

Berkshire County Youth Football League

Rules for 2023

Rules changes for this upcoming season are highlighted in yellow. This document was last updated on 8/18/23.

1. Name

The organization shall be called the “Berkshire County Youth Football League” herein after referred to as the BCYFL.

2. Mission Statement

The BCYFL’s mission is to teach the basics of clean, fundamental football in a safe atmosphere, for all participants. The youth participants’ experience and safety will always be the BCYFL’s highest priority. Cooperation among parents, coaches, teams or administrators will always enhance the experience of each participant. It is our duty as Administrators, Coaches, Parents, Fans to promote the physical and mental well-being of each participant while striving to make each individual a better football player and more importantly, a better person. To achieve its mission, the BCYFL will provide a supervised program under the Rules and Regulations as set forth by these By-Laws. The BCYFL shall operate exclusively as a non-profit educational organization providing a supervised program of competitive football.

3. Board of Delegates

The BCYFL shall be governed by a Board of Delegates. The Board is responsible for administrating all activities pertaining to the operation of the BCYFL, including but not be limited to player registration, season scheduling, enforcement of rules and regulations, and maintenance of the BCYFL operating procedures.

3.1 - The Board shall be comprised of one delegate from each community as appointed by that community’s individual football program. This delegate shall be a voting member of the board and any vote cast by each community member shall be binding as the representative of that communities program and as such should reflect the community’s desires. Each community may appoint a community delegate alternate who should attend Board meetings and participate in any discussion, but shall be entitled to vote only if the Community Delegate is not present. In the event that neither the community delegate nor community delegate alternate can attend a meeting a community may have a temporary delegate attend board meetings and vote on behalf of that community. A simple majority of members of the league in good standing and present at any meeting shall constitute a quorum to conduct the business of the league at a regular or special meeting.

3.2 - The Board of Delegates shall meet at least monthly from May to November and more frequently or by telephone conference at the discretion of the Commissioner. Actions by the Board of Delegates shall be by simple majority vote of the present voting members. In the event of a tie, the Commissioner shall have the deciding vote. The Commissioner may conduct a telephone or email vote when the need arises. League representatives have the dual responsibility of representing the Leagues rules and regulations to their respective organization. Attendance at these meetings will normally be limited to the community delegates and board members however, if the need arises, a request can be made to the board to conduct an open session in order to discuss a specific topic with a boarder audience.

3.3 – There shall be no term limit of the amount of time a board member may serve.

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3.4 – The following shall be elected positions within the Board of Delegates and shall be referred to as the Executive Board:

Commissioner: Elected by Community Delegates every 2 years. The Commissioner of the League will chair all meetings, call special meetings, and make rulings on all disputed questions regarding the rules and regulations of the League not specifically delegated pursuant to these bylaws. The Commissioner will assess penalties and perform other duties associated with this office including recruiting of new league members and arranging such meetings as may be beneficial to the overall interests of the BCYFL.

Vice-Commissioner/Webmaster: Elected by Community Delegates every year. In the event that the Commissioner is unable to perform the duties of the office, the Vice Commissioner will assume the duties of the Commissioner. The Vice-Commissioner /Webmaster will collect the results of all games and record the standings. Further, the Webmaster shall write publicity, and report scores to the local newspapers and other media as appropriate. He or She will maintain the league website.

Treasurer: Elected by Community Delegates every year. The Treasurer is charged with the responsibility of collecting all dues and assessments, paying all appropriate bills, depositing such moneys as are collected in a reputable banking institution and making reports of the conditions of the League at each regular meeting. The Treasurer serves as a resource for the assistance of the Treasurers of the member teams and is responsible for the acquisition, maintenance, and administration of all league insurance policies

Secretary/WebMaster: Elected by Community Delegates every 2 years. The Secretary/Webmaster will perform such duties as necessary to keep all written records of the operation of the League and record and make available minutes of all regular and special meetings to league members via email or SAFL website.

3.5 – Appointed Positions within the Board of Delegates

Officials Representative: Appointed by Officials Association (non-voting member)

H.S. Coaches Representative: Appointed by H.S Coaches Association (non-voting member)

Player Safety Representative

3.6 – Committees as Appointed by the Board of Delegates

3.6.1 – Community Player Representatives – The players committee shall be comprised of the Commissioner and 2 delegates and shall be responsible for overseeing the proper registration of players and the rosters of all BCYFL teams. This shall include the submission and maintenance of birth certificates, proper completion and accuracy of rosters, and conducting weigh-ins according to the BCYFL by-laws.

4. Membership

4.1 - Membership in the BCYFL shall be open to teams representing any community, sub-division or organization in the Berkshire County region. Membership shall be contingent on:

1. providing an entry consisting of a Senior, Junior, and a Pee Wee football team in compliance with these bylaws and as voted on by the existing Board of Delegates.
2. adherence to the League constitution and Bylaws, and such other Rules and Policies as established by the voting membership

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3. meeting all financial obligations and assessments set by the League by the due date
4. completing and filing with the League an organizational application, no later than May 1st.

The League shall have the right to impose territorial limitations on any entrant as a means of equalizing the population base from which entrants draw their players.

Acceptance for membership for an organization shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Delegates. Each organization is a separate entity, privately organized, sponsored and directed by the various members of that organization.

4.2 - New membership - Application shall be made in writing, at a regularly scheduled meeting, to the Recording Secretary prior to May 1 of any given year and shall be accompanied by a \$125.00 bond. Such bond is to be held in escrow and applied to team entry fee if the team is voted into the League. The bond will be refunded to the team if entry into League is not approved. In the event a new member, after being accepted into the League, fails to provide a team(s) for play, it will forfeit all bond money, unless written notice of withdrawal from the League is received by the Recording Secretary no later than July 31 of the year of entry. An organization that voluntarily drops out of the League for any valid reason that is accepted by the League membership has a one (1) season grace period in which to re-enter the League. After one (1) season the organization must re-apply for entry into the League.

