

**TRI-COUNTY JUNIOR FOOTBALL
CONFERENCE**

STANDING RULES

As Amended
June 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLE 1 – NEW MEMBERSHIP	1
ARTICLE 2 – DUES AND FEES.....	1
ARTICLE 3 – SCHEDULING.....	2
ARTICLE 4 – LEAGUE STANDINGS.....	8
ARTICLE 5 – MEETINGS.	8
ARTICLE 6 – PLAY-OFFS.....	8
ARTICLE 7 – PLAYER ELIGIBILITY.....	9
ARTICLE 8 – GENERAL LEAGUE RULES.....	12
ARTICLE 9 – AWARDS.....	17
ARTICLE 10 – RECORDING PROCEDURES FOR SCORES.....	17
ARTICLE 11 – INITIAL WEIGH IN RULES.....	17
ARTICLE 12 – GAME WEIGH IN RULES.....	19
ARTICLE 13 – INSURANCE.....	20
ARTICLE 14 – FORFEITS.....	21

ARTICLE 1 – NEW MEMBERSHIP

Moved to Tri-County By-Laws ARTICLE 3.B.1

ARTICLE 2 – DUES AND FEES

- A. All dues and fees are due on the date specified in the By Laws, these Standing Rules, or as specified by the league president subject to board approval. Any member organization owing money to Tri County Junior Football Conference is a member organization not in good standing.
- B. Unless otherwise specified; all fines, debts, fees & penalties are due by the next regular meeting.
- C. All fees or fines must be paid prior to any refunds given.
- D. Any member organization owing money to another member organization as determined by the League will pay the debt through the Tri County Junior Football Conference by check. All fines, debts, fees, penalties owed by a member organization to another member organization must be paid through the Tri-County Treasurer.
- E. All playoff/Superbowl fees will be assessed at the playoff scheduling meeting and must be paid prior to games being played.
- F. All fines and fees not paid by due date are subject to a fifty dollar (\$50.00) per meeting late charge unless specified otherwise.

ARTICLE 3 - SCHEDULING

- A. **SCHEDULE TIMEFRAME** – The schedule for games played within the League will run parallel to the High School start of the season: from the weekend before Labor Day and conclude no later than the weekend prior to Thanksgiving, and will include Playoffs.
- B. **GAMES** – minimum of six (6) regular season games will be played (a forfeit is considered a game played). However, the Scheduling Committee will attempt to schedule a minimum of eight (8) regular season games.
- C. **FIELD AVAILABILITY** – All Organizations must designate a home field(s) within reasonable proximity to their respective community. The designated field will be where all scheduled home games are played. Beginning in 2015, simultaneous games will not be played on adjacent fields which are not separated by at least 25 yards. Situations that require a relocation of the home field venue exceeding more than two consecutive games will require 2/3 approval of the Board. A form setting forth field availability as prescribed by the Scheduling Committee (the "**Field Availability Form**") must be submitted to the Scheduling Committee no later than the July regular meeting of the Board.
- D. **SHARING FIELDS** – If an Organization shares a field with a high school or other activity, the Organization must submit a copy of schedules for all teams or activities on that field to the Scheduling Committee no later than the August regular meeting.
- E. **COMMITMENT OF TEAMS** – On or before 7:00 p.m. of the "**Team Declaration Date**" (determined each year by the executive committee), all Organizations will inform the Chairman of the Scheduling Committee in writing on a form as prescribed by the Scheduling Committee (the "**Team Declaration Form**") the following information for the upcoming season: (1) the number of teams by Age Division; (2) the number of teams in each Age Division; and (3) the designation of Conference (as defined below) for each team within each Age Division including a first and second preference if a team is willing to be placed in a Conference (as described in Article 2, Section N. 5. below).
- F. **TEAM ADDITIONS/WITHDRAWALS**
1. **Prior to Game Schedule Publication.** Adding or withdrawing a team or teams after the Team Declaration Date but before the League publishes the game schedule for teams playing within the League (the "**Game Schedule**") will result in a fine of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) per team. This fine of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) must be paid at the Scheduling Meeting. No games will be played by any team of an Organization that fails to pay this fine prior to the start of the season and all scheduled games will result in forfeit until payment has been made. Requests for the addition of a team or teams are not automatically guaranteed. The Scheduling Committee will immediately review any request to determine if any additions can be incorporated into the schedule without the need for a major overhaul of an already completed schedule. The Scheduling Committee's decision will be final. A One Hundred Dollar (\$100.00) fine per team will be assessed only in the event the request is approved.
 2. **After Game Schedule Publication.** After the Game Schedule is published by the League, no teams may be added by any Organization. Withdrawing a team or teams after

the game schedule is published will result in a fine of Three Hundred Dollars (\$300.00) per team. This fine of Three Hundred Dollars (\$300.00) must be paid at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board after withdrawal of the team or teams by the Organization. No games will be played by any team of an Organization that fails to pay this fine and all scheduled games of said Organization will result in forfeit until payment has been made.

