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OPTIMIST CLUB OF ARLINGTON FOOTBALL RULES

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OPTIMIST CLUB OF ARLINGTON FLAG FOOTBALL

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I. NOTICE

The Football Project Committee (FPC), with the approval of the Youth Activities Committee of the Optimist Club of Arlington, reserves the right to waive, interpret or amend any rule when such waiver or amendment is deemed to be in the best interest of this program.

Waiver in individual instances may be made with the intent to allow each child who expresses a desire to play the opportunity to do so.

II. COACHES' RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The head coach of a team is responsible to affirm that he and all of his assistant coaches are members in good standing of an Optimist Club, current in the payment of their dues, has submitted a completed coach's application and has been certified as coach by the USA Football Certification Program prior to the start of practice. All applicants will abide by the rules, policies, regulations, guidelines and the intentions thereof, as set forth by the Optimist Club of Arlington.
- B. Applications and agreements are for the current year's season only. They must be submitted each year and must be approved each year, prior to the start of practice, by the FPC and the YAC of the Optimist Club of Arlington.
- C. The head coach is responsible for the conduct of all assistant coaches and the team. Any head coach will immediately remove any assistant coach objectionable to the Football Project Committee or the Youth Activities Committee.
- D. The coach of each team must meet all the requirements of the "Schedule of Events". This includes but is not limited to: turn in of registrations cards, birth certificates, physical examination forms, team rosters on the prescribed forms, player fees, scheduled date and times for weigh-ins. Failure to meet the requirements and schedules will result in penalties such as probation, suspension, or forfeiture of game(s).
- E. Each coach must actively support and encourage player participation during any fund-raising campaign that may be conducted for this program. Dollar amount will be set by the Project Committee. The amount will be a minimum for each division. Failure to reach the minimum may subject the head coach to suspension.

- F. It shall be mandatory that each head coach meet with the parents of team players during the time period as shown on the schedule of events. The purpose of this meeting will be to explain the football program, promote sportsmanship, and to define what is expected of each player. The coach must provide a list of any specific team rules that may effect a player's participation in a game.
- G. The head coach of each team must restrain all fans from any display of conduct that is deemed not appropriate or does not display proper sportsmanship. This includes, but is not limited to: jeering at any player, field official or an Optimist member who has been assigned to work the field. It is not considered appropriate for fans to be closer than 5 yards from the playing field. Fans must not walk or stand in the area in front of the bleachers (this area is reserved for pep squads). If fans insist in following this type of behavior, the game may be stopped and it will be the coaches' responsibility to talk to the fans.
- H. Each head coach must insure that the required adults to operate the down and distance markers, monitor games and keep score are provided.
- I. Each coach must insure that all issued equipment is returned to the Optimist Club of Arlington as scheduled by the FPC.
- J. Each coach must insure that every player on the team be given equal opportunity to participate in each game as required in Rule II, Section H.
- K. Each head coach must verify that each player on their team satisfies the age and residence requirements of this program. Each registration card must be verified whenever received. Failure to verify this information will result in forfeiture(s) as prescribed by the Football Project Committee.

- L. **No coach will use tobacco of any kind, nor will they use or be under the influence of any intoxicant, while in the presence of youths who are participating in our programs. This includes practice areas, game fields and meeting sessions.**

- M. Coaches must conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the high standards set forth by the Optimist Club of Arlington. Misconduct, including but not limited to, profane or abusive language, gestures, etc., shall result in the immediate ejection and removal from the playing fields. Such ejection and removal may only be conducted by a member of the Football Project Committee.

- N. Any coach that does not follow these rules will be subject to dismissal from this program. A dismissed coach must appear before the Football Project Committee and must then be reinstated by the Youth Activities Committee. A dismissed coach may not participate in any football activity until reinstated.

III. REGULATIONS

A. Divisions

1. The Optimist Club of Arlington Tackle Football Program is divided into four Divisions: 6th Grade, 5th Grade, 4th Grade, and 3rd Grade.
2. Each division shall be composed of the number of teams and conferences, which the Football Project Committee determines, will allow for an equitable schedule.
3. Teams will be composed of players who reside in the districts as stated by the Football Project Committee and/or as assigned by the appropriate grade administrator with the approval of the Football Project Committee. Any player who has not previously participated in the program may only join a team with the prior approval of the appropriate grade administrator.

