

ISTROUMA SPORTS

flag football 2022
coaches manual

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COACHING THE ISTROUMA WAY

The Istroma Sports mission is to intentionally create opportunities to glorify God and make disciples through our gospel-centered ministry. Our vision is to use redeeming sports as a bridge to connect our community to the gospel. Our philosophy is to do sports a different way.

Istroma Sports would like to welcome you to our league and thank you for coaching. This sports ministry began in the fall of 2009 and continues to grow its footprint in the community and impact lives for the Kingdom. Our goal is to create a winning culture and to develop an organized system that will allow you to coach the Istroma way. As a recreational sports ministry, we desire to be hospitable to those playing in our leagues, while fulfilling our mission. Our leagues are developed for the players to transition into more competitive leagues with the hopes that our players and coaches will take the Gospel teaching with them.

We use sports as a bridge to bring kids and adults from our community to our playing fields and courts. We are not just an Istroma Baptist Church league, we welcome everyone to join us. While not having to be a member of Istroma Baptist, coaches will need to apply and be vetted. We use sports as a laboratory for God to reveal our sinfulness and desires to bring ourselves back to Him. We believe that our character of idolatry, control and comfort are revealed through playing and coaching sports. Sports are contrived realities that reveal our true hearts. Our true heart is displayed when we make decisions on the field or court.

We believe that the gospel is for everyone who believes, as expressed in the bible. Romans 1:16 states, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Our desire is to integrate the gospel in the sport. Gospel-centered sports are much more than a prayer before, a devotional and a prayer after the game. As an Istroma coach, we will ask you to learn to integrate the gospel by identifying a sports occurrence that teaches a life lesson, which also leads to a biblical principle. This is done during moments in practices or games.

We believe that everyone is broken. The sports that we coach, the coaches that lead, the kids that play, the fans who watch, and those who officiate are all broken. This truth is displayed in Romans 3:23 which says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." The brokenness in sports is not only with the sport, but with those that turn sport into idolatry for self-glorification. 1 Corinthians 10:31 says, "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

We believe spiritual competition is defined as teams and individuals striving together to be the best for God's glory. We should move away from embracing the sins of self-glory, comparison to other teams or individuals, retaliation, achievement, and criticism.

We believe that God cares about sports and those that play it, coach it, and watch it but much differently than we do. God cares about whether we win or lose because we care, and because He created us. He has given this gift of sports for our enjoyment and for His glory.

We believe that sports lead to great opportunities for redemption. It is great to see coaches', parents', and players' true hearts revealed and to see transformation back to God through those situations. We are so grateful for the opportunity to come alongside you in this season as we make memories, impact the Kingdom, and enjoy life transformation.

COACHES COVENANT

1. Covenant of Character

I commit to be a positive role model for my players and community. I commit to acting and reacting in a Christ-like manner. I commit to following the rules. I commit to use sports as a laboratory to change myself through the Holy Spirit. I commit to receiving the grace of God and giving grace to others. I commit to treat others with respect and to view officials as a part of the process of developing the players.

2. Covenant of Gospel-Centered Coaching

I commit to coaching the hearts of my players, as well as their skills. I commit to seeing God at work in the lives of my players and parents. I commit to teach and show God's redemptive plan through sports by integrating the gospel during moments in practices and games.

3. Covenant of Accountability

I commit to read and adhere to emails, practice plans, and instructions from Istrouma Sports leadership. I commit to do relational outreach by discovering where parents are spiritually and inviting them to church. I commit to teaching my community to be accountable through time management, discipline, keeping their word, etc. I commit to motivating parents to be part of our community by attending and volunteering at practices, games, and awards ceremonies.

4. Covenant of Attendance

I commit to participating in practices, games, player evaluations, coaches' development and season celebration. I will have another coach take my place when I cannot attend.

5. Covenant of Communication

I commit to communicating regularly with Istrouma Sports leadership, players, coaches, referees and parents. I will communicate with Istrouma Sports regarding issues, prayer requests, etc. I commit to communicate with clarity.

6. Covenant of Serving Others

I commit to lead my community in serving others and participating in the compassion project.

