

# SOUTHERN TIER YOUTH FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

## Flag (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade) - Rules and Regulations 2023

### SECTION 1 PRACTICE SESSIONS

- 1.1. Practices shall not begin prior to **July 31, 2023** and then shall be conducted under the following guidelines:
- 1.2. No player will participate in a scrimmage until he/she has experienced three (3) full conditioning practices. All players must have three (3) full practice sessions prior to their first game. In Summary: **All players must have a total of six (6) practices prior to their first game.**
- 1.3. All players shall wear proper league approved protective equipment at all sessions (game and practice):
  - A. Soft Shell Helmet
  - B. Mouth guard
  - C. Molded rubber sole cleat or non-cleated athletic shoe
  - D. Jersey
  - E. Three (3) Velcro style flags and belt.
- 1.4. No practice session shall exceed two (2) hours. Coaches will allow sufficient water breaks.
- 1.5. No more than three (3), two-hour practice sessions per week.
- 1.6. A week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday.

### SECTION 2 GAME SCHEDULING

- 2.1. Season schedule will be set by league directors. It will be the responsibility of the head coach to see that his players are ready so that games start on time.
  - A. ***Saturday Game times are: (2016)***  
***Grade levels 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> - Lower "C" – 4:00pm (Flag)***  
***Grade levels 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> - Middle "B" – 5:30pm***  
***Grade levels 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> - Upper "A" – 7:30pm***
  - B. ***Sunday Game times are: (2016)***  
***Grade levels 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> - Lower "C" – 12:00pm (Flag)***  
***Grade levels 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> - Middle "B" – 1:30pm***  
***Grade levels 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> - Upper "A" – 3:30pm***
- 2.2. Game postponements will be allowed due to severe weather conditions as follows:
  - A. In the event of severe weather, league directors should contact each other at least 2 hours

prior to game time. Both directors must agree to the postponement. If the directors can't agree, STYFC President will make the decision.

- B. Or at the field just prior to the game with the consent of both participating coaches and/or league directors.
- C. Failure to field your team at the scheduled time will result in a forfeit. Games that are forfeited will be considered a loss and will not be rescheduled.

2.3 Rescheduling of postponed games will be done with both coaches and/or league directors to determine a day and time convenient for all. The postponed game must be made up by Wednesday of the following week. If the postponed game cannot be made up by Wednesday of the following week, the STYFC President must be contacted.

### **SECTION 3      FIELD REQUIREMENTS**

3.1 Playing Fields that are not of High School caliber (meaning Fenced and with a Track) will need to be roped off in order to keep spectators off the sidelines. Ropes will need to be 30 ft. off the sideline of the playing field where possible or as far back as field dimensions will allow. The STYFC must approve all such field situations for Game Play before the first game of the season.

- A. **80 yard fields, full width.**
- B. All Fields that do not have working scoreboards will require a Digital clock on the field that both team's coaches can see while on the field. In the event of a malfunction of the digital clock, official time will be kept on the field by the officials. The home team is responsible for providing someone who will keep the visiting team updated on status of the game clock.
- C. Only one game will be played at a time per location.
- D. The home team is responsible for the game clock and must have an adult running the clock that understands basic game officials hand signals as to when to start and stop the clock.
- E. It is the director's responsibility to contact the STYFC President and the visiting team's director if there are concerns over poor field conditions due to weather etc. that would render the field un-safe to play on. This must be done as soon as possible (minimum 1 day) in advance in order to possibly change the game's location.
- F. Bathroom facilities must be provided at all field locations.
- G. Programs that can not provide an adequate playing field will play their games on the road.
- H. Fields must be maintained (ropes, pads etc.) throughout the season after receiving league approval. If an opposing team arrives for a game and the field is not up to the standards set in the STYFC rulebook, the home team will forfeit the game. Or, if agreed upon by both teams, the game may be played under protest. The STYFC President will review the protested game and make a determination.
- I. In the event of thunder and/or lightning, the playing field must be evacuated for a minimum of 40 minutes after the first sound of thunder or flash of lightning. If no further signs of thunder or lightning occur within the 40 minutes, play may resume. If at any time there is an additional clap of thunder or streak of lightning, the clock resets and play cannot resume until 40 minutes has passed without any further signs of thunder or lightning. There is a maximum of 2 clock resets, after which the game will be cancelled.

## **SECTION 4      PERSONNEL ON THE FIELD**

4.1 Two coaches from each team are allowed on the field during play.

- A. This coach *is allowed to instruct the players up until the offensive huddle is broken.* (2016)  
The only exception is when a player is positioned illegally or in the case of a safety issue.  
(Example: Defensive player line up in the “A” gaps or incorrect depth or equipment problems.)
- B. A coach is not to instruct a player to go out and cover a wideout.
- C. The coach must stay clear of play and not interfere. Coach must be at least 5 yards behind the deepest player on their team.
- D. Coaching can resume once a play is blown dead. Coaching from sidelines is allowed at any time.
- E. Electronic communication devices are not allowed on the field of play at any time.
- F. Coaching violations will result in a 5-yard procedure penalty for each offense.

