

## TM Rookie Division - SCC - Local Playing Rules & Interpretations

### To TM-Rookie Coaches:

As coaches it is your responsibility at this clinical level to teach players the basic tenants of football. This includes proper stance, alignment and procedural requirements to properly execute a play. Proper protection schemes in blocking and tackling are fundamental to this division and should be emphasize for the safety and welfare of players on the field. If players are not able to run or defend a play from scrimmage it clearly points to a coaching lapse. Players should be aware of where they line up and how to execute a play without physical prompting or moving players as "chess pieces". There is no excuse for teams not to be versed in conducting huddle procedures in a timely fashion in relation to the rules.

Procedural, positional and alignment penalties will be enforced. Football basic tenets create number match ups. Giving an offense or defense an unfair advantage by alignment or assignment is contrary to this division. It is important that as far as football is concerned that players know basic formation and strategy to properly maneuver on the field properly and safely.

Officials will be asked to enforce procedural, timing and alignment rules to ensure best common practice in coaching and teaching football at this clinical level. Officials will also be asked to report competitive programming, play that results in the lopsided scoring at the expense of other programs. Coaches engaging in behavior or scheming deemed to be unsportsmanlike by an official will result in an immediate suspension and investigation. All procedural and timing, huddle and delay of game penalties must be enforced. 10-minute quarters do not provide ample time for teams with large rosters to complete MPR's. Delay of game penalties therefore must be enforced by officials

If these rules are not enforced it gives unorganized programs an advantage. Teams unprepared to play should not be rewarded for their lack of preparedness at another team's expense. It is my hope that you will have officials at this level enforce basic football rules when it comes to timing and procedure as they would upper level and the high school games. This will keep the coaches in good form and as honest as possible in coaching at this level.

### General Format

1. **TM – Rookie League will use an 8-Player NON-COMPETITIVE format.** Rookie Tackle uses the NFHS rule book as a base and employs the following adjustments for 8-player football; **NO SCORE will be posted during or after games for any reason. Coaches promoting a competitive format will be assessed by SCC administration and will be subject to appropriate punitive measure to ensure the continuity of the division as a format for the education of football basic play. Charters / Coaches promoting a contrary format will be sanctioned as needed to maintain the enforcement and integrity of the division.**
2. **Eligibility** - Only first year 5, 6 and 7 and second-year 7-year old players within the age/weight matrix are eligible for TM-Rookie Division. All players playing two years in the TM division regardless of age/birthdate cut-off are not eligible and must move to the MM division regardless of the age / weight matrix published by PWLS. (SCC Amendment 2019)
3. All play from scrimmage will require all players to be in a 2-point stance. A "down" lineman is defined as a lineman in a 2-point stance on the LOS.
4. **Player Numbers:** All players, all positions, all skills philosophy, there are no restrictions on jersey numbers or player positions.
5. **Field Dimensions:** All game action takes place on one-half of the field with all possessions starting on the 40yard line going toward the end zone.
6. **Offensive Possession:** Each possession starts with the ball on the 40-yard line, regardless of whether there is a score, turnover or turnover on downs. f. There are no extra points by a kick.
  - a. All PATs are attempted through a run or pass try.
  - b. Coaches can choose to go for one point from the 3-yard line or two points from the 5-yard line.
7. **Turnovers:** A turnover on downs brings the ball back to the 40-yard line, and the teams switch sides from offense to defense, defense to offense. Turnovers on interceptions or fumbles are blown dead immediately. No returns are

allowed in order to protect players from running into the 20-yard administration zone between the two fields. Play restarts on the 40-yard line with the recovering/intercepting team now on offense. There are no defensive touchdowns.

8. **Hash Marks / Spotting:** After each play, the ball is spotted in the middle of the field. Hash marks are not used.
9. **Penalties-** Because of the limited field size, all 15-yard penalties are enforced as 10-yard penalties. 7. No penalty on the offense can take the ball beyond the 40-yard line to ensure the administration zone. Penalties on the offense that are called and accepted on or behind the 40-yard line result in a loss of down. Penalties on the offense called between the 40-yard line and the end zone in which yardage is lost, even if limited in enforcement by the 40-yard line, are enforced as written in terms of down lost or replayed. **Delay of game penalty and procedural penalties will be assessed as dead ball fouls as dictated in NFHS rules.**
10. **Administrative Zone -** There are no defensive safeties. Tackles behind the 40-yard line are re-spotted at the 40-yard line. All plays are blown dead and the ball is returned to the 40-yard line if an offensive ball-carrier or a fumbled ball crosses over midfield or at the official's discretion if coaches, administrators or players from the multiple fields and the dead zone area become close enough in proximity to be a concern for safety.
11. **There are no special teams.** There are no kickoff or punts. To start the game, after a field goal or TD the ball will be placed on the team's 40-yard line to begin a new series.
12. **There is no Blitzing.** A blitz is considered any player moving toward the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped. Any movement within or outside the box adjusting toward the line of scrimmage will be considered a blitz. **The play will be deemed dead and a five yard penalty will be assessed against the defense from the line of scrimmage. The down will be replayed.**
13. **Mandatory Play Rule.** 16-25 players - 12 plays / 26-30 players – 10 plays / 30-35 players – 8 plays. Any players not receiving their minimum plays by the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter must remain in the game until their requirements are met. **Any violation of the MPR rule will result in an automatic forfeiture and suspension of the Head Coach for the following week. Multiple offenses of this rule will be considered "bad faith" and the coach will be suspended for 1 year.**