4.3 - Suspension of membership: Any individual, team, or organization may be suspended from membership for:

1. violation of League Bylaws rules, the Code of Ethics, or Coaching Certification precepts
2. conduct that is detrimental to the League and its stated purposes
3. failure to meet its financial obligations
4. exhibiting or condoning behavior that could jeopardize the welfare or safety of any participant, official or spectator.

Suspension shall be by act of the Commissioner or a two-third vote of the Board of Delegates.

4.4 - When the Commissioner suspends an individual, team, or organization he or she must notify the League Delegate of the effected organization within 48 hours of the decision to suspend. If the League Delegate is not available, the Head Coaches of the individual, team, or organization suspended must be notified within 48 hours.

4.5 - If the Commissioner suspends an individual, team, or organization, the suspended party must file a Petition of Appeal of Suspension within 48 hours in order to be considered for reinstatement. The Executive Board, acting as an Appeals Committee, will, within 72 hours of receipt of a petition of redress, convene a special appeals committee meeting to consider any redress action. If possible, the meeting will be scheduled so as to take place prior to the next game.

4.6 - At the special meeting, the Appeals Committee will conduct an inquiry in which the Commissioner and the suspended party will each have up to 1/2 hour to present all pertinent evidence in support of reinstatement or continuance of the suspension. After both parties state their case, the Committee may ask questions as appropriate. When the Committee is satisfied that all facts have been presented, a vote of the Appeals Committee will be taken. A simple majority of the Appeals Committee will determine whether to overturn the suspension. The decision is final and may not be further appealed.

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4.7 – An individual, team, or organization that wishes to seek reinstatement for the next season after a permanent suspension may petition, in writing, the Commissioner. The petition will be included as an agenda item at a regularly scheduled league meeting. The league representatives will vote to accept a compromise or reinstate for the next season at that regularly scheduled league meeting. A 2/3 majority of organizations present is required.

5. Team Registration Procedure– Teams shall be registered to play as follows:

5.1 - All participating communities shall organize their own programs and teams and shall establish their own fees and registration procedures, provided that no player shall be precluded from playing on the basis of financial need.

5.2 - No player shall change from one team to another team after the Jamboree.

5.3 - All participating communities are required to submit at time of registration a signed acknowledgment form accepting the responsibility to abide by the Rules and Regulations in these By-Laws.

5.4 - The entrance fee to the BCYFL is \$150.00 per community payable on registration day, but may be waived by the Commissioner.

5.5 - Insurance is compulsory for all teams and proof of it shall be presented on registration day. Insurance coverage must be in effect as of the first day of practice.

5.6 - All Board Members, Coaches and Assistant Coaches shall agree to be bound by the Coaches Code of Conduct adopted by the Board.

5.7 - An individual playing in BCYFL cannot play or practice with any other organized football team or league. Violation of this rule will result in suspension from BCYFL play for the remainder of the season. Scrimmages against other leagues and programs are permitted.

5.8 - There is to be no charging of admission at any of the games.

5.9 - There shall be no try outs or practice before the first Monday in August or a date determined by the board of Delegates.

5.10 - After the first day of school, practice sessions will not exceed eight hours weekly and any weekday practice session shall not exceed two hours.

5.11 - All players must maintain a satisfactory academic and behavioral standing in school. It shall be the responsibility of the individual organization to promote guidelines to assist parents and players in assuring that this rule is emphasized. The BCYFL shall make every effort to support individual organizations in this endeavor.

5.12 - All players must have at least two weeks of contact fully equipped, before playing his or her first game. For the purposes of this rule, the Jamboree will not be considered a game.

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5.13 - Adult supervision is to be provided at each practice.

6. Coaches

6.1 - Each Head Coach, Assistant Coaches and other mandated volunteers shall submit to a CORI check which will be completed by the Coaches Committee with the results being provided back to the delegates of the corresponding community programs. It will be the responsibility of each community to take the appropriate action based on the CORI results to assure the safety of their players. CORI check applications shall be completed by August 1st, for returning volunteers and prior to participating for new volunteers.

6.2 - The BCYFL is a certified member of the USA Football Heads Up Program. All Coaches are required to successfully complete the USA Football Level I Certification Course and submit proof of this completion to the coaches committee prior to August 1.

6.3 - Head Coaches must be at least 25 years of age at their registration. Waiver of this section is at the discretion of the SAFL Board of Directors.

7. Player Eligibility – Players shall be eligible as follows:

7.1 - Flag Division:

Each community shall set their own requirements for flag football. If a community does not have a flag program, players from other communities may participate in nearby flag programs. Flag is intended for ages 5 - 7.

7.2 - Pee-Wee Division:

7.2.1 Minimum age is 7 years old as of August 31.

7.2.2 Maximum age is 9 years old as of August 31.

7.2.3 Minimum weight is 50 lbs.

7.2.4 Maximum weight is 105 lbs, with an in season growth allowance of 1 lbs per weigh in.

7.2.5 No Maximum weight for Restricted Player (defined below),

7.2.6 Players shall be required to re-weigh only if within 5 lbs of the maximum weight

7.3 - Junior Division:

7.3.1 Minimum age is 10 years old as of August 31.

7.3.2 Maximum age is 11 years old as of August 31.

7.3.3 Minimum weight is 55 lbs.

7.3.4 Maximum weight is 125 lbs with an in season growth allowance of 1 lbs per weigh in.

7.3.5 No Maximum weight for Restricted Player (defined below)

7.3.6 Players shall be required to re-weigh only if within 10lbs of the maximum weight.

7.3.7 The league will allow 12 year olds who will not turn 13 in the calendar year to play in the junior division if they are 85 lbs or less. Re-weigh-ins will be required. In general, communities should discourage 12 yr old players from playing in the junior division as it limits their years at the Senior Division where they gain more knowledge of the game at a higher level.

