

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

FRESHMAN DIVISION RULES

GENERAL LEAGUE RULES

League Structure – The Northwest Football League (NWFL) is sponsored by Hilliard Optimist Club Youth Sports and governed by the NWFL Mini-Board. The Mini-Board consists of a Director (appointed and approved by the Hilliard Optimist Club Youth Sports, Inc. Board of Directors); Assistant Director(s), Community Director(s), Division Commissioners, Assistant Division Commissioners, and Secretary. Voting Members include: Director, Community Director(s) and Division Commissioners. Assistant Commissioners can vote in place of Commissioner when 24-hour notice of absence from meeting is received by the League Director. **NOTE:** Director only votes in cases of a tie, or if their vote would cause a tie.

Coaches – *The NWFL considers it a privilege to coach in our league and not a right – coaches should always remember this.* All coaching positions must be approved by the NWFL.

Volunteering to Coach – Anyone can volunteer to become a coach regardless of game and/or coaching experience by contacting any league official or volunteering through the league website (www.HilliardOptimist.org). Head coaches must be at least 21 years of age to volunteer. Assistant coaches must be at least 13 years of age to volunteer with the NWFL.

Volunteer Screenings – To be a Coach and/or Commissioner in the NWFL volunteers must pass a Volunteer Screening/Background Check. Background checks cost a nominal fee and are to be paid by the respective volunteers. **ABSOLUTELY NO** coaches will be approved without a completed background check on file. This background check must be updated every two years. In addition to coaches, anyone that will be in charge of a group of youth participants (at practices, events, games, etc.) must also complete a background check. **NOTE:** Any group of participants should be supervised by at least one approved Coach/Volunteer.

Background checks are completed on-line through the Protect Youth Sports Background Checks Program. This can be accessed through a link from the HOCYS website. Background checks do not apply to volunteers under age 18.

Photo ID Badges – Coaches and League Administrators will receive ID badges which must be worn at every game. Badges will only be distributed to coaches that have cleared the NWFL's screening process and have been approved to coach in the NWFL. These badges must be worn at all times when on the sideline and given to any league referee or official upon request. Refusal to provide your badge when requested will result in immediate removal from the sidelines and may result in a suspension for the season

Fundraising – There will be no team fundraisers or solicitation of funds from player's parents, of any type, in this league. Fundraising is done as a league function by each respective community only, no other fundraisers are allowed (for team gear, equipment, etc.). All teams and players are EQUAL.

NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES AND ORGANIZATION

Team Purchases – Any purchase for a team must be approved by a League Official. For example, if a coach or parent asks for, or suggests, that parents purchase practice jerseys, **all** team members must be provided the same practice jersey regardless of the parents' agreement to purchase the jersey.

Uniforms – NWFL participants must wear the league furnished uniform (jersey, pants, and flag belt) for all games.

Coach Suspensions – Coaches will be suspended for any behavior or actions in direct violation of the NWFL's Coaches Code of Conduct, any League rules or requirements, or any other behavior or actions found to be in detriment to the NWFL and/or the children served by the league. Suspensions can be administered by any League Assistant Commissioner, Commissioner, Assistant Director or Director of the League. Minimum suspensions will be for a period of **two weeks** where **NO** contact with the team is permitted – either at practices or games. During the time of suspension, any actions or attempts to coach at practice or games (verbal or non-verbal communication) will result in a suspension for the remainder of the season.

Appeals to any suspension can be made in writing to the Division Commissioner who will present the appeal to the NWFL Mini-Board. Appeals will be decided by the Mini-Board and will be presented at the next meeting following the suspension. If and when a decision is rendered by the Mini-Board the coach will be notified in writing (via email) of the findings. In the event that a coach is suspended for an entire year, they may petition the league to be reinstated two years after the season the suspension took place. NWFL Mini-Board meetings are scheduled at least once a month. If a special meeting is required to review any appeals or other urgent league business at least three (3) days written notice is required.

