**MISSISSIPPI VALLEY YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

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**RULES AND REGULATIONS**

These Rules and Regulations have been adopted by the Board of Directors of the Mississippi Valley Youth Football League (“Association”). These Rules and Regulations shall be applicable to all members of the Association and shall remain in full force in effect until duly and properly amended, modified, or rescinded.

**General League Rules**

A. All teams will follow the IHSA rules unless otherwise noted.

B. The Declaration of Teams will be no later then 3 weeks before the first game.

C. An organization that declares a team and then can't field that team during the season, will be penalized by forfeiting the chance to host any playoff games for that season.

D. The scheduling committee will distribute the home schedules to all clubs a day after weigh in.

E. Scheduling will be done at a scheduling meeting held no later than two weeks prior to the start of the season.

F. The season will consist of an eight (8) week schedule. The season will typically begin Week 1 IHSA.

G. Top 8 teams in each division will participate in a 3-week playoff, with the 1 seed hosting the 8 seed and the 2 seed hosting the 7 seed.

H. Each team will control their fans and keep them at least 5 yards behind the players' bench and boundary line. This shall be accomplished by the use of a restraining line. The home team shall be responsible for providing said restraining line. The restraining line is defined as a visible barrier, portable or permanent, at least 2 feet off the ground, running the length of the field, end zone, on both sides of the field. Only the following personnel will be allowed in the above mentioned boundaries: players, coaches, game officials, Mississippi Valley Youth Football League Representatives, Athletic Directors, Chain Gang, Stats Person and Emergency personnel.

I. All team personnel, maximum of 6 coaches/statisticians (age 17+), shall stay in a designated box as defined by I.H.S.A rules during the game time. Coaches and statisticians shall wear some kind of visible organizational identification at all games.

J. A copy of the Mississippi Valley Youth Football League Association by laws will be available at all games at all playing fields.

K. All playing fields are subject to inspection and approval by Mississippi Valley Youth Football League Board at any time. If a venue needs to be changed it must be inspected by a board member.

L. Scores will be kept in all divisions.

M. All games shall consist of 4, 10 minute quarters.

N. There shall be a 10 minute half time between the second and third quarters.

O. All players will play a minimum of 8 plays per game excluding 12U and 14U.

P. All League games will play on Saturday and Sundays with the exception of make-up games.

Q. Scheduled home games shall be at least 2 hours between the start of games. In the event of a serious injury, teams will be allowed to continue up to 15 minutes of the next game's starting time's grace period.

R. Points after touchdown shall be 2 points for a kick and 1 point for a run or pass.

S. Regular season games shall consist of 4 quarters. In the event of a tie at the end of regulation, only one overtime will be played. Post season play off games will include unlimited overtimes, if necessary. In the event a regular season game can't be played or finished due to inclement weather due to lightning, hail or tornado sirens, then that game can be made up before season end. Game must be played at a mutual place and time. The original missed game striper/playdown weights for rescheduled game will still apply. A playoff game can be reschedule due to inclement weather. Playoff games must be made up and finished by the end of the following Wednesday of that playoff week. Games must be played at a mutual place and time. If a playoff game can not be made up then the higher seed will advance.

T. Two game jerseys are required. A colored 1 for home games and a white one for away games. The use of a gray colored away jersey shall also be permitted. The front and back of the jersey shall be reserved for the numbers, team name, team or other logo (such as a flag) and players name only. Numbers shall be a minimum of 6 inches on the front and 8 inches on the back.

U. A team should wear no duplicate numbers.

V. The home team shall furnish all the following:

1. Game Ball Specification – 10U and below divisions must use a ball of equal size to a Wilson K-2 ball or below. 11U and above must use a size equivalent to a Jr. Size Football.

2. Weigh in Scale - Scales must be a balance type, no spring type.

3. Yard Markers - All yard markers must meet I.H.S.A safety requirements.

4. Official Time - A working time clock must be displayed at the field. When an official time is being kept on the field, any coach may request and must be given the time remaining in a quarter.

5. Penalties - All preliminary and final penalty reports will be given to both team benches by the referee.

6. Officials - Each home team will provide at least 3 officials for each game (2 for Tykes), at least 2 of these officials must be licensed and in uniform, and all officials must be at least 18 years of age. Failure to provide at least two licensed officials prior to the start of the second quarter will result in a forfeit by the home team. Prior to game time, all licensed officials are required to show their license and identification if requested. A game may start with 2 licensed officials if mutually agreed upon by the opposing coaches. If the 3rd official is not present by the start of the third quarter, the game is over and the result is a forfeit by the home team. No coaches, parents, or siblings may officiate a game in which their team and/or family member participates. This rule is to avoid a possible conflict of interest.