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7.4 - Senior Division:

7.4.1 Minimum age is 12 years old as of August 31.

7.4.2 Maximum age is 13 years old as of August 31.

7.4.3 If a Player is entering 8th Grade, and is 14 years old and will not turn 15 in the calendar year, the player will be eligible, but 14 year olds 130 lbs and over shall be Restricted Players.

7.4.4 If a Player is entering 9th Grade, and is 13 years old as of August 31, the player will be eligible, and will be governed by the same weight limits as other 13 year olds. If the Player is attending a high school that offers a football program then that Player cannot play in BCYFL.

7.4.5 Minimum weight is 60 lbs.

7.4.6 Maximum weight is 150 lbs with an in season growth allowance of 1 lbs per weigh in.

7.4.7 No Maximum weight for Restricted Player (defined below).

7.4.8 Players shall be required to re-weigh only if within 10 lbs of the maximum weight.

7.5 - Players can elect to “play up” a division if their skill level permits and Restricted Players shall be encouraged to play up if they are 9 years old (play up to Juniors) or 11years (play up to Seniors) and capable of playing at the upper level. An individual Community may require a player in its program to play up, but the Board may not overrule a Community’s decision to require or not require any particular player to play up. A player that elects to “move up” may move back down to the lower division (but then must not move back up).

8. Restricted Players

8.1 - Players exceeding weight limit will be allowed to play but will be shown on the team roster as a “Restricted Player”.

8.2 - Restricted Players shall wear a helmet sticker designated by the Players Committee and must play in an interior line offensive or defensive position. No more than ~~3~~ 5 Restricted Players per team may be on the field at any time. ~~Prior to a game, a head coach may contact the opposing team’s head coach to discuss increasing the number of restricted players for the upcoming game. If both teams agree to a number greater than 3, they need to inform the officials for the game of the agreed upon changes. The increased number will be allowed for that game only.~~

8.3 - Before the start of every game, Coaches shall meet with their restricted players and the officials to: (a) confirm that the Restricted Player has a visible helmet sticker; and (b) confirm the Restricted Player’s jersey number.

8.4 - A Restricted Player cannot carry the ball, advance a fumble or intercepted pass, or play on kick off or kick return teams. A Restricted Player may kick an extra point or field goal and may play their line positions during punts or PAT attempts (but may not advance the ball). On a punt, a Restricted Player may not cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.

~~8.5 - On Offense, no more than 2 restricted players shall be adjacent. This rule can be suspended if the two teams agree as part of the changes agreed to prior to a game as stated in 8.2. Restricted Players playing guard and tackle may pull.~~

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8.6 - On Defense, Restricted Players must be in a 3 or 4 point stance at the snap of the ball. ~~and cannot play head up on an Unrestricted Center, but can play the Center/Guard gap. If the Center is a Restricted Player, the Defensive Restrictive Player may play head up on the Center.~~ Defensive tackles may not line up outside the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle. A 5 yard penalty shall be assessed if a Restricted Player violates these rules (i.e. lining up off the line of scrimmage or not in a 3 or 4 point stance).

8.7 - There shall be 3 official weigh in dates:

- a) The first weigh-in shall be conducted by the community player representatives during the last week in August, prior to the Jamboree. There shall be a minimum of two teams assigned to a weigh-in location. There must be a community representatives and/or delegates present for each community assigned to that weigh-in location on that date. Each head coach will be present at the first weigh in and will present a roster to the committee. Every player registered to play with that community shall be present, shall be wearing the game jersey with their assigned number, and will be weighed by the community player representatives. The community player representatives will then fill in the jersey number and weight of each player on the roster given to them by the head coach. Upon completion of the weigh-in, the community player representatives will present the roster to the BCYFL webmaster, who will post it on the official BCYFL website on the Saturday prior to the Jamboree.
- b) The second weigh-in shall take place the week prior to the 4th Sunday of play and shall follow the procedures outlined in Rule 8.7 (a). One coach from each team must be present at the weigh-in.
- c) The third weigh-in will take place during the week prior to the first Junior and Senior playoff game and shall follow the procedures outlined in Rule 8.7(a). One coach from each team must be present at the weigh-in.
- d) The Commissioner may allow players an additional weigh-in, however they will be at his discretion and availability and therefore are discouraged.
- e) Any player who misses a scheduled weigh-in shall be deemed a restricted player until such time that that player may be re-weighed by the committee.

8.8 - Weigh-In Procedure

- a) The Commissioner will detail the league weigh in schedule and procedures by August 1st of each playing season.
- b) Organizations will be assigned a date, time, and location of their organization's weigh-in.
- c) The organizations Delegate will escort their team into the designated weigh-in area. No coaches are allowed in weigh-in area.
- d) Players will only be weighed once and cannot be re-weighed once they leave the scale area.

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8.9 - Guidelines

a) A Restricted Player may become an unrestricted player, if the player meets the required weight (including the in season growth allowance) at the second weigh in. No Restricted Player shall be allowed to become an unrestricted player after the second weigh in.

b) Restricted Player who initially weighs in at 10 lbs or more above the required weight shall be a Restricted Player for the entire season. (For example, a Pee-Wee who starts the season at 108 as a Restricted Player and who is weighted in at 104 at the 2nd weigh in would no longer be a Restricted Player, but a Senior who weighs in at 175 may not become an unrestricted player)(the Board does not promote rapid weight loss to “make weight”).

c) Players shall be required to re-weigh only if within 5 lbs of the maximum weight for Pee-Wees and 10 lbs of the maximum weight for Juniors and Seniors. An unrestricted player who is required to re-weigh and who does not re-weigh shall become a Restricted Player for all games following the re-weigh in.

d) New players may be weighed in and added to a team’s roster at any time, however, any initial weigh-in must be done by the players committee, who will then submit the roster change to the webmaster for posting.