- G. **PRESENTING SCHEDULES** – Schedules will be presented at a special meeting called by the President of the Board during the week prior to week one (1) of the season schedule.
- H. **SCRIMMAGES** – Beginning August 1 of the fiscal year through January 1, scrimmages are permitted both within and outside of the League without Board permission. Any contest outside of non-scheduled League games will be considered a scrimmage (i.e. pre-season and post-season tournaments, bye weeks, etc.). From January 1st to July 31, scrimmages must be approved by the Board.
- I. **FIELD PERMISSIONS** – A written statement confirming field usage must be presented to the Board at the regularly scheduled June meeting. This statement will require the signature of the individuals having authority to grant such usage.
- J. **SCHEDULE REVIEW MEETING** – The special schedule meeting (the "*Scheduling Meeting*") will be held 2 weeks prior to the start of the season at a time and place as directed by the Chairman of the Scheduling Committee. The Scheduling Meeting is a required meeting for all Organizations of the League and the Executive Committee and only two representatives from each Organization may attend.
- K. **GAMES** – Regular scheduled home games will be at least two hours (2) between start of games, with fifteen (15) minutes allowance for game starting time. In the event of a serious injury, or multiple injuries, teams will be allowed to continue up to fifteen (15) minutes beyond the next game's scheduled start time [example: if a game is scheduled to start at two o'clock (2:00) p.m., the previous game's participants will be allowed to play until two fifteen (2:15) p.m. if needed as a result of an extended delay for injury]. The only exception to this rule would be if the last game of the day is running late. That game will be played to completion as long as the head official and/or TC Rep deems that lighting is sufficient to continue. It is the responsibility of the home team to clear the field if a game is running long. The field should be cleared no later than the next game's scheduled start time, with the exception of Article 8, Section A. 7. below. The score at the time the game is called is considered final. Failure to do so will result in forfeit of the next game by the home team. The head referee's watch is official. The only exception is, if a game is running late, and it is mutually agreed upon by the head coaches of the succeeding game to allow their game to start late. It should, however, be understood by both parties, that the head coaches of yet another succeeding game may not agree to start late, thus creating the possibility of their game being halted due to time constraints. Beginning with Daylight Savings Time, no game will be scheduled to start later than three o'clock (3:00) p.m. unless mutually agreed upon by both clubs and the facility has access to the usage of lights.
- L. **GAME TIME FRAMES** – All League games will be played on Saturday or Sunday. Start times for games will be scheduled within the following time frames: D.S.T. - 9:00 am thru 4:00 pm C.S.T. - 9:00 am thru 3:00 pm. Games can not start earlier than their scheduled time. Any scheduled game times outside these parameters will require mutual agreement

between the two Organizations. The last scheduled game of the day can be continued until the home club determines that lighting is an issue.

M. **TYKES GAMES** – The scheduled start times for any game succeeding a Tyke contest may begin no sooner than one (1) hour and forty-five (45) minutes after the scheduled start time of any such Tyke contest.

N. **SCHEDULING GUIDELINES**

1. **Conference Criteria.** With the exception of the Tykes and 7 and under Age Divisions (which will be divided based on geographic location in order to provide ease in travel for the younger age groups and not the criteria below but will otherwise consist of a single conference), conferences will be divided to allow teams competitive parity and balanced play. Scheduling will make every effort to avoid scheduling games whereby teams from the same Organization will play against one another.

a. **National Conference Criteria.** The National Conference should consist of teams:

- 1) desiring a higher level of competition;
- 2) with larger, stronger and more athletic players;
- 3) with players that have previously played organized football; and
- 4) that played in the American Conference Championship Game in the immediately preceding year (when the team returning is made up of at least 9 players from the team playing in the American Conference Championship in the immediately preceding year).

b. **American Conference Criteria.** The American Conference should consist of teams:

- 1) desiring an instructional and development level of competition;
- 2) desiring or needing more technical teaching;
- 3) from Organizations that are new to the League.

3. **Selection of a Conference.** The final placement of a team in a Conference will be left to the Scheduling Committee. The criteria set forth in Article 3, Section N. 2. above are guidelines to assist the Scheduling Committee in their decision to place a team in a particular Conference and not a mandate from the League. The Scheduling Committee will be informed of the request related to Conference selection by each team within an Organization by submitting the Team Declaration Form as set forth in this Article 3., Section E. Teams will all select a first preference for the Conference in which a team desires to play.

4. **No Conference.** If the Scheduling Committee deems that there are not enough teams to form more than one Conference, or if no Conference is formed for an Age Division as determined by the Scheduling Committee, all teams in that Age Division will be scheduled as follows:

a. Scheduling of teams will be based upon a random schedule assigned by a computer program selected by the League.

5. **Home vs. Away.** Unless field availability dictates otherwise, individual teams will not have a plus/minus margin for home and away games exceeding one (1). Unless field availability dictates otherwise, individual Organizations will have a plus/minus margin for home and away games as close to zero as possible. Furthermore, this statistic will be documented and filed annually by the Scheduling Committee for future reference.
 6. **Postponements.** The Vice President and Athletic Director must be notified by the home team regarding postponements due to inclement weather or other conditions beyond the reasonable control of the home team no later than the Monday night following the postponement. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit for the home team. The postponed game must be rescheduled (and approved by the Executive Committee) no later than 10 days following the postponement and played no later than the last day of the regular season (Sunday of Week 9). Failure to do so by either team will result in a forfeit.
 7. **12 and 14 U Division Scheduling Amendment:** Due to the lack of Clubs with teams in TC at 12 and 14 U, we must adjust some rules for these divisions that will allow the TC Scheduling Committee the ability to schedule games outside of the league.
 1. TC will schedule games with clubs outside of TC if division has potential for less than 6 teams
 2. Clubs must submit potential for 12 and 14 U teams by February Bylaws meeting.
 3. Based on these potential numbers, the TC Scheduling Committee will look for clubs outside of TC to schedule games with if needed.
 4. If a 12 or 14U division has less than 6 TC teams, the following will apply:
 - a. TC Clubs will play each other no more than 2 times: Home and Away
 - b. No Playoffs, regular season games only.
 - c. TC Scheduling Committee will look to fill out the schedule with teams outside of the league.
 - d. Elimination of the weight limit rule under Article 7 for the 12 and 14U divisions.
 - e. Elimination of minimum 8 play rule under Article 8 for the 12 and 14U divisions
- O. **PLAYOFFS** – The following guidelines will be used in determining the format and scheduling for post-season play. It is the general consensus of the League that post-season play will be reserved for teams that attain a level of success during the regular season that will qualify them for the post-season. Every team in a particular Age Division and/or Conference, as applicable, will be ranked from highest to lowest using a predetermined criterion as outlined in Article 4 hereof. Teams must qualify in accordance with the standards set forth in the respective Age Division and/or Conference in which they compete as determined by their ranking.

