

Northern Vermont Youth Football League

League Rules and Regulations Effective 2011 Season

The following rules and regulations shall govern play within Nvyfl. These rules are intended to augment those rules found in the National High School Football Federation rulebook in order to facilitate play at the youth level. All other rules shall be as identified in the National Federation Rulebook. It is important that A-team coaches communicate these rules to all staff, especially the head B-team coach.

For questions regarding these rules, contact any of the following Nvyfl league board members:

Glenn Cummings, President, 802-343-6149
Tony Arcovitch, Vice President, 802-878-2643

Coaches

- a. **[7-10]** All head coaches on the field for each level must be certified through USA Football or NFHS. It is strongly recommended ALL coaches be certified.
- b. **[7-10]** All coaches must have an annual Vermont State Police background check in which there may not be any offenses to or involving children.
- c. Only head coaches may speak to officials.
- d. **[5-10]** If a coach is reported to the league for endangering the safety of anyone or acting inappropriately the executive board will follow the discipline procedure:
 1. Coach has not contact with any players until the board makes a decision.
 2. The board will begin an investigation and meet with the coach within 10 days.
 3. A member of the executive board will speak with the coach and any others involved prior to deliberating.
 4. The coach will be given one of the following disciplines
 - i. Nothing
 - ii. 1 game suspension – the coach may not meet with his team during practice or attend the next game.
 - iii. Suspension for the remainder of the season – the coach may not have any contact with the team.
 - iv. Permanently removed from the league.

Team Rosters

- a. There is no maximum number of players, however, team coaches should ensure that they can safely supervise and coach the number of players in their program.
- b. A minimum of fifteen (15) players is required to start the season.
- c. A town with more than one (1) team must submit to the board for approval a draft plan that will assure an even distribution of talent.
- d. Team rosters with birth certificate must be turned into the league by sanction weigh in (typically the season start jamboree) or as directed by the league board.
- e. **[04/01]** For flag programs, all participants must be in grades 1-4 only. Also, any player that has had any participation in a tackle program at any time is ineligible to participate in a flag program.
- f. **[04/01]** No player can participate in any league activity, including practices, unless a league registration form has been filled out completely and signed by the parent or guardian.
- g. **[04/10]** The roster must include a list of ALL coaches for the season and a signature from the head coach certifying they have all passed a Vermont criminal background check and a league coach's application. The signature also certifies that ALL head coaches on the field have a USA Football or NFHS certification. If any coach is found to have not completed these measures the head coach will be suspended for a game. If another infraction is found the head coach will be suspended for the remainder of the season. When a coach is suspended he may not attend practices or games.

Player Eligibility

- a. For A-teams only, players must be in sixth grade or 11 years old by November 1 of the season year. The minimum age for B-teams is 8 years old by November 1 of the season year.
- b. A-team players must not be above eighth grade or more than 14 years old by the end of the season (Championship game). B-team players not be older than 12 years by the end of the season (Championship game).
- c. For A-teams only, In order to confirm age eligibility, all 5/6 and 7/8 players must submit a birth certificate along with the team roster at the jamboree, or at the pre-season league sanctioned weigh-in.
- d. Players shall not be cut from any team except for disciplinary reasons. All such cuts must be explained in writing to the league board within five days.
- e. **[02/09]** Any player attaining the age of 15 prior to April 1 of the following season year will not be eligible to play kick return, kick off, tight end or any offensive or defensive positions other than a down lineman (*definition of a*

down lineman is a player that is in a 3 or 4 point stance located within 1 yard of the line of scrimmage Tackle to tackle.) tackle to tackle. They can play as a down lineman on offense or defense only from tackle to tackle. However, if they weigh less than 120 lbs. they may also play tight end for blocking and forward pass reception only.

- f. **[04/02]** In order for an A-team player to be moved to a B team, the following criteria must be met with no exceptions: 1) The player must meet B-team age requirements as stated in (b), 2) The player must be in their very first year of participation in tackle football., independent of location, and 3) the player must be approved by a league officer at the jamboree.
- g. **[05/03]** A player must have submitted their birth certificate to the league in order to be eligible for play. If a player does not have a birth certificate on record with the league (a late sign-up, for example), then the coach must present the player's birth certificate to the opposing coach prior to the start of any game the player may potentially play in. Failure to show proof of age via the birth certificate will make the player ineligible. If a coach plays a player that has no birth certificate on record, or has not shown the birth certificate to the opposing coach, then the game is subject to forfeit.
- h. **[03/09]** Teams may apply to the NXYFL league for a waiver to the rules by submitting the request to the league President. The form can be found at the end of the rules packet. The board of directors will discuss the waiver and submit a decision. Otherwise the head coaches of opposing teams must discuss and agree upon a decision prior to a game.

