



# Mission Statement

---

---

*The Catholic Youth Organization endeavors to help young people be more Christ-like in the way they live. The CYO promotes participation and sportsmanship to foster the total development of participants and influence the formation of Christian values. The CYO serves the youth of the Diocese of Cleveland with the leadership necessary for the coordination and administration of athletic activities between members, which will provide equitable opportunities for participation, reduce the risks of participation and enhance the experiences of the young athlete.*





Youth & Young Adult Ministry and CYO Office

Dear Coach,

As a coach, you need to be aware of the impact you will have on your players -- not just in their athletic endeavors, but in life, long after their organized sports playing days are over.

Being a Coach is a tremendous challenge and responsibility, but it's also very rewarding. As players grow and develop from the inexperienced athlete that you may first see at practice to the young person that they will become as a leader of the team, school, or community, you know that your positive support and guidance had an impact in their life. When you see a player sacrificing personal accomplishments for the good of the team and giving the best effort they can with a smile on their face, you will know that your direction had a positive effect not just in the game but also at home, at church and in school.

In CYO Athletics the role of the coach is that of youth minister, leader, teacher and parent. You need to reflect on each of these roles as you prepare for the upcoming season. Remember to take the time to develop your relationship with God and to always be an example of Christ-like behavior to your players, opponents, officials, parents and fans. As you do this the growth that will take place in you and the athletes through this shared experience will make both of you better people.

The information in this Coach's Handbook is designed to help you with all aspects of coaching from understanding the CYO Philosophy and Mission, planning for the season, and working with parents to understanding the rules of the game. Use the Coach's Handbook as the starting point for your plan to create a positive and rewarding experience for your players. If you do, they will never forget you.

Remember, Keep the Spirit Alive!

The CYO Athletic Staff

***CYO Athletics – Endeavoring to help young people be more Christ-like in the way they live.***

[www.clevelandcyo.org](http://www.clevelandcyo.org)

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### ***PREPARING TO COACH***

The CYO Story	4
The CYO Philosophy	5
The CYO Emblem	6
The Organization of CYO Athletics	7
You are now a CYO Coach	9
Parents at Games	10

### ***RULES OF THE GAME***

CYO Sport Offerings	11
The Athlete Preparticipation Form and Medical Expenses	12
Athlete Participation	12
Coach and Athlete Code of Conduct	12
Protests & Grievances	15
CYO Coach's Code of Ethics	16

### ***SPORT SPECIFIC RULES – CADET & ELEMENTAL FOOTBALL***

Official Team	17
Officials	17
Equipment	17
Uniforms	17
Participation	18
Game & Time Limitation	21
Practice and Coaching Guideline	21
Competition Rules	21
Cadet & Elemental – Middleweight Division (Specific Rules)	22
Cadet – Combined Division (Specific Rules)	24

# THE CYO STORY

In the Depression Years of the 1930's a ray of light burst forth illuminating a need for the development of leisure time activities for our youth. The sounds of cheering crowds, the singing of camp songs, the music from a parish hall announcing a hi-club dance and the celebration of the Eucharist among a youth group began to touch the lives of young people through the start of the Catholic Youth Organization.

Pope Pius XI, in his encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth stressed that recreational and social activities were an important part of the overall education of young people. He called for us to rise and share our values and faith experiences with wisdom and love to the young people. After two years of study, In December, 1937 Archbishop Joseph Schrembs appointed Reverend James O'Brien as Diocesan Director of the Catholic Youth Organization. The CYO was designed as a youth serving agency to organize and coordinate all youth activities. Archbishop Schrembs stated that spiritual development is the primary objective of CYO. We are to lead youth to a better understanding and appreciation of our faith, to practice virtue and to encourage the youth to receive the Sacraments.

In the early 1940's the four-fold program of CYO, Social – Spiritual – Cultural – Physical, began to fully develop through the development of the Knights of the Alter, Cayomaw Club, Hi-Club, and CYO Camp and Athletic programs. In the 1950's, under the direction of Msg. Thomas C. Corrigan the CYO grew to include young adult programs for those that lost contact with the Church during World War II and the Korean War. During this time there were over 5,000 boys and girls involved in CYO athletics and over 1,500 CYO summer campers. Committees of lay volunteers also began to organize programs in Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, a National Catholic Youth Week, a One Act Play Festival and the Knights of the Alter Holy Hour.

In the 1960's and 1970's Reverend James P. O'Donnell fostered the development of the "Youth Happening", the AMEN Program, the Walk for Hunger in Greater Cleveland, SEARCH Program, and the Coaches Certification Program. In 1976, with Dan Ferrazza as Diocesan Director, A Vision of Youth Ministry was published. In this document the United States Catholic Conference stated that "No one aspect of youth ministry is independent of others; they are all interdependent elements of a unified total vision...the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person. We are still guided by this vision today.

