- No team or player is permitted to play more than 10 games in one season.
- No game will start after 8:00 PM, and all games must stop at 9:00 PM.
- Practice session must be completed by 9:00 PM.

PRACTICE AND COACHING GUIDELINE

- No practice or any organized group conditioning shall start prior to the CYO published first day of practice and shall be limited to one (1) session per day not to exceed two (2) hours in duration.
- Uniforms and equipment may be fitted on one (1) day prior to the official first day of practice.
- From the established CYO conditioning date (listed on CYO Football season date list) until the date established for coaching, the football helmet and shoes may be worn by athletes during non-mandatory physical fitness programs. No other football player equipment may be worn.
 - During the last 30 minutes of physical fitness programs, basic football techniques and fundamentals involving passing and kicking the football may be taught to individuals. There may be no more than three individuals involved in a "play."
 - Examples:
 - The center snaps the ball to the quarterback who passes the ball to a receiver.
 - The center snaps the ball to a place-kick holder who places it for the kicker to kick. There may be no defensive players involved in such action.
- All athletes must participate in four days of pre-season physical acclimation prior to any physical contact. Athletes reporting late must have four days of physical acclimation prior to any physical contact. This rule applies to all teams. No pads may be worn on the first three days. Shorts, helmets, shoes may be worn. Full equipment may be worn on the fourth day but no physical contact is permitted.
- Scrimmages
 - Three (3) pre-season scrimmages are permitted with CYO registered teams only.
 - During the regular season one (1) practice session per week is permitted with another CYO registered team.
 - CYO Teams are not permitted to scrimmage or compete against non-CYO Teams.
 - Officials may be used during scrimmages provided both sets of coaches remain on the field. No score or time limits will be kept. Use of officials is the decision and cost of the teams involved.

COMPETITION RULES

- Play Clock
 - The length of the playing quarters shall be eight (8) minutes, with a one-minute rest period between quarters.
 - Half time will be 10 minutes in length.
 - Before starting the second half of the game, the official shall notify each team when three minutes remain in half time for the players to warm-up.
 - If there is no scoreboard, it is the responsibility of the officials to notify each head coach when there are **TWO MINUTES REMAINING** in the first half and 2nd half of the game.
- Each team will be allowed to have three (3) time-outs each half of a game.
- Kick-offs are eliminated. After a touchdown the ball will be put in play on the 35-yard line, eliminating the kick-off.

- When a team scores a safety, it will take possession of the ball on the fifty (50) yard line.
- There are no limits to the substitution of players.
- The "Try for point" after a touch-down shall be executed as follows:
 - A team electing to run or pass for the extra point shall do so from the THREE-YARD LINE and if good shall be awarded one point.
 - A team electing to place kick for the extra point shall do so from the THREE-YARD LINE and if good shall be awarded two points
- 18 Point Rule
 - When a team reaches an 18-point spread differential over their opponents, the leading team MUST substitute a complete new offensive backfield until such time the differential falls below the 18-point spread. This does not affect the defensive team.
 - An official's time-out will be taken to insert the complete new offensive backfield into the game. The original backs are permitted to fill line positions (from tackle to tackle) or leave the game until such time the point spread falls below 18.
 - The 18-point spread differential rule cannot be waived for playoffs or championship games.
 - When a team is ahead by 18 points, their best player should not ever be in the game, nor should they be handling the ball. (Ex: Fake punts, end arounds.)
- Overtime Procedure for Playoffs and Championships
 - When the score is tied at the end of regulation in a playoff & championship game each team has an opportunity for an offensive series of downs. However, an overtime period may include only one offensive series of downs if the defensive team scores a safety or touchdown.
 - To start the overtime, the offensive team will put the ball in play, first and ten, on the defensive team's 20 yard line. If the team on offense scores a touchdown, it is entitled to the opportunity for a try unless the points would not affect the outcome of the game. A field goal attempt is permitted during any down.
 - If the defensive team gains position, the ball becomes dead immediately and the offensive team's series of downs is ended. After the first team on offense has completed its series of downs, the first team on defense will become the offensive team with the ball in its possession at the same 20-yard line.
 - If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series of downs in the first overtime period, then the procedure will be repeated from the 10 yard line, first and goal.
 - If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series of downs in the second overtime period, then the procedure will be repeated from the 5 yard line, first and goal, until a game winner is determined.

VARSITY – COMBINED DIVISION (Specific Rules)

GRADE AND AGE REQUIREMENTS

- Varsity players in the Combined Division must be in either in the 7th or 8th grade. (Note: While a player must be 14 years old on October 1, players who turn 15 between October 2 and December 31, may play only tackle to tackle on the offensive line. All players to whom this applies must be noted as such on the team entry form, and registered and identified as such with the league.)

WEIGHT LIMITATIONS

- There are no weight restrictions in the Varsity Combined Division.

GAME RULES

- Pre-game warm-ups shall not exceed one (1) hour.
- Scoring
 - Six (6) points will be awarded for a touchdown.
 - Two (2) points will be awarded for a safety.
 - One (1) point will be awarded for a run or a pass from the scrimmage line after a touchdown.
 - No points shall be awarded for a field goal or for a kick from the scrimmage line after a touchdown.
- Focus Games Rules & Player Participation
 - Participation in the game by an athlete must satisfy the participation requirements outlined on page 35-36.
 - Coaches may move the full length of the field to communicate with players.