7. Covenant of Affirmation

I commit to treating myself, players, parents, referees and others as being created in the image of God. I will encourage and give hope to all of these. I commit to provide a meaningful post-game award ceremony. I commit to finding special ways to encourage my sphere of influence.

8. Covenant of Strategy

I commit to prepare for practices, games, and post-game award ceremonies. I promise to maximize participation, make practices fun, and offer plenty of opportunities for my players to improve. I commit to introduce memory verses at practice and have players recite at games. I commit to pray with my team and pray for my community.

9. Covenant of Competition

I commit to defining competition as striving together for God's glory rather than striving against each other for my own glory. I commit to teach my team that winning doesn't define us, that it is a desire and not a goal. I commit to not compromise the Istrouma Sports way to avoid losing. I commit to teaching my team how to win and lose with humility.

COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Communication with Families

Head coaches are responsible for communicating to parents. Istrouma will send you the team roster before practices. Call your parents to welcome them to the league, introduce yourself, and give them practice information. Send emails to your team weekly. Istrouma will send a coaches email and a parents email weekly. You can take that information and use it in your email. Blind copy all recipients. Avoid group texts.

2. Communication with Istrouma

Keep Istrouma staff informed. If a head coach is going to miss an event, notify ML Woodruff. If an assistant coach is going to miss an event, notify your head coach. Copy ML Woodruff on your team emails.

3. Website

In addition to emails, stay informed by visiting our website each week. Schedules, practice plans, skill videos, devotions, weather updates, and more are displayed on the website.

4. Development

Coaches clinic is a great opportunity to meet some of the other coaches in your age division. You will learn about the Istrouma Sports mission, coaching tips, and league rules. If you can't attend, we will upload a recording of the meeting. Coaches must attend the meeting or watch the video in order to be vetted.

5. First practice

Introduce yourself to players and parents. Have a team meeting at the end of practice to go over expectations.

6. Preparation for practices

Practice plans will be uploaded to the website weekly. Read and adapt the practice plan to your team. Incorporate fun and maximum participation. Review fundamentals skills every practice; do not make it only about the game.

7. Practices

Start practices on time. Set the tone for practice. Establish a listening and learning environment while coaching. Have a post practice meeting with parents. Remind them about the redemptive qualities and memory verses.

8. Teachable Moments

Seize opportunities to teach life lessons and biblical principles through sports. Don't preach, but use examples from what the players are learning.

9. Teach season theme

The season theme varies each year. Teach the redemptive qualities and memory verses to your team each week at practice and reemphasize them in your devotions after games.

10. Memory verses

Hold players accountable to memorizing scripture. Ask your players to recite the bible verse as they arrive. Each correct recitation is worth one point to start the game.

11. Use God-given opportunities

Share your testimony as opportunities arise. Contact Istrouma for updates and help.

12. Redemption week

You have the opportunity to present the gospel during practice this week, which is listed on the timeline. Coaches of older teams will distribute cards for their players to evaluate their spiritual lives. Return the cards to Istrouma before leaving practice. Remember your players who you should follow up with.

13. Game Time

Ask your team to arrive 20 minutes before game time to warm up. Be in place before your players arrive.

14. Equal playing time & position rotations

Give your players equal playing time and a chance to succeed at every position. Fill out a substitution sheet, provided by Istrouma, before each game.

15. Fan mail

Fan mail is a note that is presented by parents to players, coaches, or officials. Fan mail can be collected at the greeting table.

16. Award ceremony

Coaches must hold an award ceremony after each game. Choose awards for players based on their heart and not their skill. Give a devotion after handing out awards. More details are explained on page 10. The awards are listed on page 11.

17. Understand rules

Coaches are responsible for reading the whole manual in order to understand rules and coaching protocols. You should have a similar understanding as other coaches and officials in your division. It is your job to communicate rules and procedures to players and coaches.

18. Recruit volunteers

Assign parents to help your team have a great season. Different families need to bring snacks each game. Istrouma needs parents to run the concession stand. Home teams are responsible for providing score keepers. Recruit more coaches if you need help on game day. Parents can step in to help during practice. Istrouma's desire is for each team have 4 coaches.

19. Equipment

Istrouma provides team equipment. Return all equipment in proper condition.