Petition for Reinstatement of Suspended Coaches – Any program which is a member of the NWFL wishing to recommend reinstatement of a suspended coach may write a letter of recommendation addressed to the NWFL Mini-Board. The letter must contain the following:

- A detailed description of the incident which resulted in the suspension
- Reason why the program feels the offending coach should be reinstated

The NWFL Mini-Board will review the application for reinstatement and vote based on the merits of the petition. Once the vote is completed and a decision is announced the coach in question must wait a period of one (1) year before reapplying for reinstatement if denied. Mini-Board meetings are held once a month, if needed a second meeting can be scheduled within two weeks of request.

Player Suspensions – A player ejected from a game, for any reason, will not be permitted to practice the following week and will be suspended from the next league game. Any player found to be a repeat offender, or whose actions jeopardize the safety of others can be suspended for the remainder of the season. In addition, players may be suspended if their behavior continually disrupts practices, games or league events.

Petition for Reinstatement of Suspended Players – Parents/guardians may petition the NWFL Mini-Board (in writing) to review their child's status for the following season. The letter must contain the following:

NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES AND ORGANIZATION

- A detailed description of the incident(s) which resulted in the suspension
- Reason why the parent feels the participant should be reinstated

The NWFL Mini-Board will review the application for reinstatement and vote based on the merits of the petition. During the review process parents/guardians may be asked to attend a NWFL Mini-Board meeting in order to discuss the behavior of the player. Once the vote is completed and a decision is announced the player in question must wait a period of one (1) year before reapplying for reinstatement if denied.

Practices – Coaches are not permitted to have any contact (other than email and phone notification) with their team prior to the official start of the NWFL practices (as determined annually by the League). Any contact with the team prior to this date must be approved by the League Director.

Number of Practices/Length of Practices – Practices are a maximum of two (2) hours in length. Prior to the start of school teams may have a maximum of four (4) practices per week, and a Skill Session on Friday. Once school starts practices are limited to a maximum of three (3) per week. Of these three (3) maximum practices, two (2) can be full contact practices (with pads) and one (1) should be a no pads/no contact practice. Only **exception** to this rule is the ability to conduct a third practice in pads by teams that have a bye on the NWFL game schedule for the week. The length of the practice session shall be at the discretion of the Head Coach as long as it does not exceed two (2) hours in length per day. Once school starts, practices must be completed by 8:30 p.m.

Missed Practices by a Player – Any player that misses two consecutive practices in a week **may** not be permitted to play in that week's game. The Head Coach is responsible for providing written rules for the team prior to any disciplinary action being taken.

If a player is benched for a game the Head Coach must contact their Division Commissioner, other Community Commissioner (when game in question is played against another a team from another community), the opposing Head Coach, and the player's parent(s)/guardian(s) no later than midnight on Thursday of the current week. Any complaints and/or objections must be submitted in writing to the Division Commissioners of all Communities involved eight (8) hours prior to the game or within three (3) days of the incident.

Scrimmages – Interleague scrimmages are acceptable and encouraged, however **absolutely no scrimmages and/or games are permitted with teams that are not part of the NWFL** unless the game or practice is a special league activity sponsored by and approved by the NWFL Mini-Board. Full-contact scrimmages are limited to two (2) during the preseason and three (3) during the regular season. No more than one (1) full-contact scrimmage is permitted per week. All full-contact scrimmages must be scheduled with the Director. There are no full-pad non-contact scrimmages. Unused preseason scrimmages do not carry over to the regular season.

Length of Season – Season consists of at least eight (8) games. Each team must complete the schedule of League games.

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

Concussion Awareness and Procedures – If a player is removed from a game or practice due to concussion or concussion like systems as identified in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention publication “Concussion in Youth Sports”, that player may not return to the game or practice. The player may also not return to practice or a game until evaluated by a health care professional. A physician’s note must be provided with the date of allowable return to football activities.

Ban of Tobacco Products on School Property – In 2010 the Hilliard City School District implemented a new policy that bans the use of all tobacco products on School District property. Absolutely no smoking or use of other tobacco products on school property is permitted.

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

SECTION A – COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

- I. All Coaches shall be required to attend one pre-season league meeting and any and all other meetings deemed necessary by the League. Failure to attend the meetings without proper request for a representative to attend on behalf of the Head Coach may result in that coach losing his/her privilege to coach for the season.

