

**YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

## 2005 Tackle Football Official Rules and Regulations

The purpose and philosophy of the Greater Snohomish County Youth Football Association (GSCYFA) is two fold. First, to provide any and every youth who so desires the opportunity to play football for fun. Second, to teach sportsmanship, discipline, and self control along with the fundamentals of football and engage in competitive play with youth of comparable age. Each participant shall follow these rules in good faith.

**Current season changes will be highlighted in red.**

### Section I: Rules

We shall follow Washington State and National High School football rules with the exceptions and additions listed below.

### Section II: Players

**Article 1: Player eligibility.** All youth regardless of race, religion, or color may compete.

**Article 2:** Football is for youth of league age nine (9) to twelve (12) years of age. Nine (9) and ten (10) year olds comprise our Midget Division. Eleven (11) and twelve (12) year olds comprise our Junior Division.

- A.** September 1 is the cutoff date for birthdays. Players who turn eleven (11) years of age before September 1, must play in the Junior Division. Players who turn thirteen (13) years of age before September 1, are too old for our program. The league ages are as follows:

<b>Birth Month</b>	<b>Year of Birth</b>							
	<b>1991</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>
<b>January</b>	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
<b>February</b>	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
<b>March</b>	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
<b>April</b>	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
<b>May</b>	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
<b>June</b>	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
<b>July</b>	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
<b>August</b>	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
<b>September</b>	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
<b>October</b>	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
<b>November</b>	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
<b>December</b>	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6

NOTE: For any player born at any point during a particular month of a year, the age shown is their official league age for the 2005 season.

- B.** Competition in a school, city, church, or other tackle football leagues will deem a player ineligible. Players involved with other programs cannot be signed up simultaneously.

**Article 3: Playing Boundaries.**

- A.** All players must play on teams in the school district in which they attend school and/or reside. Any exceptions must obtain written permission from the association from which the player comes from. This written permission must be in the form of a completed Player Jurisdiction Waiver and is only good for one season. This waiver must be on file with the GSCYFA and the member associations involved. Any violation of this rule will go before the GSCYFA Board of Directors for an investigation, hearing, and disciplinary action. Cases will be judged on a case-by-case basis. All decisions of the Board of Directors are final. Possible disciplinary actions include suspension of coaches and players, forfeiture of games, and others as determined by the Board.

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- B. Players that live or attend school in a city or school district outside of the GSCYFA boundaries are not eligible to play. Any player outside of these boundaries who wants to play within the league must petition the GSCYFA Board of Directors in writing. The Board must review the petition and unanimously approve of this exception. This player cannot be a dependent of any league head coach or assistant coach unless either the player or the coach has played or coached within the league the previous season. Any violation of this rule will go before the GSCYFA Board of Directors for an investigation, hearing, and disciplinary action. Cases will be judged on a case-by-case basis. All decisions of the Board of Directors are final. Possible disciplinary actions include suspension of coaches and players, forfeiture of games, and others as determined by the Board.

**Article 4: Player Age and Weight.** Midgets, 9 and 10 year olds, will have a **135-pound maximum weight limit**. They may also have 4 possible 11-year-old team members with a maximum weight of 80 pounds. 11 year olds must play between the tackles. The minimum weight for 8 year olds to play on Midget teams is 75 pounds. Juniors, 11 and 12 year olds, will have a **165-pound maximum weight limit**. There will be a one-pound scale allowance for both divisions.

**Article 5: Birth Certificates.** Midget and Junior coaches must check and take responsibility for players' ages. GSCYFA reserves the right to check birth certificates for any player(s) in question. Furthermore, all coaches must have a copy of each birth certificate with them at each game, and allow the opposing coach to check the certificate of any player(s) upon request.

**Article 6: Weigh In**

- A. Prior to the start of each game, all players will be weighed in. The weigh-in shall be in front of both head coach and Field Supervisor (mandatory presence). The weigh-in will be on a scale provided by the host city.
- B. There will be a one-pound scale allowance for all weigh-ins. In addition, starting the second week of the season and continuing for 5 weeks, there shall be a one-pound growth allowance per week up to 5 pounds in week six.

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Post Season
Growth Allowance	0 lbs	1 lbs	2 lbs	3 lbs	4 lbs	5 lbs	5 lbs	5 lbs

- C. Any player who is deemed over weight by the scale shall not play in the game. They may not wear their helmet or shoulder pads during the game.
- D. If a player has not made weight or has not played in a game by the fourth game of the season, then they are deemed ineligible for the season and may not play.
- E. The GSCYFA reserves the right to weigh any player(s) that are in question.
- F. Coaches violating any part of Section II Article 6 will be suspended for the remainder of the season and any games played to that point will be declared forfeits.