B. Teams

1. Each team within a division will have a maximum number of players on the roster as determined by the Football Project Committee. The minimum number of players to form a team is eighteen (18). Recommended maximum number of players is twenty-five (25)
2. The Football Project Committee will initially establish 3rd Grade Tackle Divisions teams and team names.
3. Teams progress intact to the next division each year.
Example: All Players on the team named “Bears” in the 3rd Grade Division will become the “Bears” in the 4th Grade Division next year, and the “Bears” in the 5th Grade Division the following year, etc.

4. Any player who changes residence from one District to another, or lives in a District changed by the Football Project Committee, at their option, may remain on their original team throughout the rest of their tenure in this program. In the event they elect not to do so, they must request in writing to the Football Project Committee requesting a team change. The Football Project Committee may grant team reassignment but, and the player will not have a choice of teams.

C. Eligibility

Players must meet all eligibility guidelines for each season of participation in this program. Requests for exceptions to any requirement must be submitted in writing and are subject to verification, review and final approval of the Football Project Committee before eligibility may be established.

1. Must reside in the city of Arlington, or attend an AISD school, or attend a private school in the city of Arlington, or attend a public school that is pre-approved by the YAC. Any player who meets these requirements in PreK/K may continue to play in the Optimist Club of Arlington's program through the 6th grade.
2. Reside within the designated district of the team on which they participate or meet the criteria of Section II, Paragraph B, Sub-Paragraph 4.
3. Submit a registration card signed by the parent or legal guardian relieving the Optimist Club of Arlington of all liability prior to participating in any practice sessions.
4. Each player must submit a photocopy of their official notarized birth certificate.

5. Submit an approved form, signed by a licensed practitioner, showing the individual's physical fitness to participate in a tackle football program. This must be in the coach's possession prior to the individual being allowed to participate.
6. Be listed on the official team roster submitted to the division administrator.
7. Shall not participate in this tackle program more than four (4) years.
8. Shall not participate in this program while participating in any other football program or if eligible to participate in any UIL or NCAA program.
9. Satisfy the participation fee requirement.
10. Any team found in violation of any of the Eligibility or Age and Weight Rules shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including forfeiting all games in which the ineligible player participated and/or appeared on the official roster as applicable. The score of the forfeited games shall be 1 to 0.
11. No player shall participate in a division grade level lower than his school grade level.
12. Must have been promoted and moved to the next grade at the end of the previous year.
13. Players from outside of the Optimist Club of Arlington's approved area will be allowed to participate in our program under the following conditions:
 - a. The Grade Level Administrator will have sole authority in assigning the player to a team in need of players. This assignment will be reviewed by the FPC and the YAC.
 - b. Placement requests from coaches or parents will not be acknowledged.

- c. Team assignment is for the player's duration in either our flag or tackle programs. If a player participates in our flag program and requests to continue to play in our tackle program, the player will once again be assigned to a team at the 3rd Grade Administrator's discretion, reviewed by the FPC and the YAC.
- d. Player assignments can not be appealed.

D. Age and Weight

1. The official weight of each player will be determined on a specific date and at an approximate time. Weight administrator(s) appointed by the Football Project Committee chairman will conduct the weigh-in. Weigh-ins will be conducted prior to the first and fifth games of each season.
2. Official weigh-ins will be conducted in an area designated by the Football Project Committee Chair person. At both weigh-ins, each player shall be weighed wearing their game jersey, shorts, shoes optional, and have their helmet available.
3. A player is officially weighed by stepping on the scales (1 time) in the presence of a Weight Administrator. There shall be no appeal of the weigh-in procedure.
4. Each player must meet the age and weight requirements for the divisions as follows:
 - a. 6th Grade
 - (1) Age - will not attain the age of thirteen (13) by September 1st of the year participating;
 - (2) Weight - eligible ball carriers and receivers on offense, one hundred thirty (130) pounds; others, one hundred sixty (160) pounds;

