Western Ohio Jr. Football Conference
Playing Rules: Tackle, 3rd Grade & Bantam Football

NOTE: We will be using Ohio High School Football Rules with the following modifications.

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Article I - General Rules (All Grade Levels)

1.1 Playing Rules

1.1.1 The National Federation of State High School Football Association rules, as adopted by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (O.H.S.A.A.), and as amended by the WOJFC rules, will be the basic playing rules of the WOJFC for all grade levels.

1.2 Certification

1.2.1 All offensive players except tackles, guards, and centers must be certified prior to participating in any game. Players requiring certification as ball-carrier eligible include any and all members of the offensive backfield as well as the most distant member of the offensive line (ends) as aligned on both sides of center. Certification is accomplished at weigh-ins in accordance with the By-Laws.

1.3 Game Duration

1.3.1 There will be four (4) timed (stopped clock) ten (10) minute quarters, with three time-outs per team, per half. There will be a minimum ten (10) minute halftime, which is flexible to cover halftime events.

1.4 Scoring

1.4.1 Scoring will follow O.H.S.A.A. rules with the following exception: an extra point will be scored as one point for a run or kick and two points for a forward pass. For a team to score a two-point conversion on a forward pass, the receiver must catch the pass in the end zone. Any forward pass caught outside of the End Zone and run across the goal line will be scored as one (1) point.

1.5 Kicking

1.5.1 There will be no kickoff. The ball will be placed on the 35-yard line to start play.

1.5.2 The kicking of extra points and/or field goals is permitted. There will be no weight limit restrictions placed on the kicking team. Any team lining up to kick the ball must kick. A missed snap or muffed pass from center will be an automatic dead ball. A muffed field goal attempt inside the 20 yard line will result in the ball being placed on the 20 yard line and turned over to the opposing team, outside the 20 yard line the ball will be returned to the original line of scrimmage and turned over to the opposing team. A muff is defined as the placeholder having to move both feet to retrieve the ball.

1.5.3 The coach on the field must advise the referee of his intent to kick . There will be no rushing by the Defense on PAT or field goal.

1.5.4 When attempting field goals, punts or PAT's, the kicker will have ten (10) seconds to kick the ball after the snap from center.

1.5.5 There will be no fake punts, field goals, or extra points. Penalty – 15 yard unsportsmanlike levied against the Head Coach.

1.6 Play of the Game

1.6.1 No player shall purposely charge over another player not attempting to make a play standing in the open field. (Open field means no player within a five-yard area.) Penalty - 15-yard unsportsmanlike.

1.6.2 No player shall tackle above the shoulders (clothesline). Penalty - 15-yard unsportsmanlike.

1.7 On-Field Coaches

1.7.1 Coaches are permitted on the playing field during play (see specific grade level for the number permitted at that level). Once a coach has given his instructions to his players, he must move and stay ten (10) yards behind the deepest players or official at all times and observe the action. He must not become involved with the play by any means or manners. No verbal instructions can be given by either coach once the quarterback has placed his hands under the center and/or the offense is set.

1.8 Ineligible Players

1.8.1 Any question of player ineligibility should be handled by sending a coach or league representative to the opponent's sideline with a roster to jointly determine the player's eligibility. The game will not be stopped for this matter unless either team elects to call a timeout to check for a possible violation.

1.8.2 If the player is determined ineligible, he shall be removed for the remainder of the game, the Head Coach will be assessed an unsportsmanlike penalty, and the team calling the time out will get it back. In the event the questioned player is eligible, the team calling the timeout forfeits its time out.

1.8.3 If the player is determined to be playing in an ineligible *position*, the Head Coach will be assessed an unsportsmanlike penalty, the team calling the time out will get it back, but the player may continue to play in any position for which he is eligible.

1.8.4 If a coach cannot present a roster to support a child's eligibility the child must be removed from the game and the Head Coach will be assessed an unsportsmanlike penalty. In the event that a coach refuses to cooperate by checking rosters, the Head coach will also be assessed a second unsportsmanlike penalty and ejected from the game.