1. **Playoff Games.** With the exception of the Tykes Division (who will have no post-season play), post-season play will consist of a maximum of two (2) games, which must be contested on consecutive weekends (each a "***Playoff***" and collectively, "***Playoffs***"). The first round of the Playoffs will consist of a semi-final game ("***Semi-Final Game***") for each Age Division and/or Conference, as applicable. The second round of the Playoffs will consist of a championship game ("***Championship Game***") from the winners of the Semi-Final Games.
 - a. **Start Times.** Start times for Semi-Final Games will be scheduled between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm on Saturday or 9:00 am and 3:00 pm on Sunday of the week following the conclusion of the regular season. Start time for the Championship Game will be scheduled between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm on Saturday or 9:00 am and 3:00 pm on Sunday of the week following the Semi-Final Game. Organizations hosting Playoffs may schedule Playoff games later than 3:00 p.m. if (1) the hosting Organization has lighted playing fields approved by the Vice President, and (2) the Organizations whose teams are playing in a Playoff game after 3:00 p.m. approve.
 - b. **Determination of Teams.** The top four (4) ranked teams with in an Age Division and/or Conference, as applicable, will qualify for the Playoffs with "1 versus 4" and "2 versus 3" as opponents in the Semi-Final Game with the winners advancing to the Championship Game.
 - c. **Champion.** For each Age Division and/or Conference, as applicable, a Playoff will be used to decide the champion regardless of the number of teams in the Age Division and/or Conference.
2. **Fields.** Beginning in alphabetical order (**using one (1) list**) all Semi-Final Game fields and Championship Game fields will be assigned to Organizations on a rotational basis from year to year, with the following provisions:
 - a. **Field Inspection.** Field must be inspected and approved by Vice President prior to the assigned Semi-Final Game or Championship Game, as applicable. The Vice President is responsible for scheduling alternate playoff sites if he determines that the primary field is not playable for any reason. Beginning with the 2015 season, simultaneous games will not be played on adjacent fields which are not separated by at least 25 yards.
 - b. **Good Standing.** Organizations must be in good standing with the League.
 - c. **First Year Organizations.** Excludes 1st year member organizations (for 1 season).
 - d. **Minimum Games.** Must host a minimum of (3) games at each venue.
 - e. **Restrooms.** Fields must have a working public address system and separate water closet/restrooms for men & women. Restrooms must have a hand washing station.

- f. **Waiver.** If an Organization chooses to waive their opportunity for Playoff games, then the next eligible Organization, meeting the specified criteria above, will have the option to host Playoff games.
- g. **Host Schedule Submission.** An Organization hosting Semi-Final Games will submit a schedule to the Executive Committee for approval prior to midnight of the Monday following the last game of the regular season. An Organization hosting Championship Games will submit a schedule to the Executive Committee for approval prior to midnight of the Monday following the last game of the Semi-Final Games. Organizations hosting the 12U and 14U Semi-Final or Championship games shall make efforts to schedule those games on Sunday or not to conflict with Junior High Winter Sporting activities.
3. **Jersey Color.** Playoff teams determined to have a higher ranking than their opponent will have the right to choose their jersey color. Whenever their opponent's jersey color is of a contrasting color, opponents may wear the jersey color of their choice.
4. **Sidelines.** The Playoff team determined to have a higher ranking than their opponent will have the right to designate the sideline for which their team box will be located whenever both teams are competing at a neutral site. Playoff teams competing at their home site will always have the right to designate the sideline for which their team box will be located, regardless of team rankings. In the event opponents are both competing at their home site, the team determined to be of a higher rank will designate the sideline of their choice.
- P. **DEFINITIONS** – For purposes of this Article 3 the following terms will have the following meanings:
1. ***"Age Division"*** will mean the Divisions as set forth in Article 7 of the Bylaws.
 2. ***"American Conference Championship"*** will mean the game determining the winner of the playoff games for the American Conference in any given Age Division.
 3. ***"American Conference"*** will have the meaning set forth in Article 3, Section N. 1 and 2 hereof.
 4. ***"Athletic Director"*** will have the meaning set forth in the Bylaws.
 5. ***"Board"*** will mean the Executive Board as set forth in the Bylaws.
 6. ***"Bylaws"*** will mean the duly adopted Bylaws of the League.
 7. ***"Chairman of the Scheduling Committee"*** will be chairman of the Scheduling Committee pursuant to the Bylaws.

8. *"Championship Game(s)"* will mean the final game of a playoff in any Age Division and/or Conference as set forth in Article 3, Section O.1.
9. *"Conference" or "Conferences"* will mean each of, or collectively, the American Conference and/or the National Conference, as applicable, or any other Conference or regional division thereof as provided in Article 3, Section N. 1. and 2. above.
10. *"Executive Committee"* will have the meaning set forth in the Bylaws.
11. *"Game Schedule"* will have the meaning set forth in Article 3, Section F. 1 above.
12. *"League"* will mean the Tri-County Junior Conference.
13. *"National Conference"* will have the meaning set forth in Article 3, Section N. 1 and 2 above.
14. *"Organization"* will mean a football organization or club admitted to and in good standing with the League.
15. *"Playoff" or "Playoffs"* will have the meaning set forth in Article 3, Section O.1. above.
16. *"Playoff Committee"* will have the meaning set forth in the Bylaws.
17. *"Scheduling Committee"* will mean the committee designated in the Bylaws as the Scheduling – Regular Season and/or Scheduling – Playoffs and Championships, as applicable.
18. *"Scheduling Meeting"* will have the meaning set forth in Article 3, Section J. above.
19. *"Semi-Final Game(s)"* will have the meaning set forth in Article 3, Section O.1.
20. *"Team Declaration Date"* will have the meaning set forth in Article 3, Section E above.
21. *"Team Declaration Form"* will have the meaning set forth in Article 3, Section E. above.
22. *"Tyke" or "Tykes"* will mean the 5 and 6 year old Age Division.
23. *"Vice President"* will have the meaning set forth in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE 4 – LEAGUE STANDINGS

- A. The following format will be used to calculate league standings: two (2) points for a win; one (1) point for a tie; and zero (0) points for a loss.
- B. Standings and weekly game results will be maintained by the Vice President on the Tri-County web site each week. Standings will not reflect scores or total points.

- C. All weekly game results must be reported to the Vice President either by phone, fax, the Tri County Website, e-mail or as otherwise directed by the Vice President in advance no later than 8 pm on the following Wednesday.

ARTICLE 5 – MEETINGS

- A. **REGULAR MEETINGS** – All TC monthly meetings are to be held on the second (2nd) Tuesday of each month at seven o'clock PM (7:00 PM), except for the months of August thru November, which will be held on the second (2nd) and fourth (4th) Tuesdays at eight o'clock PM (8:00 PM).
- a. 7PM, the second (2nd) Tuesday of March, April, May, June, July, August, November and December of each year; and
 - b. 8PM, the second (2nd) and fourth (4th) Tuesday of August, September, and October of each year

ARTICLE 6 – PLAY-OFFS

- A. Play-off seeding will be determined as follows:
1. Total league standing points earned
 2. Head to head play
 3. Strength of schedule (add league standing points earned by opponents)
 4. If a tie still exists between two (2) or more teams those teams involved will draw for the remaining seed(s). The order of the draw will be determined by the order in which the organizations are listed in the By Laws.
 5. If a tie exists between three or more teams for 2 seeds: the top seed will be determined as in 1 through 4 in order. To determine next seed, the process above (1 through 4) will be repeated with the remaining teams.