In the 1980's and 1990's Bishop Anthony Pilla invited us to join with him in accepting not only the challenge but also the HOPE who is Jesus. He has been a guiding hand along the journey of developing Church in the Youth and Young Adults of Cleveland. During this time there has been a re-commitment to the early dreams of CYO, to enable young people to know Jesus. In May 1997 the CYO Philosophy and rules were organized into the present Charter & By-laws that are reaffirmed by member parishes each time they resubmit their Membership Agreement. Our philosophy captures the heart of our athletic programs – Christ – Participation – Team – Teaching!

The tradition of CYO continues today. In 2002, over 15,000 young people participated in our Youth and Young Adult Ministry programs, over 29,000 participated in our Cleveland CYO Athletic programs, over 7,400 campers attended our CYO Camp Programs. Our constant challenge remains the building of community and shared philosophy among the many volunteers that give the CYO the energy to grow. Today, volunteers in CYO programs give their time and energy with the same enthusiasm as those in the 1930's. Working together we will continue to help young people be more Christ-like in the way they live and promote participation and sportsmanship among all those involved in CYO.

# THE CYO PHILOSOPHY

*CYO Athletics endeavors to help young people be more Christ-like in the way they live. Our programs focus on the total development of participants in order to influence the formation of Christian values. For this reason, CYO sports are an important part of the Catholic Church's comprehensive ministry to, with, by, and for youth.*

---

---

CYO Athletics foster the development of physical skills, emotional growth, affirmation of gifts and spiritual strength. The young person, not the athletic activity, is our primary focus. Therefore we believe that:

- All CYO Athletic programs should be well organized and maintain standards of high quality.
- All who have the opportunity to be on a team should also have the right to participate in the game.
- Participants should have the opportunity to be involved in athletics at an appropriate age/grade level.

CYO Athletics believes that the Coach's role is critical. The coach's primary role is that of youth ministry leader, therefore striving to act at all times as a model of Christ-like values & behaviors.

CYO Athletics believes that success is not measured by the final score. Success is measured by the effort of individuals striving to achieve team goals while respecting themselves, their teammates, and their opponents and at the same time having fun.

CYO Athletic should be viewed as part of the faith building efforts of the participating members. The interrelationship of CYO Athletics with family life, parish life, and school life is essential.

CYO Athletics is committed to the acceptance of and love for people of all nationalities and races. Through our CYO Athletic programs, we work to build a community and a bond of unity that leads to caring for one another in the ways Jesus taught.

# THE CYO EMBLEM



*The CYO Emblem was designed and approved for the Catholic Youth Organization of the Diocese of Cleveland. To wear this emblem is to bear witness to the fundamental doctrines of one's Catholic faith in the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, and in our salvation by Christ. For this reason the CYO Emblem is to be a visible part of all CYO Team uniforms.*

- *The background of the Emblem is blue and the cross, circle and letters are white.*
- *The whole circle symbolizes God*
- *The three-fold division within the circle symbolizes the Holy Trinity of God - the Father, Jesus Christ - the Son and the Holy Spirit. This division represents the Unity we share in the Holy Trinity.*
- *The Greek Cross, which forms the divisions of the circle, is the sign of our salvation by Jesus Christ our Savior.*

*The Catholic Youth Organization endeavors to help young people be more Christ-like in the way they live.*

# THE ORGANIZATION OF CYO ATHLETICS

CYO Athletics relies upon the leaders at parishes to fulfill vital roles in the Youth Athletic Program. Parish leaders must organize sign-ups and entry materials as well as eligibility rosters, preparticipation forms, supervision of coaches as well as the financial issues associated with operating an athletic program. Established leadership roles within the CYO at the member and diocesan levels can help create stability and consistency throughout the athletic program. All members of the Cleveland CYO agree to follow the CYO Charter & By-laws which may be found at [www.clevelandcyo.org](http://www.clevelandcyo.org).

## **MEMBER LEADERSHIP**

All members (parishes or schools) participating in the Cleveland CYO athletic program must have a Pastoral Designee. The Pastoral Designee is appointed by the Pastor/Principal of the parish and is the parish's official recipient of all diocesan CYO athletic information and is responsible for promulgating this information within their parish. The Pastoral Designee also serves as the official contact for the parish with the diocesan CYO Office for issues related to finance, inquiry, eligibility, discipline, and program administration.

The Member Administrator (Pastor/Principal) is responsible for the direction and supervision of the CYO Athletic program at the Member Level. The Pastoral Designee is the official member liaison with the CYO Athletic Administration. The Pastoral Designee is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the member's CYO Athletic program. The Pastoral Designee is ultimately accountable to the Member Administrator.