8.10 - Officials and the Commissioner shall have the authority to remove a Restricted Player from a game if that particular player’s ability and size poses an undue risk of injury to other players. All Coaches shall be responsible to ensure that the use of Unrestricted Players does not result in a one team’s ability to dominate a game. Pee Wee Coaches should make a conscious effort to be certain that Restricted Players are matched up against Restricted Players to the greatest extent possible.

8.11 - Violations

a) Any Restricted Player caught violating the Restricted Player rule 8.5 or 8.6 will be given an initial warning by the referee as to the specifics of the violation. Any further violation (such as not getting in a three point stance or lining up outside the outside shoulder) will result in a 5 yard penalty.

b) Any Restricted Player caught removing a restricted sticker will be immediately ejected from the game and shall be suspended for the season. They shall resume playing the following season only after approval of the Board of Delegates.

c) Any coach caught intentionally violating the restricted player rule by (including but not limited to):

- misrepresenting a players weight on a roster
- removing or causing to restricted sticker to be removed
- intentionally playing a restricted player as a non-restricted player
- not presenting a restricted player at the beginning of the game

shall be ejected from the game and removed from the place of play. The head coach shall be suspended for the season and shall resume coaching the following season only if approved by the Board.

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8.12 - The goal and intent of the Restricted Player rules is to allow all community members to play whenever possible, but to recognize the need for safety and the desire to promote competitive games. If the Board finds that the any Coach has consistently used the participation of Restricted Players to gain an unfair advantage in a game and has “run up” the score in multiple games, the Board may take disciplinary action against that Coach, up to and including suspending the Coach.

9. Player Registration Procedures

9.1 – Dates and times of registrations shall be determined by the individual programs; however, each program must abide by the guidelines set forth in rule 8.7 as it pertains to weigh-ins and roster submissions to the league as well as rule 4.6 as it pertains to coaches CORI checks.

9.2 - New players shall provide an original or clear copy of his or birth certificate (an original birth certificate may be required -at the discretion of the Commissioner) at or prior to the initial weigh-in date. Once a player’s birth certificate has been reviewed by the commissioner and the player’s date of birth has been recorded on an official BCYFL roster, the Player does not need to present an original birth certificate again in future years.

9.3 – Once the official roster has been posted on the BCYFL website by the webmaster, only the webmaster or the commissioner can make changes to that roster. Any request for a change in a roster must be made in writing to the webmaster and commissioner no later than 5pm on the Friday prior to the next Sundays games.

9.4 – Each community shall be limited to the following number of players on their official roster: 33 for Peewee teams; 35 for Junior teams and 40 for Senior teams. The Board can vote, with an affirmative majority, to permit a community to exceed the maximum number of players on a roster for a given year only.

10. Player Equipment

10.1- Each player shall properly wear the mandatory equipment while the ball is live. Each player shall participate while wearing legal and properly fitted equipment that shall be professionally manufactured and not altered to decrease protection.

10.2 - Prior to the start of the game, the head coach shall be responsible for verifying to the referee and umpire that all of his players are legally equipped and in compliance with the rules. Any questions regarding legality of a player’s equipment shall be resolved by the umpire.

10.3 - When any required player equipment is missing or when illegal equipment is found, correction shall be made before participation. An official’s timeout shall be declared to permit prompt repair of equipment that becomes illegal or defective through use.

10.4 - Failure of the head coach, following verification, to have his player(s) wear or use legal and/or required equipment will result in a penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct charged to the head coach.

10.5 - All players shall wear helmets that carry a warning label regarding the risk of injury and a manufacturer’s or reconitioner’s certification indicating satisfaction of NOCSAE (National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment) test standard at the time of manufacture. Each helmet utilized by any player of the BCYFL must

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display a seal certifying that the helmet meets NOCSAE standards. All such reconditioned helmets shall show recertification to indicate satisfaction with the NOCSAE test standard. The coach's pregame verification to the referee and umpire that all players are properly equipped in compliance with the rules includes the exterior warning label. The facemask shall have a surface covered with resilient material designed to prevent chipping, burrs or abrasiveness and be properly secured to the helmet as designed by the manufacturer. The helmet shall be secured by a properly fastened chin strap with at least four attachment points.

10.6 - If a player's helmet comes completely off through play, other than as the direct result of a foul by an opponent, the player must leave the game for the next down. The game clock will stop at the end of the down. A team timeout is permitted to allow the player to remain in the game.

10.7 - Each player shall wear a jersey with clearly visible and legible numbers 1-99 inclusive on the front and back that are long enough to reach the top of the pants and shall be tucked in if longer. Players of the opposing teams shall wear jerseys of contrasting colors.

10.8 - Required pads are hip pads and tailbone protector, unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production; knee pads, unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production, that are worn over the knee and under the pants; shoulder pads and hard surface auxiliary attachments, that shall be fully covered by a jersey; and thigh guards, unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production.

10.9 - Metal cleats are not legal.

10.10 - Every player is required to wear a tooth and mouth protector. All tooth and mouth protectors shall (a) be a color other than completely clear or white and (b) the tooth and mouth protector must also cover the posterior teeth. The officials should, through normal observations, attempt to verify that each player is legally equipped prior to the ball becoming live and if illegal equipment is detected, that player must fix the problem or leave the game. If the officials are unable to detect the illegal equipment and the player is observed wearing a completely clear or white mouth protector during a down, a foul is to be called.