Game Time

- a. Coaches should contact each other early in the week to plan the game start times. A-team games should begin at 10am, unless the coaches plan otherwise. B-team games should begin prior to the A-team game, typically at 8am.
- b. A-team games shall consist of four ten-minute quarters, with stop time according to high school rules. B-team games shall consist of two twenty-five minute halves, running time. **[4/01]** Note that in any case a player injury causes the clock to stop, including in B-team games.
- c. **[03/05]** B-team halves may be extended to 30 minutes with a 10-minute half time, if both coaches agree prior to the start of the game, and the time extension does not cause a scheduling problem for referees or interference with the A-team game.
- d. There will be two minutes between quarters and ten minutes between halves.
- e. Each team shall have four time-outs per half, with up to three coaches.
- f. It is to the benefit of the league and the children participating that a 5th period be played immediately following the completion of the regularly

- scheduled game (if time constraints and number of players available make it appropriate and agreeable to both teams).
- g. **[04/02]** All communications between a team and the referees must only be between the referees and the head coach exclusively. No other coach (assistant) may communicate directly with referees during the game.
 - h. **[04/02]** The use of radios by the coaching staff is explicitly prohibited.
 - i. **[04/02]** Coaching staff may not have coaches directly or indirectly directing players in the stands. All coaching must be done from within the coach's box.
 - j. **[04/02]** Teams may not have staff or advising personnel in the vicinity the opposing team's player area or coaching box.

Scoring

- a. A touchdown = 6 points
- b. PAT = 1 point for a run, 2 points for a pass (note that the pass must be thrown beyond the line of scrimmage)

Penalties

- a. Normal 15-yard penalties per the Federation book shall be assessed at 10 yards, with the exception of (b).
- b. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties will be assessed at 15 yards. A second occurrence on the same player (or coach) will result in a 15-yard penalty, plus ejection from the game.
- c. Violation of league rules during a game after the play has begun is a 15 yard penalty.

Weight Limits

- a. **[07/09]** *For A-teams* – All offensive backs and ends have a maximum weight of 130 pounds. Tight ends may weigh up to 140lbs. If a tight end weighs more than 130lbs they can receive the ball only by a forward pass across the line of the scrimmage. An over weight tight end ***may not*** receive a ball by a hand off, pitch, shovel pass, screen pass behind the line of scrimmage, reverse or any other means behind the line of scrimmage.
- b. *For B-teams* – All offensive backs and ends have a maximum weight of 100 pounds. Tight ends may weigh 105 pounds, but if their weight exceeds 100 pounds they may not take a handoff.
- c. All players that may potentially be offensive ball carriers must weigh in at the season-start Jamboree, or as directed by the League board (in special circumstances). If a player does not weigh in by this time, or is over the designated weight for his position, then he is ineligible to play these positions during the season.

- d. If a weight challenge is made concerning the same player by two or more coaches, then the league board will convene to decide if the player must be re-weighed. If the decision is made to re-weigh the suspect player, then the player must be weighed before his next game. If the player is more than 5 pounds over the limit, then the player is immediately disqualified from any ball-carrying position for the remainder of the season.
- e. Any player, regardless of weight, may recover and advance a fumble that the Federation rules allow to be advanced.
- f. Any player, regardless of weight, may advance an interception, if they intercepted the ball (i.e., it may not be lateralled to an overweight player).
- g. **[04/10]** An overweight tight-end must line up within one arm's length of the last offensive lineman; all offensive linemen must be within one arm's length of each other.

Punts and Punt Returns

- a. **[04/02]** An overweight player may punt the ball, but shall not pass the ball, pitch or hand it off to another player. **[4/01]** Note that if an overweight player is in the backfield prior to the snap, then the ball **MUST** be punted or the play is dead as the right to fake is automatically declined. The overweight player may move forward with the ball to avoid a rush, but may not cross the line of scrimmage or transfer the ball to another player. The penalty for these infractions is loss of down and a dead ball at the Line of Scrimmage.
- b. All defensive players not eligible to carry the ball on punt returns must be within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage when the ball is punted. An overweight player may catch a short punt directly to him and run with it. If an overweight player is discovered to be deeper than 5 yards at the time of the punt, then the punting team shall have the option of re-playing the down with no yardage penalty.
- c. The penalty for roughing the snapper on punts shall be first down and 10 yards.
- d. A blocked punt may be advanced by any player.