20. Officiate

It would be great if each coach would officiate at least one game during the season. This helps Istrouma fill in some officiating gaps and gives coaches a deeper appreciation for other officials. Coaches in younger age divisions will officiate their own games. Both teams will have a coach in the playing area to guide players and work together to mediate the game.

21. Season celebration

Teams gather one last time and celebrate the season following their final game. This is a tailgate format, where teams will find their own area for the postgame ceremony. Istrouma will provide inflatables, gifts for players, team programs, and food. Emphasize the importance of your team attending this event.

22. Feedback

Istrouma will provide you with a form to complete during one of the last practices. Evaluate league logistics and player skills to help Istrouma prepare for the next season.

23. Encourage

Reward players for doing something right or with their best effort. Be an encourager rather than a critic.

24. Attitude

Your attitude and behavior are infectious because players and parents look to you for leadership. Body language is just as important as words. You can get clarification on a ruling, but do not question the authority of the official.

25. Safety

Safety is the top priority. Always watch your players.

26. Be loyal

Istrouma has specific rules in place to develop every player. Follow Istrouma's rules and protocols; don't manipulate the rules to take advantage of other teams.

27. Conflict Resolution

Privately go to the person that you have conflict with (Matthew 18). Inform Istrouma afterwards if necessary.

OFFICIALS RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Pregame Meeting

Show up at least 15 minutes early. It is important to set the tone for the game by meeting with both teams beforehand. Talk with head coaches from both teams to clarify rules. Make sure both coaches are on the same page. Meet with all players and coaches after the National Anthem and prayer. Welcome them to your court or field and quickly reiterate rules and penalties that are pertinent to their age division. Pray before starting the game.

2. Bible Verses

Players on teams have the opportunity to recite a bible verse to their coach before the game. Each correct recitation is worth 1 point. Before the game, coordinate with both coaches and the scorekeeper to input the correct score.

3. Postgame

Make sure players line up to shake hands after the game. Meet with both teams to give a quick recap of the game, encourage players, and pray at the end. Record the final score at the coaches' and officials' table.

4. Controlling the Game

Officials are in charge of keeping the game under control. Blow your whistle confidently and sharply to stop play; call penalties, fouls, or violations when they occur. Rough play should be stopped immediately. Set the tone for physicality at the very beginning of the game. Maintain a safe environment for players.

5. Communicate with Players

Officials are additional development tools for players. Encourage players throughout the game. Develop players by giving tips and instructions, rather than just calling them for penalties. Players need to understand why you blow the whistle. Get down on the player's level when talking to them.

6. Hand Signals

Coaches need to understand why the whistle is being blown in order to develop their players. Make a clear signal to the coaches and scorekeeper, if applicable. Learn the appropriate officiating signals for effective communication.

7. Equipment

Istrouma will provide an official's shirt and whistle if necessary. Istrouma will provide counters for baseball and softball and penalty flags for flag football.

8. Scorekeeping

Familiarize yourself with the scoreboard remote. Officials need to be aware of how to operate the remote in case you need to correct an issue on the scoreboard. Officials need to be available to train volunteer scorekeepers on the remote operation. Baseball (older teams), basketball, and volleyball will use scoreboards.

9. Rules

Familiarize yourself with the rules and format for every division. Understand and remember the rules for the division you are officiating. Istrouma will provide a cheat sheet on game day, but come prepared. If a situation is not fully covered in the manual, use your expert discernment to make a proper call. You have the authority over coaches and players during games.

10. Leniency

It is important to understand that most players are inexperienced. Officials should be more lenient with younger players. We want kids to be able to play the game, but we don't want players to develop bad habits. Officials are encouraged to warn players of violations.

11. Consistency

Be consistent throughout the whole game and season. Coaches want consistency in calls; it is easier to develop their teams this way.

12. Positioning

One referee needs to stand behind the quarterback, having vision of both sidelines. In divisions where the defense can rush, referees in this position need to hold up their hand and drop it 5 seconds after the snap. This tells the defense when they can rush the quarterback without penalty. The second referee, if applicable, needs to stand at the line of scrimmage. This referee will need to spot the ball.