- b. 5th Grade
 - (1) Age – will not attain the age of twelve (12) by September 1st of the year participating;
 - (2) Weight – eligible ball carriers and receivers on offense, one hundred ten (110) pounds; others, one hundred forty (140) pounds.
 - c. 4th Grade
 - (1) Age – will not attain the age of eleven (11) by September 1st of the year participating;
 - (2) Weight – eligible ball carriers and receivers on offense, ninety-five (95) pounds; others, one hundred twenty-five (125) pounds.
 - d. 3rd Grade
 - (1) Age – will not attain the age of ten (10) by September 1st of the year participating;
 - (2) Weight – eligible ball carriers and receives on offense, eighty (80) pounds; others, one hundred ten (110) pounds.
5. Failure to meet the weight requirements of a division shall not prohibit a player from participating in the next higher division in which they meet the requirements.
 6. Any player who exceeds the maximum weight limitations of a division at an official weigh-in may request a special weigh-in prior to any scheduled game time.
 7. Players may not re-weigh other than official weigh-ins for the purpose of establishing eligibility for ball carriers in their division.
 8. The official weight determined at the weigh-in prior to the first game will be considered valid until the weigh-in prior to the fifth game.

9. The official weight determined at the weigh-in prior to the sixth week of the game schedule will be considered valid for the remainder of the season, including all playoff games.
10. A player whose weight exceeds the limitations of an eligible ball carrier for his division may not be utilized in any position normally utilized by an eligible ball carrier. The player may not be utilized as a punter, end, or primary return person on punts or kickoffs.

E. Equipment

1. Each player is required to wear the following equipment provided by the Optimist Club of Arlington:
 - a. Helmet
 - b. Shoulder Pads
 - c. Official Team Jersey (Official games only)
2. No alteration to the Optimist issued equipment is allowed, except for the application of decals to helmets. All decals must be of a type and material as to be readily removed, all decals must be removed prior to final equipment turn-in.
3. Jerseys may not be altered in any way. Alteration of the jersey with the addition of a player name, decal, transfer, patch, etc. *is not* permitted. No player shall participate in any game while wearing an altered jersey. It will be the player's responsibility to pay the Optimist Club of Arlington for a replacement jersey.

4. In addition to the equipment listed in Section II, Paragraph E, Sub-Paragraph 1, each player must wear the following equipment supplied by the player:
 - a. Pants with knee, thigh and hip pads;
 - b. Shoes without hard or metal cleats (detachable cleats are not allowed nor street shoes);
 - c. Mouth Guard

5. The numbering system will conform where possible to the following:
 - a. Backs #1 - #49
 - b. Interior Line #50 - #79
 - c. Ends #80 - #99

6. At the parent's option, a clear face shield may be attached to the helmet issued by the Optimist Club of Arlington.

F. Practices

A PRACTICE SESSION IS DEFINED AS:

Two or more players from the same team engaging in football activities under adult supervision. Official games are not considered practice sessions.

1. No practice session of any type may be held prior to the "first practice date" as stated in the "Schedule of Events" issued by the Football Project Committee. (This rule does not apply to youth participants in another service or professional organization's program under the supervision of adults sanctioned by that program. The program must be recognized and approved by the YAC chairman.

2. Beginning with the week of the “first practice date” until the week of the first scheduled game or the start of school (whichever comes first), a maximum of five (5) practice sessions may be held during the week (Monday-Sunday).
3. Beginning with the week of the first scheduled game or the start of school (whichever comes first), a maximum of three (3) practice sessions may be held during a week (Monday - Sunday). A scrimmage/practice game is considered a practice.
4. During the week of the “first practice date” (Monday - Sunday), no practice session may be held with the players wearing “full pads”. During this time, they may wear helmets.
5. No more than one (1) practice session may be held on a single day.
6. Practices may be held on Sunday. Any practice held on Sunday must start after 1:00PM and no player may be disciplined (loss of playing time, sprints, etc.) for missing Sunday practice.
7. Practice sessions must be terminated prior to sundown to allow players to return home prior to the onset of darkness. Practice sessions may go beyond darkness if the team adheres to the following conditions.
 - a. Practice areas must have lights, approved by the Football Project Committee and the Youth Activities Committee.
 - b. All practice sessions must be terminated by 8PM.
 - c. No practice session may run longer than 3 hours.
 - d. All players must remain in the custody of a coach until the player is picked up by a parent or legal guardian or by an adult approved by the parent or legal guardian.

