

Three Rivers Youth Football Rules

Rev: August 2011

Article I - Age and weight requirements:

Section 1 – Division I (Grades 3rd and 4th)

- Division I is grades 3rd and 4th. It is the intent of the League to have players play in the age group they are in school throughout TRY- Middle and High School.
- A player cannot play a position in either the offensive or defensive backfields if the player is 95 lbs or more when weighed by a Board Member or certified CHSAA referee.
- No 6 year old or younger children will be allowed to play. No exceptions.

Section 2 – Division II (Grades 5th and 6th)

- Division II is grades 5th and 6th. It is the intent of the League to have players play in the age group they are in school throughout TRY- Middle and High School.
- A player cannot play a position in either the offensive or defensive backfields if the player is 115 lbs or more when weighed by a Board Member.

Article II - Registration and Weigh Ins

Section 1 – Timing and Weigh Ins

- Registration dates will be set by the Board. Dates will be scheduled by the end of the school year before summer break of the upcoming season. This is to register the majority of the players to help determine teams needed per Division.
- Advertisement of dates and location will be coordinated by the Town Representative and the Director through local newspapers, radio and flyers handed out to the schools.
- August 1st of each year will be the cut off for registrations. Teams will be decided after August 1st and no other player will be allowed to join a team if the team is at the 25 player limit. Teams that have not reached the 25 player limit will be allowed to add players up to the first game played. Waiting lists will be taken during registrations to see if another team for that Division can be added. The minimum of players to form a team is 18.
- Weigh in is a one time event completed by the Director or an appointed Board Member or CHSAA certified referee during the 1st week of practice. Players can be in shorts and a tee shirt without shoes worn during weigh in.
- Each and every player must weigh – no exceptions. Player must be weighed before the League will allow him/her to play in any game.

Article III – Legacy Players and Draft

Section 1 – Legacy Players

- If the parent of a player is a coach, only that player will automatically be placed on the team. All other players will enter the draft. This is limited to only three coaches per team and their child, (One Head Coach and two assistants therefore 3 players maximum allowed to be Legacy Players).

- Siblings in the same Division will be placed on the same team unless a request is made by the parent that they are not on the same team.

Section 2 – Draft

- If there is more than one team per Division all players except coaches' children will enter the draft. The Town Representative will schedule with each Division coach a draft date. Under the supervision of the Town Rep or Board Member, each coach will alternate picks of available players until all players have been chosen.
- At the Town Reps discretion, a one day skills evaluation, without pads or contact, will be allowed prior to the draft. This is to rate and familiarize coaches with all player's abilities before entering the draft. This is not mandatory and will be decided by the Town Rep and approved by the League Director or President.
- Teams cannot claim to have more than 3 coaches with their children being placed on one team as legacy players. Teams may have up to 5 coaches but the Town Rep will insist that the Head Coach identify only two assistants that can have their children be legacy players. All other children will enter the draft regardless of which team their parent coaches. This is to discourage stacking.
- If the teams have not reached the 25 player limit, the Town Rep, at their discretion, may refer to the waiting list and assign players to each team by alternate pick order by date of earliest registration date to the latest registration date to insure fairness. Once the 25 player has been reached for each team and it is after the cut off date of August 1st, the teams will now be set for the season.
- No player can be added to a team after the first official game has been played.
- Players must play for the venue of town they live in. Exceptions must get League Director approval. Director will interview the players' parents and both head coaches of teams involved to determine if request is legitimate. The spirit of this rule is to keep teams from being stacked and coaches recruiting. Teams will forfeit all games played if this rule is violated.

Article IV – Roster Requirements

Section 1 – Roster size

- No less than 17 players and no more than 25 players will be carried on any one team. This rule will be strictly enforced.

Section 2 – Participation and Practice

- No practice shall commence prior to date set by the Board of Directors.
- Full contact will be allowed from the first practice. All pads and mouth pieces must be worn by players for full contact to occur.
- Both Division I and Division II may have 5 practices per week for the first two weeks. The duration of each practice cannot be over 2 hours.
- Neither Division will practice more than 3 days per week after the first official game is played for the remainder of the season. The duration of each practice cannot be over 2 hours.