- II. No Coach is allowed to pull his team off the field and stop play for any reason whatsoever. Coaches removing their teams from the field shall have the game forfeited, shall be suspended for the remainder of the season, and any other penalty as sanctioned by the NWFL.

- III. All Coaches and players will, in the interest of GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP, shake hands with the opposing team and coaching staff at the end of the game.

- IV. Coaches conduct shall be governed by the following:
 - a. Coaches shall not engage in any extensive physical contact with players.

 - b. Coaches shall not use foul or abusive language.

 - c. Coaches shall not use tobacco products during practice, games and at league functions.

 - d. Coaches shall not give players instructions that are contrary to league rules.

 - e. Coaches will address officials in a properly courteous manner. (Likewise, officials will address coaches in a properly courteous manner also.)

 - f. Due to the nature and purpose of the League, we will practice **ZERO TOLERANCE**; that is, a Head Coach or Assistant Coach ejected from a game will be suspended from coaching for the remainder of the season and the entire next season. Application for reinstatement will not be accepted until two years has passed from the incident resulting in their suspension. After this period, the coach has the right to petition for reinstatement following the policies and procedures spelled out within the “General League Rules”.

 - g. Coaches shall not give any player instructions to fake an injury to allow a substitution or delay a game. This will be considered a flagrant violation of the Coaches Code of Conduct.

- V. All teams are to attend all League functions, including but not limited to the Optimist Nights at their community’s respective high school(s) and any functions at the conclusion of the season.

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

One Coach from each team must attend each event unless Commissioner or Director approves request at least 24 hours in advance of event.

- VI. No member of a coaching staff, family of a coaching staff, or non-family member shall be permitted to electronically videotape an opposing team's games for the purposes of scouting. This is youth football and it is the intent of the NWFL not to allow any electronic or digital recording of a game with the intent or purpose of scouting. This would include any device that is not paper, pencil, pen, and/or memory. On field use of any electronic or digital device is prohibited during any game or scrimmage. A two-game suspension will be given to the Head Coach for such a violation on the first offense, season suspension for a subsequent violation.
- VII. Teams from the Hilliard program will be scheduled to assist with the cleaning of the HS football stadiums. Any failure of a team to attend when scheduled could result in the Head Coach losing his/her coaching rights for the remainder of the season and/or the full next season.
- VIII. Representatives from teams in the League will be assigned to handle volunteer duties for NWFL functions such as the Bill Hamer Kick-Off Bowl, Jerry Baum Bowl, and Annual November Tournament. Any team that does not have a representative show for their team-assigned duties could result in the Head Coach losing his/her coaching rights for the remainder of the season and/or the full next season.
- IX. As Coaches are recognized as League Representatives, whether they are on the field or off, the League expects that they represent themselves and the League wherever they are and at all times. If actions or behavior that is unbecoming of a youth coach are brought to the attention of the NWFL Mini-Board, the League reserves the right to ask for the resignation and/or removal of the individual as a coach.

The League regards coaching youth as a privilege and any NWFL Mini-Board member may ask that a Coach not be asked to return the following season, or be asked to step down from their position at any time throughout the year (pre-season, season, post-season, etc.).

Any NWFL Mini-Board member can ask for a discussion and/or a vote by the voting members of the Mini-Board. A majority vote will then determine the status of the Coach in question.

The Commissioner of the applicable Division will be responsible for informing the Coach that the NWFL has decided not to ask them to return for the upcoming season.

If it is determined that a Coach should not be permitted to return, the League Director is responsible for informing the Hilliard Optimist Youth Club, Inc. Board by the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

SECTION B – PLAYER PARTICIPATION

- I. All players must have on file with the Program Director a signed permission to play and registration payment receipt prior to any practice or game. Hardship cases may be considered and approved wherein the League will waive payment for any player or players. The decision shall rest with the individual Program Director(s) and will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

- II. Any child will be eligible to participate if he/she has attained their seventh (7th) birthday by August 1st of the current year, and not attained his/her ninth (9th) birthday by August of the current year. Verification of age is required for all participants. Birth Certificates are not kept on file, however they are viewed and the database record of the individual is marked noting the League's verification of age. **NOTE:** Season ages are determined by the participant's age as of August 1st of the current year.