**Article 7: Player Addition.** The deadline to add a player to the team roster will be the start of the 4th week of the season as defined by the Board of Directors with the schedule. Once a part of the team, players will be subjected to the same weigh-in schedule as the rest of the team from that point in the season on. Players leaving the team after the jamboree will not receive any refunds. Coaches found in violation of this rule will be suspended for **the remainder of the season**.

### Section III: Playing Rules

**Article 1: Practices**

- A. Practices can be held each weekday and Saturdays up to 5 practices per week. After the jamboree, each team is limited to 3 practices per week. Practices may not be more than 2 hours in length. There may not be more than 1 practice per day.
- B. To be eligible to practice in pads, players must have 3 practices without any gear (helmets may be worn).
- C. To be eligible to play in a game a player must have a minimum of 6 practices.
- D. Remember that parents are waiting for their children and would like them to be let go on time.
- E. **In the interest of helping associations financially, if an association holds a camp for a fundraiser, attendees will be able to use that as their three practice days with no pads.**

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## Article 2: Playing Time

- A. **Twenty-one or fewer players.** Each player must play one full quarter in either the first or second quarter. Any player playing in both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarters will sit out the entire 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.
- B. **Twenty-two players and over.** Each player will play either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, but not both. Any player not playing the entire 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter will play the entire 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. Each player is required to play one continuous quarter of football without coming out in either the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.
- C. **Fifteen to sixteen players.** Each player must play one full quarter in either the first or second quarter. Each player must sit out one full quarter.
- D. Teams with fourteen or fewer players will forfeit the game. **Teams will still be required to have seventeen players on their roster.**

All players can sit one complete quarter using the following guideline:

- Sixteen players→
  - 5 players sit out the first quarter.
  - Different 5 players sit out second quarter.
  - Different 5 players sit out third quarter.
  - Different 1 player sits out fourth quarter.
- Fifteen players→
  - 4 players sit out first quarter.
  - Different 4 players sit out second quarter.
  - Different 4 players sit out third quarter.
  - Different 3 players sit out fourth quarter.

**Article 3:** In case of injury, a substitute player may enter the game for only one play per quarter without affecting their eligibility for the playing rule. If a player gets hurt, a player can only substitute once a quarter, unless all the players have been used, then the order in which substitutions were made will be repeated. ***The order of substitutions must follow that of the order that the players are listed on the team's roster exchange form.***

**Article 4: Roster Exchange Form.** Coaches are required to exchange Roster Exchange forms at the coin toss of each game. If forms are not exchanged, this will result in a forfeit of that game.

**Article 5:** Protests or concerns regarding a violation of the GSCYFAs Playing and Substitution rules will and must be handled in the following manner as soon as the violation is witnessed/occurred:

1. Ask the game officials for an official's time out for the purpose of discussing a league rule with the opposing coach.
2. The Field Supervisor should be notified and meet the coaches on the field.
3. The Head coach from each team should meet in the center of the field. ONLY the head coach from each team, the field supervisor, and league officials should be present.
4. The coach with the concern should calmly express and explain their concern.
5. They should make every effort to resolve the situation.
6. If further violations occur, they should be handled in the same manner. At the time of these further violations the coach with the concern should specify their interest in filing a formal protest. (Note the coach must still follow the protest guidelines set forth in Section V, Article 6.)
7. A note regarding all such conferences, violations, and protest interests should be placed on the Official Game report filled out by the field supervisor and turned into the GSCYFA.

The GSCYFA will not hear protests regarding the Playing or Substitution rule unless the process above has taken place. The GSCYFA encourages coaches to work cooperatively to follow the spirit and intent of the rules. Furthermore, they should work to provide a positive experience for the players involved. Remember, coaches are role models for the participants in this program and should act accordingly.

## Section IV: Game Regulations

**Article 1:** **Field size.** Midgets and Juniors will play on a field of 100 yards in length.

**Article 2:** **Football Size.** Midgets will use an official Junior size football. Juniors will use an official intermediate size football.

**Article 3:** **Footwear.** Footwear must consist of one piece (no removable cleats) rubber molded shoes and/or tennis shoes.

**Article 4:** **Mouth guards.** Mouthpieces are mandatory for all players. Whenever a player is on the field, practice or games, their mouth guards must be in place.

**Article 5:** **Time.** The game shall consist of 4 quarters of 8 minutes each for the Midgets and 4 quarters of 10 minutes for the Juniors. Extra point attempts may either be kicked when goal posts are present for 2 points or run in for one point. No field goals will be allowed.