8. No practice session may be held on any school property, unless the head coach has permission from the principal of the school.
9. No team may participate in any game or scrimmage against a team outside of this program.
10. No team may participate in any game or scrimmage against any team outside of their designated division.

G. Playing Rules

1. The NCAA Official Rule Book as modified by the NCAA Interpretation Book with respect to Texas High Schools, shall prevail except as modified by the following rules:
 - a. The field shall be eight (80) yards long and marked as specified by the Football Project Committee.
 - b. Penalty Modifications:
 - (1). The following personal fouls will be assessed a fifteen (15) yard penalty and an automatic first down:
 - (a). Intentional Face Mask
 - (b). Spearing
 - (c). Roughing the passer, the kicker, or holder
 - (d). Clipping
 - (e). Piling On
 - (2). The following personal fouls will be assessed a fifteen (15) yard penalty:
 - (a). Butting or Ramming with the Helmet
 - (b). Offensive Face Mask
 - (c). Use of Abusive or Insulting Language
 - (3). All other major violations shall be assessed a ten (10) yard penalty instead of the customary fifteen (15) yard penalty.

- (4). A kick-off receiving or punt receiving “Halo Rule” violation shall be assessed a five (5) yard penalty instead of the customary ten (10) yard penalty.
- c. All kickoffs for each grade will be from the thirty (30) yard line.
- d. Quarters will consist of an eight (8) minute regulation clock with each team receiving a maximum of three (3) time-outs per half.
- e. The interval between halves shall be ten (10) minutes.
- f. Eligible substitutes may replace a player or fill a player’s vacancy between consecutive downs; such entries do not affect the game clock or interrupt the twenty-five (25) second clock; the number of individual entries is not limited.
- g. After the scoring of a touchdown, the conversion rule applies as follows:
 - (1). One (1) point will be awarded for successfully running the ball across the goal line.
 - (2). Two (2) points will be awarded for successfully kicking the ball through the uprights or successfully completing a forward pass when the play terminates beyond the goal line.
- h. The 3rd grade division has the options of a declared 20 yard punt on any offensive play. They also have the option of a free kick. The 4th grade division has the option of a free kick only. During a free kick, the offensive team must declare to the referee their intention to punt. They may not alter their decision to punt. The referee will notify the defensive team. The defensive team must align themselves with a minimum of nine (9) players within five (5) yards of the line of scrimmage. Both the offensive and defensive teams must remain in their proper alignment until the ball is actually kicked.

Violation of this rule is a five (5) yard illegal formation penalty. A declared punt does not count towards a player's participation.

- i. When at the line of scrimmage the "Center" may move the ball to any position necessary to insure a clean snap of the ball. As long as he does not lift it off the ground. If he does, it will be considered a snap, and will become a live ball.
2. If a player is ejected from a game he may not re-enter that game and may not participate in the next scheduled game.
 3. In the event a play-off game ends in a tie, the following rules shall apply:
 - a. The home team will call the coin toss.
 - b. The winner of the coin toss will select offense or defense.
 - c. The loser will select the end zone into which play will continue.
 - d. The ball will be placed at the 15 yard line. Each team will have an equal number of possessions. The first team to outscore the other will be the winner.
 - e. The team closest to the end zone, at which play will continue, will move to a position between the goal line and the 15 Yard line. The team on the opposite end will move to a position between the 15 and the 30 yard line. This applies when both teams are on the same side. If teams are on opposite sides of the field, then both will position between the goal line and the 15 yard line on their end of field.
 - f. Can make 1st down.

H. Participation

1. Each player must participate in at least the minimum number of plays in each half of every game, including playoff and championship games.
2. The minimum number of required plays will be determined by the number of eligible players at each game as follows:

Current Participation Rule

Number of Players	Plays per Half
25	7
24	7
23	7
22	8
21	8
20	8
19	9
18	9

No team shall be allowed to form with less than 18 players.

3. The penalty for not fulfilling the current participation rule shall be:
 - a. As prescribed by a Commissioner or the Football Project Committee Chairperson, if the penalty occurs in the first half of a game, the team will make up the player's plays in the second half, which is the player's first half plays missed plus all of the player's second half plays. If the offense occurs in the second half of the game, the offended player will play either the entire first half of the following game on either offense or defense, or play the entire game on either offense or defense as specified by the Football Project Committee.
 - b. A forfeit may be declared and coaches may be suspended by the Football Project Committee.

