

Fairfield County Football League

3rd/4th Grade Modified 2025 RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. GRADE AND WEIGHT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- A. No age limitation as long as the player is enrolled in the 3rd or 4th Grade during the fall football season.
- B. The Head Coach must ensure that each player on his team meets the grade, age, and weight requirements.
- C. Violations of the above eligibility rules will result in automatic forfeit of all games played in which the violation occurred.

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III. HEAD COACH RESPONSIBILITIES - GAME DAY:

- A. The Home Teams having the first game of the day will provide two (2) assistants to League Officials for field preparation, including placing yard line and goal markers.
- B. After the last game, the Visiting Team will ensure that the field and sidelines are clean and will assist League Officials with storing equipment.
- C. Head Coaches are responsible for fan control and deportment.
- D. Home Teams will provide a three (3)-man sidelines/first down crew. Where possible, the
- E. First down crew shall be stationed on the home team's sideline.
- F. Each team may have two coaches on the field during all plays; the coaches may give oral instructions to his team until the offense is set. All on-field coaches must be deeper than the deepest player on his team. Once the ball is snapped, the coach may only move to get out of the way of the play, and if a coach moves toward or directs a player to the play after the snap (verbally or physically) a personal 15 yd foul will be assessed.
- G. Home Teams must provide the same accommodations for the Visiting Team that they have available for themselves. Home Teams who cannot provide the same accommodations for the Visiting team are prohibited from using them.
- H. No sideline coaches, parents or fans are permitted on the playing field, or in the end zones for any purpose including filming the game.
- I. All coaches, fans and players are prohibited from using any wired or wireless mechanical communication devices, either directly or indirectly, to communicate with anyone observing the game.
- J. Refer to additional responsibilities in FCFL Policy and Procedures "Coaches Code of Conduct".

IV. REFEREES:

Referee responsibilities include:

- A. Knowing FCFL Rules
- B. Enforcing Rules
- C. Keeping Time
- D. Down Supervision

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E. Game Play

F. Crowd Control

G. An official game may not be played without at least two referees in attendance.

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Referee point of Emphasis:

The FCFL board emphasizes that there should be a penalty called any time the head or neck is contacted by any player, whether offensive or defensive. If a determination can't be made who initiated the illegal head and neck contact, then both players should be penalized. The referees should at the time of the penalty track in writing the number and name of the player(s) penalized and report it on the FCFL website. If a player gets two such penalties, they should immediately be removed and again reported on the FCFL website. Referees should not hesitate to penalize or eject a player who violates these rules. It is considered critical in the teaching of proper techniques to both the player and the coaches. It is expected that initially there may be a lack of understanding of the strictness of the calls, but by consistently calling the penalty, players and coaches will learn that there is no tolerance to any contact to the head and neck area, nor any contact using any part of the helmet to initiate the contact. The FCFL board would rather the referee err on the side of calling a borderline penalty, than not calling the penalty. Even contact that is deemed unintentional should be penalized.

V. INJURIES - EMT COVERAGE:

A. Host organizations must ensure that EMT or EMS personnel are present at their fields during every game and have radio access to ambulance service.

B. Coaches are to cooperate fully with EMTs, recognizing that any injury is potentially serious. The Head Coach (or his duly qualified designee) shall immediately attend to a downed player, solicit the opinion of the referees regarding the circumstances related to the injury, and signal to the attendant EMT if assistance is required. As soon as the EMT arrives, the EMT will be responsible for the disposition of the injured player.

C. An injured player must sit out a minimum of one (1) play.

D. Injured players will be permitted to return to the game based on a decision made by the medical doctor or EMT covering the game.

VI. MANDATORY PLAY RULE:

A. Team size will be dependent upon the total number of participants in that grade as specified in the FCFL Policy and Procedures document, section VII, A.

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B. Each player is required to play a minimum Fourteen (14) plays. Punts and Live PAT/FG count as plays. Any “dead-ball” play such as dead ball extra points (since they are not live) do not count as plays.

C. At the end of the second and third quarters, there will be an official time out, for player monitors to agree on players who have not played 14 plays. If the minimum plays have not been satisfied by the end of the third quarter, each player who has not played 14 plays must immediately start the fourth quarter and remain in the game until he meets the minimum play requirements. Once both coaches have agreed that all players have met the minimum play requirements, neither team may submit a protest. Coaches shall not agree to waive the minimum play rule. It is mandatory that each team has at least one play counter and all play counters from both teams are together on the sideline (outside coaches’ box) of the home team in the first half and the away team in the second half. After each quarter the play counters will have one official play count tally.