Section 3 – Team Rosters

- Two official team rosters (typewritten) will be submitted by each Head Coach at weigh in to be given to official performing weigh in.
- Players that do not weigh will not be allowed to play until their weigh in is complete.
- The roster will be complete with each player identified; first by number (in numeric order) Second by name. Third by weight. Fourth by position(s) with starting position ID'ed. Fifth by grade. Jersey changes of any player number will cause a new roster to be submitted to the Town Representative. One copy of the roster will be given to the games announcer prior to each game as well.

Section 4 – Transfers

- Transfers are highly discouraged. However, once the teams are set and practices have begun, a parent may petition the Town Rep on transfers. The Town Rep will then contact the Director and explain the situation. If the request is reasonable, the transfer will be allowed. This is given that there are more than one team in the Division.

Section 5 – Practice Sessions During Extreme Weather Conditions

- Safety of all participants is of utmost concern. During lightning storms cover must be sought immediately until storm passes. During extreme heat conditions, physical exertion will be held to a minimum with several water breaks. Laps or conditioning running will be eliminated for that days practice.

Article V – Board Members

Section 1 – President and League Director

- The League President will be the representative for the League at all official Three Rivers Youth Football functions. The President will assist the League Director in the day to day operations of the League where necessary. This is a paid position to offset expenses incurred by the position. Amount will be determined by the Board of Directors at the beginning of each season. The President has voting power.
- The League Director is responsible for the day to day operation of the League. This is a paid position to offset expenses incurred by the position. Amount will be determined by the Board of Directors at the beginning of each season.
- The responsibilities (include but not limited to) the League Director and President are:
 1. Seeing that the day to day operations of the league run smoothly.
 2. Receive reports from league officials on their area of responsibility and report back to the Board.
 3. Schedule meetings and locations.
 4. Coordinate Town Representatives.
 5. Ordering of equipment, uniforms, trophies for the league and keeping inventory of such.
 6. Manage Town Reps and Coaches as well as be the liaison to address any concerns by parents that the Town Rep cannot resolve.

7. Keep notes of Board Meetings for future reference.
8. Overseeing and development of League game schedule and keeping standings.

Section 2 – Other Board Members

- The Town Representatives will be members of the Board of Directors with voting power. The Town Rep will live in the immediate area of the community he/she is representing. Their responsibilities include but not limited to:
 1. Coordinate the keeping of Registrations and Liability forms for at least two years.
 2. Recruit coaches and “manage the coaches”.
 3. Coordinate registrations which includes advertising, visiting schools, and setting up where registrations will take place.
 4. Collection of all fees and forms and retaining forms for league Purposes and making deposits into TRY bank account.
 5. Insuring all control forms are used uniformly by all coaches.
 6. Scheduling and supervising drafts.
 7. Assist League in weighing of all players during first week of practice.
 8. Coordinating equipment check out and return and keeping detailed inventory to be reported to League Director/President at the beginning of the season and again at the end of the season.
 9. Communication to League Director of all funds deposited into TRY account.
 10. Setting up playing fields and insuring all equipment, press box, restrooms etc are ready.
 11. Confirming with Referee Coordinator that at least two qualified refs are available for each game scheduled.
- The remaining Board Member positions will be:
 1. Legal – Consultant for legal concerns
 2. Fund Raising – In charge of fund raising for the League
 3. Insurance – Overseeing and coordinating insurance needs for the League. Each member has voting power at all Board Meetings. It is understood that although the Board Members, other than the League Director and President, is not a paid position, Board Members and Head Coaches will be given a waiver in regards to registration fees if their child is a player on any team.
 4. League Treasure – In charge of all funds associated with TRY Football, payment of bills, and keeping detail reports of finances of League and report back to the Board of Directors.

Article VI – Coaches Requirements

The coaching staff of a team is in complete control of the team whenever it is together on the field, traveling as a group, or whenever together for any team function such as a banquet. The coaching staff is under the direction of the Head Coach. All other coaches are considered assistant coaches. The coaching staff can consist of up to 5 coaches including the Head Coach. But only 3 may be on the field during the games. The other 2 coaches will be in the press box or in the stands. All coaches will sign Application and Oath form as well as Coaches Code of Conduct.