### Offensive Scheme

1. **Line of Scrimmage -** Each play must include three offensive linemen – a center and two guards, one on either side of the center. These players are ineligible for first touch as the receiver of a pass. Player rotations may result with traditional non-lineman numbers at these positions for the purpose of fundamental skill development. Guards are required to play from a two-point stance.
2. **The center may only have his or her snapping hand down.** The distance between a guard and center may not exceed three feet (1 yard) but may be closer. The quarterback-center exchange may be direct, pistol or shotgun.
3. **Offensive lineman,** the center and two guards, cannot shift to another position. All three offensive linemen are ineligible for first touch on a pass.
4. **Quarterback keeps / sneaks are prohibited in all situations** because the defense is not allowed to have players aligned over the center or in the center-guard A gap. **Silent Snaps / A Gap Runs - "No under center snap can be made without the offensive line being set and in a down 2-point position by verbal command.** A down position is defined as a player being in a 2-point stance. **The quarterback must indicate a snap by either motion in a shotgun/pistol position or verbal prompt. No silent snaps are allowed."**
5. **The offense must have five players on the line of scrimmage.** No more, no less. The fourth and fifth players can be tight ends, split ends or a combination of the two. Only the two end players on the line of scrimmage are eligible for first touching of a pass.
6. There are no unbalanced lines including trips (3 players outside the guard box). The split ends/tight ends must be on opposite sides of the center. Even if outside the G-G box, there are only two players on that side of the field allowed at any time.
7. Motion is allowed as long as it does not form a trips formation.
8. All blocks below the waist by any player anywhere on the field are illegal 10-yard penalty and loss of down.

### Defensive Scheme

9. **The defense cannot in any way engage the center. Defensive linemen must be in a two-point stance. Defensive players cannot line up in the A gaps and must remain on 2 technique "head-up" on the guard. Any contact with the center while the ball is being snapped by a defensive player is considered an**

**“unsportsmanlike penalty” on the coach and the team is assessed a 15- yard penalty. The second infraction will result in an additional 15-yard penalty and the head coach being ejected for the remainder of the game.**

10. **Defenses may only have two defensive linemen unless an offensive formation includes a tight end.** In that case, a third defensive lineman may line up over the tight end. Two tight ends allow the defense to use four defensive linemen.
11. **Defensive Alignment** - Defensive linemen must be aligned on the guards and/or tight ends in a “head-up” position. No shade or gap alignment is allowed.
  - a. If the offense aligns with no tight ends, the defense may still align with four players on the line of scrimmage, but they must be positioned over the receivers they are covering.
  - b. With the exception of the players covering the guards, the defense is not required to have additional players on the line of scrimmage but has the option to do so.
  - c. The defense must have one player at least 10 yards from the ball.
  - d. All remaining players not on the line of scrimmage or at deep safety must be four yards off of the line of scrimmage. •
  - e. Defenses that choose to not match the eligible receivers on the line of scrimmage may position those players on the second level as long as they are at least 4 yards from the ball.
2. **No blitzes are allowed.** Players within the box at the snap can penetrate upon the snap. Linebackers, safeties and cornerbacks (both on the line and at depth) can flow to the ball naturally after a handoff is made, but predetermining penetration to a specific gap is illegal. The box includes offensive players who line up within two yards of the ball and on the line of scrimmage along with the defensive players lined up directly over them.
3. **Rushing-** On pass plays, anyone outside the box on the snap cannot rush the quarterback and must remain behind the line of scrimmage in pass coverage.
4. **Goal line Adjustment** - If the ball is inside the 4-yard line, the five non-linemen, non-deep players may align on the goal line.

**COACHES ARE REMINDED THIS IS A NON-COMPETITIVE DIVISION AND THEIR BEHAVIOR AND OR PROGRAMMING CAN BE ASSESSED BY SCC PERSONNEL TO DETERMINE PLAY THAT IS REPORTED TO BE CONTRARY TO THE FORMAT OF ROOKIE FOOTBALL. AS A ROOKIE COACH, PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU ARE MINDFUL THAT YOUTH FOOTBALL AT THIS LEVEL IS AN EDUCATIONAL FORMAT TO TEACH BASIC FUNDAMENTALS AND SHOULD BE PLAYED WITH THE HIGHEST SPORTSMANSHIP AND ETIQUETTE AFFORDED TO OPPONENT PROGRAMS. ANY COMPLAINTS FROM OFFICIALS, LEAGUE ADMINISTRATORS ETC. THAT CAN BE SUBSTANTIATED WILL BE PUNITIVELY ADDRESSED BY THE SCC TO ENSURE THE INTEGRITY OF THIS DIVISION OF PLAY.**