Kick-Off Return

- a. **[05/03]** Both A and B teams will kick off from the 30-yard line. A minimum of five players on the return team must be 10 – 12 yards from the ball when it is kicked. All other players must be behind them, and must also meet ball-carrier weight limits. The players on the line may catch and return the ball if it is kicked to them.

- b. **[05/03]** The B-teams will only kick off once at the start of the game, and once at half time. All other starts will automatically occur at the 20-yard line.
- c. **[05/03]** For B-team kick-offs, no intentional on-sides kicks are permitted. Also, the ball may not be recovered by the kicking team unless possession (NOT simply touch) has first been made by the receiving team and a fumble occurs. A recovery by the kicking team without a fumble results in a dead ball at the point of recovery, and the receiving team takes possession.
- d. After a safety the ball will be kicked from the 20-yard line.
- e. If a kick-off goes out of bounds, then the receiving team has the choice of taking the ball where it went out or having it kicked over after a 5-yard penalty.

Blocking

- a. On pass plays, the offensive backs may block below the waist in an area behind the line of scrimmage and between the tackles.

Overtime Procedure for A-team games

If a game is tied at the end of regulation, the following procedure shall be used to resolve the tie:

- a. A coin toss determines which side shall attempt to score first, and at which end zone the scores shall be attempted.
- b. Each team in turn will receive one possession, starting with first-and-10 from the opponent's 10-yard line. The game clock is not used.
- c. A team's possession ends when it scores or loses the ball by turnover. The defense may score on a play on which it gains possession by turnover. As usual, a touchdown by the offense is followed by a try for one or two points.
- d. Each team receives one charged time-out per overtime procedure.
- e. If the score remains tied at the end of the overtime procedure, an additional overtime procedure is played. The team with the second possession in one overtime procedure will have the first possession in the next overtime procedure.
- f. Starting with the third overtime procedure, a touchdown must be followed by a try for two points (in our case a pass).

General and Miscellaneous

- a. For both A and B teams, defensive players may not charge the line faking a blitz for the purpose of causing the offense to move. Penalty: Warning for the first time, five yards thereafter.
- b. The Center's head may extend into the neutral zone, but not beyond the furthest point of the ball.

- c. Injured players that require a time out must leave the game for a minimum of two plays. If the injury is to the head or neck the player may not return to the game without medical approval.
- d. **[05/03]** Each team will supply a football for use in the game by their team. The football may be made be of any brand, and may be hide, composite or rubber. For the B-teams, the football must be of Junior or Youth size. For the A-teams, the football must be Youth size only. Each coach will present their football for review by the referee and opposing coach prior to the start of the game. Upon review, the head referee will declare the ball's eligibility, and only eligible balls may be used in the game. If more than one ball is to be used (i.e. rain situation), then each ball must be submitted for review prior to use in the game.
- e. The playing field will be 80 yards long, plus two 10-yard end zones. The regulation width of 53.3 yards should be used, unless the field location makes it impossible or unsafe to do so. In such a case the width must be a minimum of 40 yards wide.
- f. **[4/01]** A mandatory 'safety zone' must be identified along the sidelines with orange marking paint, ribbon or some other visible means. The minimum width of the safety zone is 5 yards. Spectators are allowed behind the end zone, but must not have strollers, folding chairs or any other hardware that may pose a risk to players. Also, spectators in the end zone area must maintain a safe distance from the zone end line. Absolutely no spectators are allowed in the sideline safety zone during the game. If an official sees a spectator within the zone, then the game will be stopped until they leave. A second infraction of this rule by the same team's spectators will result in a delay of game penalty. Coaches are strongly encouraged to tell parents in advance of this rule and its importance.
- g. Players on sidelines must stay between the 25 yard lines. Two players may go beyond that with the coaches.
- h. All players must wear mouth guards. Penalty: Warning for first time, 5 yards thereafter.
- i. Three coaches may go on the field during a charged time out. Players may huddle with coaches on the sideline after a score.
- j. Offensive backs must wear numbers between 1 and 49.
- k. Medics must be maintained at every NUYFL game. It is the home team's responsibility to provide a medic. A medic is defined as a registered nurse, physician, EMT or authorized trainer. Any other medical staff must be approved by the league board in advance of the subject game.
- l. It is the responsibility of both "Head Coaches" to assure that medical staff are present prior to starting the game. If no medical staff are present then the game must not start until proper medical coverage is found.