10.11 – Eye Shields, glasses, and goggles must be clear, not tinted or colored. Eye shields or visors must be of molded or rigid material. Tinted or polarized eyeglasses prescribed by a doctor for a medical condition may be utilized at the discretion of the umpire and medical personal.

10.12 – Suitable athletic supporter and cup, where applicable

11. Game Day Procedures–

11.1 - Prior to the start of each game, the coaches of the participating teams are required to exchange paper versions of the Official Team Rosters. These rosters must accurately account for every player who is properly suited for contact and attending that particular game. These rosters must be the exact duplicate of the Roster posted on the League's website with any modifications approved by the Commissioner.

11.2 - Any changes to the official roster must be noted and approved by both head coaches and the head referee. If one coach does not approve of such a change, he will notify the head referee. It shall be then at the discretion of the head referee to determine if the discrepancy would be the cause of a safety issue and to take proper action if such a

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condition existed (i.e. – ineligible player, restricting a player, etc.). The coach will then document his complaint and forward it to his Delegate for action by the Board of Delegates. Game shall be played under registered protest.

11.3 - Any deviation from the roster that is not disclosed prior to the start of the game will result in an unsportsman-like conduct penalty against the offending team. If it is determined that the infraction was an intentional attempt by a coach to gain an unfair advantage or circumvent a rule, that coach will be immediately ejected from the game and will be suspended for the remainder of the season. In the event that the infraction involves the discovery of having an unregistered player on the team, that team will forfeit all prior games.

11.4 - The home team for each game is responsible for assuring that a certified and properly equipped Emergency Medical Technician is at each game. An AED must be present at each game. If an E.M.T. is not present, the game shall not be played and is considered a forfeit by the home team. Final disposition of the game will be at the discretion of the Board. The home team is responsible for providing adequate security to assure the safety of all participants, including officials, coaches, and players.

11.5 - The home team for each Pee Wee, Junior and Senior game is responsible for assuring that at least two registered Football Officials are at each game. If an official is not present, the game shall be played under protest with the possibility of forfeit by the home team. Final disposition of the game will be at the discretion of the Board. Referees shall receive \$45 compensation for each game which they officiate.

11.6 - If during a game one team goes ahead by 28 or more points, the game is officially over, the score is frozen, and that team is awarded the win. It is expected that the head coaches will then meet midfield to agree upon how the remaining time in the game will be played (e.g., running time or normal clock rules, 2nd squad versus 2nd squad, controlled scrimmage, or normal game operations, etc.). For the betterment of the league, it is expected that all coaches work out an agreement that allows as many players as possible to participate in a positive experience regardless of the score.

11.7 – All games are to be played under MIAA rules unless modified by these By-Laws; the rules set forth in these by-laws as established by the BCYFL shall apply to and take precedent in all games played in the BCYFL.

11.8 - The following game rules shall apply:

11.8.1 - The PeeWee Division scrimmages shall normally start at 11:30am.

11.8.2 - The Junior Division games shall normally start at 1:00 p.m.

11.8.3 - The Senior Division game shall normally start at 2:30 p.m. or 15 minutes after the Junior game, whichever is later.

11.8.4 - Special starting times for games must be mutually accepted by the teams involved and approved by the Commissioner.

11.8.5 - The time for quarters shall be 8 minutes each for the senior division, and 8 minutes each for the junior division.

11.8.5 - Each team will be allowed 4 time-outs per half.

11.8.6 - The time allowed between halves is 15 minutes.

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11.9 - If a team fails to appear for a scheduled game, they will forfeit the game after a 30 minute wait, unless there is a justified cause and proper notification. Final decision on the forfeit will be made by the Board.

11.10 - In case of rain or inclement weather on the day of a scheduled game, the home team will make the decision whether to play or not by 10:00 a.m., and notify the opposing team and the Commissioner. The Commissioner reserves the right to cancel any game.

11.11 - Yard lines must be properly marked. If yard markers are used they must be made of rubber or other soft material.

11.12 – The home team shall be responsible for providing a distinct barrier which is capable of separating the players and the field of play from the spectator area. It shall be the responsibility of the organizations Delegate to assure adherence to these boundaries is maintained and that no unauthorized persons enter the player area or field of play. Failure to provide an adequate barrier may result in forfeiture of the game as determined by the head referee. Any spectator or other unauthorized party who enters the player area or field of play without the consent of the delegate and head referee will be immediately ejected from the field and from the facility. Further such an intrusion will result in an unsportsman-like conduct penalty against the offending team. Multiple infractions by an individual organization will result in sanctions and penalties as levied by the Executive Board.

11.13 - If goal posts are available, Points-After and Field Goals are allowed. Goal posts must be padded. If a team elects to kick, it will be in essence a free play. They need to inform the Referee that they are electing to kick. The defense is to take the field but are not allowed to rush the kicker. The holder may pick up a bobbled snap and place for the kick but if the holder stands up to get the ball the play is whistled dead. No fakes are allowed.

11.14 – Game Balls

11.14.1 - The ball used at the Senior division games must be a Wilson TDY or equivalent “YOUTH” size football.

11.14.2 - The ball used at the Junior division games must be a Wilson TDJ or equivalent “JUNIOR” size football.

11.14.3 - The ball used at PeeWee division games must be a Wilson K2 or equivalent “PEEWEE” size football.

11.15 - If the score of a game is tied at the end of regulation time, the NCAA tiebreaker system implemented by the MIAA will be used except the series will start at the opponent’s 10-yard lines. During the regular season, if after two extra periods the score is still tied, the game will be over and ruled a tie. During play-off games, the tiebreaker system will continue until a winner is declared. If a team elects not to participate in the tiebreaker, that team will be deemed to have forfeited the game.