Section 1 – Head Coaches

- Head Coach must be at least 21 years of age.

Section 2 – Assistant Coaches

- Assistant Coaches must be at least 18 years of age or be a high school graduate. A team may have a maximum of 4 assistant coaches. 2 on the field during the game and 2 in the press box or stands.

Section 3 – Other Coaches’ Requirements

- All team coaches must be listed on the roster.
- The Head Coach will determine the assignments of the assistant coaches.
- Head Coaches and assistant coaches must meet the approval of the League Board and Director/President.
- Coaches may be dismissed for conduct detrimental to the League or violation of League rules and regulations.
- Coaches do not make the policies that govern this League. They are responsible for carrying out those policies. While on the practice or playing field, the Head Coach is in complete control and shall not be interfered with, except in the case of rule violations, and any other conduct deemed as detrimental to the League or the welfare of the youth the coach oversees.
- The Head Coach has the final responsibility for his actions, those of his assistant coaches, players, fans and parents.
- The Head Coach and his assistants must teach proper respect for authority, therefore a coach must act with proper restraint and set a positive example for his players when dealing with opposing teams and game officials.
- Coaches will be required to attend any meetings and/or clinics when notified by their Town Representative or League Director.
- Coaches are required to inform all players and parents of practice and game schedules, equipment hand out and return etc. during the season.
- Head Coach must identify one of the assistants to track playing time on “Play Tracker Form.” This form given to Town Rep at end of each game.

Article VII – Officials

A Referee Coordinator will be chosen at the beginning of each season. This Coordinator will be a CHSAA certified referee. The position will be required to attend weekly CHSAA referee meetings and secure certified referees for each game. This is a paid position and salary will be determined by the Board of Directors at the beginning of each season. Referee Coordinator will report weekly to the League Director and President. It is the desire of the League to have at least one certified referee at each game. Where possible 2 certified referees will be present. High school students can assist as referees as long as a certified referee is in control of the game and the students have attended a referee clinic sponsored by the League. Certified referees will be paid \$50.00 per game and non-certified referees will be paid \$25.00 per game.

Section 1 – Referee requirements

- Referees will complete a game score card indicating game score and any other pertinent information, listing names and jersey numbers for injured players, players or coaches ejected from the game. Referees will submit these cards to the Referee Coordinator for review with the League Director or President.
- The referee is the sole interpreter of League rules during the game. Protests may be registered with the Town Rep to be brought to the League Director or President for review and decision.
- Three Rivers Youth Football will follow “National Federation State High School Association Rule Book” for the game of football unless otherwise discussed under “Special Rules” section of this document.
- Down markers and Linesman Crew must be supervised by referee for accuracy.
- The referee shall not permit any player to take part in any game unless uniformed in conformity with all required equipment and other members of the team with proper numerals affixed to the front and back of the players’ jersey.

Article VIII – Equipment Required by League

Section 1

- The following items shall be worn by players in all divisions from the beginning of full contact in practice sessions and all games. Equipment shall meet the required safety standards.
 1. Helmet
 2. Chin strap
 3. Shoulder Pads
 4. Pants
 5. Tail Pads
 6. Hip Pads
 7. Thigh Pads
 8. Knee Pads
 9. Game Jersey
 10. Mouth Piece

Section 2

- No playing equipment will be altered. This includes cutting jersey sleeves, pants or pads.

Section 3

- No players are permitted to use detachable steel football cleats. Cleats must be made of molded rubber which are part of the original rubber sole of the shoe. In the event of a protest, it is the responsibility of the game official to remove the offending player from the game until the player is equipped with the proper type of shoe.

Section 4

- Use of mouth guards are MANDATORY. Mouth guards will be used at all times when in participating in any form of contact.

Article IX – Special Rules of Three Rivers Youth Football

The National Federation State High School Association Rule Book will be in effect for Three Rivers Youth Football League. This Special Rule Section will supersede The National Federation State High School Association Rule Book as follows. If there is a dispute over a rule and it is not addressed in this Article of Special Rules, then the Referee will revert back to The National Federation State High School Association Rule Book for his/her final decision.