1.9 Penalties for Restricted Zone Infractions

1.9.1 At no time during regulation playing time will any spectator or person be permitted in the end zones or at the goal posts. In the case of the first infraction, in a given game shall result in a warning given by the game officials and an announcement made to the spectators by the field public address.

1.9.2 A second infraction in a given game shall result in a penalty. If on the offensive team, a 15 yards from the ensuing spot or line of scrimmage and loss of down. If on the defensive team, a 15-yard penalty yards from the ensuing spot or line of scrimmage and an automatic first down for the offensive team.

1.9.3 In case of repeated infractions, for a given game and/or at more than one (1) level of play on a given game day could result in a forfeiture of the game and/or games played that day and be cause for review and/or action taken as deemed appropriate by the Board of Trustees for the WOJFC. Any repeated infraction must be addressed in writing to the Communications Officer by the Monday meeting following the infraction. After proper warning has been issued, game officials can require that a person(s) including spectators be removed from the playing field and/or spectator area for a given game day. Game officials can delay the play of the game until said person is removed from the area.

1.10 Penalties

1.10.1 Unsportsmanlike Penalties (15 yards) may be assessed for conduct by players, coaches, or fans (including swearing by players or coaches and abuse of players or officials by coaches).

1.10.2 Illegal Participation **-** Once the coach/coaches who are on the playing field have given their instructions to their players they must move and stay ten (10) yards behind the deepest players or official at all times and observe the action. They must not become involved with the play by any means or manners. No verbal instructions can be given by coaches on the playing field once the quarterback has placed his hands under the center and/or the offense is set. If a Coach violates this ruling, the penalties are:

1st infraction - verbal warning
2nd infraction - 5 yards
3rd infraction - 15 yards and an automatic unsportsmanlike penalty against the coach

All other penalty yardage assessments will be in accordance with O.H.S.A.A. playing rules.

1.11 Protests

1.11.1 A protest must be made to the head game official at the time of the infraction of the rules (not judgment calls) prior to the next play, not at the end of the game or at the conference meting.

1.12 Clock Procedures

1.12.1 The clock shall stop on plays that result in an incomplete pass, a ball carrying players goes out of bounds, and will not start until the SNAP OF THE BALL.

1.12.2 The clock shall stop (if live, stops when the play is whistled dead) on all penalties, and will start with the referee's READY FOR PLAY whistle, unless Rule 1 applies.

1.12.3 The clock shall stop on all first downs, and start after the chains reset, teams have 11 players on their side of the ball, and the ball is MARKED READY FOR PLAY.

1.12.4 The clock shall stop on all NON PUNTING team change of possessions (fumbles, interceptions, 4th down plays, penalty loss of last down), and start after the chains reset, teams have 11 players on their side of the ball, and the ball is MARKED READY FOR PLAY, unless Rule 1 applies.

1.12.5 The clock shall stop after every team punt is completed (all grades), and will not restart until the SNAP OF THE BALL of the new team's possession.

NOTE:Teams need to be aware that after any "ready for play" whistle, they only have 40 seconds for Bantam and 3rd Grade, and 30 seconds for 4th, 5th, and 6th Grades, to snap the ball.

1.12.6 The clock shall start for each new team possession after touchdowns when teams set with 11 players, chains are set, and ball is MARKED READY TO PLAY.

1.12.7 The clock shall stop for the start of the quarters until the SNAP OF THE BALL.

1.12.8 The clock shall stop for all injuries, and remained stopped until the injured player has cleared the field and has been replaced with a new player.

1.12.9 The Home team shall call the next game's teams to the end zones before the game start time. Home teams shall announce team rosters 10 minutes before each game time, or immediately after the existing game is over, if there are less than 10 minutes remaining until that game's start time.

1.12.10 SUGGESTION FOR TIMEKEEPERS: Any official on the field can stop the clock, (waving both arms above the head), but the referee WILL ALWAYS start the clock (winding arm in a circular motion).

1.12.11 For consistent timekeeping at each site, clock operators and the home team's chain gang should meet with the officials prior to the start of the game(s).

