



Mid-State Youth Football & Cheerleading Conference

<http://www.mid-stateyouthfootball.org>

YOUTH FOOTBALL GAME PLAYING RULES

1. **WIAA RULES:**

All games are to be played under the rules for varsity football as set forth by the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) with the following additions and/or exceptions.

2. **AGES & WEIGHTS:**

The player's age on September 1 of the current year shall be the player's age for the coming season.

Once a player is named on a roster for a team and turned into the conference, they may not be moved to another team in the same division, Jr. PeeWee to Jr. PeeWee or PeeWee to PeeWee, they may only move up as weight dictates. This rule is without exception.

<u>Division Name</u>	<u>Ages</u>	<u>Weight</u>	
Junior PeeWee	7-8-9 (7 year olds must be in 3 rd grade)	> 100 lbs.	Restricted
	9	>160 lbs.	must move up to PeeWee
	10	>100 lbs.	must move up to PeeWee *
Pee Wee	9-10-11-12(6 th Grade)	>130 lb	Restricted

* Any 10 year old Jr PeeWee player that exceeds the 100 pound limit at a game day weigh-in, must move up to the Pee Wee division for the remainder of the season. That player may not move back down to the Jr. PeeWee team any subsequent week, nor can they decide to "NOT PLAY" that week to try again in the future. They must be moved up or the player forfeits playing the rest of the season. The players name, jersey number and teams affected MUST be reported to the Conference secretary on the day of that game. Both communities involved need to report the player as well as what team the player will be assigned to. That player WILL be allowed to play on the PeeWee team they are assigned to the same day of the infraction so the player does not miss out on a week of football. However, this decision will be at the receiving PeeWee coach's discretion.

Exceptions must be brought before the board by that community's President or Vice President and that child's parent(s) by the June board meeting.

3. **RESTRICTED PLAYERS:**

a. Definition:

- i. A restricted player in Junior Pee Wee level is a player who weighs over 100 pounds plus equipment (which is 8 pounds without helmet) allowance at the time of weigh-in prior to each game. A restricted player in Junior Pee Wee level can only be 7-9 years old. If a player is deemed over weight, they shall be tagged as such at the scale for that days contest by both coaching staffs.
- ii. A restricted player in Pee Wee level is a player who weighs over 130 pounds plus equipment (which is 8 pounds without helmet) allowance at the time of weigh-in prior to the first game. Example: A player weighing over 139 pounds with equipment on, but without helmet, at weigh-in will be a restricted player.
- iii. Weight Limit Rule: The 9 year old weight limit is 160 lbs plus pads. If they are 9 years old and over this restriction they must play PeeWee. If they begin the season as a PeeWee they cannot change to Jr. PeeWee once they meet the restriction. However,

if they exceed this limit at pre-game weigh-in and are on the roster of a Jr. PeeWee team, they can be moved up to a PeeWee team at anytime during the season. That move needs to be reported to the Conference secretary immediately and is permanent. This is not a mandatory move. The child in question may take his pads off and not play that day if so desired. The moving of the child to PeeWee level will be at the sole discretion of the coaches and parents.

- b. Restricted players will be limited to playing on the offensive line and defensive line ONLY. They may not play in the backfield on either offense or defense, with the exception of being the place kicker and punter.
 - i. Restricted players on offense may only play center or offensive tackle, limiting the offensive team to playing only three (3) restricted players on any given play.
 - ii. Restricted players on defense may only play defensive tackle, limiting the defensive team to playing only two (2) restricted players on any given play.
 - iii. Restricted players may NOT carry the ball, except if they pick up a fumble or intercept a pass and run with the ball.
- c. Restricted players may not play on either the kickoff team or the kickoff receiving team.
- d. Restricted players are allowed to be the punter or place kicker (for an extra point or field goal).
- e. Restricted players will wear an identifying patch on the front of the helmet at all times.
- f. Any request for restricted player exceptions so that a community can field a team, MUST be brought before the Conference board for approval.

4. REGARDING INELIGIBLE PLAYERS:

Forfeiture of all games in which the ineligible player was a member of the team shall be the penalty applied to the team involved. There shall be no exceptions.