4. Monitors must visually identify the players on the field. Neither player position sheets nor any other aid will be allowed.

IV. GENERAL RULES:

- A. Only approved personnel are allowed on the bench side of the playing field. These include a maximum of five (5) coaches per team, a maximum of two (2) non-coaching monitors per team and any non-coaching medical personnel.
- B. Photography, filming, or use of electronic equipment, audio or visual, or scouting may not be done on the bench side (goal line to goal line) of the playing field.
- C. The head coach and the assistant coaches will confine their activities to the bench side of the field, between the mid-field line and their twenty (20) yard line during a game and must be wearing their current OCA furnished badge.
- D. The “home team” will be the first team listed on the game schedule. The home team also sits on the bench that lines up with the way they are listed on score boards, also will warm up at same end zone.
- E. The “home team” will provide two (2) adults (minimum of eighteen (18) years old) and the “visiting team” will provide two adults (minimum of eighteen (18) years old) to operate the down and distance markers. These

V. SCHEDULE AND PLAYOFF GAMES:

- A. The schedule will contain non-conference and conference games. Only conference games will be used to determine conference standings and teams to compete in playoff games.
- B. The dates, sites and format of all playoff games will be determined and announced by the Football Project Committee prior to the end of regular play, subject to the approval of the Youth Activities Committee.
- C. In the event that teams are tied for playoff position(s) at the completion of regular play, the playoff position(s) individuals shall be considered “official” and shall not coach or advise players on the field will be determined on the basis of which team defeated the other. Should this method not rectify the situation, a means judged equitable by the Football Project Committee will be used.
- F. A coach may not dismiss a player from a team for any reason without investigation and concurrence of the Football Project Committee.
- G. Last game of the day, the winning team will clear all equipment off fields.

OPTIMIST CLUB OF ARLINGTON

FLAG FOOTBALL

GRADES PreK/K, 1, and 2

I. SCOPE

- A. The Football Project Committee (FPC), with the approval of the Youth Activities Committee of the Optimist Club of Arlington, reserves the right to waive, interpret or amend any rule when such waiver or amendment is deemed to be in the best interest of this program.

Waiver in individual instances may be made with the intent to allow each child who expresses a desire to play the opportunity to do so.

Please see section II for coaches' responsibility.

- B. The roster size for a flag football team will be at least twelve (12) players but not more than sixteen (16).
- C. Field size will be the same as in the tackle division for 1st and 2nd grade divisions. Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten division will use half of the tackle field.

II. COACHES' RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Each head coach and all assistant coaches must be a member in good standing of an Optimist Club, current in the payment of their dues, and have submitted a completed coach's application prior to the start of practice. The coach's application contains an agreement stating that the applicant will abide by the rules, policies, regulations, guidelines and the intentions thereof, as set forth by the Optimist Club of Arlington.
- B. Applications and agreements are for the current year's season only. They must be submitted each year and must be approved each year, prior to the start of practice, by the FPC and the YAC of the Optimist Club of Arlington.
- C. The head coach is responsible for the conduct of all assistant coaches and the team. Any head coach will immediately remove any assistant coach objectionable to the Football Project Committee or the Youth Activities Committee.
- D. The coach of each team must meet all the requirements of the "Schedule of Events". This includes but is not limited to: turn in of registrations cards, birth certificates, physical examination forms, team rosters on the prescribed forms and player fees. Failure to meet the requirements and schedules will result in penalties such as probation, suspension, or forfeiture of game(s).
- E. Each coach must actively support and encourage player participation during any fund-raising campaign that may be conducted for this program. Dollar amount will be set by the Project Committee. The amount will be a minimum for each division. Failure to reach the minimum may subject the head coach to suspension.

