

New Mexico Young America Football League



Spring Tackle League Rules

**Approved with Amendments
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New Mexico Young America Football League

8 Man Tackle Football Playing Rules

Table of Contents:

Article I:	Basic 8 Man Tackle Football Rules
Article II:	Field Dimension/Uniforms/Equipment
Article III:	Game Timing/Timeouts/Scoring
Article IV:	Kicking
Article V:	Defense
Article VI:	Offense
Article VII:	Penalties
Article VIII:	All Other League Rules

Article I: Basic 8 Man Tackle Football Rules

➤ Practice Times and Restrictions

The first week practice restrictions are as follows:

- Five (5) days for practice are allowed the first week.
- Each practice of the first week must be no longer than 2 hours in length
- First day of first week – Helmet, T-Shirt, Shorts, Cup and Cleats – **No Contact**
- Second Day of first week – Full Uniform Allowed – **No Player on Player Contact**
- Third practice of first week and each day thereafter – Full Uniform Allowed – **Full Contact Allowed**

The first Saturday of season is scrimmage Day at Mesa Del Sol

The second week practice restrictions are as follows:

- Each practice of the second and each week thereafter must be no longer than 1 ½ hours in length
- Five days of practice are allowed during the second week.

The Third week practice restrictions are as follows:

- Each practice of the third week and thereafter must be no longer than 1 ½ hours in length
- Three days of practice are allowed during the third week and thereafter.

➤ All Age Divisions will play 8 Man Tackle Football

- Games will start with a coin toss at midfield with the winner of the coin toss choosing between receiving the ball or deferring to the 2nd Half. The other team will then have the option of which direction to go or if they want the ball or not.

➤ **Minimum Play Rule (MPR)**

- The number of plays required will be 10 total plays
- All Minimum plays must be “active” plays (punt and punt return are active plays from the line of scrimmage (LOS) and do count). All other special team plays do not count as MPR plays. All plays must be from the LOS. Any penalties resulting in the replay of the down, do not count as plays. Plays that result in a quarterback dropping to his knee with the sole purpose of “playing it safe” will not count as plays.
- All participants must receive their minimum mandatory number of plays by the end of the 3rd quarter. Any participant that has not received their minimum plays by the end of the 3rd quarter must enter the game and remain in the game until they have received their required number of plays.
- Each team will supply two adults, 18 years of age or older, to monitor the Mandatory Play Rule. Failure to supply two adults as described will be considered a violation of the Mandatory Play Rule and may result in the forfeiture of the game.
- Any person assigned to be a Mandatory Play Monitor must be instructed to be respectful while on the opponent’s sideline or working with the opponent’s volunteer. There is to be no excessive cheering, cell phone use and no coaching of any kind. At any time, the opponent for any reason may ask that the volunteer be replaced. This request must be complied with immediately without question. Failure to Comply will be considered a violation of the Mandatory Play Rule and may result in the forfeiture of the game.
- Any team not meeting the Mandatory Play Rule shall forfeit their game. Additional minimum penalties: First offense for the head coach: probation. Second offense for the head coach: suspension for one game and one week of practice. Third offense: suspension for remainder of season. If it is the last game: suspension for the first half of the following season’s games. In the event a suspension should carry over into the next season, the Association that may appoint the offending coach will be obligated to enforce the suspension.

➤ ***DECEPTIVE PLAYS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED:***

- Trick plays are allowed that fall within the rules of the game. If there are questions regarding the definition of each, please contact the Director of Football or an official for clarification.

➤ **Coaches on the Field:**

- One coach will be allowed on the field during the game from each team to assist in play calling for the Mite, Peewee, and Rookie divisions.

➤ **Sideline Rules:**

- **Only those coaches on the official coaching roster, and who have gone through a background check will be allowed to be in the coaches and player box. Badges must be visible on each Coach/Team Manager.**
- It is the coach’s responsibility to ensure the parents stay out of the restricted area. A referee can penalize the head coach for any misconduct on the sidelines of the team.

Article II: Field Dimension/Uniforms/Equipment

➤ Field Dimension:

- All teams will play on an 80 X 40 yard field.

➤ Uniforms/Equipment:

- Helmets, shoulder pads, integrated pants and game jersey will be provided for each player by NMYAFL following registration. There will be no equipment issued to any player who has not completed all of the registration forms signed by the proper party, or who have not paid their registration fees in full. Equipment may not be used in this program unless it is approved by NMYAFL.
 - Helmets and shoulder pads must be returned **within 5 days of final game**. Parents are responsible for the cost of additional equipment when the equipment needs to be replaced due to theft or loss. The athlete will not play until he or she has the proper equipment, the condition of the equipment is safe, and the athlete is properly wearing their equipment.
 - The uniform for spring tackle football consists of a white helmet with approved NMYAFL decals, color game jersey
 - Football or soccer 1/2 inch long maximum molded cleat or athletic shoe will be used for footwear. No Detachable cleats will be allowed. Uniformed Game Officials will have final authority as it relates to the proper uniform.
- **All Helmets must have the current NOCSAE approved “Warning Label” in a visible position on the outside of the helmet.**
- **This label shall not be removed and the player will not play if this label is removed.**
- The chinstraps properly fastened is mandatory. A player will first be warned and then the team will be penalized for each additional violation.
- All Equipment is subject to inspection and rejection. All decisions are final by NMYAFL Commissioners. Equipment inspections may occur on the field before, during, or after games to ensure an athlete’s safety.
- **Face Shields/Visors are permitted as long as they are clear and approved by NMYAFL.**
- Players are not allowed to participate in practice and games with cast or splints on any body parts, unless released with a physician’s note.
- **Football Size:**
- The size of the ball used during all games will be provided NMYAFL for all Age divisions.
 - Mites = Mini size football
 - Peewee and Rookie = Peewee size football
 - Freshmen and Sophomore = “Junior” size football
 - Junior = Youth Size Football
 - Varsity = Official Size
 - Coaches may use other youth size footballs in practice. However, it is recommended to use the provided footballs during both practice and games.

Article III: GameTiming/Timeouts/Scoring/Game Clock

➤ Game Timing

- **First Quarter**
 - 12 Minutes running clock
- **Second Quarter**
 - 12 Minutes running clock
- **Halftime**
 - 8 Minutes
- **Third Quarter**
 - 12 Minutes running clock
- **Fourth Quarter**
 - 12 Minutes running clock
- The play clock will revert to a standard stop and start clock when inside of 2 minutes to end of the second and fourth quarters
- Intermission between quarters will last approximately 1 minute. The clock starts for the next quarter when the next play is snapped. Referee will give 30 second play clock prior to play starting.
 - Playing time will be kept by the best means available to the official. In no case except injury, time outs, and other official delays at the discretion of the official will the clock stop during the game. The clock will not stop with an incomplete pass or player running out of bounds. The offensive team has 30 seconds to get the ball into play. ***The clock will stop for change of possession.*** Change of possession will take no longer than 30 seconds. The referee will begin the play clock, and the offense has 30 seconds before a delay of game penalty (5 yards penalty).
 - The game clock will not stop for player substitutions. The clock will stop at the referee's discretion for player injuries. Players must leave the game for at least one play after an injury.

➤ Timeouts:

- Each team will have 3 time outs per half. There is no carryover of time outs. The clock starts after timeouts when next play begins.
- Timeouts will be 1 minute long, after 1 minute, 30 second play clock will start.

➤ Scoring:

- Touchdowns = 6 Points
- Running Extra Point from 3 Yard Line = 1 Point
- Kicking Extra Point from 3 Yard Line = 2 Points
- Defensive Safety = 2 Points

➤ **OVERTIME:**

- If at the end of regulation play both teams are tied, two coaches and two players from each team will meet the referee at mid field for a coin toss. Both teams will get an offensive series and defense series. The team with the most points at the end of this first offense and defense series will determine the winner of the game. If the game is still tied the team will play a second play off as noted before. Each team will start their possessions from at the 10 yard line. The team with the most points at the end of the second overtime offense and defense series will determine the winner of the game. If there is still a need for a third or more overtimes. The above process will continue until one of the teams with the most points at the end of an overtime section wins.
- Starting with the 3rd overtime period, teams will be required to perform the extra point from the 8 yard line. **Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.**

➤ **Mercy Rule:**

- No head coach will deliberately run up the score. Clock will start when a team has a 35 point differential during or start of 4th quarter. In the Mites, Pee-Wees, and Rookies Coaches will not be allowed on field when a team has a 24 point lead.

➤ **Game Tie Breakers:**

- All Tie Breakers will be decided by the normal NMYAFL rules concerning tie breakers.

Article IV: Kicking

➤ Kick-offs:

- The ball will be placed on the 30 Yard Line and kicked from a tee to start the half or after a touchdown.
- The receiving team shall have at least 3 players within 10 yards of the ball at the time the ball is kicked.
- The ball is spotted on the receiving team's 20 yard line when there is a "Touchback" to start the offensive plays.
- Following a defensive safety, the ball will be placed at the 20 yard line for a free kick.

➤ Punting:

- There will be rushing of the punter in all divisions.
- If the receiving team fumbles the ball while receiving it, the ball is live, but cannot be advanced by the defensive team.
 - The defense in all divisions may attempt to block the punt without roughing the punter.
 - The punter must be positioned at least three yards behind the line of scrimmage and between the tackles when he or she kicks the ball.
- The punter must be at least 7yds from line of scrimmage for center to be protected from contact.

➤ Points After Touchdowns/Field Goals:

- Close kick option: (applicable to point after kick in the Mighty Mite, Pee Wee, Rookie, Freshmen and Sophomore) Coaches have the option of requesting that the ball be placed 3 yards from the goal posts on the PAT (Point After Touchdown).
- The team must kick, if this option is exercised. If the close kick option is not chosen, a team may either kick or run. In the event of any defensive penalty, the kicking team may re-declare their option.
- If the Close Kick option is once again chosen and the penalty is accepted, the ball will be placed the same distance from the end line as it would have been placed from the goal line after the acceptance of the penalty.
- All PAT and Field Goal attempts are considered live ball- ie K can decline an encroachment call if PAT or Field Goal are successful. K may also accept the defensive penalty and decline the spot.

Article V: Defense

- There is no minimum amount of down linemen on the defensive line
- Defensive lineman may line up in front of the offensive lineman, or in the gaps on the line of scrimmage, this includes lining head up in front of the center or either gap on the sides of the center
- The defensive unit cannot shout, yell, or clap their hands in order to disrupt the cadence of the offense.
- However, the defensive team may call audible plays while the offense is calling their play
- **Exception** – One coach is allowed on the field to call plays for the defensive team in the Mite, Peewee, and Rookie divisions only.
- Penalties for the above infractions will be 5 yards from the initial line of scrimmage

Article VI: Offense

- The offensive team has 4 downs to advance the ball 10 yards for another set of downs. - First downs will be marked by a sideline marker every 10 yards.
- In the Mite, Peewee, and Rookie divisions, one coach will be permitted to be on the field from each team to assist players with offense play calling.
- No Center sneaks.
- However, the guards/ends could become eligible if the coach aligns his players in such a manner to comply with the below 5 player on the line of scrimmage rule.
- **Formation/Motion:**
 - No fewer than 5 offensive players are allowed to line up on the line of scrimmage.
 - Centers must be covered up by 2 guards that are on the line of scrimmage and are no more than 2 yards from the center.
 - Any player who is on the end of the line of scrimmage is an eligible receiver.
 - All 3 backs / receivers are eligible as receivers who are lined up off the Line of Scrimmage
 - The ends may be tight or split out as wide as the field and either stand or assume a three point stance
 - One player may be in motion at a time once the team is set
- **Receiving:**
 - All players on the end of the Line of Scrimmage or lined up in the backfield are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or passed laterally from the quarterback).
 - A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

Article VII: Penalties (All Divisions)

Tackle Penalty Summary

➤ **Loss of 5 Yards:**

- Failure to properly wear mandatory equipment during down
- Delay of game
- Failure to properly wear mandatory player equipment just before the snap
- Illegal substitution
- Free-kick infraction
- Free-kick out of bounds (ball will be placed at the offense's 20 yard line)
- Invalid fair catch signal
- Snap infraction
- False start Illegal formation
- Less than 5 players on the line of scrimmage by the offense Illegal motion
- Illegally handing ball forward (loss of down)
- Illegal forward pass (loss of down)
- Intentional grounding (loss of down)
- Ineligible receiver down field
- Helping the runner
- Incidental face mask contact
- Sideline interference
- Non players outside the box, but not on the field Loss of 10 yards:
- Illegal blocking technique
- Interlocked blocking
- Holding
- Runner grasping a teammate
- Illegal use of hands or arms
- Illegal block in the back
- Forward pass interference
- Offensive pass interference (loss off down)
- unsportsmanlike conduct(player non player)
- Illegally kicking

➤ **Disqualification associated with certain 10 yard penalties:**

- Fighting by player or non-player
- Intentionally contacting an official, coach, or commissioners
- Striking, kicking, or kneeling
- Any act if unduly rough or flagrant
- A **second** unsportsmanlike foul by player or non-player
- A substitute leaving the team box during a fight.

Article VIII: All Other League Rules (All Divisions)

- These rules are strictly playing rules for 8 man football and are not intended to replace any NMYAFL League rules regarding Player, Parent/Spectator or Coaches Conduct. This includes Coach Financial Responsibilities, etc. Please refer to the complete NMYAFL league rules for any further clarification.