There are six (6) unequivocal definitions of an ineligible player, from which there are no appeals:

- a. Overweight or Overage
- b. Residing outside of legal boundaries without mutual agreement of appropriate Leagues and/or associations.
- c. Falsification of data concerning any of the above.
- d. Participation in school tackle football in the same season. A participant may practice with a school team up until the first game, but not participate and/or be rostered with that school team once the first practice with school team or Mid-State team, but not both simultaneously. If they are trying out for their school team they may not practice with the Mid-State team until they are removed from the school team and show proof of removal.
- e. Failure to prove scholastic eligibility

5. ROSTER SIZE:

Maximum Roster Size: Not more than 35 players shall be certified onto a team roster. A team with less than 13 certifiable players will not be permitted to form and play.

A minimum of 13 players must be dressed and eligible to play at each game. Also, if you start a game with 13 players, you must maintain 13 eligible players during the game and finish the game with 13 players. Each League shall have the option to determine whether or not a team which fails to dress the minimum number of players shall forfeit the game or whether the game shall be rescheduled. Any team which forfeits two successive games by reason of an insufficient number of players shall be investigated by the League for a determination as to whether to forfeit the balance of the season.

6. MANDATORY PLAY RULE:

- a. All players are required to participate in a minimum of fourteen (14) plays in each game. Kickoffs, non-kicking extra point attempts, punts, and free kicks shall count toward their play total.
- b. Each player must play seven (7) plays in each half. If a player does not get his plays in the first half, he must start the second half and stay in the game until the remainder of his fourteen (14) plays is completed.
- c. If a player is being disciplined, he must remove his shoulder pads so he is not counted for that half – and this is the only reason to override 6(b).
- d. If a team wishes to spot an opponent (count an opponents plays), spotters must stay out of the coach's box while on the opposing side of the field.
- e. Opposing team may supply a witness to oversee accuracy of spotter sheet.
- f. If a team does not supply a witness for spotting or does not spot the opposition, they forfeit the right to challenge the participation of the opposing team's players or the accuracy of the spotter sheet.
- g. All spotting is voluntary. No team is required to spot another team nor is required to provide a witness.
- h. All violations of minimum play participation will be investigated by the league officers and resolution will be determined at league meetings.

7. PLAYER DESIGNATIONS:

Each player shall wear a number between 1 and 99 inclusive. Numbers "0" and "00" are illegal and shall not be worn. Player's number does not follow position. Players are eligible by position not by number. There will be no ineligible player down field.

During a game in which a PA system is used, the number of any player committing a foul shall not be publicly announced.

8. REQUIRED EQUIPMENT:

The following items shall be worn by players in all divisions beginning with physical contact in practice sessions:

- a. Helmet: Only helmets bearing the NOCSAE Seal of Certification may be worn. All helmets must bear the current NOCSAE approved "Warning Label" in a visible position on the outside of the helmet. This "Warning Label" is the same label that is furnished by all helmet manufacturers and quality reconditioners. (Note: Regulations regarding chin straps and face guards are to be followed per the National Federation or NCAA regulations, whichever is applicable.)
- b. Shoulder pads
- c. Pants: One Piece or Shell
- d. Hip Pads
- e. Tail Pads
- f. Thigh Guards
- g. Knee Pads
- h. Jerseys
- i. Mouth guard (Keeper Strap required – cannot be clear or same color as face guard)
- j. Athletic Supporter or Compression Shorts (male players only)
- k. Shoes: In all divisions of play: sneakers, molded rubber cleats (soccer style), or detachable rubber or plastic (football style) cleats are permitted. No metal cleats are permitted. Cleats may not exceed a ½" in length.

- l. Eyeglasses: When worn, shall be of athletically-approved construction with non-shattering glass (safety glass) or contact lenses.
- m. Any additional equipment worn by players shall be approved by the League.
- n. Jewelry of any type shall be prohibited, except religious or medical medallions, which must be covered by the player's uniform.
- o. The wearing of headgear containing knots, including beads and/or decorative hair ornaments is prohibited.