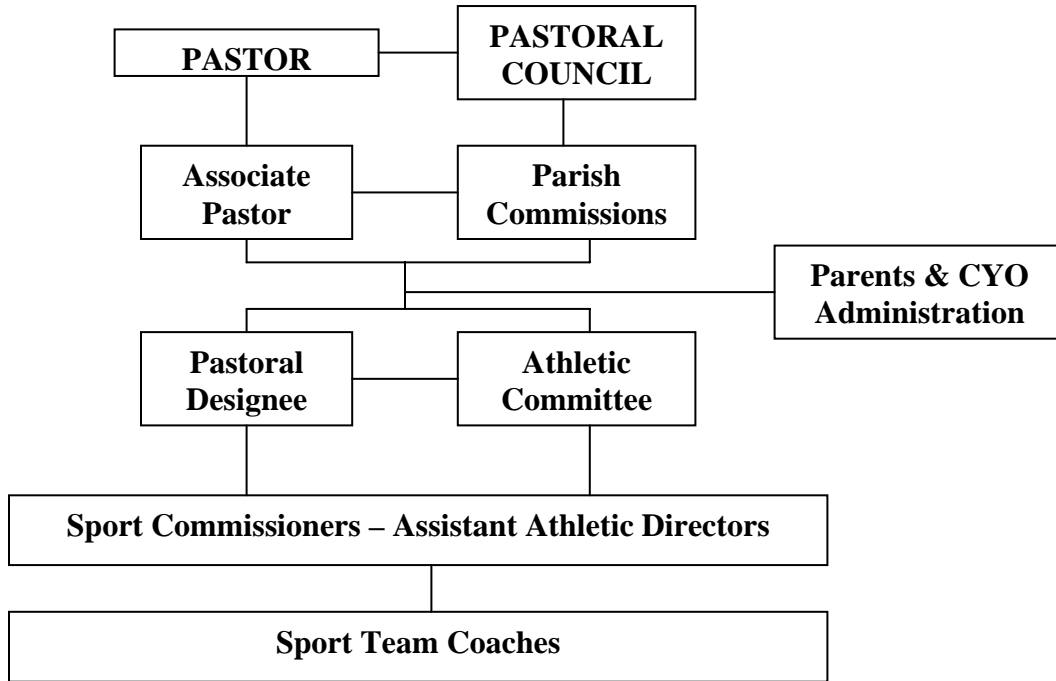
## **CYO OFFICE LEADERSHIP**

The CYO Office is led by the CYO Athletic Administrator, CYO Area Athletic Directors, CYO Sport Commissioners and the Cleveland CYO Athletic Advisory Committee. The CYO Office staff is here to help pastoral designees and coaches plan and prepare for the upcoming sport seasons. The CYO Sport Commissioners are the first points of contact for coaches of a sport. Coaches should familiarize themselves with the names and telephone numbers of their sport commissioners. Coaches should call their CYO Athletic Director for answers to questions related to eligibility, protest or grievance, to review a decision made by a sport commissioner or to comment on the success and virtue of the CYO program.

The Cleveland CYO Athletic Advisory Committee meets on a quarterly basis to review, evaluate, plan and integrate the path of CYO Athletics in Cleveland with the overall mission of the Church. The committee is composed of 14 individuals from parishes participating in the CYO Athletic Program, who also may serve on sub-committees or ad-hoc committees that advise and give direction to the CYO Staff.

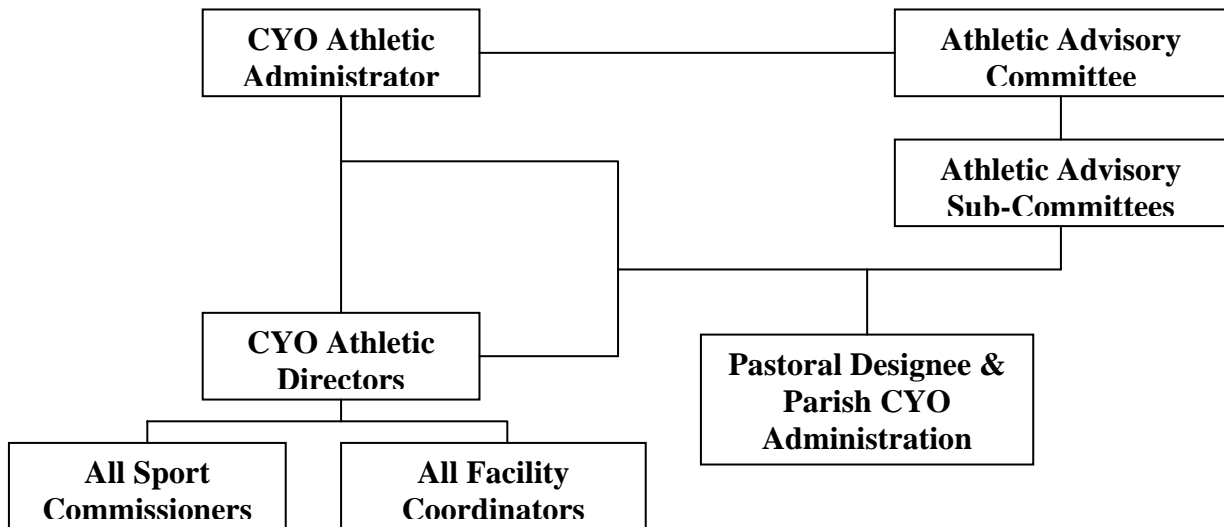
## Member Organization of CYO Athletics

The CYO Charter and By-laws are the governing documents under-which the following operates.



## Diocesan Organization of CYO Athletics

The CYO Charter and By-laws are the governing documents under-which the following operates.