ARTICLE 7 - PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- A. **RULES FOR UNLIMITED WEIGHT PLAYERS**
1. **KICK-OFF** – Maximum of five (5) unlimited weight players may participate on the kick-off team at any position.
 2. **RECEIVING** – Maximum of five (5) unlimited weight players may participate on the receiving team, any and all of which must be positioned in the area extending ten (10) to fifteen (15) yards beyond K's free kick line and between the side lines at the time of the kick.

3. OFFENSE – Maximum of five (5) unlimited weight players may participate on the offensive line of scrimmage, any and all of which must be positioned as an interior lineman within the free blocking zone at the snap.
4. DEFENSE - Maximum of five (5) unlimited weight players may participate on the defensive line of scrimmage, any and all of which must be positioned within the lateral parameters of the free blocking zone at the snap.
 - a. EXCEPTION – In the event the offensive unit shifts after initially positioning themselves at the line of scrimmage, the only restriction that will then apply to the defensive unlimited weight player(s) is the requirement to be positioned on the defensive line of scrimmage at the snap.
5. Unlimited weight players are not allowed to advance the ball, except under the following situations:
 - a. Interceptions
 - b. Fumbles, provided the recovered fumble results in a change of team possession
 - c. Scrimmage kicks by unlimited weight player R1, provided the kick ends when R1 gains possession in or behind the expanded neutral zone.
 - d. Free kicks by unlimited weight player R1, provided R1 is the only player of R to have touched the ball and the ball is not first touched by R1 more than fifteen (15) yards in advance of K's free kick line.

It is also permissible for unlimited K1 to put the ball in play with a free kick, attempt a try or a field goal with a scrimmage kick or punt the ball from a scrimmage kick formation, which requires K1 to be positioned directly behind the center to receive a snap other than a direct hand to hand exchange.

Whenever unlimited weight player K1 is designated by position as the kicker for a try or field goal attempt, the ball shall become dead immediately should K1 retrieve a mishandled or errant snap. However, K1 may retrieve an errant snap and scramble to elude opponents in an attempt to successfully complete a punt attempt. Passing or handing the ball is considered advancing the ball and is not allowed. Any unlimited weight player advancing the ball will be ruled down at the spot.

6. Any player wishing to participate as a non striper must make current week's weight.
7. Unlimited weight players shall wear a minimum one (1) inch stripe of a contrasting color on helmet running from ear hole to ear hole across the top of the helmet or a 2" stripe from logo to logo. Penalty for violation of this rule will be illegal participation.
8. Violation of any of the aforementioned position restrictions by an unlimited weight player shall result in an illegal participation infraction if flagged during a live ball and shall be penalized accordingly. Officials should attempt to recognize illegal

formations and flag them during the dead ball prior to a snap that is eminent and therefore penalize the offending team for illegal procedure.

B. 7U / 8U DIVISION RULES

1. Any player wishing to participate, as a non-striper, must make current week's weight [example: week two (2) must weigh eighty six (86) pounds or under, regardless of initial weigh in weight].
2. There shall be NO rushing the kicker by the defense, if the offense elects to kick the ball (they must be allowed to kick). As we have allowed the offense the free kick, in order to be fair, no offensive player may leave the line of scrimmage before the ball is kicked. The offense must kick the ball (no fake kicks). The penalty for both defense and the offense shall be encroachment/illegal procedure, respectively. As this is a 7U / 8U, the expanded neutral zone shall be used for enforcement of the penalty.
3. 7U / 8U The offensive center is not to be hit or **to be lined up over** by the defense, unless he moves to become a blocker. A repeated infraction will result in a fifteen (15) yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
4. Tykes through 8U must declare if they intend to kick. If they do kick, and fail to declare it is a 15 yard penalty. A fake kick is not allowed.
5. After the offense has declared their intent to punt, attempt a field goal or extra point, the defense must have a minimum of six players on their line of scrimmage and no more than three players more than 10 yards beyond the neutral zone to their goal line at the time of the free kick.

C. TYKE DIVISION RULES: THE SOLE PURPOSE OF THIS DIVISION IS PURELY INSTRUCTIONAL

1. **TYKE DIVISION SCHEDULE:** Will consist of 7 games and start the weekend after Labor Day.
2. Any player wishing to participate, as a non striper, must make current week's weight [example: week two (2) must weight sixty six (66) pounds or under, regardless of initial weigh in weight].
2. GAME CARDS – Game cards will be filled out completely, including sportsmanship points, but no score shall be recorded.
3. A maximum of two (2) coaches from each team is allowed on the playing field. Once the offense is set no instructions from coaches on the field at this time. Penalty for this violation will be illegal participation.
4. The defense will consist of a maximum of six (6) players on their line of scrimmage at the time of snap. All other players must be at least two (2) yards behind the defensive line of scrimmage. Only defensive players positioned on their line of scrimmage within the free blocking zone may enter the neutral zone and cross the offensive scrimmage line at the

snap. However, once a play has developed to the degree in which the ball advanced beyond the offensive line of scrimmage or outside an imaginary line that runs parallel to the sidelines and through the point at the lateral end of the free blocking zone, only those restrictions that are I.H.S.A. rule book defined will apply to the defense. In this particular division, the intent of this rule is not to disallow the defense from tackling the offense behind the line the scrimmage, but rather to provide the offense an opportunity for a play to develop. Unsportsmanlike conduct will be assessed for violation of this rule.