11.16 - Regular season - The Home Team is responsible to notify the webmaster or commissioner so as to post the final score (Junior and Senior games only) on the BCYFL website. The team standings in Junior and Senior Divisions will be determined by a point system. A team will get 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, and zero points for a loss. If at the end of the season there are teams at the top of the standings with an equal amount of points, then there shall be season co-champions.

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11.17 – Starting with the 2021 season, New Format for Playoffs for Juniors & Seniors only:

Week 1 – 7 Regular Season

Week 8 & 9 Playoffs – Higher seeded team is the home team.

Week 8 Playoffs – Rank 1 gets a bye. Rank 2 vs 7; Rank 3 vs 6; Rank 4 vs 5

Week 9 Playoffs – Rank 1 vs Lowest Winner; Highest Winner vs 2nd Low Winner

Week 9 Consolation Game – High Loser vs 2nd High Loser

Week 10 Championship at Neutral Site; If not possible then higher seed or mutually agreed upon site.

Playoff Rankings (Tie Breakers)

1. Best record in your conference, if tied
2. Head-to-head record, if tied
3. Best overall season record, if tied
4. Less points allowed to that specific team, if tied
5. Coin flip
6. Only after the 5 steps are exhausted, and in the event of a three-way conference tie, a coin flip will be used to determine the top seed. The head coach or delegate from each team will simultaneously flip a coin. Odd coin out wins top seed, while two like coins will then use the 5 steps to determine second and third seeds.

11.18 - If weather or other unforeseen circumstances causes the season to end prior to completing the championship playoffs, the championship will be awarded to the team that had the best record in the regular season and is still active in the playoffs. A tie will result in co-champions. For playoff games, the Commissioner will be responsible for making the determination if a game will be played, re-scheduled, or cancelled.

11.19 - If the visiting team determines the field conditions are not in compliance with this section, they will immediately notify the head referee. The home team will have one half hour to correct the situation, then the game official can declare the field unplayable. The League will declare that the home team has forfeited the game.

11.20 – 2021 Season Implementation of an Offensive Play Clock

11.20.1 Seniors will have 40 seconds from the completion of the previous play.

11.20.2 The Referee will have the play clock.

11.20.3 The Referee will inform the QB when the time is getting low.

11.20.4 The Referee may use discretion when starting the play clock for certain instances that may arise,
For example, a long pass, or other event that may slow the offense down.

11.20.5 Juniors will abide by the same rules but have a 50 second play clock

11.20.6 Pee Wees do NOT have a play clock but per 12.4 are encouraged to play within 60 seconds.

12. SPECIAL RULES FOR PEE-WEE DIVISION

12.1 – 15 minute running quarters (clock stops on change of possession and at half time).

12.2 – Each team will be allowed 2 time-outs per half (clock stops).

12.3 – Game must be completed at 1:00PM for Junior Game to start.

12.4 – A guideline of one (1) minute in the huddle is encouraged.

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12.5 – Only authorized coaches will be allowed on the sidelines and on the field of play.

12.6 – Jr. Pee Wee Mini-Game / 5th Quarter – The teams may elect to play a “Jr Pee Wee Mini-Game” or “5th Quarter” consisting of a 20 to 30 minute scrimmage played by the first year players and others who will not play at least 8 minutes in the regular game. Only second and third string players shall play in the mini game and the scrimmage should be played with an equal amount of time on Offence and Defense for each team. The mini game can be played either before or after the regular game at the election of the home team coach.

12.7 - There is a mandatory must-play rule. Coaches must make every effort to assure that all team members have equal opportunity to participate in these games. The second quarter has been designated for this purpose and each team will assure that all players that are not playing at least 8 minutes in other quarters will play this entire quarter.

12.8 - Play restrictions:

12.8.1 - No man on center

12.8.2 - No Blitzing unless defense is backed up within its 20 yard line

12.8.3- Players can use footballs that are one or two sizes smaller than Junior Division youth size.

12.8.4 - No punts will be allowed but the Offense may elect to spot the ball on the opposing team’s 35 yard line.

12.8.5 - Instead of Kickoffs the ball will be spotted on the opposing teams 35 yard line.

13. Violation of Rules

13.1 - If at any time any member of the Delegate Board becomes aware of evidence that leaves him to believe an infraction of the rules has occurred, he or she shall notify the Commissioner who will take the following steps: Discuss and review potential evidence with the Board Member. Determine the validity of the infraction. Report to the Board on his findings and make recommendation to the Board on any action to be taken. The Board will vote on final action. Any member of the Board has the right to approach any player at a game for purpose of confirming proper eligibility.

13.2 – A Code of Conduct will be agreed upon and shared by the BCYFL Delegates in an effort to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for our players. That document, Exhibit A, is an enforceable extension of these by-laws.

14. Coaching Conduct

The coaching staffs of each team in the BCYFL have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that generates a positive environment for all participants in the BCYFL. It is considered the responsibility of the individual communities to establish a high standard of conduct for their coaching staffs and formally communicate these expectations to them each season. When accepting the position of a coach within the BCYFL, each individual must agree to conform at a minimum to the following conduct rules:

14.1 - The use of obscene language is prohibited while interacting with the players or other BCYFL participants (games and practices)

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14.2 - The use of personally abusive language is prohibited while interacting with players or other BCYFL participants, and officials (both at games and practices)

14.3 - It is expected that coaches will refrain from arguments with officials during the game. If there becomes an issue concerning the quality of the officiating, they should be brought to the attention of the Delegate who will then communicate such issue to the Commissioner and the president of the Official Association after the game. Initiating and/or participating in prolonged heated arguments with game officials, other coaches or parents is considered detrimental to the BCYFL and is prohibited.

14.4 - Instructing and/or allowing players to intentionally inflict physical harm to another player is prohibited.

14.5 - The use of alcohol or any tobacco products (including chew) while interacting with the players is prohibited.