# YOU ARE NOW A CYO COACH

Congratulations on joining one of the most rewarding professions known to any man or woman. As a coach of a youth sport team you have the opportunity to shape the outlook young people have towards athletics and the development of their faith. By taking a few moments to plan and prepare for the upcoming season you can minimize issues that you may come across later on in the season. The goal of this section is to inform you of the requirements to coach in CYO Athletics and steps to take to plan for a successful season.

Your main goal as a CYO coach is not to win matches or games, but to organize the children for fun and learning. Coaching youth teams has nothing to do with winning, it's objective is developing players and helping them to play well. The young player wants to enjoy themselves and winning matches or games is not their main goal, so whatever you do don't let your self-esteem and self-confidence be governed by whether the team wins or loses.

CYO Coaches often list many specific goals they hope to achieve when coaching their athletes; usually their goals fall under these objectives:

- To help young people have fun.
- To help young people develop skills
- To help young people demonstrate Christ-like behaviors

As a coach you want an athlete to develop physically, by learning the sport skills, improving physical conditioning, developing good health habits, and avoiding injuries; psychologically, by learning to control their emotions and developing feelings of self worth; and socially by learning cooperation in a competitive context and appropriate standards of behavior.

## **REQUIREMENTS TO BE A CYO COACH**

Each parish must assure that a person who has been engaged to coach complete the following before they begin coaching;

- Read and acknowledge the Diocese of Cleveland, "Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse"
- Read and acknowledge the Diocese of Cleveland, "Standards of Conduct for Ministry".
- complete a parish application,
- attend an approved abuse prevention program,
- attend a CYO Coaches Development Program session,
- complete the required fingerprinting process.
- Wear CYO credentials while coaching at all CYO events.
- Failure to do so will result in the coach's ineligibility until the requirements have been completed.

- For grade school teams, any man or woman 18 years of age or older may serve as a head coach, or at least 16 years of age may serve as an assistant coach if they are approved by the Pastor, Pastoral Designee and member athletic committee.
- For high school teams, any man or woman 25 years of age or older may serve as a head coach, or at least 18 years of age may serve as an assistant coach if they are approved by the Pastor, Pastoral Designee and member athletic committee.
- When a girl's team is coached by men, it is required that a women 18 years of age or must be associated with the team as an athletic aide and in attendance at all practices. When a female coaches a boy's team a male athletic aide must be associated with the team is also required.

### **COACHES TRAINING SESSIONS**

- All coaches must attend a CYO approved coaches orientation program before they begin coaching.
- All coaches are to attend coaches meetings and other session required to maintain CYO certification.

### **PARENTS AT GAMES**

As the coach of the team during a game you are responsible for the actions of yourself, assistant coaches, players, parents and fans. It may not be fair to put that much responsibility on you, but as a coach your actions usually set the tone for the other individuals listed. Unfortunately problems with poor sportsmanship from parents exist. In the CYO we hope that our philosophy and atmosphere at the games would minimize unsportsmanlike behavior.

As a coach you thought you were there solely for the kids, but you may have to step in if a parent is becoming too involved by verbally abusing officials, taunting players, and coaching players from the stand or stepping onto the court. Your actions may need to be a calm reminder of the purpose of youth sports to suggesting that the parent leave the facility or helping the official gain control of the crowd. Always take the time to remind your parents and assistant coaches that the little eyes of the players are always watching them and learning from their behavior.

# **RULES OF THE GAME**

## **CYO SPORT OFFERINGS**

The Cleveland CYO offers competition in the following sports during the noted season:

### **FALL**

Football  
Girls Soccer  
Boys Cross Country  
Girls Cross Country  
Girls Volleyball  
Cheer  
Boys Soccer

### **WINTER**

Wrestling  
Boys Grade School Basketball  
Girls Grade School Basketball  
Boys High School Basketball  
Girls High School Basketball  
Cheer

### **SPRING**

Baseball  
Fast-pitch Softball  
Boys Track & Field  
Girls Track & Field  
Boys Volleyball  
Girls High School Volleyball

## **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

Participation on CYO Teams is open to those that meet the criteria outlined in By-law 4 of the CYO Charter & By-laws. To be eligible to compete in CYO the athlete must meet either the Parish, School, Parish School of Religion or adjoining member requirement outlined on By-law 4. Some athletes may not be able to participate in practices, scrimmages or games without the approval of the CYO Office, consult the by-law for details. By-laws are available at [www.clevelandcyo.org](http://www.clevelandcyo.org)

## **AGE LIMITATIONS & DIVISIONS**

The CYO will, whenever possible, offer leagues by age/grades divisions. However all divisions of play may not be offered in all sports or service area. A team must enter in the division of the oldest member of that team. In each case, the athlete must meet the age requirement on October 1 of the current school year. Third grade students are not eligible for CYO participation. Many parishes offer intramurals for such children. Divisions are of competition are as follows:

<b>CYO HIGH SCHOOL</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> grades	
Varsity	12 <sup>th</sup> and down	ages 18 and under
Junior Varsity	9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> grade only	ages 16 and under
<b>CYO GRADE SCHOOL</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> grades	
Varsity	8 <sup>th</sup> grade & down	ages 10-14
Junior Varsity	7 <sup>th</sup> grade & down	ages 9-13
Cadet	6 <sup>th</sup> grade & down	ages 9-12
Developmental	5 <sup>th</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> grade only	ages 8-11
Elemental	4 <sup>th</sup> grade only	ages 8-11

**NOTE:** All divisions may not be offered in all sports or areas. *More restrictive limitations on age may be in place for certain sports. Consult the sports rules for details.*

## **ATHLETE PREPARTICIPATION FORM**

Each Athlete must have a complete and valid Preparticipation Form on file with the CYO member before the athlete may participate in any practice, competition or scrimmage.