4.2 Officials and chain crews:

- A. It will be the home team’s responsibility to ensure that 3 responsible adults are assigned to man the 10-yard chain and down marker for each game.
- B. The chain crews are instructed by and under the direction of the head linesman.
- C. Chain crew location will be determined by the home team. In the event the chain crew is on the visiting team’s sidelines and there are any conflicts or confrontations between the chain crew and the visiting coaches or spectators, the chain crew will be moved to the home team’s sidelines.
- D. It will be the home team’s responsibility to have at least 2 Adult officials that are High School Certified or have been trained by their league director on the field to insure proper conduct of the game and enforcement of the rules for the level. The visiting team may supply 1 or 2 referees. (Optional). Visiting (Non Certified) officials are entitled to be either the back judge or referee and must be an adult. The home team official has the first choice.
- E. Adults are classified as being at least 18 years of age and out of High School.
- F. If a H.S. Certified Official is in attendance for any game, (be it home or away) that Certified Official shall be designated as the Head Referee. Should both the Home and Visiting Team supply a Certified Official(s), then a Certified Official supplied by the Home Team shall be designated as the Head Referee.
- G. If Certified Officials are present then a Non-Certified Official will NOT be allowed to work with the certified crew.
- H. Failure to provide Certified or league director trained adult officiating will result in a FORFEIT by the HOME teams. If certified or league director trained officials are NOT available the HOME team must notify the visiting team and the STYFC President by Friday at 8:00 PM to avoid a forfeit.
- I. Non-Certified Officials should wear at the minimum an Officials Black/White Striped shirt.

## SECTION 5      GAME CLOCK

- 5.1      Playing time for all age levels will be 4 quarters of 10 minutes each.
- 5.2      It will be a running clock.
- 5.3      The play clock will be controlled exclusively by an official on the field of play and run as follows:
- A.      A 60 second play clock will be strictly enforced at the “C” Level.
  - B.      10-minute quarters with a 1 minute official time out between the 1st and 2nd and the 3rd and 4th quarters. *Division C will have a 5 minute halftime.- 2023*
  - C.      Clock will stop any time during the game for:
    - official time outs,
    - charged time outs,
    - extra points,
    - injuries, and
    - change of team possessions. Change of possession is when the offensive team declares a punt, loss of downs, or after a score. **One minute play clock for offensive team starts on the placement of the ball.**
- 5.4      Each team is allowed 3 time outs per half (1 minute each). A charged time out occurs when requested by the captain, Head Coach or other authorized player as granted by an official. Non chargeable time outs will be injury of a player, repair of equipment or officials time outs. *Injured players, for which a time out has been called, must come out of the game for the next two (2) plays. - 2019*

## SECTION 6      TEAM REGISTRATION

- 6.1      Each team shall produce and provide an official roster and shall contain the following information in this order: *Name, Date of Birth, Age, School Name, Grade Level, and Jersey Number and **must be in alphabetical order.** Only the official STYFC Roster Form will be accepted. If the official STYFC form is not used the **TEAM** will **NOT** be accepted. Once the competitive season starts, a player’s jersey number can’t be changed without all STYFC directors being notified in writing. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Each program roster shall be signed by the Program Director. prior to the weigh-in.*

## SECTION 7      ELIGIBILITY

- 7.1      *Lower division (Grades 2<sup>nd</sup> and Lower) – Flag - 2019*
- A. Player’s grade level of the present school year will be their official playing level.
  - B. Weight restrictions:
    - 1. Unlimited. However, all coaches and directors should assess whether to move a “large” player with sufficient abilities to the next level.

- 7.2 No player will be allowed to participate in more than one division at the same time. *A player can play at the level above, at the discretion of the individual program. Players are not allowed to play a level below their playing level as based on their school grade level. - 2019*
- 7.3 *If a Player or Coach is thrown out of a game, the League Director of that program shall report the event to the STYFC League Directors within 24 hours. STYFC will review and provide a decision on the Payer or Coach(es) eligibility for the next scheduled game. (2014)*
- 7.4 *Any player additions after the official roster is issued, per Section 7, must be communicated and distributed to STYFC Directors. If not communicated to STYFC prior to game play, team will be required to forfeit any wins with ad player(s). (2016)*
- 7.5 Mouthguards, soft shell helmets, and Velcro-style Flag/belts are required. Three (3) flags are required (1 on each hip and one centered on behind). Shirts must be tucked in at the waist.