9. GAMEBALL:

The ball shall be of a good grade of leather, rubber or composite material with minimum specifications in the area of (in Junior Pee Wee Division: if the team elects to user smaller ball listed, entire game is played with that size ball):

Junior Pee Wee Division (ball will be approx 9.5" in length)	Pee Wee Division (ball will be approx 11" in length)
Spalding: J5PW	Spalding: Junior
Wilson: K2	Wilson: TDJ
Rawlings: ST5	Rawlings: RF5J
Baden: FC500	Baden: BF100L

10. LENGTH OF GAMES:

Each game shall consist of four (4) eight (8)-minute quarters with standard time keeping under high school rules set forth by the WIAA.

TIE GAMES:

In the event of a tie game, each team will get 4 plays from the 10 yard line to score 1 time. After that, if it is still tied, then the game ends in a tie. First possession will be determined by coin toss. Loser choose field end. Each team receives 1 time out.

11. INTERMISSION LENGTH:

- Between 1st & 2nd; 3rd & 4th quarters.....1 minute
- Between 2nd & third quarters.....8 minutes

12. TIME-OUTS:

Standard rules for time-outs shall apply with the exception of punting. See rule #23 for this exception.

13. PLAYERS:

A free substitution rule is always in effect.

It is STRICTLY PROHIBITED for a player or group of players to participate in any practice session or game with players from another division of play (i.e., Junior Pee Wee vs. Pee Wee). No physical contact between groups.

14. RADIOS AND COMMUNICATION DEVICES:

No radios or other communicative devices shall be allowed during game situations to relay information to the coaching staff on the sidelines.

15. SCOUTING:

Scouting football teams is permitted in the form of video tape, film and written reports. Scouting is only permitted during a game situation. Scouting any type of practice is strictly prohibited.

16. NO TAXI SQUADS:

No team is permitted to run a "taxi" or "reserve" squad.

17. PRACTICE:

PRE-SEASON:

Follow the WIAA rules of 3 days with helmets only. After that, full pads. There may be no more than 10 hours per week of practice before Labor Day and no more than 6 hours per week after Labor Day.

WARM WEATHER PRECAUTIONS:

Teams must guard against serious heat problems, which in extreme high school and college cases have occasionally resulted in death. The training regimen of any team practicing under high heat and/or humidity conditions must:

- a. Limit or eliminate laps entirely. Do not assign laps for disciplinary reasons.
- b. Schedule practices for early evening, after sun is low in sky.
- c. Give players all the water they want to drink, when they want it. Do not substitute soft drinks for water.
- d. Each coach must keep an eye on all players and his fellow coaches for the slightest sign of heat exhaustion or fatigue.
- e. A fifteen-minute break is mandatory in the middle of each practice, not to be counted against practice time.

MANDATORY BREAKS:

A mandatory 10-minute break after each hour of practice shall be required. Break time is not counted against the hours per week or per day allowed at practice time.

FULL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT REQUIRED:

At all practices, pre-season or in-season, where person-to-person or person-to-dummy contact takes place, each player must be dressed in the full complement of protective equipment described in Rule 8, "Required Equipment."

CONTROLLED INTER-SQUAD SCRIMMAGE:

After the first week of practice, teams are permitted to engage in joint practice sessions with other teams in what are called controlled inter-squad scrimmages.

In a controlled inter-squad scrimmage, there is prior agreement between coaching staffs that:

- a. Coaches will be permitted on the field.
- b. Long time-outs are taken between plays so that coaching staffs can instruct and critique their players.
- c. Coaching staffs may inform each other of the plays they are going to run so one team can concentrate on its offensive sets while the other improves its defense and vice-versa.
- d. Officials can be present during scrimmages.
- e. Game score is not kept; scoring is not the primary goal.

- f. No official time is kept other than to assure the practice maximum is not violated. A mandatory ten-minute break is taken at the end of one hour, said break not to be counted against the allowed practice time.
- g. No player or team is permitted at any time to engage in a controlled scrimmage or any form of contact drills involving a player, players, or team from a different Age/Weight division of play.

SCHEDULING PROHIBITIONS:

- a. Under no circumstances will a team be allowed to play a game, scrimmage, or practice against a team of another division (i.e., Junior Pee Wee vs. Peewee).
- b. No team may schedule a game against a team whose ages and weights are not FULLY in compliance with those printed in this rulebook, unless both teams have identical approved Variances.