W. Awards will be presented at the League's discretion. Trophies and plaques will be approximately equal monetary value.

X. Game cards of all football games must be completed correctly and must be received by the official recorder, bearing postmark no later than the Tuesday following the Saturday or Sunday games played. If a player or coach was ejected from a game, game officials must record the ejection on the back of the game card. Mississippi Valley Youth Football League President must be notified of the ejection on the game day.

Y. Any changes to rules of play or by-laws that are to be voted on should be discussed at one meeting and voted on at the next Association meeting. This gives organizations time to take the issue back to their organization and discuss the issue to decide how to vote.

Z. When scheduling regular season games, byes should be distributed evenly between organizations in each division.

AA. If a team is up by 40 points, score keeping will stop and the opposing coach has the option to forfeit the game with no penalty.

**Team Eligibility**

A. Each team shall register a maximum of 35 players and a maximum of 6 coaches, including statistician. No player can be added to the roster after Weigh-in, providing the roster doesn't exceed 35 players or result in splitting a team.

B. All team rosters will be turned in at the September league meeting and a copy will be provided to each organization's league representative. A player cannot be listed on a team roster if he has not been weighed with a stamped League ID card. A coach must have in his possession on game day a League ID card for any player listed on his team roster regardless if the player is participating or not. Failure to provide a complete set of League ID cards could result in a forfeit if a protest is made by an opponent. All team rosters must be in compliance with Articles VIII, subparagraph B at the time roster are due to the league. Any changes or additions made to team roster before the deadline set in Article VIII, subparagraph A, must also follow the rules set in this paragraph.

C. Team rosters will consist of names, addresses, game card numbers, date of birth, age and weight of each player. They will also have coach's names and phone numbers listed.

D. There will be an official pre-season identification card check for each player. This will take place at the last meeting prior to the start of the season. At this time, two teams will exchange player cards and birth certificates, and verify that the information on the player card is accurate. These cards will list the name, date of birth (to be verified by a birth certificate, baptismal record, military ID card, passport or past player ID card), grade in school, name of school, weight, organization and division, team number, head coaches name, a current picture (not more than 2 years old) of the child affixed to the card. Each card will be stamped with an official stamp covering part of the picture and initialed by a League officer. All ID cards must be individually laminated by week 1 of the season.

E. The home team is responsible for furnishing weigh in equipment. A representative of the opposing team is to witness the weigh in. Two rosters of the player's names and numbers, in numerical order, must be available at the weigh in. Rosters must be typed or printed legibly. The team coach must have the Leagues ID cards available at all games. All cards must be completed for the player to be eligible for that game. The mandatory weigh in will commence 60 minutes before the scheduled game time and the identification cards will be provided to the opposing coach at that time. In addition, the identification cards must be provided to the opposing coach to review at any time during the game in case of a protest.

F. An additional weigh in will be provided at half time of each game for any late arrivals or overweight players. Example: If scheduled game time is 1:00 pm., any player arriving or is overweight after 12:45 pm. must weigh in at halftime and is ineligible for the first half.

G. If a card(s) is lost, the organization must notify the President of the League, prepare a new card and have it authenticated by the President of the League or the next ranking officer available, using the official League stamp.

**Insurance**

All organizations must carry insurance on all teams. Certification of insurance must be submitted to the league before practices begin. The first installment will be due at the regularly scheduled July meeting. The remainder will be due at the regularly scheduled September meeting.

A. Minimum age for participation shall be 5 years of age. The player's age shall be considered that as of July 1st of the current year. If born on July 1st through September 1st, the player can choose. No Mississippi Valley Youth Football League player will be eligible in a like sport defined by IHSA rules.

B. No change of team classification will be permitted after the child has participated in any League game.

C. A weight allowance (growth factor) will be provided. An allowance of one pound every 2 weeks starting with the second week of the regular season game.

**Rules of Play Stripers = Unlimited Weight Players**

A. Regarding kickoffs, and kickoff returns, stripers will be on the front line at the onset of the play.

B. A striper will be allowed to advance the ball on any special teams play.

C. There will be no more than 5 stripers on the field at any time.

D. Defensive stripers will be no wider then outside should of offense tackle. A 5-yard penalty will be assessed for each violation.