13. Harassment

Ignore fans during the game; stay focused on developing the players. Notify Istrouma staff if you are having issues with harassment from a player, coach, or fan. It is a crime in Louisiana to harass sports officials. We will ask the harasser to leave if you desire. Charged parties can be fined and face jail time.

COMMUNITY GATHERING

The Community Gathering is important in “Doing Sports a Different Way”. It is imperative that you, as the head coach, make a big deal out of this postgame ceremony. You are to invite players and their parents, relatives and friends to come be a part. This is where you build your team and have an opportunity to minister to families. The gathering takes place after the game and away from the field in a private area. Have an idea before the game begins of the awards you’ll hand out to your players. Spend a few minutes with your assistants deciding on the recipients of the awards; this process should start at midweek practice. During the time you are making decisions, have your parent who brought snacks distribute them to your team. Keep an ongoing tally of who receives which awards; Istrouma will provide you with a template. The postgame ceremony gives the coach the opportunity to speak into the lives of players and parents. Make sure you call each player’s name and talk about in a positive way of what he did accomplish and what he can accomplish through listening, trying, practicing, etc.

The head coach should address the players, parents, grandparents, relatives and friends in a positive manner. Make sure your players and fans are in a close semicircle in front of you. Parents think this is a time for the kids, but they need to hear the gospel just as much as the players. Talk about your team play first and then present the individual awards. Give a brief detail of the significance of the award and the biblical character it represents. Be kind and affirming, but also talk about ways your team needs to improve. Our goal is to reward the positive character traits while playing the game rather than just the performance. We want to instill the importance to our kids of how they play the game and who they play for. We want to teach our players the importance of teamwork as they pull together towards a common goal and a desire to win. Encourage parents to work with their kids’ skills and also address attitudes that need to be improved. Do not be afraid to mention how players need to change attitudes and play unselfishly. If a child does not receive an award, be prepared to give an answer to that child’s parent.

Share the weekly devotion with your team after the Award Ceremony. You already have the kids’ and parents’ attentions. You just encouraged your players and handed out awards for how they played. Now it’s time to relate that to the gospel. Istrouma provides you with weekly devotions; the material has already been prepared for you. Emphasize the redemptive quality and memory verse. Speak in a way that your kids and parents can understand. Always close your ceremony in a prayer thanking God for the gifts and talents that have been given and also give God the credit as we play with great effort and humility.

SEASON AWARDS

Award cards will be picked up at the coaches table before each game is played. The process of selecting players for awards start at practice and carry on throughout the game. Award player selection is based on character performance rather than on skill or outcome. Players may receive the same award many times. Not every player has to receive an award every week or the Christlikeness award by the end of the season.

Name of Award	Verse
Award for Playing with Christ-Likeness	Philippians 1:21 – For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.
Award for Playing with Courage	Joshua 1:9 – Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.
Award for Playing with Sacrifice	Matthew 20:16 – So the last will be first, and the first will be last.
Award for Playing with Passion	Colossians 3:23 – Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.
Award for Playing with Joy	John 15:11 – These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.
Award for Playing for God’s Glory	1 Corinthians 10:31 – So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.
Award for Playing with Obedience	Titus 3:1 – Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work.
Award for Playing with Respect	1 Peter 2:17 – Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.
Award for Playing with Perseverance	James 1:12 – Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him.
Award for Displaying Leadership	1 Timothy 4:12 – Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.
Award for Loving your Teammates	John 13:34 – A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.
Award for Serving Others	1 Peter 4:10 – As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.
Award for Knowing the Memory Verse	Psalms 119:105 – Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
Award from the Coaches > Step above just obeying; willing to learn, improve, help others	Hebrews 13:7 – Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.
Award for Doing and Then Some > Going above expectations; doing more than asked	John 14:12 – Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

GAME & PRACTICE RESPONSIBILITIES

Practice

- Try to arrive early and be prepared for your players as they arrive.
- Practice plans are available on our website.
- Equipment will be on your field for practices. Please bag up all equipment after practice and place on the road.
- Discuss redemptive quality and memory verse. Use football examples to integrate the gospel.
- Maximize participation, have individual and team drills.
- Make it fun and include competitions.
- Always end practice with a team meeting and prayer. Include the parents.