COMMON REQUIREMENTS-ALL SCHEDULING:

The following requirements apply to all scheduling beginning with practice and ending with post-season bowl games:

- a. Practice will start on the 1st Monday in August (never on August 1st). The 2nd Saturday thereafter is an “open scrimmage” weekend. The 3rd Saturday will be the start of competition.
- b. No team, on its own, may arrange a game. All games, regardless of type, must be arranged through or with the sanction of the League of which the team is a member.
- c. Prior account will be taken of all local and state laws pertaining to the scheduling of athletic contests.
- d. A period of a least four (4) full days (96 consecutive hours) will elapse between the end of any game for a given team and the beginning of the next game for preseason exhibitions, regularly scheduled league games, post-season and bowl games. A League shall be permitted to waive the four (4) full days (96 consecutive hours) the 2 ½ days (60 consecutive hours) ONLY to permit the conclusion of the regularly scheduled season.
- e. Games will start at scheduled start time, unless a new time is agreed to by both teams.

18. MINIMUM ROSTER SIZE AT GAME TIME RULE:

A team with less than 13 official players eligible for play after weigh-in shall forfeit the game. No grace periods shall be extended to any team found in violation of this rule at the official game time as set by the master schedule.

19. FAILURE TO APPEAR RULE:

Any team failing to appear for a scheduled game at the time set forth by the master schedule shall be subject to forfeit, suspension, fine, or expulsion. The Board of Directors shall take extenuating circumstances precluding the appearance of a team for a scheduled league game under advisement upon receiving a written explanation within 72 hours of the date that the infraction occurred.

20. POSTPONEMENT OF GAME RULE:

If by referee decision, after consultation with officials of the home community, weather or ground conditions prohibit a game from being played safely, the home team must immediately contact the conference president to reschedule the game. The president reserves the right to cancel the game in the event that it does not have any effect on the standings in the conference.

21. SCORING:

Scoring values shall be as follows:

- Touchdown = 6 pts.
- Point After Touchdown (kicking) = 2 pts.
- Point After Touchdown (other) = 1 pt.
- Safety = 2 pts.
- Field Goal = 3 pts.

22. LOPSIDED OR INTENTIONALLY RUN-UP SCORE:

When any team (Team-A) is ahead of its opponent (Team-B) by 24 or more points, the following guidelines shall be observed:

GAME CLOCK

- a. If the game is in the first half and Team-A is ahead of Team-B by 24 or more points the game the clock will continue to run as in a normal game
- b. If the game is in the second half and Team-A is ahead of Team-B by 24 or more points, the game clock shall become a running clock in accordance with WIAA rules, whereby the clock shall not be stopped except for timeouts called by either team, injuries, or scoring by either team.
- c. If, Team-B reduces the point differential to 23 points, normal timekeeping will be reinstated.

23. PUNTING RULES:

- a. The offensive team must declare its intention to punt the ball to the referee (within 25 sec after ready for play whistle), and the referee shall stop the clock in order to allow the teams to align properly for the play. Then the ball must be kicked within 25 sec after declaration.
- b. Time will remain out until the punter kicks the ball. The play shall be a dead ball play with no movement in any direction by either team until the punter has kicked the ball. The ball must cross the line of scrimmage with the kick to become a live ball. If the ball fails to cross the line of scrimmage it will be dead where it touches the ground.
- c. The defensive team must line up in accordance with all defensive rules as set forth in Rules 25, 27 and 28.
- d. In the event the ball is snapped over the punter's head or the punter mishandles the ball, the punter shall be allowed to retrieve the ball and kick it from the spot where he retrieves the ball.
- e. If the punter goes down on one knee to pick up a fumbled snap the play is not dead and the punter is allowed to punt the ball.

24. EXTRA POINT AND FIELD GOAL RULE:

The same rules for punting on each level shall apply for attempting to kick extra points and field goals with the following exceptions:

- a. The ball must be caught cleanly by the holder, meaning not allowed to touch the ground, and placed cleanly on the kicking tee or ground, meaning not allowed to be fumbled and set again. If the holder mishandles the snap of the ball and it touches the ground or fumbles the placing of the ball requiring a second attempt at placing the ball or the holder lifts his/her knee off the ground to catch the ball, the play shall be deemed over by the referee.
- b. The ball must be placed on the kicking tee or the ground a minimum of five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage.
- c. The defensive team shall not be allowed to move or make noise in an attempt to distract either the holder or the kicker during the play.