- m. The penalty for roughing the passer shall be 10 yards from the line of scrimmage or the end of the resulting run.
- n. **[4/01]** Prior to the start of the game, medical personnel must be identified to the game officials. Game officials should only allow medical personnel to handle an injured player that is suspected of any serious injury, especially to the head and neck area.
- o. **[4/01]** Any injury in practice or game situations that results in the injured player missing a subsequent game must be reported to the league president within 48 hours following the missed game. The player's name, any involved players names, nature of the injury, and description of circumstances must be reported.
- p. **[4/01]** At the conclusion of a game, the head A-team coach must immediately contact Rene Laberge (863-5134) to report the scores. This will be used to report to the newspaper, and for league records, so it is important that it be timely and accurate.
- q. **[6/01]** Scouting of other teams is permitted, but the use of video cameras for scouting games where your team is not playing is forbidden. Video may only be used to film a game that your team is participating in.
- r. **[04/02]** If a player is injured such that he is unable to participate in the next game following the injury, then a league injury form must be filled out and submitted to the league president within one week following the date of the injury. Coaches should also call the league president or vice president within 24 hours to make them aware of the incident. League injury forms may be obtained from the web site hand out section.
- s. **[05/11]** No team shall participate in any local football camp that is a tackle camp. Players attending local camps shall be conditioning, agility and individual position drills only, no offensive or defensive plays shall be instructed at these camps. Teams or individuals may participate in tackle football camps that are not sponsored by a local high school. Youth coaches may participate in the camp but not in a manner of coaching offensive or defensive plays.

Coaching

- a. **[06/06]** Teams may perform their own background checks on coaches, but must provide a written, signed affidavit to the league certifying that the checks have been run, and itemizing the coaches and check status.

B-team Special Rules and Regulations

- a. The B-team mission is *instructional* in nature. Its purpose is to teach the fundamentals of football while offering a fun and positive experience for the players involved. B-Team coaches should plan game play such that all players have an opportunity to participate. Use of the "fifth quarter" is strongly encouraged.

- b. **[02/09]** During games, only B-team junior varsity coaches are permitted to be on the field with players to verbally assist them when necessary. A maximum of 1 coach per team is allowed on the field at any given time.
- c. Players that are not playing should be OFF the field. Junior Varsity coaches that are on the field may call out players from the sidelines, but non-participating players should not be on the field during play.
- d. Punts must be declared on 4th down, and the punter may not be rushed.
- e. In order to simplify coaching and shift the focus to teaching fundamentals, the B-team defense is restricted to a 5-2. Further restrictions are as follows:
 - 1. **[05/03]** Linebackers must be 3-yards off the line of scrimmage at the snap, and must play “read and react” to the flow of play. Linebackers may not cross the offensive line of scrimmage from tackle to tackle, unless it is to meet a runner approaching the OLOS from tackle to tackle.
 - 2. **[05/03]** All interior (tackle to tackle) offensive linemen must be within arms length of each other.
 - 3. Corner backs must be 5 yards off the line of scrimmage at the snap, and safeties must be 10 yards off the LOS.
 - 4. Within the red zone (inside the 20 yard line), all defensive backs (cornerbacks and safeties) must be 5 yards off the line of scrimmage. Linebackers must remain 3 yards off, and may not blitz.
 - 5. Penalty for all of the above: Warning/replay of down for first violation, then 5 yards.
 - 6. NOTE: If an unbalanced receiver formation (trips, etc.) is used, then the defense may move a linebacker out to cover the extra player.

NOTE: The 5-2 defense restriction should be viewed as a means of providing a controlled environment for the purpose of enhancing instruction of the players. It should NOT be viewed as an opportunity to use bizarre offensive schemes in an attempt to take advantage of the restriction.

Northern Vermont Youth Football League Request for Waiver Form

Please complete the following information:

Name of Team/Organization: _____

Name of Player: _____

Player D.O.B.: _____

Current Age of Player as of the date of this Request: _____

Date this Request for Waiver submitted: _____

Please describe below the reason(s) for this Request for Waiver.

The NXYFL Board has reviewed the above Request for Waiver and the following decision has been made regarding said request.(Submission of request does not constitute acceptance)

_____ **The Request for Waiver has been APPROVED.**

_____ **The Request for Waiver has been DENIED.**

Signature – President of NXYFL

Date of Signature