- III. The League Director and Commissioners reserve the right to determine the Division in which a child shall be placed. Generally, five (5) six (6) seven (7) eight (8) year olds shall play in the Flag Division, seven (7) and eight (8) year olds shall play in the Freshman Division, nine (9) and ten (10) year olds shall play in the Junior Division, and eleven (11) and twelve (12) year olds shall play in the Senior Division. Senior Division players cannot be thirteen (13) years old on August 1st of the current year. Other factors that could determine placement include: maturity levels, special needs, experience, etc. A Commissioner may place the participant within one (1) year and no more than two (2) years of the written age requirements for the NWFL Divisions at their discretion.

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

SECTION C – EQUIPMENT

- I. All players **MUST** wear protective gear at all times while engaged in contact play – including practice sessions. This shall include: helmet, shoulder pads, football pants (with proper knee, thigh, hip and tail pads) and a mouth guard. Athletic supporters are strongly recommended. Other protection, such as rib pads and arm pads are also permissible if approved in advance by the NWFL.

- II. League participants may wear molded football cleats or multi-purpose style shoes. Tennis style shoes are permitted but not recommended. No steel or molded cleats with exposed metal are permitted. Participants found to be in violation of the rule will not be permitted to play until league-approved footwear is worn. If participant and/or coaching staff is found to be negligent or is known to have repeated issue with this subject, a suspension can be issued to the participant and/or the Head Coach for such a violation on the first offense and up to, and including, a season suspension (subject to the review of the NWFL Mini-Board).

- III. Team uniforms shall not vary from the League provided game jerseys and helmet decals. Players are required to wear the League furnished game jersey and the player furnished solid, one-color game pants (colors of pants are determined by the appropriate Commissioner). **NOTE:** All players on a team must wear the same color game pants. Any alteration of the uniform (jersey and pants) will result in the removal of the participant. The participant will be permitted to return to the game when and if they are able to meet the League requirement of the uniform. If participant and/or coaching staff is found to be negligent or is known to have repeated issue regarding uniforms, a suspension can be issued to the participant and/or Head Coach for such a violation on the first offense and up to, and including, a season suspension (subject to review by the NWFL Mini-Board).

- IV. The League shall furnish one approved mouthpiece for each participant prior to the first game of the season. They are designed to be attached to the helmet via the facemask. All participants are required to wear and attach their mouthpiece to their facemask as they were designed. Failure to do so will result in a five (5) yard dead ball penalty and the participant will be declared ineligible until they are fitted with the proper equipment. Participants with a special mouthpiece must report any special needs to the Referee prior to the start of every game. **NOTE:** Ohio High School Rules do not allow clear or white mouthpieces. All participants will be required to wear their mouthpiece during practices and games.

- V. From time to time, games will be scheduled between teams with like colored jerseys. In these cases, cover-ups furnished by the League will be worn by the home team. The use of cover-ups will be decided by the Referees prior to kick off or the start of the game. This is not for debate by either team or NWFL Commissioner and/or official, rather it is at the sole discretion of the Referees. If a Coach argues with an Official about the judgment, they will be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct and a penalty will be assessed to the Head Coach and marked off at the

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

beginning of the game. **NOTE:** Cover-ups must be returned to the appropriate commissioner on duty at the field immediately following the game.

- VI. The NWFL furnishes shoulder pads and helmets to all players. If a player chooses to supply their own helmet or shoulder pads, the equipment must first be pre-approved by the League no later than Equipment Pass-Out Day, which occurs before the first scheduled practice of the season. If the player purchased equipment is approved by the League, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of such player must complete a "NWFL Release of Liability for Parent Purchased Equipment" form available on the league website **before** the player engages in any practice or League activity. This form must be provided to the Director of the NWFL and kept with League records for that season. The Head Coach is responsible for notifying their division Commissioner of any players who do not receive League equipment and/or show up for practice in other than League supplied equipment. The Head Coach is also responsible for ensuring that players who do not use League furnished equipment have a completed "NWFL Release of Liability for Parent Purchased Equipment" form before any engagement in League practices and/or games. Failure of the Head Coach to do so will result in an immediate two-week suspension. Repeated failure to do so will result in a season suspension.