Game

- All parents volunteering to coach on game day must be fully vetted by Istrouma Sports.
- Equipment will be on your field for games. Please bag up all equipment after your game.
- Head coach grabs awards and substitution sheet from the coaches table.
- Have players individually recite memory verses to you as they arrive. This isn't a group activity. Correct recitations are worth 1 point in divisions that keep score. Give this amount to the scorekeeper. Be honest.
- Home team coach recruits a scorekeeper during warm-ups. Don't wait until game time.
- Head coaches meet pregame to discuss rules and clarify uncertainties.
- Teams gather pregame to discuss rules, review redemptive quality, and pray.
- If you're playing in the earliest game, line your players up 5 minutes before game time for the national anthem and opening prayer.
- Bench monitor: prepare players for substitutions and keep them on the bench.
- Defensive coach: place a cone on the sideline to mark the line of scrimmage.
- Offensive coach: have the kicking tee ready for kick-offs.
- Lead your team's postgame ceremony off the field: snacks, fan mail, devotion, awards.

Game Format

- 5 on 5
- Football – Mini
- Score will not be kept.
- No extra points
- Safety results in possession for the defense.
- Teams practice for 20 minutes and then play a game.
- Game will consist of four 8-minute quarters, running clock, and 1-minute breaks after each quarter. No timeouts.
- There will be a 45-second play clock after the ball is spotted.
- Each team must have a coach on the field and on the bench.
- A coach on defense can place a cone on the sideline to mark the line of scrimmage.
- Players must rotate through all positions.
- Visitors will start the game on offense. Teams will switch endzones after halftime.
- Coaches will officiate the game.
- Coaches will have the option to play quarterback for part of the game. This will be determined during the season.

Division Rules

- Offense will begin the drive at their own five-yard line. No kickoffs.
- Possession changes if the offense fails to get a first down or touchdown. No punting.
- The ball carrier's feet determine the spot of the football when a flag is pulled.
- Minimum of 3 players must be on the line of scrimmage at every snap.
- Completion requires receiver to gain control of the ball with at least one foot in bounds.
- A fumble will result in a dead ball. Teams can replay the down on a fumbled snap.
- A dead ball occurs if a body part, except for hands and feet, touches the ground.
- If a flag inadvertently falls off, play continues by way of one-hand-touch.
- The quarterback has 10 seconds to pass the ball. If he doesn't throw within the time, the play will be treated as an incomplete pass.
- The quarterback is not allowed to run the ball across the line of scrimmage.
- The defense cannot cross the line of scrimmage.
- Interceptions may not be returned.

This is a developmental division. The focus should be to develop your players rather than getting actual games in. Take about 20 minutes before your game to develop skills and teach the game because this division doesn't meet for midweek practices. Treat the game as a developmental scrimmage. Please teach and train your players during the game.

Game Format

- 5 on 5
- Football – Peewee
- Score will not be kept.
- Extra point attempts from 2.5 yards (halfway to hashmark)
- Safety results in possession for the defense.
- Game will consist of four 10-minute quarters, running clock. No timeouts.
- Breaks after 1st and 3rd quarters are two minutes; halftime is four minutes.
- There will be a 45-second play clock after the ball is spotted.
- One coach per team may be on the field of play.
- At least one coach per team must be on the sideline with substitutions.
- A coach on defense will place a cone on the sideline to mark the line of scrimmage.
- Players must rotate through all positions.
- Visitors will start the game on offense. Teams will switch endzones after halftime.
- Referees will officiate the game, when available.

Division Rules

- Offense will begin the drive at their own five-yard line. No kickoffs.
- Possession changes if the offense fails to get a first down or touchdown. No punting.
- The ball carrier's feet determine the spot of the football when a flag is pulled.
- Minimum of 3 players must be on the line of scrimmage at every snap.
- Completion requires receiver to gain control of the ball with at least one foot in bounds.
- A fumble will result in a dead ball. Teams can replay the down on a fumbled snap.
- A dead ball occurs if a body part, except for hands and feet, touches the ground.
- If a flag inadvertently falls off, play continues by way of one-hand-touch.
- The quarterback has 10 seconds to pass the ball. If he doesn't throw within the time, the play will be treated as an incomplete pass.
- The quarterback is not allowed to run the ball across the line of scrimmage.
- The defense cannot cross the line of scrimmage.
- Interceptions may not be returned.