5. The offensive center is not to be hit or **to be lined up over** by the defense, unless he moves to become a blocker. This situation is to be controlled by the referee **and the defensive coach**. A repeated infraction will result in a fifteen (15) yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
6. There shall be no rushing the punter by the defense. If the offense elects to punt the ball, they must be allowed to punt. As we have allowed the offense the free kick, in order to be fair, no offensive player may leave the line of scrimmage before the ball is kicked. The offense must punt the ball (no fake punts). The penalty for both the defense and offense shall be encroachment/illegal procedure, respectively. As this is a Tyke Division, the expanded neutral zone shall be used for enforcement of the penalty. In addition, the punting team shall have the option to move the ball twenty (20) yards up field. However, this option cannot be exercised once the offensive team has crossed mid field.
7. After the offense has declared their intent to punt, the defense must have a minimum of six players on their line of scrimmage and no more than three players more than 10 yards beyond the neutral zone to their goal line at the time of the free kick.
8. Games shall consist of four (4) twenty minutes (20) minute quarters, with a ten (10) minute halftime. The clock shall run continuously. It will be the duty of the head referee to speed up the offensive call.
9. The game will have two (2) kick-offs. A coin toss will take place. Team choosing to be R at the start of the first (1st) half will be K at the start of the second (2nd) half.
10. After A has crossed B's goal line the ball will be placed on the fifty (50) yard line for a change of possession. There will be no extra point attempt.
11. No score shall be posted on any scoreboard, announced, or displayed in any other manner.
12. The offensive center may turn the football parallel to the line of scrimmage in order to initiate a snap.

ARTICLE 8 – GENERAL LEAGUE RULES

- A. All games shall be played under Illinois High School Association playing rules with the following exceptions:
 1. All games shall consist of four (4) ten (10) minute periods.
 2. There shall be free substitution

3. Rest intervals between second (2nd) and third (3rd) quarters shall be ten (10) minutes.
4. All eligible players in attendance at a game must participate in the game a mandatory eight (8) plays (unless injured and unable to return). If a player is weighed in at halftime they must play a mandatory four (4) plays in the second (2nd) half (unless injured and unable to return). A player that has not weighed in, is overweight, or injured, must remove their helmet and shoulder pads to remain in the player's box. During the regular season, if a request is made by either team, a play monitor from each Organization will keep track of the opposing team's plays. The monitors will stand together in a designated area agreed upon by the Organizations and utilize a standardized participation form. The monitors will report their findings at the end of the second (2nd) quarter and the beginning of the fourth (4th) quarter to the head official, who will then notify each head coach. All Playoff games will be monitored and utilize the procedures outlined above.
5. All League games will be played on Saturday or Sunday. The home organization is to notify the League Scheduling Committee of field availability for Saturday and/or Sunday games by the regularly held August meeting each year. Opposing teams will be notified of changes in time and/or date due to field availability no later than midnight on Tuesday of the week in which games are to be played as confirmed by the President and Athletic Director of the League. Any rescheduling of games as confirmed by the President must be rescheduled between the hours of nine o'clock (9:00) a.m. and four o'clock (4:00) p.m. on Saturday or Sunday unless mutually agreed upon by the Organizations competing in the rescheduled game(s).
6. Points after touchdown shall be two (2) points for a kick and one (1) point for a run or pass.
7. All games shall consist of four (4) quarters. In the event of a tie, over-time will be played in accordance with IHSA rules. During the regular season only, no over-time period will be started after the scheduled start time of the succeeding game. Post season playoff games will play over-time, if needed, until a winner is determined.
8. When one team secures a twenty-four (24) point lead, the game clock will run continuously, except for a called time out, an injury time out, an officials time out for time needed to assess a penalty following a live ball foul, or the time between a score and the ensuing kick-off, including any un-timed down. If the score between opposing teams gets less than twenty-four points, the game clock goes back to normal and both teams will have regular time outs.
- 9.. In the (4th) quarter the team winning by twenty-four (24) or more points will not be allowed to call a time out. Penalty for this infraction shall be unsportsmanlike conduct, which is a fifteen (15) yard penalty. When one team secures a forty (40) point lead, the game shall be considered final. In the event that the winning team has not fulfilled its obligations under the 8 play rule as stated in this Article 8, Section A. 5. above, they will forfeit the game.
10. When a quarterback is not under center it will be considered a long snap. Center cannot be hit while snapping the ball.

11. Any team who has a parent or fan that enters the playing field without being approved to enter the field will immediately forfeit the game and the current forfeit rules will be applied.
 12. **Competitive Safety:** During game play, if it is evident that there is a safety issue due to competitive differences between the two teams, the game can be ended and forfeited. There must be agreement between the Head Official, both Head Coaches, and the TC representative in charge of the home field. There will be no club penalties associated with this type of forfeiture.
- B. **PROTEST** – A protest will be allowed at any time during the game. The protest fee will be \$150. The protesting coach must notify the referee and the opposing coach immediately. The coach making the protest must write a brief summary on the back of the game card. The protest must be followed up in writing to the Secretary of Tri County Junior Football Conference within seventy two (72) hours after the scheduled game time. If denied, the 150\$ will be placed in the League treasury and the resulting outcome shall be a forfeit by the team that raised the protest.
- C. Equipment shall be as follows:
1. A durable helmet approved by NOCSAE with an approved face guard (not comprised of or containing exposed metal), shoulder pads, pants, thigh pads, knee pads, mouth pieces and shoes, which meet the requirements as outlined in the National Federation of State High School Associations rule book and adopted by the Illinois High School Association. Stockings, a cup, kidney pads and supporters are optional.
 2. Special protection devices may be used only when the team coach or a physician attests to the need and approved by the game officials.
 3. Two (2) game jerseys are required. A colored jersey for home games and a white jersey for away games. The front and the back of jersey shall be reserved for player numbers, team name and/or logo and player name only. Numbers shall be a minimum of six (6) inches on the front and eight (8) inches on the back. No commemorative or other patch beyond the criteria described above may appear on team jerseys without the approval of the Board. The offensive jersey number systems of the I.H.S.A. shall be disregarded and any number can be used.
 4. A team shall have no duplicate numbers. Violation of this rule shall be illegal participation. The player shall not be allowed to remain in the players box.
 5. Any player wearing an "eye shield" is only permitted to wear a "clear, molded and rigid" eye shield. Although a doctor's letter is not required, this rule cannot be altered by a doctor's letter. Meaning, a doctor's letter DOES NOT take precedent over this rule. A player can wear tinted eye glasses under a clear eye shield.
- D. **PRACTICE**