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D. Each team must use the Player Participation Form as provided by FCFL and maintained during the game by each team's designated player monitor. Head coaches are to provide the opposing coaches/player monitors with a minimum play sheet that clearly identifies the following separately: two-way starters, offense only starters and defensive only starters and substitutes.

E. Plays that result in a QB spiking the ball or dropping to his knee with the sole purpose of “playing it safe” or “taking a knee” will not count as plays for minimum play requirements.

VII. REMOVING PLAYERS:

A. If a team has twenty-one or more points in the second half of the game, the opposing coach may elect to remove up to three (3) players from the leading team's offense without regard to position until the lead is reduced to less than twenty-one points. Additionally, such players are ineligible to participate on any special teams (punting or punt receiving, and field goal or PAT attempts).

B. If after the 3rd quarter ends, a team has a twenty-one or more lead, the opposing coach may elect to remove up to three (3) players from the leading team's defense without regard to position until the lead is reduced to less than twenty-one points.

VIII. PLAYING RULES: N.F.H.S. Rules, except as modified below, shall govern all play.

A. Quarters are 11 minutes, timed in accordance with N.F.H.S. rules. Half time will be limited to 5 minutes.

B. Field of play: 40x80 yards with additional 10-yard end zones

C. Modified Travel Flag will play 9 players per side of the ball instead of 11. There are no tackles in 3 /4 modified flag football. There must be 1 QB and 2 running backs in the backfield at all times. (Running Backs must be at least 3 yards behind line of scrimmage and not outside of the ghost tackle (not outside 3 feet of the Guard). Only 1 player is allowed outside of the Guard

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within 5 yards. Overloaded formations of 2 TEs or 1 TE and 1 wing back (or slot) within 5 yards of the guard is not permitted. The games should be played with 3 linemen (1 Center, 2 Guards and 6 skill players) not 5 “lineman” and 4 skill players. There will be 1 center, 2 guards, a minimum of 2 receivers on the line, a minimum of 1 running back in the backfield at least 3 yards back and 1 Quarterback.

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D. All fumbles, including exchanges on the snap between center and quarterback, are live and may be recovered by either team. All players can advance the ball or continue the play in 3rd/4th Grade Modified. If a ball is juggled in the air and is caught before touching the ground, it shall be treated as if it were an intercepted pass and may be returned by the defense or advanced by the offense. No player on defense can intentionally force a fumble without going for the flag. No player on offense can fumble the ball forward. A forward fumble, if recovered by the offense will be whistled dead and placed at the spot of the fumble for the next down.

E. Offensive Formations are limited to the following (Trip receivers are not allowed):

1. Offensive Team Formations are limited to formations including the use of 2 split ends OR tight ends lined up on the Line of Scrimmage on opposite sides of the formation. The use of 5 players on the line of scrimmage is required. Only One (1) slot back may be employed. The single slot back may be deployed with a tight end or split end must be at least one (1) yard off the line of scrimmage.

2. “Slot” is defined as any back outside the guard and off the LOS. Only 1 Slot is allowed on each side of the center.

3. QB is defined as the player who receives the initial snap from center. At no time may there be more than two backs (one of whom must be a quarterback under center) closer than three yards to the line of scrimmage. No player in the backfield other than “Slots” as defined above) may be wider than the “would be tackle box” (3 yards outside the guard) Running backs can be as wide as an attached tight end or where the tackle box would be. Two running backs are allowed on one side of the center.

4. If employing shotgun, only one back is allowed within 3 yards of the LOS, whether it’s a slot or otherwise. Any player outside the “would be tackle box” (3 yards outside the guard), is slot. There needs to be at least 1 RB and a QB in the backfield.

5. Splits between Centers, and Guards may be no more than one yard maximum. Wide outs must be no wider than 10 yards from the Tackle box. No unbalanced line may be employed.

6. All Offensive players, to include linemen, backs and receivers, may be in a 2, 3 or 4 point stance.

7. No motion may be employed.

F. Defensive Team Formations and Restrictions

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1. Defensive Team Formations are limited such that 2 linemen are head up on offensive guards and there is a maximum of 1 additional lineman lined up on each side anywhere wide of the Receiver next to the Guard (a total of 2). The center (defined as the player who snaps the ball) is not to be covered by any defensive lineman.