14.6 - Verbal interacting that incites unacceptable parent/fan actions is prohibited.

14.7 - Taunting any player during a game is prohibited.

14.8 - It is expected that all coaches will demonstrate sportsmanship at all times while interacting with the players. Traditional displays of sportsmanship like greeting the opposing coach before and after the game as well as assuring that the participating players "shake hands" after the game are the responsibility of the coach. Serious or chronic displays of un-sportsman-like conduct are prohibited.

14.09 – Coaches Penalties

14.09.1 – Any head or assistant coach who displays bad sportsmanship, gets confrontational or questions the integrity of any official shall be penalized in the following manner:

- a) First offense - throw a flag (15 yd penalty). Call time out. Explain to the head coach, that the next time he or his coaching staff repeats any of the above actions, he shall be ejected from the grounds and he shall serve a one game suspension.
- b) Second offense - throw a flag (15 yd penalty). Instruct the head coach that he shall leave the location. If he refuses, the game shall be forfeited immediately. The Referee and/or the program Delegate, if present at the game, shall notify the BCYFL Commissioner of the altercation.

14.09.2 - If a coach has been found by the Board to be in serious violation of any conduct regulation, the following action will be taken;

- a) First offense - The coach will be on probation for that year. The community represented by the coach will be required to write a letter of apology to their team, the opposing team when appropriate as well as anyone else deemed appropriate by the commissioner.
- b) Second Offense - On the second occurrence within a year, the coach will be suspended and not allowed to participate in the BCYFL.

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14.09.3 - Based on the severity of the violation the Board reserves the right to take unique action and/or modify the designated action. Any such coach who has been suspended by the Commissioner may seek recourse as outlined in rule 4.

15.0 - Parents and Fan Conduct

The parents and fans play a very critical role in providing a positive experience for the players. They need to set the example of how to properly accept success as well as defeat. It is the responsibility of each community to clearly communicate to the parents the standard of conduct that is expected. The parents and fans who attend the games of the BCYFL are expected to accept this responsibility and as a minimum abide by the following regulations:

15.1 - The use of obscene language is prohibited while interacting with the players or other BCYFL participant. The use of personally abusive language is prohibited while interacting with coaches, players or other BCYFL participants and officials (both at games and practices).

15.2 - Encouraging players to intentionally inflict physical harm to another player is prohibited.

15.3 - The use of alcohol at any BCYFL game is prohibited.

15.4 - Verbal interacting that incites unacceptable fan or player actions are prohibited.

15.5 - Taunting any player during a game is prohibited

15.6 – Penalties

15.6.1 – Per BCFOA policy, for a game in progress, any parent or fan that becomes abusive, confrontational or questions the integrity of any official, then the following steps shall be made:

- a) First instance - The game will be immediately stopped. The head referee will then call a meeting of the head coach and delegate of the offending sideline and a warning will be given.
- b) Second instance – The game will immediately be stopped. The head referee will throw a penalty flag and assess the offending sidelines head coach a unsportsman-like conduct penalty. The head coach and delegate will be advised by the officials that he must advise the person that he or she must leave the grounds immediately. If the person refuses to leave the grounds, the game will be forfeited. The decision of the Official cannot be overruled.

15.6.3 – Such violations shall be reported to the Commissioner after the game. Based on the severity of the violation, the commissioner shall convene a session of the Executive Board who will then determine whether further action is appropriate and in the best interest of the BCYFL. The community delegate will then be notified of the board's decision. The actions to be considered will include but are not limited to declaring a game forfeited; suspension of all subsequent home games for the offending community; letter of notification/reprimand to the corresponding community leaders (e.g., Selectmen, Mayor, youth program organizers); forfeit of corresponding games.

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16.0 – Concussion/Head Injury Protocol

It is critical to the success of this league that we employ a common comprehensive approach to protecting players from serious injury as it pertains to concussions and head injury.

16.1 – Each organization within the league shall have an appointed player safety representative. It shall be the responsibility of the player safety representative to monitor all activities to assure that the best practices regarding player safety are being adhered to. Further it shall be the responsibility of the player safety representative to monitor and maintain any and all documentation regarding injuries sustained by a player during the course of play, which requires medical treatment outside of the field of play. All injuries must be documented whether such injury is football related or not, including injuries sustained outside of the football field but have an effect on a players ability to participate in football practice or games. Any player that sustained an injury that required medical attention, regardless of whether the cause was football related or not, will not be allowed to participate at practices or games until the head coach has received a written medical clearance from a physician that sufficient healing has taken place to resume participation in playing football. The head coach must then report this to and provide a copy of this clearance to the delegate to be included in the season records. The medical clearance must be available for verification. Any player with a splint, cast, or brace will not be allowed to participate at practices or games without proper protective padding. All protective padding must be inspected by the attending EMT and the game officials.

16.2 – Each organization shall require all coaches within the organization to complete the National Federation of State High Schools Association Course on Concussions in Sports or the USA Football Coaches Certification Course prior to the start of any organized practice. Certificates of Completion for these courses shall be submitted to the League with the CORI checks. Each organization shall encourage parents and/or legal guardians of youth players to acknowledge annually that they have reviewed and understand the concussion video and parent information on concussion symptoms, diagnosis and management and that they have discussed these issues and the need to be candid with coaches and referees about any injury they may sustain with their players.

16.3 – Each organization shall require each athlete provide information, on a form approved by the organization, relative to any prior head injury which required medical treatment. These forms are to be signed by both the player and the players parent or legal guardian prior to being eligible to practice. This information will be distributed to all coaches so as to help them identify players who may be at greater risk for repeated head injuries. These forms shall be kept by the Player Safety Coach to be made available for review by the league.