1. **January 1 – June 30.** Organization sponsored Non-Pad Football Activities that may be perceived as “practice” are allowed between January 1 and June 30 of each year. “*Non-Pad Football Activities*” mean coaching, instructing, and teaching players **WITHOUT PADS** (by anyone associated with or sponsored by the Organization) such as, but not limited to, flag football, running football plays, instructing football techniques and methods such as tackling, throwing, catching, blocking, scrimmages, etc.). No Organization (or anyone associated with or sponsored by the Organization) is permitted to hold camps, clinics, practice, scrimmages where pads are to be used until August 1 and all Non-Pad Football Activities must cease on or before July 1.
2. **July 1 – July 31.** Organization sponsored conditioning, strength training and other similar *Non-Football Related Activities* WITHOUT PADS are allowed between July 1 and July 31. “*Non-Football Related Activities*” mean any activity that is **NOT** related to coaching, instructing and teaching the game of football, football techniques and methods such as tackling, throwing, catching, blocking, explaining or running football plays, etc.
3. **August 1 – December 31.** Organizations may practice pursuant to I.H.S.A. rules.
4. Teams may request permission from the executive committee to hold a one week camp. No contact is allowed, equipment can be utilized during the camp.

These rules are intended to prevent a team within a Organization from gaining an early season advantage by engaging in an organized team practice, which may be held under the false pretense of a camp, clinic, scrimmage, etc. Any person(s), including but not limited to, coaches, members, directors, parents, etc. associated with an Organization engaging in an such activities or attempting to circumvent the rule(s) that pertain to this policy, as determined by the Board of the League, even though the a specific circumstance is not addressed within the these Standing Rules, the Bylaws or other governing document, prior to August 1, will play all games in the regular schedule, but all games will be deemed a forfeit and forfeiture penalties will apply as set forth herein.

E. PLAYING FIELD AND COACHING STAFF

1. The playing field shall be of regulation size with the opposing team benches on the opposite side of the field. Goal posts and a working game clock will be required. Time and score must be legible on the game clock. Beginning in 2015, simultaneous games will not be played on adjacent fields which are not separated by at least 25 yards.
2. Each team will control fans and keep them at least five (5) yards behind the boundary lines. Clubs that join the league after August 1, 2015, the restriction is (10) yards behind boundary lines. Each home team shall provide a restraining line behind the benches. The restraining line is defined as a visible barrier, portable or permanent, at least two (2) feet off the ground, running the length of the field, End line to end line, on both sides of the field. Only the following may be within those above mentioned boundaries: players, coaches, game officials, Tri County Junior

Football Conference representatives, athletic directors, chain gang, stats person, and emergency personnel.

- a. The Head Coach is responsible for the conduct of his assistants, players, and sideline conduct of parents and spectators.
 - b. All football coaches must be **Certified** in order to coach at practice and games. Certification must include the following:
 - a. Concussion certification (CDC or USA Football)
 - b. Tackle Certification
 - c. Background Check (National)
 - c. Coaching Badge/Lanyard must be worn by all coaches during Tri-County sanctioned football games.
 - d. Coaching Cards: All Head Coaches, for each level, must take an IHSA rules test with Tri-County rules filtered in. This test will be open book and administered by Regional Athletic Director through the direction of the Executive Committee of the league.
 - e. Cheer Coaches must be certified to coach at practice and games. Certification includes:
 - a. Concussion (CDC or USA football)
 - b. Background Check (National)
 - f. A National background check is also required for the following:
 - a. Team coordinators or team moms
 - b. Tri-County Representatives
3. All team personnel, including a maximum of six (6) coaches, (1) monitor and one (1) statistician, shall stay in a designated box as defined by I.H.S.A. rules during the game time. Coaches and statisticians shall wear some kind of visible organizational identification at all games. If not in compliance the referee or Tri County representative shall ask you to leave the field.
 4. Copy of the Tri County Junior Football Conference By-Laws and Standing Rules will be available at all games at all playing fields. Failure shall result in a twenty-five dollar (\$25.00) fine.
 5. All fields are subject to inspection and approval by Tri County Junior Football Conference Executive Committee at any time.

F. GAME EQUIPMENT – The home team shall furnish all the following equipment:

1. GAME BALL SPECIFICATIONS – Tykes thru 10U Divisions must use a ball with a width circumference measuring approximately eighteen (18) inches and a length circumference measuring twenty-four (24) inches (example: K-2 or equivalent balls). The 11U thru 14U Divisions must use a ball with a width circumference measuring approximately nineteen (19) inches and a length circumference measuring approximately twenty-six (26) inches [example: Junior, or Youth size footballs]. The offensive team in any division has the option to use any ball meeting the above specifications and as outlined in the I.H.S.A. rules.
2. WEIGH IN SCALES – Scales must be a balance type or digital scales using only the whole number (example 89.2 is 89 lbs and 9.9 is 89 lbs), no spring type. Scales

must be certified every two (2) years and proof must be visibly displayed for the opposing team.

3. YARD MARKERS – All yard markers must meet I.H.S.A. safety requirements.
4. OFFICIAL TIME – When the official time is kept on the field, the procedure will be the same as I.H.S.A. rules.
5. PENALTIES – All preliminary and final penalty reports will be given to both team benches by the referee.

G. OFFICIALS

- (1) For 7U thru 9U, each home team will provide at least three (3) officials for each game; at least two (2) of these officials must be licensed and in uniform; and all officials must be at least eighteen (18) years of age as required by N.F.H.S. A game may start with two (2) licensed officials if mutually agreed upon by the opposing coaches. If the third (3rd) official is not present by the start of the second(2nd) quarter, the game is over and the result is a forfeit by the home team. A thirty-five dollar (\$35.00) fine shall be imposed and paid to the League by the home team in addition to any other fines/penalties that are applicable.
- (2) For 10U-Juniors, each home team will provide at least four (4) officials for each game; at least three (3) of these officials must be licensed and in uniform; and all officials must be at least eighteen (18) years of age as required by N.F.H.S. A game may start with three (3) licensed officials if mutually agreed upon by the opposing coaches. If the fourth (4th) official is not present by the start of the second (2nd) quarter, the game is over and the result is a forfeit by the home team. A thirty-five dollar (\$35.00) fine shall be imposed and paid to the League by the home team in addition to any other fines/penalties that are applicable.
- (3) A minimum of two (2) N.F.H.S. licensed officials is all that is required for Tykes' games.
- (4) If any organization uses a non-licensed official with a fictitious number or if an official leaves the field (TC representative must be notified by the official at the time of departure and notify both teams) before the game has ended (Unless due to injury, use of bathroom, or personal reasons), the following will apply:
 - (a) 1st Offense: Organization receives written warning and that Official is banned from officiating Tri-County games for 1 year.
 - (b) 2nd Offense: Organization will be fined 100\$ and forfeits all games that Official worked.
 - (c) 3 or more Offenses: Organization will be fined 1000\$ and Tri-County will vote on removal of Organization for a period of at least a year. If the fine is not paid by the next scheduled TC meeting that Organization will be ban permanently.
- (5) Playoff Officials must have a "R" or "C" and be in good standing with the IHSA.
- (6) All chain gang members must be thirteen (13) years of age or older and clock operators must be eighteen (18) years of age or older.