- There shall be no rushing the punter. Instead, the punt must be declared and kicked.
- There will be a 25-minute running clock. Only the team behind may call a time out in the last two (2) minutes. The only exception is when an injury stops the clock. Focus games must be played unless cancelled prior to the start of the regularly scheduled game. This must be communicated with head coaches and referees.

MEMBER PARTICIPATION

- To be eligible for entry into the Combined Division, the schools must meet the following criteria:
- The Member must declare any change in football play by the May 1st prior to the start of the season. Pastoral Designees must submit a letter stating their intent to play with the CYO Area Athletic Director by May 1st.
- The Member must enter teams in both the varsity and cadet divisions. The Member must make a four (4) year commitment to participation in the Combined Division.
- The Member must provide a home field to be used for a minimum of four (4) dates.

VARSIITY & JUNIOR VARSITY MIDDLE WEIGHT DIVISION (Specific Rules)

WEIGHT AND DOTTED PLAYER REQUIREMENTS

- Backfield players and ends, playing on the offense, may not exceed 145 lbs. (No Dot).
- Maximum weight for non- dotted players on defense is 145 lbs. Players over 145 pounds shall be given a Dot that is to be placed on the Right Front and Left Back of the player's helmet.
- Dotted players.
 - Weight is unlimited for the offensive line, tackle to tackle. *Dotted players must be "covered" by an end.*
 - Weight is unlimited for the three interior defensive line positions. These defensive linemen must line-up in a down stance and their alignment must be from head-on offensive tackle to head-on offensive tackle.
- A player weighing less than 90 pounds and more than 80 pounds is required to submit an Official CYO Weight Release Form, signed by the player, his parents or legal guardians, and physician to the CYO Office before the athlete participates in practice or games. No one is allowed to participate in the middleweight football division with a weight of under 80 pounds.
- There will be a three (3) pound growth allowance for players participating in the "Diocesan Championship" (148 pound maximum).

PLAYER PARTICIPATION

- Participation in the game by an athlete must satisfy the participation requirements outlined on page 35- 36.

KICKING

- In a punt situation, if the punter has a dot on the helmet the punter is not permitted to advance the ball and must punt the ball from the spot it is snapped to. A maximum of three (3) dotted players on the offensive and defensive lines is permitted on the field during a punt.
- On a kick, regular offensive rules are in effect during extra point attempts and field goal attempt, with the exception that any player may attempt a kick regardless if the player has a Dot on the player's helmet or not. The player may be the only player with a Dot in the backfield. The try will end when the kick is good or it is obvious the try will fail.
- On a bad snap in the backfield, a dotted kicker may not take part in the play as a ball carrier or blocker.
- Any player with a Dot on the helmet, who gains control and possession of the ball, may not cause the ball to be advanced. At the time of his control and possession, the ball will be declared down and the player in possession shall place his knee on the ground. Any such player who advances the ball will be penalized 15 yards from the spot at which the player gained possession of the ball. There shall be a penalty of 15 yards for any member of the opposing team who tackles, blocks or shows any unsportsmanlike conduct toward such a player.

WEIGH-INS

- There will be two (2) scheduled weigh-ins prior to the first scheduled games. All players must weigh-in prior to the opening game to be eligible to play.

- If a player does not weigh in at one of the two-scheduled pre-season weigh-ins, the player can not play. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- The scale will be visible to the head coach.
- Scheduled weigh-ins. There shall be four (4) weigh-ins during the season.
 - Two initial weigh-ins prior to the first scheduled game of the season.
 - Mid-season weigh-in (no growth allowance).
 - Prior to the Championship Game. For those who qualify all will be weighed-in on one scale. Opposing coaches may be present.
- Mid Season weigh-in-
 - Varsity-Players who weighed in at 140-145lbs. at the pre season weigh-in must be weighed in again as well as dotted players wishing to remove the dot.
 - Junior Varsity-Players who weighed in at 140-145lbs. at the pre season weigh-in must be weighed in again as well as dotted players wishing to remove the dot.
- For any weigh-ins all players must wear a minimum of T-shirt, shorts and no shoes.

SWEATING DOWN

Any coach found guilty of suggesting or encouraging a player to "sweat down" to meet weight limitations shall be liable and a penalty of suspension for two years shall be assessed.

WEIGHT CHALLENGE

- The challenging Head Coach must file a formal challenge in writing, listing the name of player or players, number and the parish they represent. The written challenge and a twenty-five (\$25/challenge/player) dollar-filing fee must be turned into the CYO Athletic Office at least 48 hours PRIOR to the scheduled game time with the team being challenged.
- The MAXIMUM number of players challenged per team is FOUR.
- A challenge is permissible any time during the regular season.
- The challenged player or players will be weighed in as quickly as possible at the discretion of the CYO Area Athletic Director.
- If the challenged player or players exceed the 145-pound weight limit, the player or players then shall add a dot to their helmet and may participate in accordance with Weight and Dotted Player Rules. The player must weigh in again at the next scheduled weigh in if the player wishes to remove the Dot.

SCORING

- Six (6) points will be awarded for a touchdown.
- Two (2) points will be awarded for a safety and a kick after a touchdown.
- One (1) point will be awarded for a run or pass from the scrimmage line after a touchdown.
- Three (3) points will be awarded for a field goal.

(Revised May, 2008)