16.4 – Each Player Safety Coach shall be responsible for the monitoring and documentation regarding any head injury that requires examination by a trained medical professional.

16.5 – If any referee, coach, or delegate who witnesses or suspects that any player who (1) sustains a significant blow to the head or body, (2) complains about or is exhibiting symptoms consistent with having suffered a concussion, or (3) is otherwise suspected of having sustained a concussion, must be evaluated on the sideline by the on-site Healthcare Professional and the following protocol is REQUIRED to be applied:

1. Immediately remove the player from play. Notify the assigned EMT or Athletic Trainer for evaluation. Look for signs and symptoms of a concussion. If the injury occurs during the course of practice, the coach must evaluate the player to determine whether further treatment is warranted. This may include the calling for a

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EMT evaluation on the scene or notifying the parent or guardian of the player's condition. The coach will be required to notify the player safety coach of the incident for follow-up.

2. If the severity of the blow appeared significant or the player has demonstrated any of the recognized symptoms, the coach and EMT must notify the player safety coach and the parent/guardian of their findings. The EMT or Athletic Trainer must then fill out and sign the Concussion Protocol Form as provided by the BCYFL.

3. One copy of the form must be provided to the parent of the player while one copy is retained by the player safety coach. The player is then ineligible to practice or play until the parent copy of the form is signed by a licensed health care professional authorizing the player to return to play. This form must then be presented to the player safety coach who will keep that form on file, to be presented to the BCYFL if so required.

4. For any player removed from a practice or play who has been diagnosed as having suffered a concussion, the player will not be permitted to return to practice or play until the player has successfully completed a graduated

Return to Play protocol under the guidance of a health care professional. The graduated Return to Play protocol will consist of at least the following steps:

- (1) The player must be symptom free at rest for 24 hours before commencing the protocol;
- (2) Following (1), the player must be symptom free after moderate activity for 24 hours;
- (3) Following (2), the player must be symptom free after heavy activity for 24 hours;
- (4) A Health Care Professional must confirm that the player has completed the RTP process and a physician must make the final Return to Play.

16.6 – Any coach who knows or has reason to believe that a player has received a significant bump or blow to the head or body, whether during the course of football play or practice or during any other outside activity must make every effort to obtain all pertinent information regarding the injury and to follow the protocols for such.

16.7 – Any Referee, Coach, or Delegate who knowingly disregards this protocol, in that they fail to notify a proper health care professional in the event of a suspected injury or allows a player to participate in football activities without receiving proper clearance of the concussion protocols from a health care professional shall be immediately suspended from coaching by the Commissioner. The Commissioner will then report this violation to the Board of Delegates and based on the severity of the violation the Board reserves the right to take unique action and/or modify the designated action. Any such coach who has been suspended by the Commissioner may seek recourse as outlined in rule 4.

16.8 – If any parent or guardian of a player fails to notify a coach or the player safety coach of a suspected injury, as outlined in this section, that player shall be immediately suspended and shall remain suspended from football activities until such time the Board of Delegates is able to review any and all documentation regarding the injury and may require the player to complete all Return to Play protocols prior to resuming football activities. Any parent or guardian who knowingly fails to notify a coach or player safety coach of an injury and allows the player to continue football activities shall be suspended from all practices and games for the remainder of the season.

BCYFL CODE OF CONDUCT

Exhibit A – New for 2023 Season

In an effort to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for our players we are implementing a mandatory code of conduct to be signed by coaches, spectators and players. We adults need to be role models for our kids by showing sportsmanship with calm and respectful ways of handling all issues that may arise. Too many leagues of all sports around the country are losing officials and cancelling seasons due to unruly, rude and unfortunately violent behavior at times. This not only sends a horrible message to our kids it results in the kids missing out on valuable learning time of the game.

The following will not be tolerated and will come with the consequences listed after.

- 1) Verbal abuse of any kind to officials, coaches, players and any volunteers present.
- 2) Physical threats or actions to anyone at the event including fellow spectators.
- 3) Foul language of any kind directed at anyone at the event.
- 4) Accusations directed at officials of bias towards one team or another along with belligerently questioning an officials call.
- 5) Along with the officials we reserve the right to make gameday decisions on what we view as unruly and disruptive behavior and act accordingly to put an end to it.

Coaches misconduct of above and disciplinary actions to be taken:

First offense 1,3,4 and 5 will result in a 15 yard misconduct penalty on their team

Second offense will result in ejection from current game and entire next game

Third offense will result in suspension of the rest of the season and BCYFL Board approval to come back the following season.

Infraction of rule #2 will result in immediate and lifetime ban from BCYFL in any capacity

Parents, Guardians and all Spectators:

Dependent on the severity of rules 1,3 and 4

First offense of any verbal abuse or disrespectful behavior towards any official on the field will result in a 15 yard misconduct penalty on their team.

Second offense you will be asked to leave the field for current game and entire next game.

Third offense you will be banned for season.

Infraction of rule #2 will result in immediate lifetime ban from all BCYFL functions.

We reserve the right to view first or second offense serious enough to remove spectator and ban from future BCYFL functions.

Players:

Players are to show sportsmanship and respect to all officials, coaches and other players on the field at all times. All disciplinary penalties carry a 15 yard penalty for your team. Continued unruly and disrespectful behavior will result in ejection from current game and next full game. Both officials and coaches reserve the right to eject you from a game if they deem it necessary for the safety of others.

Lets make the season enjoyable for all. Please remember we are here for our children. It is our job to teach them how to play football in a fun and safe environment. Although we do have a championship this league is primarily instructional at every level so lets please keep winning in perspective to the real goal of the league. Its been all over the internet "no scholarships will be given out today".

BE SUPPORTIVE AND CHEER ALL THE KIDS ON

Signature:

Date:

_ Coach _ P,G,S _ Player