Section 1 – Playing Field Size

- The playing field size will not be modified from the National Federation State High School Association regulation football field size.

Section 2 – Defensive Sets and Blitzes

- The Center will be allowed to get a clean snap to the Quarter Back. Therefore no defensive player is allowed to line up over the Center. If a player is lined up over the Center, that player must be at least one yard off the Center to insure a clean snap. If the Center is still having problems snapping the ball due to the defensive player's speed and agility, the Referee will move the defensive player further back. Defensive players can line up in the gap on either side of the Center but cannot hit the Center during the snap.
- Inside Linebackers are not allowed to Blitz before the snap. That is to line up in a gap and blitz. They may blitz from normal linebacker **depth of at least 3 yards** from line of scrimmage after the snap has been made.
- Patched players for Division 1, those that are 95 pounds or more, and Division 2, those that are 115 pounds or more, must line up in the box from tackle to tackle. The patched players which are Red Stripped on their helmets, must always play in either a three point stance or four point stance when lined up before the snap. No Defensive End or Outside Linebacker, is allowed to be a patched player. The patched player is allowed to line up on the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle in a three point or four point stance. If the Referee believes that the defensive player is further out than the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle, the referee will move the player further inside.

Section 3 - Delays

- Teams must appear on the field promptly and any unnecessary or willful delay exceeding 10 minutes will result in a forfeit.

Section 4 – Special Division 1 Free Punt

- On fourth down, the offensive team has the option for a free punt. This means the offensive team can notify the referee they choose to punt the ball on fourth down. When a free punt is selected, the defense is notified and can not rush the punter. The Punter can either receive the snap from the center or be given the ball by the Referee

and then punt the ball. No fake will be allowed. Penalty for running or passing after declaring a free punt will be considered an unsportsmanlike penalty of 15 yards and loss of possession. If a free punt is not elected, the offensive team may run any offensive play they wish to on fourth down.

Section 5 – Kick After Safety

- Following a safety, the team which allowed the safety shall free kick from their 30 yard line.

Section 6 – Substitutions

- Unlimited substitutions shall be allowed at any time except when the ball is in play. However, the 22 starting position rule is still in effect. In other words, a coach can not substitute a player simply to put a stronger player in the game until the fourth quarter.

Section 7 – Number of Players

- Ideally the Town Representative for each community will attempt to have teams at 22 players. This allows for each player to have a starting position which is the Leagues desire. All coaches are encouraged to “platoon” so equal time is given to all players.
- Both Divisions must have at least 17 players on the roster and no more than 25. The Board reserves the right to allow more than 25 players if special circumstances exist.
- Unless 11 eligible players can be put on the field to start the game, the game is automatically forfeited. If for any reason a team falls below the 11 player limit after the game begins, the game will be forfeited. The minimum a team may have on their rosters is 18 players. This rule gives some leeway to absent or injured players so the game could continue.

Section 8 – Scoring Values

- Touchdown = 6 points
- Point after touchdown = 1 point for a run and 2 points for a pass.
- Safety = 2 points
- Forfeit = offended team wins 1 – 0

Section 9 – Quarters and Intermission

- Both Divisions will play 10 minute quarters
- 2 minutes between quarters
- 10 minute half time
- Line crews must change direction at each quarter.

Section 10 – Starting Players

- Teams that have 22 or less players will have a starting position for **EACH PLAYER** on either Offense or Defense (Special Teams do not count as a starting position). If the team has 23 to 25 players, there must be a coach monitoring to insure those players rotate **every series** so that all players are participating equally. This rule shall be enforced for the first three quarters. In the fourth quarter it is understood the coach may play those players best suited to win the game. It is understood that coaches can restrict playing time for players that miss practices, illness, etc. Player’s parents, along with the Town Representative, **MUST** be contacted and informed of such decisions and amount of time restricted in advance of that week’s game. Referees

must also be made aware of situation before kick off. Any injured player present but not playing should be in jersey only. Not full pads.

Section 11 – Mercy Rule

- Mercy Rule is not an option it is mandatory. The minimum length of a game will be one half (first and second quarter). Once a team has developed at least a 28 point lead in the third quarter, the game is officially over. The score at this time will be the official score of the game for League standing purposes. The clock will continue to run. The game will continue from this point on as a controlled scrimmage with all rules followed until the time expires. Losing team has the option to terminate the game and request a controlled scrimmage at any point in the game – even during the first half if the Head Coach of the losing team believes it is in his teams best interest.

Section 12 – Profanity

- If a player or coach uses profane or obscene language, he/she shall be warned by the referee that a second offense will result in his/her permanent removal from the game. Upon a second offense during the season, the offending player or coach will be removed from the game immediately and not permitted to return for the rest of the season.

Section 13 – Ejection

- If a player or coach is ejected for any reason, the referee will note it on the game sheet. The referee will notify the League Director. The situation will be reviewed by the Director, the President and the Town Representative. A decision will be made on what the outcome should be. This decision will be final and binding.

Section 14 - Protests

- No protest of officials judgment calls will be reviewed at anytime. Any other protest will be brought to the Town Representative, President and Director. Ruling on the protest will be determined by the three Board Members prior to the next League game. Ruling of the Board Members will be final and binding.

Section 15 – Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco

- No type of tobacco products or alcoholic beverages or their containers will be permitted on or near League functions at anytime. Both Referees and League Officials are instructed to stop any and all games, practices or events where usage of these substances exist. Head Coaches of each team is responsible for enforcement and distribution of information to their players, parents, spectators, and fans concerning the use of these substances.

Section 16 – Postponement and Unplayable Field Conditions

- When weather, wet or snowy field conditions are a factor, the Town Representative will inspect the playing field and notify the Head Coaches and Referees if the game must be postponed. Rescheduling of games will be done by the League Director and President and most likely played during a week day to stay on schedule.

Section – 17 Overtime

- Overtime will consist of a coin toss. The winning team of the toss will have the option for offense or defense. The loser of the toss will have the option of what end

of the field the overtime will be played. The ball will be placed on the 10 yard line with 4 downs given the offensive team to score. An attempt at an extra point(s) also occur after the touchdown. Change of possession will occur after the 4th down or score. The opposing team then has a chance to score and if successful attempt an extra point(s). If the score is still tied after both teams attempt to score in 4 downs and attempt either a run, for 1 point, or a throw, for 2 points during the extra point(s) try, the game will end in a tie. The entire overtime is played at one end of the field.

Section – 18 Horse Collaring

- Horse Collaring will not be tolerated. First occurrence player and team will be warned thereafter an unsportsmanlike conduct call will be made and a 15 yard penalty will be assessed.

Section – 19 Three Coaches Rule

- Only three coaches will be allowed on the sideline during games. The Head Coach must identify these coaches to the Referee prior to the start of the game. If a team has more than three coaches, the remaining coaches must be in the stands or Press Box.

Section – 20 Electronic Communication

- No electronic communication devices will be allowed between coaches at anytime during the game. These include radios, cell phones or head sets. An unsportsmanlike conduct call will be made and a 15 yard penalty will be assessed. Second occurrence, game will be forfeited.

Section – 21 Parents and Fan Zone

- All parents and fans are required to be in the stands and away from the field of play at all times during the game. At venues where stands are not available, parents and fans must stay behind the appointed barrier and not interfere with sideline players, coaches, or referees at anytime. If an occurrence happens, the game will be stopped and parents asked to remove themselves from the area.

Section – 22 Crack Back Block

- Crack back block by a wide receiver on an interior lineman or linebacker will not be allowed. A 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty will be assessed immediately.

Section – 23 Pre-game meeting between Referee and Head Coaches

- There will be a pre game meeting between the Referee and Head Coaches to go over which player is not participating in the game and reason why. This is to insure that all players dressed and present are participating. Referees should also have a brief Team meeting with both teams to go over mouth guards and any other rule the Referee deems necessary.

Section – 24 Referee's discretion to suspend game for rules review

- The Referee may suspend the game at anytime to review specific rules to the players and coaches.

