

DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO INTERMEDIATE AND YOUTH DIVISION FOOTBALL RULES

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

SECTION 1 - OFFICIAL TEAM

- A. Defined as an individual or group of children from one or more Members listed on the team roster that meet the eligibility rules and are approved by the Pastoral Designee, Member Administrator and CYO Office.
- B. A CYO Team refusing to continue playing a scheduled game for any reason without the consent of the game official or CYO representative may be subject to penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11. This also applies to CYO Sanctioned Events.
- C. There is not a maximum or minimum roster size. It is recommended that a group of 34 or more athletes be divided into two teams at the start of the season.
- D. A partial roster or combined roster cannot be entered into any tournament or sanctioned event.

SECTION 2 - OFFICIALS

- A. Officials that are certified and registered with the Diocese of Cleveland CYO will be assigned to each game.
- B. Officials have the power to warn or disqualify from the competition anyone who commits acts which intend to influence their decisions.
- C. Officials have the authority to call or suspend a game if conditions warrant.
- D. Four (4) officials will be assigned to each regular season game. Five (5) officials may be assigned for sanctioned events and play-offs.
- E. The head coach and the team captain are the only persons that should speak to the officials before, during or after the game.

SECTION 3 - EQUIPMENT & UNIFORMS

- A. Game Ball:
 - 1. All divisions will use the Youth size ball.
 - 2. Teams are permitted to use either a composite or leather ball.
- B. Electronic Devices:
 - 1. Walkie-talkies, cell phones, or any other electronic communication systems are not permitted within the competition area.
 - 2. Teams are permitted to only videotape their games.

- a. Videotaping is only permitted from areas approved by the facility but is never permitted from within the competition area, team bench area or other unapproved areas.
 - b. Individuals videotaping or photographers must be positioned at least two yards from the sideline or end zone.
 - c. Coaches, Fans, etc. are not permitted to videotape an opponent's game or practice.
- C. All athletes are required to wear member issued uniforms.
 - D. 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.
 - E. 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.
 - F. All players must have the CYO Emblem on their uniform either sewn or stenciled.
 - G. All participants must be properly equipped and fitted by the member with the following items:
 - 1. Helmets that are NOCSAE certified. All helmets must have the certified imprint and special warning stickers related to injuries. At least a four snap chin strap shall be required to secure the helmet.
 - 2. Shoulder pads.
 - 3. Football pants with pads for the hips, tailbone, thighs and knees.
 - H. A maximum of 3/4 inch rubber or plastic cleats are permitted. Cleats may screw-on or be molded into the shoe. Metal cleats are prohibited.
 - I. 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.
 - J. Chains, earrings, other jewelry, glitter, face paint or other inappropriate items may not be worn during the game.
 - K. 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.
 - L. 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.

SECTION 4 - PRE-CONTEST COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Coaches must be CYO certified.
- B. CYO Credentials are to be worn and visible at all times with the seasonal sticker.
 - 1. Credentials cannot be given to another coach at any time.

2. Coaches who are reported of giving their credentials to another coach, even for one game, will have their coaching privileges revoked for one year.
- C. Coaches are responsible for the supervision of their team before and after the game.
- D. At each game and practice, coaches are to have in their possession: an official team roster, a copy of each athlete's Preparticipation Form and Emergency Medical Authorization Form and a first aid kit.
- E. A pre-game conference will be held between the officials, coaches and captains.
- F. Bench personnel are limited to:
 1. Players listed on the eligibility roster, two (2) water personnel under the age of 16 and six (6) non-players (coaches).
 2. Non-players 16 years of age or older must be CYO certified.
 3. Non-players under the age of 9 are not allowed in the bench area.
- G. Chains and Down Marker Crews:
 1. 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.
 2. 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.
 3. The home team will provide the chain and down marker crew and will be positioned on the home side of the field.