- (7) The home team shall be required to provide each head coach with the Tri County Junior Football Conference "Officials Card" at the pre game conference. This card shall contain the following information: printed names of all game officials, position they will be working for that game, state association identification number and classification. If the third (3rd) game official is not licensed, enter "none" in the space provided for official identification number and "trainee" in the space provided for classification.
 - (8) The pre game conference, which shall be conducted by the referee, will include opposing head coaches, team captains, and all other game officials. The home team shall present each opposing coach with an "Officials Card" of which all information regarding the game officials shall be completed. The section reserved for the coaches to rate the game officials shall be completed at the conclusion of the game, free from scrutiny and without repercussion for an honest evaluation of all game officials. The coach shall rate each official's on field performance based upon the instructions & criteria set forth on the card, with reference to their ability for consideration to work play-off games. It shall be mandatory for all coaches to complete and send this card to the league's official recorder (Vice President) bearing postmark no later than the WEDNESDAY following the Saturday or Sunday game played. This requirement may be met by sending the "Officials Card(s)" to the vice president along with the Game Card(s). Visiting coaches, likewise, may send their "Officials Cards(s)" to the Vice President with their organization's home game cards. If this is not a viable option, it shall be the responsibility of the coach to meet the deadline requirement previously stated.
- b) Officials will not record sportsmanship ratings until the opposing coaches have signed the Game Card verifying the score.
 - c) No coaches, parents, grandparents, aunts, or uncles, or siblings may officiate a game in which their team and/or family member participates. This rule is to avoid a possible conflict of interest.

H. TEAM ROSTERS AND WEIGH-IN GAME CARDS

- (1) Each team shall register a maximum of thirty five (35) players, in addition to the team coaches and be ready for competition by the second (2nd) Tuesday of September.
- (2) Team rosters will be made available at the time of weigh-in. The roster will include name, game card number, date of birth (NO numbers may be used for the month of birth), age and weight.
 - (a) Team Rosters shall be completed in an ascending card number order. A team forfeit shall be imposed for each week any documented card violations are discovered. A one time \$50.00 fine will be imposed against the club that stamps or approves any documented card violations.
 - (b) Game Rosters shall be completed in ascending jersey number order.
 - (c) All Weigh-in Cards will be laminated at the time of official weigh-in by the League.
 - (d) If a loss of card(s) occurs, the member organization will notify the President of the League, prepare a new card(s) and have it authenticated by the President or next ranking Officer available, using the President's stamp. Additionally, the Regional Athletic

Director may also authenticate a new card using his/her designated Regional Athletic Director stamp. A fine of Twenty Five Dollars (\$25.00) per card up to a maximum of two hundred (\$200.00) will be imposed for loss of a card(s). Fines are due at the next regular meeting of the Board of the League after loss of the card.

- I. **Tri-County Home Field Responsibility:** The Tri-county Representative in charge of the home field must be present and available from weigh ins for the first game of the day until completion of the last game of the day.

ARTICLE 9 – AWARDS

- A. Individual Awards will be presented to top two teams in there respective division. Trophies and plaques will be of approximately equal monetary value.
- B. A sportsmanship plaque is awarded for sportsmanship demonstrated by spectators, coaches, and players. Organizations that score in the top 3 will earn a sportsmanship award.

ARTICLE 10 – RECORDING PROCEDURES FOR SCORES

- A. Game Cards & Officials Cards for all football games must be completed correctly and must be received by the official recorder (Tri County Junior Football Conference Vice President), emailed by eight o'clock (8:00) p.m. and bearing postmark no later than the Wednesday following the Saturday or Sunday game played. A five dollar (\$5.00) fine will be assessed to the home team per game for violation. The fine will be strictly enforced, with no exceptions. Conference standings will be determined by awarding two (2) points for a win, one (1) point for a tie, and zero (0) points for a loss.
- B. If a player is ejected from a game, the name(s) shall be listed on the back of the game card and given to the Vice President. The home team shall email the Vice President the name and team of any player or coach that is ejected from the contest. The Vice President will notify offending team and next scheduled opponent of the suspension.

ARTICLE 11 – INITIAL WEIGH IN RULES

- A. An initial League Weigh In must be held for all participants in the League.
- B. All participants must weigh in for the official weigh in wearing only shorts, shirt, and socks.
- C. Each weighing team must consist of at least one (1) current year Tri County Junior Football Conference representative, alternate representative or Tri County Junior Football Conference officer.
- D. Tri County Junior Football Conference representative, alternate representative, or Tri County Junior Football Conference officer will record weight as accurately as possible on ID cards at initial weigh in. Age is to be verified by birth certificate (paper copy ONLY no pictures of a birth certificate will be accepted), baptismal record, military ID, passport, state

certified documented age or Tri County Junior Football Conference ID card from one year previous.