- F. It shall be mandatory that each head coach meet with the parents of team players during the time period as shown on the schedule of events. The purpose of this meeting will be to explain the football program, promote sportsmanship, and to define what is expected of each player. The coach must provide a list of any specific team rules that may effect a player's participation in a game.
- G. The head coach of each team must restrain all fans from any display of conduct that is deemed not appropriate or does not display proper sportsmanship. This includes, but is not limited to: jeering at any player, field official or an Optimist member who has been assigned to work the field. It is not considered appropriate for fans to be closer than 5 yards from the playing field. Fans must not walk or stand in the area in front of the bleachers (this area is reserved for pep squads). If fans insist in following this type of behavior, the game may be stopped and it will be the coaches' responsibility to talk to the fans.
- H. Each head coach must insure that the required adults to operate the down and distance markers and keep score are provided.
- I. Each coach must insure that all issued equipment is returned to the Optimist Club of Arlington as scheduled by the FPC.
- J. Each coach must insure that every player on the team be given equal opportunity to participate in each game as required in Rule II, Section H.
- K. Each head coach must verify that each player on their team satisfies the age and residence requirements of this program. Each registration card must be verified whenever received. Failure to verify this information will result in forfeiture(s) as prescribed by the Football Project Committee.

- L. **No coach or Optimist Official will use tobacco of any kind, nor will they use or be under the influence of any intoxicant, while in the presence of youths who are participating in our programs. This includes practice areas, game fields and meeting sessions.**

- M. Coaches must conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the high standards set forth by the Optimist Club of Arlington. Misconduct, including but not limited to, profane or abusive language, gestures, etc., shall result in the immediate ejection and removal from the playing fields. Such ejection and removal may only be conducted by a member of the Football Project Committee.

- N. Any coach that does not follow these rules will be subject to dismissal from this program. A dismissed coach must appear before the Football Project Committee and must then be reinstated by the Youth Activities Committee. A dismissed coach may not participate in any football activity until reinstated.

III. GENERAL GAME CONSIDERATIONS

- A. The game is played between two teams of eight (8) players each.
- B. All Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten games will end in a tie. Scores will be kept in 1st grades however no standings will be kept and no Championship game will be played.
- C. Scores will be recorded and standings kept for the 2nd grade. Playoff games and a Championship game will take place for 2nd grade.
- D. All Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten games will have one (1) official. All other games will be officiated by a crew of two (2) officials, a referee and a linesman. When available, a third official, an umpire may be added. The referee has general supervision and control of the game, and is the final authority for all decisions made during the game.
- E. **There are no protests in flag football.**
- F. An OCA Flag Football Administrator or his designated replacement will be present at all games to assure proper conduct and display of sportsmanship by coaches, players, substitutes and spectators. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated from any team or its spectators.
- G. Rescheduling of games cancelled or interrupted due to inclement weather shall be the responsibility of the OCA Flag Football Administrator through the OCA Football Project Committee.

IV. PLAYING FIELD FOR 1ST, AND 2ND

- A. Each team (head coach, authorized assistants and players) shall remain on the “TEAM” side of their field between the 20-yard line and midfield. The home team shall occupy the southern-most area.
- B. The teams shall jointly provide three (3) adults to work distance indicators and down marker. Chains/down marker will move along the “SPECTATOR” side of the field.
- C. All fans, or others not in an official capacity or meeting the requirements of Paragraph B, must remain on the “SPECTATOR” side of the field.
- D. Collapsible yard markers will be placed at ten (10) yard intervals between the goal lines to assist in determining general ball location.

V. EQUIPMENT

- A. Game uniforms shall be worn as provided by the OCA. Alteration of the jersey with the addition of a player name, decal, transfer, patch, etc. *is not* permitted. Pants or shorts are allowed, when worn by all team members. They must be of a color that contrasts with the flags provided by the OCA.
- B. Mouthpieces are required for all players.
- C. Soft cleats or other soft sole shoes shall be worn. Metal cleats or spikes of any kind are not allowed.
- D. An OCA provided belt with three (3) Velcro-attached flags shall be worn at all times by all players and substitutes.
- E. Flags must be worn within the guidelines set by the Football Project Committee.

VI. GAME PRELIMINARIES

- A. Prior to the scheduled start of each game, the game officials shall meet at midfield with the head coaches and three players designated as team captains from both teams.
- B. The head coaches shall assure the game officials that all players are properly equipped (uniform, shoes, mouth pieces and flag belts).
- C. The referee will conduct a coin flip. The home team coach or one of the home team captains will call the fall of the coin while the coin is in the air, resulting in the following options:

FIRST HALF OPTIONS

TEAM "A"

(Coin Toss Winner)

OFFENSE /DEFENSE

GOAL TO DEFEND

DEFER TO 2nd HALF

(Will get 1st half second choice after
Team "B" selection.)