## **ATHLETE PARTICIPATION**

It is the philosophy of the CYO to have all players participate in games and competitions. All children eligible and healthy are expected to play. For reasons of discipline, grades, etc., a child may lose eligibility as determined and established by the coach, school, principal, parish pastor, administrator or Pastoral Designee. In situations of ineligibility the coach is to inform the scorer and opposing coach of the ineligibility as well as insure it is marked on the game scoresheet or roster. The rules of each specific sport define the implementation and requirements for the participation rule.

All athletes that meet registration and medical criteria are to participate in CYO athletes. Teams are not permitted to cut players from a team. It is an underlying principle of CYO to allow all to play and participate, and for us to foster the development of physical and social skills, as well as spiritual strength in each CYO Athlete on our team. Therefore tryouts are not to be held for the purpose of limiting participation.

## **COACH AND ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT**

It is expected that all players, coaches, parents, officials, commissioners, site personnel or other persons involved with a CYO team, will conduct themselves as an example of Christian behavior. They do this through Christian leadership, good sportsmanship and providing an atmosphere for healthy athletic programs. Christian behavior is essential and expected as a witness to the philosophy and values of CYO athletics. The violations listed below will not be tolerated in CYO programs:

- Failure of the Pastoral Designee to assume direct responsibility for the individual program.
- Refusal to abide by the rules and decisions of the CYO.
- Violation of the Influence Rules (recruiting).
- Knowingly using an ineligible player.
- Taking a team off the field, floor, or out of a tournament because of dissatisfaction with the officials or other unsatisfactory reasons.
- Failure to control the spectators and/or players bench.
- Failure to adequately protect officials and/or the visiting team.
- Violation of the practice and playing season dates.
- Use of profane, vulgar or abusive language.
- Inappropriate conduct or disrespect toward officials, site personnel and others involved in CYO Athletics.
- Vandalism or the destruction of property.

- Verbal or physical abuse of players, coaches, opponents, officials or anyone affiliated with the CYO program.
- Use of alcohol or illicit drugs or tobacco before, during, or after any CYO activity.
- Representing ideals that are contrary to the philosophy of the CYO program.
- Escalating behaviors that incite others to act in ways that are in direct conflict with the values of the CYO program.

### COACH AND PLAYER SUSPENSION POLICY

A coach or player ejected from a game for any reason must leave the premises and shall be suspended for the next scheduled game (two games in the high school division). An ejected player must be supervised by an adult. The person ejected may not associate with the team during the duration of the suspension, this includes practices and scrimmages.

- If a head coach is ejected from a game and does not leave quietly or there is no registered assistant coach, the team must forfeit that game.
- The penalty for any coach or player who is suspended for a second time during a season will be removal from the program for the remainder of the season.
- Any flagrant or unsportsmanlike conduct is just cause for suspension. Good sportsmanship is expected at all times by all parents, coaches and players. Inappropriate behavior at any time during the CYO function is just cause for penalty.

### INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

Sportsmanship is a primary focus of CYO sports and players and coaches are expected to respect their opponents. It is inappropriate for players and coaches to use insulting or demeaning language (“Trash Talk”) or unacceptable language to one another before, during or after games. This rule will be strictly enforced by CYO game officials.

### RECRUITING

- In the Cleveland CYO, the use of influence by any person connected or not connected with a CYO Member to secure or retain a prospective athlete from another member is not permitted and shall cause the student to be ineligible upon transfer and shall jeopardize the standing of the member in future CYO athletic programs.
- High Schools that are members of the Ohio High School Athletic Association must follow their Bylaw 4, Section 9 which outlines the following limitations on recruitment by an OHSAA member high school:
  - A student is considered a prospective athlete upon enrolling in the seventh grade.
  - Prior to enrollment a prospective athlete may visit a member school within the district of residence of parents, provided the arrangements for the visit are cleared through the principal of the school to be visited.
  - High Schools cannot provide financial aid or scholarships to a student on the basis of athletic ability.
  - A prospective athlete shall not be offered or accept any inducement, such as free tuition, employment, books, complimentary tickets, sweatshirts, uniforms and

supplies, other than that which is provided to all students. High Schools can invite an 8<sup>th</sup> grade class to attend a game for free. However the invitation must be made to the whole group and not particular students.

- High School Coaches are not to initiate contact with prospective students outside of the high school's building until the student has applied to the school and acceptance letters have been distributed. No (OHSAA) member representative shall initiate any communication with a prospective athlete, parents or an athlete, guardian or family member, in person or through a third party prior to enrollment.
- The Cleveland Area Catholic High Schools have an agreed upon "No Contact" period that runs during the application review process from early-January to mid-February. During this time representatives from high schools are not to have contact with prospective students.
- High School coaches can talk to a parish group as long as they talk about the general educational values of athletics and not the attributes of a particular school.
- High Schools cannot provide financial aid or scholarships to a student on the basis of athletic ability.
- If a parent or athlete wishes to talk to coach, they need to make a request through the admissions office of the school and a meeting will be held on school grounds.

#### DIOCESAN RULE ON ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARM USE

Coaches, players, managers, statisticians, scorekeeper, cheerleaders, spectators, site personnel, commissioners and contest officials in the CYO athletic program are prohibited from using any form of alcohol, illicit drugs, tobacco products or carry a firearm or deadly weapon at CYO athletic competitions or practice sessions. CYO contest sites are drug, alcohol, tobacco and firearm free zones.

Alcohol, illicit drugs, tobacco products or firearms and deadly weapons are not permitted anywhere on the premises of a CYO athletic event. Penalty for violation by the parish representatives, officials, coaches, spectators or participants is disqualification from that contest as well as possible legal action. The CYO Member is responsible to enforce this policy.

#### PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF RULES

The penalties that are imposed by the CYO Athletic Administration or their Pastoral Designee for violation of rules include, but are not limited to:

- Warning.
- Probation.
- Forfeiture of playoff or tournament rights.
- Forfeiture of game or games.
- Temporary or permanent suspension or removal of a player, coach, parent or spectator.

- Suspension of current/future event sanctions.
- Suspension of the team.
- Suspension of athletic contests when the relationship between two or more teams has become as quarrelsome and unsportsmanlike as to jeopardize the parish and public welfare.
- Suspension of the member.

## **PROTESTS AND GRIEVANCES**

The CYO Office will review a protest or grievance that is received with three (3) business days after an incident. The initiator of the complaint must submit a grievance or protest in writing that is signed by the Pastoral Designee and Member Administrator.

A Formal Grievance is any concern or disagreement with the administration of the Catholic Youth Organization athletic program. A formal grievance does not require a protest fee to accompany that complaint.

A Formal Protest is a written objection directly associated with the rules and/or athletic contest. A formal protest, in order to be considered by the Area CYO Athletic Director or grievance committee must be accompanied with a protest fee of \$25.00. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be returned.

Protests or grievances involving disputed calls by game officials are not considered for appeal.

An appeal of the decision of the Area CYO Athletic Director may be filed with the CYO Athletic Administrator within five (5) business days following the release of the written decision of the CYO Athletic Director. A written decision from the CYO Athletic Administration shall be issued three (3) days after the review.

## **GOVERNING BODIES**

- The CYO Sport Specific rules are supplemented by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules. Copies of the NFHS rulebooks may be obtained through the Ohio High School Athletic Association or by visiting [www.NFHS.org](http://www.NFHS.org).
- The CYO Sport Specific rules are supplemented by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) rules. Copies of the OHSAA rules may be obtained through the Ohio High School Athletic Association, [www.OHSAA.org](http://www.OHSAA.org).

# CYO Coach's Code of Ethics

*CYO Coaches are contributors toward the development of the young athlete. As such, they need to exercise a high level of self-discipline and responsibility. The purpose of this Code is to establish guidelines for standards of conduct by CYO Coaches.*

The CYO Coach shall teach and encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support and respect for all athletes, officials, site workers, fellow coaches, and CYO administrators at all times.

The CYO Coach shall be a positive force in the formation of the youth as a total person. Through the coach's counseling and encouragement, all athletes should learn their value and responsibility to the Team, Church and Community.

The CYO Coach shall master and follow the rules of the sport, CYO modification, divisional rules as well as the general policies of the CYO Charter & By-laws.

The CYO Coach shall help their players master the skills of the sport. They shall use practices, competitions and games as opportunities to develop the fundamental skills in each athlete.

The CYO Coach shall be punctual and responsible in the fulfillment of their obligations by arriving at the competition and practice sites early, by making introductions to officials, scorers/timers/supervisors and other coaches.

The CYO Coach shall remain mindful that their conduct during each event has a tremendous impact on the conduct parents and fans exhibit. The coach should always demonstrate good sportsmanship, patience, manners and an attitude indicative of the spirit of CYO.

The CYO Coach shall remain mindful that their conduct has a tremendous impact on the love of the sport a child may have, the view parents and fans have of youth sports, the reputation of the youth coaching profession and the quality of the CYO Athletic Program.

***Sportsmanship is the Name of the Game!***

Name Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

# CYO CADET & ELEMENTAL 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 members listed on the team roster who meet the eligibility rules and are approved by the Pastoral 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 *that should speak to the officials 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, *cell phones*, or any other electronic communication systems *are not permitted within the competition area.*
  - Teams are permitted to only videotape their own games. Coaches, Fans, etc. are not permitted to videotape an opponent. This is a violation of Ohio High School Athletic Association & CYO Rules.

## UNIFORMS

- *All athletes are required to wear member issued 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 *at least* 10 inches in height, while the number on the front of the jersey shall be *at least* 8 inches in height. The bars or strokes should be approximately 1-1/2 inches wide.
- *The jersey number requirements by position and the requirement of the visiting team to wear a white jersey of the NFHS do not apply to CYO competitions.*
- 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 nor 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 or cancel a game.

### **PRE-CONTEST COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Coaches are to be CYO Certified.
- Coaches are responsible for the supervision of their team before the contest.
- At each contest and practice, coaches are 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 players listed on the eligibility roster, *two (2) water personnel under the age of 16, and six (6) non players (coaches). Non-players 16 years of age or older must be CYO certified.*

### **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.
- The intent of the participation rule is to divide playing time equitably amongst members of the team for the entire game. As a result of the intent of the rule, all players will receive more practice and game time experience and instruction.
- **Combined Division Participation Requirements**
  - Each team will provide the opposing coach and referee/site supervisor a line-up sheet 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; the teams will follow the Cadet Middleweight Division Participation Requirement listed below.
- **Elemental Middleweight Division Participation Requirements**
  - Each team will provide the Play Counter, opposing coach and Site Supervisor a completed team participation form which will indicate which players will participate in the 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> quarters of the game (1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> quarter squad) and which players will participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the game (2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> quarter squad).
    - These squads will be divided as equally as possible with the number of players dressed for the game (i.e. A team of 25 cannot schedule 11 to play in the 1st quarter and 14 to play in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter - A split of 12 and 13 per the respective quarter would be acceptable).
    - These squads will be listed by offensive & defensive player position.
  - A team with 22 or more players dressed for the game and listed on the team participation form – The players that participate in any portion of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the game are not permitted to play in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the game.
    - The players that participate in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the game are then to play in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the game, while the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter squad is expected to play in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the game.
    - If the team drops down to having fewer than 22 players able to play due to injury or ejection, the team would be required to then follow the rule for a team with “fewer than 22 players dressed for the game” for the remainder of the game.
  - A team with fewer than 22 players dressed for the game and listed on the team participation form – The team will be required to play the same 11 players on offense, defense and special teams in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the game. Those players that did not participate in the first quarter of the game must start and play the entire second quarter of the game. To round out the 11 players needed on the field, players that participated in any portion of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter may be used according to the following position restriction;
    - Key positions - If a player played in one of the following positions in the 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> quarters of the game, he is not permitted to play in any key position during the 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> quarters.
      - Quarterback
      - Fullback
      - Running Back
      - Slot Back
    - The players that participate in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the game are then to play in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the game, while the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter squad is expected to play in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the game.
    - Some players may play in multiple quarters due to the small size of the team. However any player playing one of the key positions listed above in the 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> quarter squad is not permitted to play in any key position on the 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> quarter squad.
  - 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 and the game officials will assess an unsportsmanlike penalty on the violating team and cause for a line-up correction to be made. The CYO Administration will determine if any additional penalties need to be assessed to the coach or team.
  - It is encouraged that teams with 28 or more players split into two teams to facilitate compliance with this rule.
  - If a member sponsors multiple Elemental division teams - due to sickness or injury, players may be moved from one elemental team to the other team, in order to minimize the chance of a forfeit due to insufficient players. This request must be made to the CYO Office - Area Athletic Director no later than 9:00 am Friday morning before a weekend game
    - A player is still restricted to participation in one game per week.
    - A single player is only permitted to be moved between teams once per season.
    - At the conclusion of the game, the player automatically returns to their original roster.

- **Cadet Middleweight Division Participation Requirements**

- Each team will provide the Play Counter, opposing coach and Site Supervisor a completed team participation form which will indicate which players will participate in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the game (1<sup>st</sup> quarter squad) and which players will participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the game (2<sup>nd</sup> quarter squad).
  - These squads will be divided as equally as possible with the number of players dressed for the game (i.e. A team of 25 cannot schedule 11 to play in the 1st quarter and 14 to play in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter - A split of 12 and 13 per the respective quarter would be acceptable).
  - These squads will be listed by offensive & defensive player position.
- A team with 22 or more players dressed for the game and listed on the team participation form – The players that participate in any portion of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the game are not permitted to play in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the game. If the team drops down to having fewer than 22 players able to play due to injury or ejection, the team would be required to then follow the rule for a team with “fewer than 22 players dressed for the game” for the remainder of the 1<sup>st</sup> and/or 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.
- A team with fewer than 22 players dressed for the game and listed on the team participation form – The team will be required to play the same 11 players on offense, defense and special teams in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the game. Those players that did not participate in the first quarter of the game must start and play the entire second quarter of the game. To round out the 11 players needed on the field, players that participated in any portion of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter may be used according to the following position restriction;
  - If a player played in one of the following positions in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the game, he is not permitted to play in any key position during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.
    - Quarterback
    - Fullback
    - Running Back
    - Slot Back
  - Some players may play in both quarters due to the small size of the team. However any player playing one of the positions listed above in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the game is not permitted to play any key position during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.
- 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 and the game officials will assess an unsportsmanlike penalty on the violating team and cause for a line-up correction to be made. The CYO Administration will determine if any additional penalties need to be assessed to the coach or team.
- It is encouraged that teams with 28 or more players split into two teams to facilitate compliance with this rule.
- If a member sponsors multiple Cadet division teams - due to sickness or injury, players may be moved from one cadet team to the other team, in order to minimize the chance of a forfeit due to insufficient players. This request must be made to the CYO Office, Area Athletic Director no later than 9:00 am Friday morning before a weekend game
  - A player is still restricted to participation in one game per week.
  - A single player is only permitted to be moved between teams once per season.
  - At the conclusion of the game, the player automatically returns to their original roster.
- If overtime is played, free substitution will be permitted.
- Age and Grade Requirements
  - Participants must be between the ages of 10-12 before October 1st and in the 4th, 5th or 6th grade only.