Game Format

- 6 on 6
- Football – Pee wee
- Extra Point = 1 point from the 5-yard line
- Game will consist of four 10-minute quarters. No timeouts.
- Breaks after 1st and 3rd quarters are two minutes; halftime is four minutes.
- There will be a 45-second play clock after the ball is spotted.
- Coaches may be on the field for the huddle, but must be on the sideline during play.
- A coach on defense will place a cone on the sideline to mark the line of scrimmage.
- Players must rotate through all positions.
- Home team (listed as top team on the Game Schedule) will provide a scorekeeper.
- Visitors will start the game on offense. Teams will switch endzones after halftime.
- Referees will officiate the game.

Division Rules

- No kickoffs. Teams will start each half and possessions after touchdowns at their 5-yard line.
- Punting gives the defense possession at their own 5-yard line. Offense won't kick the ball. The decision to punt must be clearly announced to coaches and referees.
- If offense fails to convert on 4th down, defense will take possession at the line of scrimmage.
- The ball carrier's feet determine the spot of the football when a flag is pulled.
- Minimum of 3 players must be on the line of scrimmage at every snap.
- Completion requires receiver to gain control of the ball with at least one foot in bounds.
- A fumble will result in a dead ball.
- A dead ball occurs if a body part, except for hands and feet, touches the ground.
- If a flag inadvertently falls off, play continues by way of one-hand-touch.
- One player may be in motion at the time of snap, but not towards the line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback has 7 seconds to pass the ball. If he doesn't throw within the time, the play will be treated as an incomplete pass.
- The quarterback is not allowed to run the ball across the line of scrimmage. No option plays.
- The player receiving the hand-off or pitch may pass the ball (half-back pass).
- Offensive players may block for the ball carrier with hands at his side or behind his back.
- The defense can cross the line of scrimmage when the QB hands off or pitches the ball.
- Interceptions may not be returned.

11U

Game Format

- 7 on 7
- Football – Junior
- Extra Point = 1 point from the 5-yard line or 2 points from the 10-yard line
- Game will consist of four 12-minute quarters. Clock will stop for out-of-bounds plays, incompletions, and first downs in the last minute of each half. No timeouts.
- Breaks after 1st and 3rd quarters are two minutes; halftime is four minutes.
- There will be a 30-second play clock after the ball is spotted.
- Coaches must always stay on the sideline.
- Only one coach per team is allowed to cross midfield to move with the line of scrimmage.
- A coach on defense will place a cone on the sideline to mark the line of scrimmage.
- Encourage position rotations for the first 4 games. Teams can transition into coach-preferred positions for the last 4 games.
- Home team (listed as top team on the Game Schedule) will provide a scorekeeper.
- Visitors will start the game on offense. Teams will switch endzones after halftime.
- Referees will officiate the game.

Division Rules

- No kickoffs. Teams will start each half and possessions after touchdowns at their 5-yard line.
- Punting gives the defense possession at their own 5-yard line. Offense won't kick the ball. The decision to punt must be clearly announced to coaches and referees.
- If offense fails to convert on 4th down, defense will take possession at the line of scrimmage.
- The ball carrier's feet determine the spot of the football when a flag is pulled.
- Minimum of 3 players must be on the line of scrimmage at every snap.
- Completion requires receiver to gain control of the ball with at least one foot in bounds.
- A fumble will result in a dead ball.
- A dead ball occurs if a body part, except for hands and feet, touches the ground.
- If a flag inadvertently falls off, play continues by way of one-hand-touch.
- One player may be in motion at the time of snap, but not towards the line of scrimmage.
- The player receiving the hand-off or pitch may pass the ball (half-back pass).
- Offensive players may block for the ball carrier with hands at his side or behind his back.
- Defense is allowed to rush the quarterback after 5 seconds, indicated by the referee dropping his hand. QB is allowed to run if defense crosses the line of scrimmage.
- The defense can cross the line of scrimmage when the QB hands off or pitches the ball.