SECOND HALF OPTIONS

TEAM "A"

(If deferred in 1st half)

OFFENSE/DEFENSE

(NOTE: Because offensive direction changes only at the half and not at each quarter, the "GOAL TO DEFEND" is not a second half option.)

VII. PLAYING THE GAME

- A. Except as noted, rules of play shall be the “Official National Touch and Flag Football Rules, Latest Edition, as published by the Athletic Institute”.
- B. The playing time for Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten grade games shall be fifty (50) minutes in duration, divided into two twenty-five (25) minutes halves. The playing time for 1st and 2nd grade games shall be forty (40) minutes in duration, divided into two halves of twenty (20) minutes each. The time between halves shall be seven (7) minute
- C. Straight running time will be used for the entire game with the clock stopping only for:
 - 1. Team Time-outs;
 - 2. Official Time-Outs;
 - 3. Touchdowns (PAT’s will be an untimed down. The clock will resume on the offensive snap following the PAT attempt);
 - 4. Penalties in the final two (2) minutes of each half. (The clock will resume on the offensive snap following the penalty).
- D. Each team is permitted three (3) time-outs per half. Only the on-field coach (Pre-K through 1st Grade) or the designated captain (2nd Grade) may request the time out. Any official may call time out when it is deemed necessary.
- E. For Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten grade games, two (2) coaches are allowed on the playing field to assist in play calling. For 1st games one coach per team is permitted on the playing field to assist in play calling. No Coaches are allowed on the field for 2nd grade games.

- F. There are no kickoffs. The ball is placed on the offensive team's own twenty (20) yard line at the start of each half to begin that drive. Placement is also on the offensive twenty (20) yard following each score.
- G. Substitution of players must be handled in the following manner. On change of possession, all players on the bench will enter the game and remain on the field until the next change of possession. Players may only be redesignated as offensive or defensive players on a game quarter basis or by approval of the acting Flag Administrator.
- H. Leaving the feet (diving) is not permitted by any player at any time.
- I. All players must have their flags hanging freely at their hips. Shirt and belt must be tucked-in and not hinder flag removal. Should a flag be inadvertently lost or removed prior to a player becoming a ball carrier, that player remains an eligible ball carrier, but will be considered stopped at the first defensive opportunity. Should a player lose a flag for any reason, while carrying the ball, the player shall be considered down at the point of flag loss.

VIII. PLAYING OFFENSE

- A. A minimum of five (5) players shall be positioned on the offensive line.
- B. All offensive players should remain stationary in a legal stance for at least one full second prior to the snap. One eligible ball carrier may be in motion, but motion may not be toward the opponent's goal line.
- C. Offensive linemen should remain stationary of the "SET" count with their hands on their waist; elbows outside the shoulder. The referees will discourage offensive line movement prior to the snap, but slight movement may be tolerated by the officials, when that motion does not provide an offensive advantage, or does not draw the defensive unit offside.
- D. All plays from scrimmage must begin with a legal snap. In a legal snap, the ball must leave the hand(s) of the center and be in possession of a back fielder player.
- E. Upon assuming a blocking position following the snap, the blocker's elbows must remain entirely outside the shoulders. Blocker's hands must remain on the hips. Arms may not be interlocked with another player.
- F. **THERE SHALL BE NO INITIATION OF CONTACT BY ANY PLAYER AT ANY TIME.** All contact not judged incidental by the game officials will be penalized.
- G. The blocker may not swing, throw or flip the elbow or forearm. The blocker's purpose is to provide an obstruction between the defensive player and the path of the ball carrier.