- d. The center must hike the ball between his/her legs.

25. DEFENSIVE FORMATIONS:

Teams must play a 5-man line.

- a. Nose tackle must line up directly on the center.
- b. Defensive tackles must line up directly on the offensive tackles.
- c. Defensive ends must line up at any point beyond the outside shoulder of the tight ends or the spot where the tight end would be.
- d. If a defensive lineman lines up in violation of rules 25a, 25b, or 25c, the defensive team shall be penalized for an illegal formation. The penalty shall be five (5) yards.

26. OFFENSIVE FORMATIONS:

- a. Offensive line must have two (2) players on each side of the center at the time of the snap.
- b. Center, guards, and tackles must line up no farther apart than fingertips-to-fingertips with arms extended.
- c. The center may turn the ball parallel to the line of scrimmage, but the helmet cannot be in advance of the ball.

27. POSITIONING OF LINEBACKERS:

- a. Linebackers must line up a minimum of 3 yards off the line of scrimmage except when the offensive team has the ball inside the defensive team's 10-yard line at which time linebackers may line up 1 yard off the line of scrimmage.
- b. No more than three linebackers may line up in the area known as the box, i.e., the area between the outside shoulder of each offensive tackle.
- c. If a linebacker lines up in violation of rules 27a or 27b, the defensive team shall be penalized for an illegal formation. The penalty shall be five (5) yards.

28. POSITIONING OTHER DEFENSIVE PLAYERS:

- a. Cornerbacks and safeties must line up behind the linebackers or outside the area known as the box.
- b. Cornerbacks and safeties must line up a minimum of 3 yards off the line of scrimmage except when the offensive team has the ball inside the defensive team's 10-yard line at which time cornerbacks and safeties may line up 1 yard off the line of scrimmage.
- c. If a cornerback and a safety lines up in violation of rules 28a or 28b, the defensive team shall be penalized for an illegal formation. The penalty shall be five (5) yards.

29. MOVEMENT OF DEFENSIVE TEAM:

- a. Defensive players in the tackle box (tackle to tackle box) may not be moving forward prior to the snap of the ball and after the quarterback calls the offensive team into a set position.
- b. If a defensive player (as defined in 29a) moves forward prior to the snap of the ball and after the quarterback calls the offensive team into a set position, the defense shall be penalized for illegal motion. The penalty will be five (5) yards.

30. SEASON LENGTH

- a. If there are an even amount of teams in the peewee or jr. peewee divisions, we will run a 6 game/ 6 week schedule in that division. There will be no games scheduled for Labor Day weekend. The 7th week will be a play off date. 1st and 4th place will play at the 1st place field. The 2nd and 3rd place will play at the 2nd place field. The 8th week will have the

winner from the previous week playing for 1st and 2nd. The losers will play for 3rd and 4th. The playing field will be determined by the conference.

- b. If there is an odd amount of teams in either division of the conference, there will be a 6 game/ 7 week schedule. There will be no games on Labor Day weekend. Every team will get a bye week. The 8th week will have the 1st and 2nd place team playing for the championship and the 3rd and 4th place team playing for 3rd place honors. The playing field will be determined by the conference. With an odd amount of teams, there will be no playoffs before the championship games.
- c. This will make the season from the start of practice to the end of the championships an 11 week season.

31. COACHES ON THE FIELD

- a. One (1) Junior Pee Wee Coach may be on the field for the first two games of the competition season only. They will still adhere to all game clock rules and will not get any special exceptions.

32. DETERMINING CHAMPIONSHIP POSITIONS *(criteria used where appropriate for play-off selection)*

- a. Season record
- b. Head-to-Head *(only used when determination is between 2 teams)*
- c. Common Opponents
- d. Strength of Schedule
- e. Coin Toss

33. OFFICIATING

- a. Games are required to have a minimum of 3 officials
- b. 2 Officials must be WIAA certified