SECTION 5 - PARTICIPATION

- A. Each athlete must be treated with dignity regardless of his or her ability.
- B. 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.
- C. All participants in all divisions are to meet the following requirements:
 1. Each team will provide the Play Counter, opposing coach and Site Director 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.
 2. Each eligible player on the team participation form must play a minimum of non-penalty plays based upon the following game day roster size.
 - a) 24 or fewer players able to play – Each player must play a minimum of ten (10) non-penalty plays per game. At least five (5) of the plays must take place in the 1st half of the game.
 - b) 25 or more 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.

- D. If a coach will not play a player because of missed practice, unsportsmanlike conduct, academics or injury, the coach must inform the official before the game begins and mark the player as not participating on the official participation sheet.
- E. Late Arriving Players:
 - 1. If a player arrives late to a game during the first or second quarter and is permitted to play by the coach, the player is to meet the full participation requirement of the game.
 - 2. If a player arrives late to a game during the third or fourth quarter and is permitted to play by the coach, the player is to meet one half of the participation requirement for the total game.
- F. Upon violation of the Participation Rule, the Play Counter will notify the Game Officials and Site Director and the following penalty will be assessed:
 - 1. For violations discovered at the end of the game, the Site Director will contact the CYO Athletic office with the details and documentation of the violation and the CYO Administration will assess the penalties toward the coach or team. If after a review a violation is confirmed, a forfeiture of the game will be assessed.
 - 2. All violations of the participation rules are to be communicated to the CYO Athletic Office by the Site Director and game officials by the morning following the infraction.

SECTION 6 - GAME & TIME LIMITATION

- A. No team or player is permitted to play more than 10 games in a season.
- B. No team or player may play in more than 1 game in a day.
- C. No team or player may play more than 2 games per week.
- D. Events on Sunday cannot begin until 1:00 PM.
- E. Events cannot start after 8:00 PM.
- F. Practice sessions must be completed by 9:00 PM.

SECTION 7 - LIGHTNING & INCLEMENT WEATHER

- A. When thunder is heard or a lightning bolt is seen at a practice or competition, the teams must suspend play and take shelter immediately. Once play has been suspended, a period of at least 30 minutes after the last thunder heard or lightning flash is witnessed must be honored prior to resuming play/practice.
- B. Contest or CYO officials assume authority for competitions when they arrive on the field. When the officials recognize inclement weather they are duty bound to suspend the game. Coaches and Pastoral Designees are responsible for application of this policy at practice.
- C. Announcements related to the status of competitions will be posted on the main page of the schedule website or telephone announcement lines and media as needed.

- D. Contests that are suspended as a result of inclement weather and cannot be resumed with-in a reasonable time at the same site will be cancelled, unless deemed necessary to reschedule by the CYO Administration.

SECTION 8 - PRACTICE AND COACHING GUIDELINE

- A. Practice or any organized team conditioning cannot start prior to the CYO published first day of practice.
- B. Practice sessions shall be limited to one (1) session per day not to exceed two (2) hours in duration.
- C. Uniforms and equipment may be distributed one (1) week prior to the official first day of practice.
- D. All athletes must participate in five days of pre-season physical acclimation prior to any physical contact. Athletes reporting late must have five days of physical acclimation prior to any physical contact. This rule applies to all teams & participants.
 - 1. Days 1 & 2 – No Pads, shorts, helmets and shoes can be worn, no physical contact.
 - 2. Days 3 & 4 – Shoulder pads may be added, but no contact is permitted.
 - 3. Day 5 – Full equipment may be worn, but contact is prohibited.
- E. Scrimmages
 - 1. Three (3) pre-season scrimmages are permitted.
 - 2. During the regular season one (1) practice session per week is permitted with a CYO registered team of another member.
 - 3. 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.

SECTION 9 – COMPETITION RULES

- A. Play Clock
 - 1. All Divisions
 - a. The length of the four (4) quarters shall be ten (10) minutes, with a one-minute rest period between quarters.
 - b. Half time will be ten (10) minutes in length.
 - 2. 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.
 - 3. Approximately four (4) minutes before the end of each half, the official shall notify the field captains and their coaches of the time remaining. If a field clock is the official timepiece, neither notification nor stoppage of the clock is required.
 - 4. If the score is tied at the end of regulation in a regular season game, the process outlined in Section 11 will be followed.

B. Time Outs

1. Each team will be allowed three (3) sixty (60) second time-outs per half of a game.
2. Unused time-outs do not carry over to the second half or overtime periods.
3. Each team will be allowed one (1) time-out per overtime.

C. Scoring

1. Touchdown will award 6 points
2. Field Goal will award 3 points
3. PAT-Run will award 1 point
4. PAT-Kick will award 2 points
5. Safety will award 2 points
6. Field Goals and PAT-Kicks are permitted in all games, as long as the playing field has goal posts.

D. Placement of the ball

1. At the start of the game or half the ball will be put in play on the 30-yard line.
2. After a Touchdown or Field Goal the ball will be put in play on the 30-yard line.
3. After a safety the ball will be put in play at the 50-yard line.
4. Overtime procedures in Section 11 will be followed when needed.

E. Kicking

1. Kick-offs are not permitted.
2. Regular offensive rules are in effect during an extra point and field goal attempt, with the exception that any player may attempt a kick regardless if the player has a Dot or not.
3. Try for point (PAT) after a touchdown shall be attempted from the three (3) yard line.
4. The try will end when the kick is good or it is obvious the try will fail.
5. On a bad snap in the backfield, a dotted kicker may take part in the play as a ball carrier or blocker.

F. Incidental possession of the ball by a player with a "Dot"

1. A player with a "Dot" can advance the ball on incidental possession resulting from a fumble, tipped ball, bad snap on a kick or other non-scripted means.
2. If the game official believes that the possession of the ball by a "Dot" player was a scripted or organized play, the play will be blown dead and an unsportsmanlike penalty may be assessed to the offending team.

SECTION 10 – MERCY RULE

- A. When a team reaches an 18-point spread differential over their opponents, the team is expected to conduct itself in a manner that the game officials and CYO administration feel show respect and dignity towards its opponent.
- B. The leading team must punt on 4th down, as long as the ball is outside the defensive team's 30-yard line. If the ball is inside the defensive team's 30-yard line, the punt

will not take place, but the ball is given over to the other team and placed at their own 20-yard line.

- C. The Mercy Rule cannot be waived for playoffs, championship games or sanctioned events.
- D. Penalty for Violation of the Mercy Rule
 - 1. First Offense - Warning.
 - 2. Second Offense - Unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on the head coach.
 - 3. Third Offense - Unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and ejection of the head coach.
 - 4. Fourth Offense - Forfeit Loss.

SECTION 11 – OVERTIME PROCEDURE

- A. When the score is tied at the end of regulation time, 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.
- B. A field goal attempt is permitted during any down.
- C. Three minutes after the conclusion of the fourth quarter the game officials will conduct a coin toss with the team captains to determine positions and field use. If a field only has goal posts at one end, that end of the field will be used for each overtime period.
- D. To start the overtime,
 - 1. The offensive team will put the ball in play, first and ten, on the defensive team's 20-yard line.
 - 2. If the team on offense scores a touchdown, it is entitled to the opportunity for a PAT unless the points would not affect the outcome of the game.
 - 3. If the defensive team gains position, the ball becomes dead immediately and the offensive team's series of downs is ended.
 - 4. 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.
- E. If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series of downs in the first overtime period, there shall be a two minute intermission then the procedure will be repeated from the 10-yard line, first and goal.
- F. If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series of downs in the second overtime period, there shall be a two minute intermission then the procedure will be repeated from the 10-yard line, first and goal.
- G. If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series of downs in the third overtime, there shall be a five minute intermission then the procedure will be repeated from the 10-yard line, first and goal until a winner is determined. A five minute intermission will be held between each additional overtime.

SECTION 12 – PLAYER WEIGHT REQUIREMENT

A. Unrestricted Division

1. There are no player weight restrictions.

B. Middleweight 165lb Division

1. Players at weigh-in that are recorded over 165 pounds shall be given a “Dot” that is to be placed on the right front and left back of the player’s helmet.
2. Players with a “Dot” are permitted to participate in the following positions;
 - a. Offensive line, tackle to tackle and must be “covered” by an end.
 - b. Three interior defensive line positions. These defensive linemen may line-up in either a down or a 2 point stance. Their alignment must be from head-up offensive tackle to head-up offensive tackle. Gap alignment is permitted according to the NFHS rules.
 - c. Punter
 - d. Place-Kicker
 - e. Holder for a Kicker
3. Players that weigh-in at 165 pounds or less are not restricted by position.
4. Players that weigh-in at less than 90 pounds and more than 80 pounds are 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.
5. Players that weigh-in at less than 80 pounds are not eligible to participate in practice or games.

C. Middleweight 150lb Division

1. Players at weigh-in that are recorded over 150 pounds shall be given a “Dot” that is to be placed on the right front and left back of the player’s helmet.
2. Players with a “Dot” are permitted to participate in the following positions;
 - f. Offensive line, tackle to tackle and must be “covered” by an end.
 - g. Three interior defensive line positions. These defensive linemen may line-up in either a down or a 2 point stance. Their alignment must be from head-up offensive tackle to head-up offensive tackle. Gap alignment is permitted according to the NFHS rules.
 - h. Punter
 - i. Place-Kicker
 - j. Holder for a Kicker
3. Players that weigh-in at 150 pounds or less are not restricted by position.
4. Players that weigh-in at less than 90 pounds and more than 80 pounds are 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.
5. Players that weigh-in at less than 80 pounds are not eligible to participate in practice or games.

SECTION 13 – WEIGH-INS AND CHALLENGES FOR THE MIDDLEWEIGHT DIVISIONS

A. Weigh-ins

1. There shall be four (4) weigh-ins during the season.
 - a. Two initial weigh-ins prior to the first scheduled game of the season. All players must weigh-in at one of two the scheduled initial weigh-ins to be eligible to participate.
 - b. Mid-season weigh-in for players who weighed in at 160-165 pounds in the middleweight 165 lb division or at 145-150 in the middleweight 150lb division at the initial weigh-in must be weighed in again as well as dotted players wishing to remove the dot.
 - c. Prior to the Diocese of Cleveland Championship Game for all players.
2. Procedures for weigh-ins:
 - a. Teams will present the athletes in the order they are listed on the team eligibility roster.
 - b. Athletes will wear their game jersey, shorts and socks when asked to stand on the scale. Any athlete who does not come dressed as described will not be weighed. Adding or removing clothing is strictly forbidden.

B. The scale will be visible to the head coach.

C. Sweating Down - Any coach found to suggest or encourage a player to "sweat down" to meet weight limitations shall be face a minimum penalty of suspension for two years.

D. Weight Challenge

1. To initiate a challenge, the challenging Head Coach must file the challenge in writing and submit the \$25.00 filing fee to the CYO Athletic Office at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled game with the team to be challenged.
2. The document must contain the name of player or players being challenged, their uniform number and the CYO Member they represent.
3. A team can submit a maximum of 4 weight challenges per season.
4. A challenge is permissible at any time during the regular season.
5. The challenged player or players will be weighed in at the scheduled appointment of the CYO Athletic Office.
6. If the challenged player or players exceed the 165-pound weight limit, the player or players then shall add a dot to their helmet and may participate in accordance with the "Dot" restrictions. The player must weigh in again at the next scheduled weigh in if the player wishes to remove participation restrictions.

SECTION 14 – CAUTION AND DISQUALIFICATION

A. Teams are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that the game officials and CYO administration feel shows respect and dignity towards its opponent.

- B. A coach or player ejected from a game for any reason shall be suspended for the next scheduled game. The ejected person may not associate with the team during the duration of the suspension, this includes practices and scrimmages.
- C. Any player, coach or other person who receives two (2) ejections during the course of the season will be suspended for the remainder of the season and may be subject to additional disciplinary action.

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