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

SECTION D – ASSIGNMENT OF PLAYERS

- I. All players will be evaluated and assigned to their respective teams. Returning players will return to their previous season's team as long as they have signed up and completed registration (i.e., made payment) prior to team assignments being made. Any player that signs up after the scheduled assignment date will be randomly assigned to teams by the League.

- II. Players that do not meet the minimum age requirement may be evaluated to participate upon request. Players will be evaluated and the final decision of their ability to compete in the Freshman Division will be based on the decision of the Freshman Evaluating Committee assigned by the League Director. Players requesting evaluations must appear on the scheduled date and time of evaluations in order to be considered.

- III. If players approved to move up to the Freshman Division are found to not be ready for tackle football, they will be reassigned to a Flag team. Final approval is at the discretion of the League Director and/or Director's representative.

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

SECTION E – WEIGH-INS/WEIGHTS

Maximum skill position weight = 85 lbs.

- I. Unofficial player weights are initially recorded by the player's parent/guardian at the time of on-line registration. These weights must be as close as possible to the player's true weight as their assignment to a team will be partially based on that. The official weigh-in will occur during Equipment Pass-Out Weekend. **NOTE:** If a player has been determined to have a significant difference in their true weight from the on-line registration weight, that player may be reassigned to another team to ensure competitive balance.
- II. **Exception Rule** – Every effort is made to group players based on age, not weight. If a player weighs more than 85 lbs. and less than 111 lbs. the player will get a green X on the helmet and may only play non-skill positions (no defensive end position). Red X (players weighing over 110 lbs. are not permitted as a ball carrier. Red X players may only play center, guard, tackle positions on offense. Red X players are not permitted to pull outside of tackle position. Red X players are not permitted to play defense.
- III. Official weigh-ins will be conducted prior to every game. This includes doubleheader weekends when games are played on a Saturday and Sunday, however, back to back games on the same day will not require a second weigh-in. Weigh-ins will be completed one team at a time and will be conducted approximately one-half (1/2) hour before kick-off, and no earlier than one (1) hour prior to kick-off. The weigh-in will be conducted by the Field Commissioner with both the respective team's Head Coaches, or designated representative, observing and verifying the other team's weigh-in. Those individuals not making weight as described herein will be disqualified from game play for that week and any week in the future until such time as the participant can make weight on an approved scale in the presence of one of the Field Commissioners or their authorized representative.
- IV. Participants will only be weighed in one time on game day, early weigh-ins are not permitted.
- V. At weigh-in time, the weight will be adjusted back to the previous full pound (i.e. 67.8 pounds will be entered as 67 pounds).
- VI. Each team will exchange their respective roster with the opposing team, complete with player last names and jersey numbers. Coaches are required to use the supplied form for consistency (in Appendix). This form will allow each team to track the numbers of carries for each player. (As stated within Section F – Game Rules, each player can carry the ball for **not more than four times** per game. If both teams' stat sheets are not in alignment, the Official will make the final ruling on the matter.)

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

- VII. There will be no weight allowance for pads, true weight will be recorded

- VIII. There will be no “agreements” between coaches regarding a player’s weight, the Field Commissioner will make all decisions on weight

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

SECTION F – GAME RULES

- I. Games 1 -2 will be played on the 50 yard X 35 yard Freshman Field. Game eight (8) will be played utilizing the 100 yard X 35 yard Freshman Field..
- II. All games will be played using a format set forth by the League.

A. Games Format

1. **Games 1 - 2** – Scrimmage Format. Each team will receive seven (7) consecutive offensive/defensive plays per quarter.
2. **Game 3 – 4** - Seven (7) consecutive offensive/defensive plays for two quarters, then live second half. 6 minute quarters. Each team gets one (1) time out.
3. **Games 5 – 7** – Live. Four (4) 6-minutes quarters. Each team gets two time outs.
4. **Game 8** – Freshman Bowl. Live. Like-records match-ups utilizing the 100 X 35 yard Freshman Field. Four (4) 8-minute quarters.
 - a. A two-minute break will follow each completed quarter and a five-minute break for halftime of live games.