## SECTION 8 FLAG - PLAYING RULES

- 8.1 Since flag football will have the youngest players in our league, and for many of them it will be their first experience to play in an organized spot, the sole purpose is to:
- A. Teach the fundamentals of the game of football
  - B. Teach sportsmanship, ethics and integrity
  - C. Teach team play
  - D. Have fun
- 8.2 80-yard fields will have 10-yard first downs.
- 8.3 There are NO kickoffs. Offense will start with the ball on the 15-yard line.
- 8.4 After a Safety, play will start on the 15 yard line.
- 8.5 Punting will be done by a controlled freeze punt. The offense team must declare if they are going to punt.
- A. No rushing or no returning of the punt. Both the offense and defense will have 5 players at the line of scrimmage. Players are allowed to stand with hands raised. NO Jumping.
  - B. The ball must be controlled by the receiving team. The referee will place the ball in play at that point. The ball cannot be hit or fumbled forward.
  - C. **If punting is not optioned by the offensive team, then the defensive team will take over the ball 15 yards from the line of scrimmage.**
- 8.6 No advancement of fumbles or turnover on a fumble; fumble is a dead ball.
- 8.7 Equipment
- A. Football shall be “PEE WEE” size made of rubber or leather. No Nerf type balls.
  - B. Flag belt holds three (3) flags; one on each side and one in the middle of the back. Belts are worn around the waist of each player on the field and not to be covered by shirts or jackets. Flags shall be a minimum of 12” long and be individually attached to the belt via

velcro.

C. *“Lower” Division players required to wear soft shell helmet during games. - 2021*

8.8 Interceptions are live and can be advanced.

8.9 Conversions that run from **3 yard out are 1 point; 6 yards out are 2 points**

8.10 In case of a tie at the end of a game, each team will get 3 plays from the opponent’s 20 yard line. Winner will be determined by most scored plays.

8.11 *Heat Index Rule: If the Home teams school or league has a heat index rule and a game must be canceled, the Home team must re-schedule and play the game within the week or take a forfeit. (2014)*

8.12 *If a rules violation occurs during a game, the opposing coach must bring the violation to the attention of the game officials. The game officials must inform the violator of the rules violation. If the rule violation continues to occur with no attempt of corrective action, the opposing Coach may bring video evidence to the STYFC League Directors for review and resolution of issue. (2014)*

## **SECTION 9      OFFENSE**

9.1 *Offense line of 7 linemen must be in a 2 point stance on the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball. All players must be set for 1 second prior to snap. The use of an unbalanced line is legal. (2019)*

9.2 Offensive player is on the line of scrimmage when he faces his opponents goal line with the line of his shoulders approximately parallel thereto and his head or foot breaking the plane of an imaginary line drawn through the waistline of the snapper and parallel to the line of scrimmage

9.3 Maximum split of 1 yard between linemen, end to end, unless a split end is used, in which case the maximum split for the end is 10 yards from the tackle. No double split ends (in other words, no “twins”). A team has the option of using either a split end or a flanker on any given down. However, they may not use both a split end and a flanker at the same time on a given down. If the end is not a ball carrying weight he/she may block only. The end must be ball carrying weight only if split is greater than 1 yard.

9.4 Center shall have his feet behind his line and No part of his body other than a hand or hands on the ball may be beyond the foremost point of the ball.

A. The snapper may make preliminary adjustment of the ball before assuming his set position. During these adjustments the snapper may lift the ball slightly without moving the location.

9.5 Flanker can be used, with a maximum split of 5 yards out past the end and at least 1 yard off the line of scrimmage and be ball carrying weight.

9.6 Illegal formations: You cannot have 3 eligible ball carriers set on the same side outside the tackle. No more than 2 players outside the tackle.

- 9.7 Motion: No more than one player may be in motion at the snap of the ball between the offensive ends and then only if such motion is not toward the line of scrimmage prior to the snap of the ball. When motioning to the side of a formation that has 2 players outside of the tackle, the motion back may not be passed the midline of the center at the snap of the ball.
- 9.8 Ready-For-Play is a term which signifies the referee has signaled the ball may be put in play by the offense. After the referee's signal the offense will have 60 seconds.
- 9.9 Double reverse and end around plays are legal.
- 9.10 Inadvertent whistle. During a down, if an inadvertent whistle occurs while:
- A. A legal forward pass or snap is in flight: the down shall be replayed.
  - B. The ball is loose following a backward pass, fumble, illegal forward pass or illegal kick, the team last in possession may choose to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.
  - C. The ball is in player possession, that team may choose to accept the play at that spot or replay the down. (This is always offensive teams choice)
- 9.11 Ball carriers are not allowed to stiff arm defenders. The infraction shall be deemed a spot foul, with a 5 yard penalty.
- 9.12 Ball carriers are not allowed to flag guard, hands must stay above the waist while advancing the football. The infraction shall be deemed a spot foul, with a 5 yard penalty.
- 9.13 Fumbled Snap – A fumbled snap between the center and quarterback is allowed once per play, with no loss of down. The ball will be re-set at the LOS. A second fumbled snap on that play is considered a true fumble, and therefore a loss of down.