- 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 on the game roster.

### **GAME & TIME LIMITATION**

- No team or player is permitted to play more than 10 games in one season.
- No game can 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 ten (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 second 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.)

## **CADET & ELEMENTAL – MIDDLE WEIGHT DIVISION (Specific Rules)**

### **WEIGHT AND DOTTED PLAYER REQUIREMENTS**

- Cadet-Backfield players and ends playing on the offense may not exceed **120** pounds (No Dot).
- Cadet-Maximum weight for non-dotted players on defense is **120** pounds. Players over **120** pounds shall be given a Dot that is to be placed on the Right Front and Left Back of the player's helmet. *Note: This will be the last increase to the dot weight limit. Future changes will result in the elimination of dotted players.*
- Elemental-Backfield players and ends playing on the offense may not exceed **100** pounds (No Dot).
- Elemental-Maximum weight for non-dotted players on defense is **100** pounds. Players over **100** pounds shall be given a Dot that is to be placed on the Right Front and Left Back of the player's helmet. *Note: This will be the last increase to the dot weight limit. Future changes will result in the elimination of dotted players.*
- Dotted Players may play the following positions;
  - Weight is unlimited for the offensive line, tackle to tackle. (Maximum of 4 dotted players). Dotted players must be "covered" by an end.
  - Weight is unlimited for up to three interior defensive line positions. These defensive linemen must line-up in a down stance and their alignment must be from head-on the offensive tackle to head-on the other offensive tackle. A punter or place kicker can be a dotted player. (See Kicking Rules)
- A player weighing less than 65 pounds and more than 55 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 55 pounds.

### **PLAYER PARTICIPATION**

- Participation in the game by an athlete must satisfy the participation requirements outlined on pages 36-39.

### **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 attempts, with the exception that any player may attempt a kick regardless if the player has a dot on the helmet or not. The kicker may be the only player with a dot in the backfield. The attempt to kick will end when the kick is good or it is obvious the attempt will fail.

- On a bad snap in the backfield, the dotted punter or 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 shall be declared down and the dotted 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 player.

### **WEIGH-INS**

- If a player has two game jerseys (home and away) both the color and corresponding numbers must be recorded.
- If a player's number changes at any time for any reason the CYO Commissioner or CYO Office must be notified within 24 hours of the change. No numbers may be changed less than 24 hours prior to a scheduled game. If a player's number is changed during a game the CYO Commissioner or CYO Office must be notified within 24 hours after the completion of that game.
- There will be two (2) scheduled weigh-ins during the regular season (pre-season and mid-season).
- Pre-season weigh-in - All players must weigh-in prior to the opening game to be eligible to play.
  - A player who does not weigh-in at the pre-season weigh-in cannot play. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
  - The scale will be visible to the head coach.
  - For any weigh-ins all players must wear their game jersey, shorts and socks. Any athlete who does not come dressed as described will not be weighed. Adding or removing clothing is strictly forbidden.
- Mid-season weigh-in
  - Cadet-Players who weighed-in at **115-120lbs.** at the pre-season weigh-in must be weighed-in again as well as dotted players wishing to remove the dot.
  - Elemental-Players who weighed-in at **95-100lbs.** at the pre-season weigh-in must be weighed-in again as well as dotted players wishing to remove the dot.
  - The scale will be visible to the head coach.
  - For any weigh-ins all players must wear their game jersey, shorts and socks. Any athlete who does not come dressed as described will not be weighed. Adding or removing clothing is strictly forbidden.

### **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(s) exceed the **120** pound weight limit in Cadet or, **100** pound weight limit in Elemental, the player(s) shall add a dot to their helmet and may participate in accordance with Weight and Dotted Player Rules. The player(s) must weigh-in at the next scheduled weigh-in if the player(s) wish to regain eligibility.

## **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.

## **CADET – COMBINED DIVISION (Specific Rules)**

### **GRADE AND AGE REQUIREMENTS**

- Cadet players in the Combined Division must be in either in the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade. (Note: While a player must be 12 years old on October 1, players who turn 13 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 CYO Administration.)

### **WEIGHT LIMITATIONS**

- There are no weight restrictions in the Cadet 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 pages 36-39.
  - 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 school must meet the following:
- The Member must declare any change in football play by the May 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 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.

*(Revised May, 2009)*