B. Offensive Possessions

1. Offensive team starts the game with the ball on the thirty (10) yard line
2. The Center is protected on all plays; no player shall line up head over the Center
3. **No Quarterback Draws** will be permitted
4. Passing plays are limited to two (3) passes per half by the Offense except in the final two minutes of live game conditions when there are no limits.
5. Once the Referee signals the ball ready for play the Offensive team has twenty-five (25) seconds to snap the ball
 - a. The penalty for delay of game is loss of play
NOTE: During the first several games it will, at times, take longer for young players to get organized and get the ball into play. The twenty-five (25) second rule is intended to speed up play. There is normally no intent to delay play by these young players. If, in the opinion of the game Officials, delay is intended, the Officials may stop the clock until the ball is snapped.
6. Offensive Formations – **All offensive formations must be a commonly used formation in either high school or college - no exceptions.**
 - a. Offensive formations will be limited to the standard seven (7) man line – unbalanced lines are not permitted – all formations must use two (2) tight ends.
 - b. The Offense must run a formation in which all backs are inside the ends
 - c. Latitude will be given to the Center’s head being over the ball during the snap of the ball

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

- d. All formations are considered tight (i.e., no more than a two (2) foot spread between tackles and ends), One (1) wide out is allowed (no split ends)
- e. Offensive line splits shall be no more than two (2) feet in width - more importantly - proper offensive lineman spacing must be taught (no feet to feet)
- f. Hurry-Up Offenses are **not** permitted
- g. Shotgun formation is only allowed on two (2) plays per quarter. This includes live game conditions.
- h. No Spread Offense – one wide out is allowed (no split ends)**
- i. Blockers may not leave their feet before, during or after contact is made
 - i. There will be no blocking from behind or below the waist
 - ii. Blockers cannot lock limbs with other blockers
- j. Motion is permitted and must be within the ends before the snap of the ball. **NOTE:** If you have a question about a formation ask a League Official – do not assume it will be okay
- k. Punts will be a 25 yard mark off and a 10 second clock run during live, full field games. No punt may go inside the 10-yard line. Otherwise, each offensive possession will start at the 10-yard line.

C. Defensive Formations

- 1. Defense must line up head-to-head, no shooting the gap and no blitzing
 - a. Blitzing is defined as a player who was more than one (1) yard off the line of scrimmage at the snap, charging in anticipation of penetrating the line of scrimmage with the snap of the ball
 - b. A defensive player who has established a position within a yard of the line of scrimmage, irrespective of whether he is in a down position or in an upright or standing position, will not be classified as a Blitzer
 - c. Continued violation of this rule shall result in a loss of Offensive play
- 2. There shall be no more than six (6) defensive linemen and no less than five (5) defensive linemen on the line, with all linemen required to be in the down position with the exception of two (2) defensive ends
 - a. **All other defensive players must be aligned no less than five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball**
 - b. Repeated violations of this rule can result in an unsportsmanlike penalty and removal of a Coach
- 3. **No** head-to-head line up over Center is permitted
- 4. Defensive players must be set for one (1) second before the snap of the ball
 - a. The spirit of this rule is to allow the Officials time to check for possible blitzers and obvious attempts to draw the offense offside – not to

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

penalize the defense for arbitrary movement within the line and will be enforced as such

5. Linemen must make contact with both hands to the front of a member of the opposing line's jersey before rushing the backfield – **Defensive lineman MUST engage with a blocker.**
6. Defensive team can advance interceptions and fumbles; all participants are eligible except X players.
 - a. If the end zone is reached, team will be awarded the resulting points

D. Playing Time

1. All active players on a team shall start on Offense or Defense and will play 100% of each game
 - a. Although players may play both Defense and Offense in the same half, they cannot be considered “done” for the game after one half of dual play – the rule is for the players to play in both halves
2. Any participant who, for any reason, will not be participating in any game shall be reported to the Officials and Commissioners prior to the “kick-off”
3. A player that starts on Offense must play the **entire half** on Offense
4. A player that starts on Defense must play the **entire half** on Defense
5. Substitutions are only allowed in the case of player injury and must be announced to the opposing team's coaching staff
 - a. Any intentional misuse of this rule can result in the Head Coach being permanently removed from coaching duties in any Division
6. No player shall be permitted to carry the ball more than four (4) times per game. If all players have 4 carries, then the rotation starts over. No player may have five carries until all eligible players have 4 carries, etc. - **It is the goal of the League to give as many kids as possible the opportunity to play/learn a skilled position – Green X & Red X players may not carry the ball.**
7. No player shall be permitted to play a skilled position in the second half if they played a skilled position in the first half - **two starting line-ups are required**
 - a. Skilled positions in the Freshman Division are defined as:
 - i. Backs in the backfield
 - ii. Tight ends (2) **NOTE:** Tight ends may remain in the same position in the second half if they are not used as a “skilled player” (i.e., carrying the ball or catching the ball) – violations of this rule will result in loss of down