## **SECTION 10 DEFENSE**

- 10.1 Defensive formation will be 6-2-3 or 6-2-2-1. Once inside the 10 yard line or extra point try a 6-3-2 can be used. Defensive player must be grouped into three distinct areas until the ball is snapped. All defensive backs and linebackers must be eligible ball carriers.
- 10.2 Defensive line made up of 6 linemen must be in an imaginary straight line extending from offensive end to offensive end. With **no one lined up over the center**.
- 10.3 No linemen may play directly over the offensive center or in the "A" gap. *Defensive guards and tackles must line up, head up over offensive lineman. - 2023*
- 10.4 Defensive ends can play no more than half a shoulder (body) outside the offensive ends in an upright stance. When an offensive team employs a wide receiver, *flanker* (2016) or split end, the defensive end to that side of the formation may assume a walk away position. The defensive end may align at a maximum depth even with the 2 inside linebackers and no wider than half the distance between the wide receiver, *flanker* (2016) or split end and the next lineman.

- 10.5 Linebackers must be at least 1 yard directly behind the deepest linemen (guard, tackle or end) until the ball is snapped. Linebackers may Not line up over the center or in the gap in 6-2-3 or 6-2-2-1. Inside the 10 yard line (goal line stands or extra point) 6-3-2, linebacker can line up over the center however they must be 1 yard behind the deepest lineman.
- 10.6 Defensive backs or corner backs must be at least 3 yards behind the deepest linebacker until the ball is snapped. Defensive backs may play up to 5 yards maximum outside the widest offensive player on the field. He may or may not move out to cover a wideout. However the 6-2-3 must be maintained. Inside the 10 yard line the defense can be modified to 6-3-2. Proper depths must be maintained at all times.
- 10.7 Blitzing: No Defensive Linebacker or Defensive back may be moving towards the line of scrimmage (blitzing) prior to the snap of the ball. Movement by the Defensive line that doesn't break the plane of that player's line of scrimmage is not a foul.**
- 10.8 Head butts or direct blows to the head are NOT allowed.
- 10.9 Defender must show effort in attempt to grab ball carrier flag, not the ball carriers body.
- 10.10 Defenders are not allowed to leave their feet in an effort to grab a flag – diving is not allowed and will be penalized as an illegal flag pull. - 2023*

## **SECTION 11      SCORING & OVERTIME**

- 11.1 The game is won by the team which accumulates the most points. Points are scored either by the run or the pass as follows:
- A. Touchdown = 6 points
  - B. Point after:
    1. Run or pass from the 3 yard line = 1 point
    2. Run or pass from the 6 yard line = 2 points - 2023
  - C. Foul during point after:
    1. Offense attempt is for 2 points from the 3 yard line and their attempt is unsuccessful however the defense commits a foul. The offense accepts the penalty and the spot is moved half the distance to the goal. The attempt will still be for 2 points.
    2. Offense attempt is for 1 point from the 1 yard line and is successful however they commit a foul. The defense accepts the penalty. The spot is now beyond the 6 yard line. The attempt will still be for 1 point.
- 11.2 Safety = 2 points
- 11.3 Overtime for Games ending in a Tie – refer to Section 8.13.

## **SECTION 12      POSTSEASON**



- 12.1 *Postseason shall consist of one (1) exhibition game after the completion of the regular season. Games will be scheduled at the completion of the regular team where teams will be matched based on regular season record. All teams are expected to participate in exhibition game. - 2023*

## **SECTION 13 PENALTIES**

- 13.1 The referees will call all penalties
- 13.2 All penalties will be assessed from the LOS, except as noted (spot fouls)
- 13.3 Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
- 13.4 Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

### **Spot Fouls**

Defensive Pass Interference	Automatic First Down (AFD)
Holding	5 yards
Stripping	10 yards
Defensive Unnecessary Roughness	10 yards
Flag Guarding	5 yards and loss of down
Charging	10 yards and loss of down
Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	10 yards and loss of down

### **Defensive Penalties**

Offsides	5 yards from LOS
Illegal Flag Pull	5 yards from LOS
Roughing the Passer	10 yards from LOS and AFD
Illegal Rush/Blitz	5 yards from LOS

### **Offensive Penalties**

Offsides/False Start	5 yards from LOS and Replay the Down
Illegal Pass	5 yards from LOS and Loss of Down
Offensive Pass Interference	5 yards from LOS and Loss of Down
Illegal Motion	5 yards from LOS and Replay the Down
Delay of Game	5 yards from LOS and Loss of Down