- E. ALL cards must be filled out in advance with the exception of weight and sequence number. The month of birth **MUST** be written in full or abbreviated, **NO** numbers shall be used for month of birth (example: Sept 10, 2010 or 10 Sept 2010 **NOT** 09/10/2010). Each player's picture [not more than two (2) years old] is to be glued or stapled to the card. All cards must be typed, printed or in original ink, with no strike through, scratch outs or use of any corrective fluid or tape. Do not glue the picture to the card until the card is filled out correctly, as spoiled cards must be reprinted. Polaroid pictures are not to be used.
- F. Representatives doing the weigh in will number each card in the upper right hand corner with year and numerical sequence as the players are weighed in (example: 2010-01, 2010-02, up to and including 2010-35). The weigh in team is to retain the number of players weighed in on each team. If the maximum number of players [thirty-five (35)] is reached, no other player may be weighed in on that team unless a "Voided" card is given to the weigh in team (example: card 2010-13 is voided and given to the weigh in team, the applicant will then be assigned the voided number 2010-13).
- G. Representatives performing the initial weigh in, after seeing proof of age and verifying each player's weight shall initial and date in the space provided on the lower portion of each card.
- H. ALL cards are to be stamped with the weigh in teams stamps. An unstamped picture is to be used. Stamps are to partially cover picture and card.
- I. Organizations that have players that missed the initial Saturday weigh in will be allowed to weigh in before the rules and interpretation meeting. Organizations will be allowed to weigh in 2 players per team in the organization. Any Organization that exceeds the 2 player per team limit will be fined 5\$ for each player over the limit. In order to weigh in, the Tri-County representative for that organization must be present at the makeup weigh in. All stamps are to be returned to the Executive Committee at the completion of the final weigh-in.
- J. No bathroom scales will be used for the initial weigh in.
- K. Weigh In Teams are as follows:
 - a. Belleville Devils - Knights, Fairview, JJK, Cahokia
 - b. O'Fallon - Collinsville, Highland, Troy, Mascoutah
 - c. Edwardsville - Alton, Bethalto, Jerseyville, Granite City

ARTICLE 12 – GAME WEIGH IN RULES

- A. No bathroom scale will be used Digital scales may be used using only the whole number (ex. 89.2 is 89 lbs and 89.9 is 89 lbs). Scales must be certified every two (2) years and proof must be visibly displayed for the opposing team.

- B. Home teams will provide a shielded and covered area for players to weigh in. A Tri-County Representative must be **available** for the weigh-in but does not have to be present unless a dispute between teams should arise.
- C. At game weigh-ins the scale should be set at the maximum weight of the division being weighed. At that time the player hands his ID card to the weigh in team for approval. After the balance arm has come to a stop and is not being stopped by the retention bar scale the player shall be said to have passed the weight requirements for the game. Digital scales may be used using only the whole number.
- D. Game weigh-ins are to be conducted by a Tri County Junior Football Conference representative, alternate representative, or Tri County Junior Football Conference officer when possible. Home management shall conduct weigh-ins. Coaches are only to witness weigh in. Coaches will weigh in each other only if there is no Tri County Junior Football Conference representative present.
- E. For regular season and playoff games each team shall be required to have two (2) rosters available at weigh in time (for the booth and opponent). Rosters are to be in numerical Jersey order and have the number listed first then the player's name. Rosters are to be typed. The penalty for this violation will be a Fifty Dollar (\$50.00) fine. A copy of the initial weigh in roster is not required for the playoffs.
- F. The team coach must have League identification cards available at all times. All cards must be completed for the player to be eligible for that game
- G. The MANDATORY weigh in will commence no earlier than one (1) hour prior to the scheduled starting time of the game and no later than fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled starting time of the game. Teams arriving later than one (1) hour prior to scheduled starting time of game shall forfeit their privilege to witness the weigh in. League identification cards will be presented to the opposing coach at that time. In addition, the identification cards will be provided at the time of a protest or forfeit.
- H. An additional weigh in will be provided at half time of each game [example: scheduled game time is one o'clock (1:00) p.m., any player arriving after twelve forty-five (12:45) p.m., must weigh in at half time and is ineligible for the first (1st) half].
- I. If a player weighs in before a game begins and is designated as not meeting that division's weight requirements and is marked as a striper for that game, that player will not be allowed to then re-weigh at halftime and subsequently play the second half of the same game as a non-striped player. Once a stripe is applied to a player for a specific game, they are a striped player for the entire game.
- J. Teams must be in numerical order to weigh in.

ARTICLE 13 – INSURANCE

- A. Organizations will supply their own insurance and present a certificate in writing to the Tri County Junior Football Conference Secretary no later than the regular July meeting. No practice or games shall begin until this certificate is received.
- B. The Secretary of Tri County Junior Football Conference must receive the final weigh-in roster (initialed by last entry per team) at the Rules and Interpretation Meeting from every organization. Any team whose final weigh in roster and game stamp are not received by this date will be fined fifty dollars (\$50.00) for each violation. An additional ten dollars (\$10.00) per day will be assessed for each day thereafter. If not received prior to the start of the next scheduled game, forfeiture of that game by team in violation will occur and continue until the rosters and/or stamps are submitted. Any roster found to be filled out incorrectly must be corrected and received by the Secretary prior to the next scheduled game. Failure to do so results in the same repercussions as stated earlier in this paragraph.
- C. In order to avoid a possible conflict of interest, no member of the Insurance Committee shall be employed by or act as an agent for the Tri County Junior Football Conference designated insurance company used in that fiscal year, but may act as an advisor only.

ARTICLE 14 – FORFEITS

- A. A forfeit shall be defined as a game that does not get started or completed by either team. A disqualification shall be defined as a game that gets completed but later has certain determinations that demonstrate ineligibility on the part of either team.
- B. In the event that a visiting team forfeits a game, they will be responsible to reimburse the home field fifty dollars (\$50.00) per official for the four (4) officials the home field was required to hire. In addition to, the highest officer whose team is not involved will appoint a three (3) person committee to consider the reason for the forfeit and determine the amount of restitution to be paid to the home field for lost concessions, not to exceed \$350.00. The committee shall consist of three (3) members from different organizations not involved in the forfeit. In the event all Executive Officers are affiliated with the teams involved in the protest, power to appoint the committee reverts back to the President. This committee will meet within two (2) weeks and their findings will be final.
- C. In the event that a home team forfeits a game, they will be subject to a fine or penalty. The highest officer whose team is not involved will appoint a three (3) person committee to consider the reason for the forfeit and determine the amount of said penalty not to exceed \$500.00. The committee shall consist of three (3) members from different organizations not involved in the forfeit. In the event all Executive Officers are affiliated with the teams involved in the protest, power to appoint the committee reverts back to the President. This committee will meet within two (2) weeks and their findings will be final.