E. Each striper shall have an adhesive "stripe" of contrasting color, and at least one inch in width on their helmet from ear hole to ear hole.

F. All stripers will be "covered" by a non-striper on the offensive line of scrimmage. A striper cannot be the outermost player on the line of scrimmage. A 5-yard penalty will be assessed for each violation.

G. A striper is allowed to be the punter allowing 6 stripers to be on the field if this is the case, regardless of the events that occur the striped punter cannot advance the football.

**Tykes Division**

A. Two coaches will be allowed on the field. Coaches will not give verbal instructions or aid the players in any way once the QB starts his cadence. First offense will result in a warning. Second offense will result in the coach being removed from the field of play for the remainder of the game.

B. When a team requests to punt, the ball will be automatically advances 20 yards from the line of scrimmage. Exception, when the line of scrimmage is inside the defending team's 40 yard line, the ball will be automatically advanced half the distance to the goal and when inside the 20 yard line no punt advance allowed.

C. There will be a maximum of 6 players on the defensive line. The defensive line will be from sideline to sideline. A 5-yard penalty will be assessed for each violation after initial warning.

D. There will be no defenders over the center and/or will hit the center at the snap of the ball. A 5-yard penalty will be assessed for each violation.

E. No blitzing. All defensive players who are not playing on the defensive line will be at least 4 yards off the line of scrimmage. The distance is reduced to 3 yards if the opponent is on the 1 yard line about to score.

F. There will only be two (2) kickoffs per game, first and third quarters. Following a score, the ball will be placed on the 40 yard line to resume play.

G. A 35 second play clock will be utilized in the Tykes Division.

H. Two referees may be used instead of three in Tykes Division only.

I. If a safety occurs the team that was on defense and got the safety will be awarded 2 points and the ball on their opponents 40 yard line.

**7U – 8U Divisions**

A. No rushing of the punter and no one leaves the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. Once declared, the offense must punt the ball. A 5-yard penalty will be assessed for each violation.

B. There will be a maximum of 6 players on the defensive line. The defensive line will be from sideline-to-sideline. A 5-yard penalty will be assessed for each violation after initial warning.

C. All defensive players who are not playing on the defensive line will be at least 3 yards off the line of scrimmage. A 5-yard penalty will be assessed for each violation.

D. There will be no defenders over the center and/or will hit the center at the snap of the ball. A 5-yard penalty will be assessed for each violation.

E. When kicking the extra point, the ball shall be placed on the extra point hash mark and the defense cannot rush after the ball has been snapped. If the kick is good the score is worth 2 points.

**9U – 14U Divisions**

All IHSA rules will apply. If not previously addressed in these by-laws (example: striper rule)

**Ages and Weights**

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| **Divisions** |  | **Ages as of July 1** |  | **Max Weight** |  | **Position Restrictions** |
| Tykes |  | 6-May |  | Unlimited |  | Over 65lbs = Striper |
| 7U |  | 7 |  | Unlimited |  | Over 80lbs = Striper |
| 8U |  | 8 |  | Unlimited |  | Over 90lbs = Striper |
| 9U |  | 9 |  | Unlimited |  | Over 100lbs = Striper |
| 10U |  | 10 |  | Unlimited |  | Over 120lbs = Striper |
| 11U |  | 11 |  | Unlimited |  | Over 130lbs = Striper |
| 12U |  | 12 |  | Unlimited |  | No Restrictions |
| 13/14U |  | 13/14 |  | Unlimited |  | No Restrictions |

**Game Protest**

There will be only 2 areas of condition for which a game may be played under protest:

A. Issues of player eligibility

B. Field conditions

(a) Clock function or lack thereof

(b) Scale function of lack thereof

(c) Improper number of officials

The game officials, a member of the Board of Directors, and the opposing head coach must be notified as soon as possible after the alleged infraction has occurred. The protesting coach must write a summary of the alleged infraction on the back of the game card. In case of a protest, the game will be played in its entirety unless there is an immediate safety concern for the players. The protest can be initiated at any time but will require a $100 deposit by the coach/team that initiates the protest. At first convenience after the end of the game, the Board of Directors will appoint a committee to determine the validity, and subsequent outcome of the protest. If the protest is upheld the deposit will be returned to the protesting team. If denied that deposit money will be placed into the general league treasury.

Effective date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

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President Secretary