Article II - Tackle Program Rules

2.1 Play Clock

2.1.1 The offense is allowed thirty (30) seconds to initiate the next play, after the ball is marked ready for play.

2.2 On-Field Coaches

2.2.1 One (1) offensive and one (1) defensive coach will be allowed on the playing field during play.

2.3 Punting – All Tackle Grades (4th, 5th and 6th)

2.3.1 You must notify the official (who in turn notifies the opposing team) of intent to punt. Failure to do so is a dead ball foul. Defense must be given the opportunity to set. Notification of intent to punt must be given within 10 seconds after the ball is spotted. Failure to inform the official within the 10 seconds of intent to punt would require the offense to take a time out or be penalized a five-yard delay of game. (If time is called after notification is given; the offensive team must re-declare their intention to the head official before play can resume. The defense is given time to set.)

2.3.2 No weight limit on kicker (intended receivers must meet weight restrictions).

2.3.3 Both defense and offense must have seven (7) men on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. Offensive linemen (from tackle to tackle) must be no farther apart than fingertip to fingertip.

2.3.4 Punter must be a minimum of five *(5)* yards from the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap.

2.3.5 There are no muffed snaps on a punt. If the ball is not kicked within five (5) seconds after the snap, it is a dead ball foul (5 yards and Re-kick).

2.3.6 No line contact or crossing the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. (Dead ball foul – 5 yards, and Re-kick).

2.3.7 No loud noises or yelling will be permitted by the receiving team or kicking team. Can jump! (Dead ball foul – 5 yards and Re-kick).

2.3.8 If the punted ball strikes an offensive player (behind the line of scrimmage), or does not cross the neutral zone, the ball is dead and will be spotted at the original line of scrimmage, and results in change of possession. At original line of scrimmage.

2.4 Punting – 5th and 6th Grades Only

2.4.1 Following the kick of the ball, O.S.H.A.A. rules apply.

2.4.2 The punted ball must travel in the air beyond the line of scrimmage to become live.

2.4.3 Ball is live if it is touched first by defense after it crosses the neutral zone.

2.5 Punting for Fourth (4th) Grade Only

2.5.1 There are no punt returns in 4th grade.

2.5.2 No minimum yardage will be given. Actual spot of the ball will be actual yardage gained (or lost) via the kick. The ball is declared dead once downed by the receiving team or blown dead by an official.

2.5.3 If the ball is kicked inside the 10-yard line, the ball will be placed on the 10-yard line and marked ready for play (change of possession takes place). If the ball is kicked in the end zone, the ball will be placed at the 20-yard line and marked ready for play.

2.6 Kicking (4th, 5th, and 6th)

2.6.1 The holder on field goals and extra points may kneel or stand to receive the snap but must immediately go to the kneeling position for the kick.

Article III - 3rd Grade Program Rules

3.1 Play Clock

3.1.1 The offense is allowed forty (40) seconds to initiate the next play, after the ball is marked ready for play.

3.2 On-Field Coaches

3.2.1 Two (2) offensive and two (2) defensive coaches will be allowed on the playing field during play.

3.3 Kicking

3.3.1 There will be no punting. The ball will be advanced twenty-five (25) yards, but not inside the opponent's twenty (20) yard line.

3.3.2 On field goals and extra-points, the holder may stand to receive the snap and then kneel to place it.

3.3.3 All punts shall have 15 seconds counted off the clock from the time the Head Official gives the clock signal for punts and clock shall stop at the end of 15 seconds, and clock shall not start until the snap after the 15 seconds.

3.4 Play of the Game

3.4.1 A noseguard will not be allowed over the center or in the "A" gaps until the ball is inside the 10-yard line. Any player over the center or "A" gaps must be two yards off the line of scrimmage. Once inside the 10-yard line, there are no restrictions on the number of defensive lineman on the line of scrimmage. Lining up in other gaps is OK. A player can rush any/all gaps after the snap of the ball. (Dead ball foul – 5 yards.)

3.4.2 A maximum number of defensive linemen on the line of scrimmage (sideline to sideline) at the snap of the ball will be six (6). All other players must be two (2) yards off the line of scrimmage. Once the quarterback has placed his/her hands under the center, a dead ball foul will be called if more than six (6) defensive linemen are on the line of scrimmage. All other defensive players must be a minimum of two yards off the ball at the time of the snap and must be set. (Dead ball foul – 5 yards.)