2. All other defensive players (3-5 players) must be at least 3 yards off the line of scrimmage. The defensive alignment can therefore have 2, 3 or 4 linemen (2 of whom are head up on guards, at least 1 safety (6 yards off the LOS) and the remaining 2 – 4 players at least 3 yards off the line of scrimmage.

3. The linebackers and safeties may be no closer than three yards to the line of scrimmage. They may set up laterally anywhere between the sidelines. No linebacker or safety will be permitted to move inside of 3 yards of the Line of Scrimmage (LOS) prior to the snap. There can be no defensive movement or shifting prior to the snap after the offense is set.

4. Interior Linemen may be in a two-, three- or four-point stance.

5. Defensive ends may be in a two-, three-, or four-point stance.

6. In goal line situations (defined as within the defensive team's 3-yard line) linebackers are permitted to move to no closer than 1 yard from the ball, instead of normal 3 yard minimum.

7. Defensive players all must be set prior to the snap. Movement prior to the snap is illegal procedure. After the snap, there is no restriction on blitzing or stunting.

"Flinching" by the defensive player is not a penalty as long as there is no encroachment on the LOS or a LB/CB/S remains 3 yards deep of the LOS.

F. Kick-offs – There are no kick-offs. Possession will start on the offense's 20-yard line. (50-yd line after safety)

G. Punting: There is no actual punting. A team declares its intention to punt to the referees, who will advance the ball twenty yards from the Line of Scrimmage (but not inside the twenty-yard line) and give possession to the other team to begin offense. No possession will begin any deeper than the receiving team's 20-yard line.

H. After scoring a touchdown, the offensive team may elect to pass, run, or kick for an extra point(s). When the offense elects to kick the PAT, the ball is snapped from the 3-yard line. Defensive rushing is not permitted and all defensive players on the line of scrimmage must remain in a 3-point stance. The Kicker can be a Limited or Unlimited player. If the ball is not kicked within five seconds of the snap the referee will flag for illegal procedure, and a penalty will be assessed. Teams that successfully kick the PAT will get two (2) points. Teams that successfully run or pass for the PAT will get one (1) point if they elect to start from the 3-yard line and two (2) points if they elect to start from the 5-yard line. You must use the same ball of a PAT or Punt as you are using in a game.

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H. There are no field goals.

I. Safeties – If an offense gives up a safety, the defensive team gets the ball at midfield.

J. Overtime – Used only in the playoffs. A coin toss will be called by the visitors. Winner of the toss chooses offense or defense first. Teams start on the ten-yard line and attempt to score. In OT, all PATs must be live run or pass plays, that is, there are no kicked PATs. If the score is tied after additional OT periods are played in the identical fashion, reversing the order of playing offense.

K. Keep the Head out of Football:

1. Illegal helmet contact: Any intentional or unintentional contact including blocking and tackling by an offensive or defensive player to any part of an opponent's head or neck is prohibited resulting in a 15-yard penalty.

2. Illegal use of helmet: Any intentional or unintentional contact including blocking, tackling, or rushing by an offensive or defensive player using any part of his helmet as the initiation point of contacting an opponent is prohibited and should result in a 15-yard penalty.

3. Two or more of the above penalties by a single player, result in ejection from the game

L. No blocking below the waist – except for tackling, any purposeful football action below the waist is illegal.

IX. EQUIPMENT:

A. Only certified and properly reconditioned helmets may be worn.

B. All players must have a colored mouth guard that must be worn while the ball is in play (Violations will incur a 5-yard penalty).

C. Sneakers, rubber cleats or turf shoes must be worn.

D. A jersey must cover the shoulder pads.

E. All excess equipment must meet scholastic guidelines.

F. Under Armour, Nike and Wilson balls are all approved for use in the size indicated as follows:

1. Grades 3 & 4: Pee-Wee

2. Grades 5 & 6: Junior

3. Grades 7 & 8: Youth

G. All Modified Travel Flag Players must wear the following flags when playing in the game:

NFL – Flag -Nylon

These are available in Yellow, Green, Blue and Red and the color the player wears must contrast the uniform color.

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X. Modified Specific Rules

1. No intentionally stripping of the football. (Result in personal foul 15 yard).
2. No intentionally pushing players out of bounds when running down the sideline.
(Result in personal foul unnecessary roughness 15 yard)
3. No stiff arms (result in flag guarding – Ball placed at spot of flag guard.)
4. If a runner falls while the defender is trying to grab a flag at the waist level, a tackle penalty shall not be called.
5. If a defender intentionally trips (going below the knee or hits a runner high (at chest level or above) and knocks down the player that is considered a tackle and results in a 15-yard penalty.