

MM Rookie Division - SCC - Local Playing Rules & Interpretations

To MM-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 call a play from a huddle, aware of where they line up and how to execute a play without prompting from behind the huddle it clearly points to a coaching lapse. 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. 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.

1. **There are no kick offs.** To start the game, after a field goal or TD the ball will be placed on receiving teams 35-yard line to begin a new series.
2. **Delay of game penalty and procedural penalties will be assessed as dead ball fouls as dictated in NFHS rules.**
3. **Coaches are not allowed on the field. All calls will be made from the sidelines or by player exchange. This will ensure that all teams are coached and proper huddle procedure and time management between plays. (SCC 2019 Amendment)**
4. **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.**
5. **There is no rushing of punts, field goals or PAT's. Kicking is considered a free play.** The kicking must be declared. Defenders can move, jump up and down and make noise but cannot in any way attempt to penetrate the line of scrimmage. If the kick is unsuccessful on a declared kicking attempt the play is dead.
 - a. Defenders cannot line up over the center;
 - b. A punt, field goal or PAT snap can be walked back to the tee or a spot behind the line of scrimmage from a direct snap;
 - c. Kickers are allowed to regain possession of a bad snap prior to a kick.;
 - d. Offensive players on the punt team must remain in their stances until the ball is punted. Once punted the ball is live and the receiving team is free to advance the ball.

- e. 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.
6. **The defense cannot in any way engage the center.** Even if a defensive lineman lines up on an inside technique of a guard, no contact is allowed on the center. Defensive players cannot line up in the A gaps and must remain on a 1 technique or inside shade of 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.
7. 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. **There shall be no more than seven (7) "down" lineman" as required by NFHS football rules on the offensive line of scrimmage. There shall be no more than six (6) "down" lineman on the line of scrimmage for defense. There shall be no more than 8 players inside the free blocking zone or box as a defensive front. The free blocking zone or box is considered to be 4 yards from the tackle, 3 yards deep from either side of the ball.** All linebackers, safeties and corners must be outside the free blocking zone or box and at least 3 yards deep or they are considered in the box. The free blocking zone disintegrates once an offensive player leaves the box. Defensive players cannot blitz, but can pursue the ball behind the line of scrimmage once the ball has been snapped if the offensive player runs laterally or backwards.
(PWLS Amendment 2019)
8. **Lopsided/Intentionally run up scores.** Any break in Pop Warner rules, general etiquette and sound sportsmanship of any kind, verified by referee statement, video or other source that may be used to determine un-sportsman-like play against another team will result in the Head Coach immediate suspension for the next week without appeal. The Mitey Mite division is for all purposes considered a clinical division. Any reluctance of a coach to refrain from playing in good faith in a fair and balanced contest after being ahead by 18 or more points will be considered to be in violation of policy of Los Angeles County Pop Warner and Pop Warner football.
9. **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 3rd 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.
10. **Silent Snaps / A Gap Runs - "No under center snap can be made without the offensive line being set and in a down position by verbal command.** A down position is defined as a player being in a 3 point or 4 point stance. **The quarterback must indicate a snap by either motion in a shotgun/pistol position or verbal prompt. No silent snaps are allowed."**
- a. The A gap can be run through and quick snap used in 3rd and 4th down situations with less than 1 yard to run a play to secure a first down. The silent snap and run through the A gap is contrary to the ability of the defense to not hit the center. This gives the offense a clear advantage in yardage every play and could eliminate other players on offense from ever running the ball. This strictly forbidden. Any coach using this tactic will be suspended.