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- Article 6: Overtime.** Will consist of each team getting the ball from the 10-yard line. Each team will have 4 downs to score. If needed, it will be repeated. If there is no score, the game will be a tie.
- Article 7: Penalties.** On fields of less than 100 yards, penalty yardage will be limited to 10 yards.
- Article 8: Twenty-Four Point Rule.** Is in effect when a team is ahead of its opponent by 24 points or more. When this occurs the time clock will run without being stopped unless there is a change in the score. During this time, when the team that is behind gains possession, they receive the ball at the current location or on the Mid Field Line, which ever is closer to the goal they are going towards. This rule only applies to the second half.
- Article 9: Free Declared Punts**
- A.** In punting situations, teams have the option of a normal punt or declared punt. If they decide to declare a punt, the coach or team captain must tell the referee and the opposing team that your team is punting before you break the huddle. The punting team has to punt the ball and the defensive team may not rush the punter. The clock does not run until the ball is touched. If a team does not declare a punt, the defense may rush the punter. The referee may only ask the coach if they wish to declare, not if they are punting, and must do so prior to the offense-breaking huddle. The opposing coach may not ask. **Good sportsmanship should be realized in this situation.**
  - B.** Receiving team formation on a declared punt shall consist of a minimum of eight players on the line and a maximum of three players back to receive the ball. **Good sportsmanship should be realized in this situation.**
  - C.** If a penalty occurs on a declared punt, then the declaration is removed. If the punting team retains possession after the penalty and want a declared punt, they must re-declare. Note, they still have the option of running a play or running a non-declared punt, otherwise the defense may rush. **Good sportsmanship should be realized in this situation.**
- Article 10: Coaches on the Field**
- A.** One coach can be on the field to call plays and make necessary adjustments, but **MUST BE OFF the field prior to the snap of the ball** and may not re-enter the field until the official have blown the ball dead. Two coaches are allowed during a time out.
  - B.** ONLY one coach at a time may traverse the full length of the sidelines.
  - C.** At the Junior level, no defensive coaches are to be on the field except during a timeout.

### Section V: Administration

- Article 1: Facilities**
- A.** All games will be played on fields as scheduled by the GSCYFA
  - B.** Spectators must remain a minimum of 5 yards from the sideline or behind the rope, fence, or barrier specified by the host city or school which ever is farther.
  - C.** The use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs is not permitted at any GSCYFA sponsored activity, especially games and practices. If you need to smoke you must leave the facility.
  - D.** **NO PETS** are permitted at GSCYFL and GSCYFA activities.
  - E.** Those violating these rules will be asked to leave the facility. Coaches violating Section V Article 1 C may be subject to suspension or expulsion from the program.
- Article 2: Video Equipment.** Video cameras and VCR's are not allowed on the playing field under any circumstances. No coach or other person on behalf of a coach may videotape a game or scrimmage in which his or her team is not participating. Coaches found in violation of this rule will be suspended for the remainder of the season.
- Article 3: Coaches Conduct.** Coaches for the program will be select individuals from the community who volunteer their time to teach the players the skills, disciplines, and conduct that make for good sportsmanship. The COACH is vital to the success of the program. As such, the coach must uphold the GSCYFA rules and regulations, along with the bylaws, or face the consequences of being suspended by the Board of Directors and/or their individual associations. There should be solidarity between coaches as to goals, with emphasis on the player's welfare, interest, and attitudes, which the player will learn or imitate by observing his/her coach. Therefore, the rules and guidelines must be observed.
- Article 4:** Parents and fans are the sole responsibility of the Head Coach from each team. Referees can assess penalties to a team based on the actions of their parents and/or fans.
- Article 5: Suspensions.** Coaches ejected from a game will be suspended from the next 2 games. Coaches ejected from a game following a 2 game suspension will be **EXPELLED FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON**. Players ejected from a game will be expelled for the next 1 game. Players ejected from a game following a 1 game suspension will be **EXPELLED FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON**. All suspensions will be reviewed by the GSCYFA. Coaches are required to notify the GSCYFA of any and all suspensions.

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**Article 6: Protests.** A protest can only be made concerning a rule interpretation (i.e., playing rule). Protests can only be officially submitted in writing. The written protest must be submitted to the GSCYFA within 48 hours of the completion of the game. Along with the written protest, a \$50 protest fee must be submitted at the same time. Coaches must get the approval of their area president for the protest, prior to starting this process. If the area president is the one protesting, he must have the approval of the next highest-ranking member of their Board of Directors. The \$50 protest fee will be refunded only if the protest is upheld. Failure to meet any of the protest criteria will result in the protest being VOID.

**Article 7: Insurance.**

- A. Players upon paying the set signup fee will be automatically covered. Membership covers the players and participants in all the associated activities. **If the participant does not have primary insurance, there will be a deductible, which will be determined by our insurance carrier.** It is the responsibility of the head coach to assist the participants with any insurance claims.
- B. Associated activities are defined as those scheduled and organized by the GSCYFA. Any events outside the normally scheduled activities that the GSCYFA is asked to organize, insure, or otherwise sanction should be presented at a league meeting and voted on by the member areas before being endorsed by the GSCYFA. Rules and procedures applying to outside events that differ from the league rules (i.e. weight and age variations) should be similarly presented to the member areas for approval. Competition with teams not governed by the GSCYFA must be presented for approval.

**Article 8: Field Supervisor**

- A. There shall be a Field Supervisor at all games. The supervisor must be a league officer, league representative, or an area president.
- B. The Field Supervisor shall be responsible for greeting teams, greeting referees, and explaining rules to them. They shall also assist the referees with the interpretation of the rules and crowd control. They shall also help teams enforce and follow all GSCYFA rules and regulations (including the playing rule) and mediate all onsite team conflicts. The Field Supervisor will report all final scores to the person in charge of the standings. They will also report all ejections to the same person and the president of the GSCYFA.
- C. The host city shall be responsible for providing a Field Supervisor for each game/field, who is not directly involved with a team participating, for all regular season games.
- D. The GSCYFA Board of Directors may appoint Field Supervisors for all post-season games.
- E. The referees have final say on all rule interpretations during the game. League Officers and/or referees may over rule Field Supervisors.

**Article 9: Season Length**

- A. The regular season shall be a minimum of seven weeks and a maximum of eight weeks in length.
- B. Each age group will consist of 2 conferences. The teams will be placed into a conference based on a lottery drawing to be done each year.
- C. Each team shall play seven regular season games. In case of an odd number of teams, one team shall play 8 games, with their first non-conference game not counting in their record. Every team will play all of their conference opponents once with the remaining games to be played against the other conference.
- D. The top 4 teams in each conference shall go into the playoffs.
- E. Remaining teams shall play an exhibition game at the end of the season with the 5<sup>th</sup> place team in Conference A playing the 5<sup>th</sup> place team in Conference B, 6<sup>th</sup> to play 6<sup>th</sup>, etc. In case of odd number of teams, the team with the worst record will not have an exhibition game. If teams are tied for the worst record we shall follow Section V Article 9 F.
- F. Places and ranks will be decided on basis of record. If there is a tie between two or more teams, we will first look at head to head competition to break the tie. All the teams who tied must have played each other for a head to head comparison. If they did not all meet during the regular season, then we shall look at the total number of points scored against each team. The team with the fewest number of points shall be ranked higher, and win the tie between the two teams.
- G. Only conference games shall be counted towards playoffs. If there is a tie between two or more teams, we shall refer to Section V Article 9 F.
- H. Any league commitment to post season play with other areas/leagues must be submitted to and approved by the Board of Directors of the GSCYFA prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>. This does not include individual team participation in tournaments.

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- I. Any team wishing to compete outside the GSCYFA scheduled activities, must have it approved by their association, and then notify GSCYFA Board of Directors. This notification should include rationale, date, time, location of game, who the opponent is, and contact info for their coach and league. Age and weight of the opponent should meet the GSCYFA age/weight guidelines. A plan for rules and a plan for the providing of referees should also be submitted as informational only. The Board must approve anything outside GSCYFA guidelines. Any cost for outside activities will be not be paid for by GSCYFA.

### **Article 10: Cheerleading**

- A. Member associations may sponsor cheerleading squads to help support their member teams.
- B. Cheerleading squads must be made up of youth that are in the same age group as the teams they are cheering for.
- C. Cheerleading squads may not dictate to member associations how to place football players on teams.
- D. The Cheerleading season for cheer squads shall be August 1 to November 30 of each year. Any squads performing or competing outside of these dates are not considered to be member squads and will not be covered by GSCYFA insurance.
- E. The only exception to letter Section V Article 10 D is the participation of cheer squads in their local community celebration parade, e.g. Marysville cheerleaders in the Marysville Strawberry Festival Parade or Lake Stevens Cheerleaders in the Lake Stevens Aqua Fest Parade.
- F. Cheerleaders will be held to the same practice limits as football teams.
- G. Cheerleaders will be held to the same playing boundaries as football teams.
- H. Cheer performances may not interfere with the movement or time frame of a game.
- I. Cheerleaders may only perform at games in areas designated by the host city, or in the case of playoff in areas designated by the GSCYFA. Must be a minimum of 5 yards from the sideline during the game.

**Article 11:** Decisions of the Board of Directors are final. The Board will rule on any matter not covered.