3.4.3 The offensive linemen (tackle to tackle) must be no farther apart than fingertip to fingertip on the line of scrimmage. (Dead ball foul 5 yards.)

3.4.4 Blitzing - there will be no timed blitzing allowed. All players must be in a set position at the snap of the ball. All players (except linemen) must be 2 yards off the line of scrimmage and in a set position. Violation will result in a five (5) yard penalty for the first infraction and a fifteen (15) yard unsportsmanlike penalty assessed against the Head Coach for any further infractions.

Article IV - Bantam Program Rules

4.1 Play Clock

4.1.1 The offense is allowed forty (40) seconds to initiate the next play, after the ball is marked ready for play.

4.2 On-Field Coaches

4.2.1 Two (2) offensive and two (2) defensive coaches will be allowed on the playing field during play.

4.3 Kicking

4.3.1 There will be no punting. The ball will be advanced twenty-five (25) yards, but not inside the opponent's twenty (20) yard line.

4.3.2 On field goals and extra-points, the holder may stand to receive the snap and then kneel to place it.

4.3.3 All punts shall have 15 seconds counted off the clock from the time the Head Official gives the clock signal for punts and clock shall stop at the end of 15 seconds, and clock shall not start until the snap after the 15 seconds.

4.4 Play of the Game

4.4.1 A noseguard will not be allowed over the center or in the "A" gaps until the ball is inside the 10-yard line. Any player over the center or "A" gaps must be two yards off the line of scrimmage. Once inside the 10-yard line, there are no restrictions on the number of defensive lineman on the line of scrimmage. Lining up in other gaps is OK. A player can rush any/all gaps after the snap of the ball. (Dead ball foul – 5 yards.)

4.4.2 A maximum number of defensive linemen on the line of scrimmage (sideline to sideline) at the snap of the ball will be six (6). All other players must be two (2) yards off the line of scrimmage. Once the quarterback has placed his/her hands under the center, a dead ball foul will be called if more than six (6) defensive linemen are on the line of scrimmage. All other defensive players must be a minimum of two yards off the ball at the time of the snap and must be set. (Dead ball foul – 5 yards.)

4.4.3 The offensive linemen (from tackle to tackle) must be no farther spread than fingertip to fingertip. (Dead ball foul – 5 yards.)

4.4.4 Blitzing - there will be no timed blitzing allowed. All players must be in a set position at the snap of the ball. All players (except linemen) must be 2 yards off the line of scrimmage and in a set position. Violation will result in a five (5) yard penalty for the first infraction and a fifteen (15) yard unsportsmanlike penalty assessed against the Head Coach for any further infractions.

4.4.5 Fumbles - In the event of a fumble, the ball is dead where it hits the ground. There is no change of possession (except 4th down). Players may not steal (strip) the ball from the ball carrier.

4.4.6 Interceptions - In the event of a defensive interception of an attempted forward pass ***or*** airborne lateral, the defense may assume possession and may advance the ball.

4.4.7 Blocking - No player may block below the waist at any time.

2005 New Rules – All Grade Levels

1. Only one forward pass per down, even if behind the line of scrimmage. Old rule was two. (ie. Screen pass would be one forward pass)

2. Loss of down penalty does not extend a period. (ie. Intentional grounding is a loss of down by offense and the clock ran out during the play, period would not be extended for penalty.)

3. After the quarterback releases the ball for a pass, there is NO pass interference on the defense for contact with any receivers that are away from the pass. (ie. Pass thrown to left side of the field, and during pass, defense makes contact with receiver on right side of field, no interference for contact on receiver on right side of field. But there could be defensive holding or unnecessary roughness.)

4. All chin straps must be fastened during the play. In 2006 it will be required to have 4 point chin straps. (ie. If a player has either 2 or 4 point chin straps in 2005 all must be fastened.)

5. Starting in 2006 all mouthpieces must be a color. No mouthpiece can be clear or white.

6. The new substitution 9 yard rule WILL NOT be used in the WOJFC in 2005, but all players in the WOJFC must be within 15 yards of the ball prior to the snap.