E. Coaches on the Field of Play

1. A total of four (4) coaches (1 Head Coach and 3 Assistants) are permitted on the sidelines for each team
 - a. Teams are permitted one water boy/girl for each team
 - b. Statisticians are not permitted on the sideline

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

2. Two (2) Coaches are permitted on the field for each team for the first two (2) weeks of the season – beginning with week three (3) the Official will determine if a second coach is needed on the field
 - a. One (1) in the huddle to call plays
 - b. One (1) to help in placement of the players and ball to keep the game moving in a timely manner

NOTE: If a team has more than one qualified Coach, then the Coach on the playing field calling the plays shall be different for Offense and Defense – the Head Coach shall identify Offensive/Defensive Coaches to the Official prior to kick-off
3. Once the Offensive team breaks the huddle **AND** the players are set, the on field Offensive Coaches **cannot** communicate in any way with their players
 - a. Similarly, once the Defensive team breaks its huddle and the players are set, the on field Defensive Coaches **cannot** communicate in any way with their players
 - b. The Officials shall attempt to give each coach a warning, however, violations are at the sole discretion of the Officials and subsequent violations will be penalized and could result in loss of a down
 - c. The Official can ask for the Coach to remove themselves from the field of play and allow plays to be run in by a player from the sidelines (with helmet removed) for either Offense, Defense or both
4. The On-Field Coaches shall make every attempt to stay out of the way of the play – in the event that a Coach is obstructing the play, they shall be treated, at the Official’s discretion, as part of the field

F. Time Outs

1. Two (2) time outs are permitted per half
2. Time outs will be one (1) minute in length
3. Time outs not used in the first half cannot be carried forward to the second half
4. During a time out two Coaches are permitted on the field, the Head Coach and one Assistant Coach

G. Injury Time Outs

1. An injured player must be removed from the playing field for at least one (1) down
2. The Officials will make the determination of a player is injured – **no exceptions** will be allowed to this rule

H. Football

1. The official League football shall be furnished by the NWFL to each team
2. Official football size is K2 Pee Wee

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

I. Additional Rules

1. The Official Football Rules, published by the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations and such changes authorized by them shall govern all games
 - a. If a rule is not specifically modified by the League, in writing, by the official league rules or addendum therein, the above listed rulebook shall be followed

- III. Maximum game time is one hour and thirty minutes (1:30)
 - A. Half-time break is five (5) minutes
 - B. A two (2) minute break will follow each quarter

- IV. A minimum of one (1) carded official must be present for the game to be played - if no carded official is present, the game will be rescheduled

**NORTHWEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND ORGANIZATION**

SECTION G – FIELD EQUIPMENT AND CLEAN UP

- I. The home team for the first game of the day shall see that the yard markers and chains are on the field.
- II. The home team for the last game shall see that the yard markers and the chains are properly put away immediately following their game.
- III. Both teams playing in the last game on the respective fields shall be responsible for the cleanup of the field and surrounding area (including bleachers).
- IV. Due to the adverse effect on income from the Concession Stands, tailgating is banned as a practice in this League.

Firearms, whether legal or otherwise, shall not be permitted at any function of the NWFL – be it practice, games or other official functions. The only exception to this rule shall be duly sworn local law enforcement officials in the performance of their duties.

Any person, be they Officials, Coaches, participants or spectators found to be carrying, displaying, or otherwise having in their possession a firearm, whether legal or otherwise, shall be banned from participating in the NWFL.

In addition, appropriate legal action shall be brought against said person by the NWFL.