- H. Blocking stance shall assure any incidental contact is made on the front side of the player, below the neck and above the waist; however, contact should be avoided between players.
- I. There is no two-on-one blocking allowed beyond the line of scrimmage.
- J. All offensive players, except the center, guards, and tackles are eligible ball carriers. All offensive players, including the center, guards, and tackles are eligible to receive a forward pass, except the passer.
- K. All forward passes must originate behind the line of scrimmage. The offensive team may make as many forward passes as desired from or behind the line of scrimmage.
- L. A ball carrier may pass the ball backward at any time.
- M. Spinning by the ball carrier is permitted.
- N. “Stiff Arming” and “Flag Guarding” is not permitted.
- O. The ball carrier may not attempt to run through a defender.
- P. Hurdling is not permitted. The ball carrier may not attempt to jump over any defensive player.
- Q. For 1st and 2nd grade games the time between consecutive offensive plays by the same team shall not exceed thirty-five (35) seconds. For Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten grade games the time between consecutive plays by the same team shall not exceed forty-five (45) seconds.

- R. For 1st and 2nd grade games the offensive team must gain ten (10) yards in four (4) downs, except as modified due to enforcement of penalties.
- S. For Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten grade games, the offensive team will have five (5) downs to try to score a touchdown. If they fail to score the ball goes over on downs.
- T. All point-after-touchdown attempts shall originate at the three (3) yard line.
- U. An inadvertent whistle by a game official will result in the team with possession at the whistle, accepting the play at the point of the whistle.

IX. PLAYING DEFENSE:

- A. Defensive players must line up at least one yard off the line of scrimmage and shall have full freedom of movement at all times on their side of this neutral zone.
- B. No defensive player may play directly across from the center.
- C. No defender may enter the neutral zone until the ball is snapped.
- D. No defensive player may touch the center until the center has regained an upright position.
- E. Defensive players may use their hands on their opponents only for balance. Players who grab, hold, push, slap or run through an opponent will be penalized.
- F. Defensive players must play the flag, not the man.
- G. No defender shall remove the flag of any offensive player, who does not have possession of the ball. (A pass receiver's flag may not be removed prior to the pass being completed).
- H. The defensive player removing the offensive player's flag shall raise the flag immediately above the head and stop as quickly as possible to assist the referee in accurate placement of the ball.
- I. The ball becomes "Live" at the snap which starts the offensive play and becomes "Dead" for one of the following reasons:
 - 1. When the ball is fumbled - Ball is returned to offensive team where the ball contacted the ground. No fumble shall result in increased yardage for the team that fumbled;

2. When a pass is incomplete;
 3. When the ball is carried out-of-bounds;
 4. Upon scoring a touchdown, extra point, field goal or safety
 5. When any part of the ball carrier's person, other than hand or foot touches the ground. Exception: The ball shall remain alive when being held during "place-kicking" of extra points;
 6. When a player on the punting team contacts the punted ball prior to the ball being touched by a player on the punt receiving team;
 7. When a punted ball first contacts the ground;
 8. Any mishandled or dropped center snap is considered dead when it hits the ground. Exception: A direct snap that skips/bounces cleanly from the center to the quarterback shall remain "Live", if the quarterback gains immediate control of the ball;
 9. Upon removal of any of the ball carrier's flags;
- J. An intercepted pass will result in a change of possession. (In Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten it will become "dead" at the point of the interception.)

X. THE KICKING GAME - 1ST AND 2ND GRADE

- A. All kicks shall be free kicks.
- B. The kicking team shall declare to the referee their intention to kick, and cannot alter that decision.
- C. All players must remain on their side of the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.
- D. Both teams must maintain a minimum of three (3) players on the line of scrimmage until the kick is made.
- E. The kicker/holder must be at least five (5) yards behind the line of scrimmage when receiving the snap.
- F. Mishandling the snap on any kicking attempt will not create a “Dead Ball”. The kicker/holder may retrieve the ball and return to the originally planned kicking point and resume the kick.
- G. All players on the punt receiving team are eligible to receive a punt;
- H. Two (2) options exist for punting:
 - 1. A free kick as previously described, or
 - 2. A “Free Punt” is also available on any down. The ball is moved twenty (20) yards down field and a change of possession occurs. The ball cannot be advanced further than the opponent’s twenty (20) yard line.

XI. SCORING

- A. The following summarizes point scoring in the 2nd grade division.
1. Touchdown 6 points
 2. Extra point by run 1 point
 3. Extra point by pass 2 points
 4. Extra point by kick 2 points
 5. Field Goal 3 points
 6. Safety 2 points
 7. Intercept and return an extra point attempt 2 points

XII. PENALTIES

- A. Penalties for rules infractions shall be as assessed by the game referee.