Game Format

- 7 on 7
- Football – Youth
- Extra Point = 1 point from the 5-yard line or 2 points from the 10-yard line
- Game will consist of four 12-minute quarters. Clock will stop for out-of-bounds plays, incompletions, and first downs in the last minute of each half. No timeouts.
- Breaks after 1st and 3rd quarters are two minutes; halftime is four minutes.
- There will be a 30-second play clock after the ball is spotted.
- Coaches must always stay on the sideline.
- Only one coach per team is allowed to cross midfield to move with the line of scrimmage.
- A coach on defense will place a cone on the sideline to mark the line of scrimmage.
- Coach can keep players in their preferred positions.
- Home team (listed as top team on the Game Schedule) will provide a scorekeeper.
- Visitors will start the game on offense. Teams will switch endzones after halftime.
- Referees will officiate the game.

Division Rules

- No kickoffs. Teams will start each half and possessions after touchdowns at their 5-yard line.
- Punting gives the defense possession at their own 5-yard line. Offense won't kick the ball. The decision to punt must be clearly announced to coaches and referees.
- If offense fails to convert on 4th down, defense will take possession at the line of scrimmage.
- The ball carrier's feet determine the spot of the football when a flag is pulled.
- Minimum of 3 players must be on the line of scrimmage at every snap.
- Completion requires receiver to gain control of the ball with at least one foot in bounds.
- A fumble will result in a dead ball.
- A dead ball occurs if a body part, except for hands and feet, touches the ground.
- If a flag inadvertently falls off, play continues by way of one-hand-touch.
- One player may be in motion at the time of snap, but not towards the line of scrimmage.
- The player receiving the hand-off or pitch may pass the ball (half-back pass).
- Offensive players may block for the ball carrier with hands at his side or behind his back.
- Defense is allowed to rush the quarterback after 5 seconds, indicated by the referee dropping his hand. QB is allowed to run if defense crosses the line of scrimmage.
- The defense can cross the line of scrimmage when the QB hands off or pitches the ball.

PENALTIES & VIOLATIONS

Defensive

- 5 yards from line of scrimmage and replay down.
 - Encroachment – player crosses the line of scrimmage before the snap of the ball.
 - Illegal Flag Pull – removing flag of player that is not in possession of ball.
 - Illegal Rushing – player crosses the line of scrimmage during the 5-second pass count.
- 10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down.
 - Pass Interference – contact with a player before he receives the ball
- 10 yards from dead ball.
 - Delay of Game – not being in formation within 20-second play clock, only on first play after change of possession.
 - Diving – diving in attempt to pull a flag or defend a pass
 - Illegal Contact/Defensive Holding – pulling clothes, holding, or other illegal use of hands.

Offensive

- 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and replay down.
 - Delay of Game – not snapping the ball within 30-second play clock.
 - Illegal Formation – fewer than three players on the line of scrimmage.
 - Illegal Motion – more than one player in motion at the time of snap or any player in motion toward the line of scrimmage.
- 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down.
 - Illegal Pass – passer's feet cross the line of scrimmage before passing the ball.
 - Intentional Grounding – throwing the ball toward an area with no receiver.
- 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down.
 - Pass Interference – contact with a player before receiving the ball.
- 10 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down.
 - Diving/Hurdling – attempting to gain yardage, pull a flag, or defend a pass
 - Flag Guarding – use of the arm, football, or untucked shirt to prevent a flag pull.
 - Illegal Blocking – holding or blocking using extended arms/hands.
 - Stiff-arming – intentional contact with the arm to keep defender at a distance

Contact penalties are 10 yards (includes diving or hurdling).

Non-contact penalties are 5 yards (except defensive delay of game).

A penalty will be half the distance to the goal if it results in placing the ball in either end zone.

Violations

- Players cannot play two consecutive series at quarterback or safety.
- Players cannot sit out more than one possession at a time.
- Players must play both offense and defense in every game.
- The ball must be snapped under center or shotgun to begin each play. No side snaps.
- Center cannot take a handoff from the QB.
- Laterals are not allowed once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage.