

# Official Rules - 2017



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## Season Timeline and Game Schedules

1. Registration deadline for all players is August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017. The league may close registration earlier if at capacity.
2. Games will begin on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> and will end no later than November 11<sup>th</sup>. Post regular season tournament will be defined and communicated by September 9<sup>th</sup>
3. The game schedule will be produced by September 9<sup>th</sup>.
4. All games will be played on Saturdays, unless makeup games are required because of weather. Each team will play two games each Saturday. The league is working to have all games back to back.
5. It is expected that teams should practice once a week but no more than twice a week. Teams should not practice more than 2-3 hours a week.
6. Memorial 7 will be divided into two leagues; Varsity – 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades; Junior Varsity – 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades

## Field Dimensions and Equipment

1. Field Size – Field Length is 45 yards long; End Zone is 10 yards deep; Field width is no wider than 54 yards wide.
2. Uniforms – Each team will be provided with game shirts and shorts.
3. Mouthpiece – All players will be required to play with a mouth piece.

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4. Ball – The Varsity league will be using the Wilson™ Junior Size football. The Junior Varsity league will be using the Wilson™ K2 Pee Wee Size football. Each team will be provided with a game ball to be used during games while they are on offense.
5. Film – Each game will be filmed by GameDay Film™. Everyone will have access to film management software to be able to watch the games or share with family and friends.
6. Headgear – Memorial 7 has evaluated the use of protective headgear for the league and will make headgear optional.

## Starting the Game

1. A central time keeper or referee will be designated to keep the time of the game. All games will begin and end on this person's instructions. He/she will also announce the time remaining at the 10, 5, and 2-minute mark.
2. It is the responsibility of the head coach to have their team on the field and ready to play when the timekeeper sounds the horn/whistle and the game official starts play.
3. The visiting team will have the first possession. The home team will have first possession the 2nd half.
4. To begin the game and the second half, the ball is always placed on the right hash mark when at the 45-yard line.
5. The referee will announce the score and time post score and before each offensive possession.



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## Offense

1. Offensive plays must all be passes. No rushing, kicking or punting.
2. Possession always begins at the 45-yard line at the right hash mark. Hash mark placement of the ball must be enforced by officials, in accordance with NCAA rules, once the ball has been advanced.
3. Offenses always move in the same direction.
4. The field is marked at 15 yard intervals with cones. (3 first downs without a penalty or turnover result in a touchdown) The offense must gain at least 15 yards in the first 3 or less plays or the defense takes over. (There is no kicking or punting). Four down territory occurs after the offense proceeds to or inside the 15-yard line cone.
5. All passes must be forward. A pass caught behind the line of scrimmage must be a forward pass.
6. The quarterback (QB) is allowed 5.0 seconds to throw the ball.
  - a. The timekeeper starts a stopwatch on the snap of the ball from the center and stops the watch as soon as the QB releases the ball.
  - b. If release is under 5.0 seconds, the play goes on.
  - c. If the timekeeper sees that the clock has exceeded 5.0 seconds, he waits until the play is over (the play is not blown dead), then brings the ball back to the original line of scrimmage with loss of down.
  - d. All penalties will be marked off on a 5.0 second count EXCEPT for pass interference.



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7. A 5.0 second violation is considered a 'sack' at the line of scrimmage and anything resulting from the play will not stand (including interceptions). Play results in ball being returned to the line of scrimmage and next down or change of possession.
8. Should a pass not cross the line of scrimmage before the 5.0 second count has expired it is an incomplete pass.
9. If a pass occurs behind the 45-yard line and a defensive player tags the ball carrier behind the 45-yard line, it is a safety.
10. All passes MUST be forward.
11. 'Shuttle' passes are legal if forward. Backward passes result in a dead ball. Ball is placed at the spot of the received backward exchange and next down occurs or change of possession.
12. If line of scrimmage is 45-yard line and a backward exchange occurs, ball is returned to the 45-yard line.
13. No hand-offs, backward passes or backward laterals are allowed behind the line of scrimmage.
14. The QB must throw one forward pass within 5.0 seconds from the first movement of the center snap. Backward laterals and hand-offs are allowed after the completion of a successful forward pass or by the defense in the case of an interception return. Once a forward pass has been thrown, a backward pass (lateral) is allowed.
15. The center is an eligible receiver. One receiver on each side of the center must line-up on the line of scrimmage. All other receivers must be off the line of scrimmage to be considered eligible. Multiple receivers lining up on the



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line of scrimmage will result in 'covered' receivers being considered ineligible

16. The ball must be snapped from the ground between the center's legs. A snap can be a direct snap or a shotgun snap (mirror the game of football) A muffed snap is not a fumble/dead ball. The 5.0 second count remains in effect on snaps.
17. The center is responsible for setting or re-positioning the referee's bean bag at the line of scrimmage. On change of possession, the team moving to offense will ensure the bean bag gets to the new scrimmage line. (centers on both teams are responsible). Offensive team is responsible for retrieving and returning the ball to the previous spot or the new scrimmage spot in a timely fashion. Failure to do so can result in a delay of game penalty.
18. There is no blocking or moving screens. Players standing still may be used by a ball carrier to divert an opposing team member from touching the ball carrier. Offensive blocking will result in a 'spot' foul and ball will be placed at the spot of the foul. In the case of blocking by a defensive player on an intercepted pass, the play will be whistled dead and the defense takes over the ball on the 45-yard line due to interception (change of possession).
19. Offensive pass interference is the same as NCAA rules. (15-yard penalty)
20. Each team has 25 seconds to snap the ball once it has been marked ready for play by the referee. Delay of game results in a loss of down and a 5-yard penalty.

## Defense

1. A ball carrier is legally down when touched below the neck with at least one hand by an opposing team's player.



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2. A defensive player may not leave the ground (jump, leap, bound or propel himself in any way) to touch the ball carrier. Penalty for such actions will be 5-yards from point of infraction and automatic first down
3. Excessive force by shoving, pushing, or striking a blow will be penalized by automatic first down and 5 yards. Excessive force is ruled unsportsmanlike or flagrant will result in an expulsion of a player(s).
4. Fumbles are dead balls at the spot with the last team retaining possession.
5. Defensive pass Interference is considered a “spot foul” and an automatic 1st down.
6. Responsibility to avoid contact is with the defense. There will be no chucking. Deliberate bumping or grabbing. These actions will result in a “tack on” penalty at the end of the play (5-yard penalty)
7. Interceptions may be returned (“no blocking” rule applies). If an interception is returned beyond the 45-yard line (the offensive origination point) it is a touchdown and point after attempt should ensue. The teammates of the person who intercepted the ball may trail the runner so as to be in position to take a backwards pass. They may not block for or screen for the runner. Interceptions may be returned for a touchdown by successfully crossing the 45-yard line before being touched by an opposing team member. All members of the opposing team are eligible to touch a player attempting to return an intercepted pass (i.e., including the center).
8. Any dead ball foul on a play that results in the defense getting the ball and it is unable to be penalized back to the 50-yard line will result in a loss of down penalty. The defense, now the offense, would be starting play with 2nd down.



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## Special Rules and Scoring

1. Two delay of game penalties in the same possession results in a turnover. A delay of game penalty on the extra point try results in a turnover.
2. No penalty will be assessed in excess of the 45-yard line. On an unsuccessful or successful offensive play from the 45-yard line resulting in an offensive penalty: The ball will be returned to the 45-yard line and 1st down will become 2nd down; 2nd down will become 3rd down; and 3rd down will result in a turnover.
3. No taunting or “trash talking”. (5-yard penalty & expulsion if flagrant).
4. Any player, coach, official or spectator involved in fighting, physical or verbal conflicts with opposing players, coaches, officials or spectators will be ejected from the game and will be required to leave the stadium. Failure to leave the stadium will result in a team forfeiture and possible expulsion from the league. Any second offense, the player will be disqualified from participating in the league.
5. Teams may have playbook, play cards on the field or may have wristbands.

## Scoring

6. 6 points for TD.
7. Point after touchdown (PAT)
  - a. 1 point for a PAT from the 3-yard line
  - b. 2 points for a PAT from the 10-yard line
  - c. 2 points if a defensive team returns a PAT back across the 45-yard line.
8. Official score is kept by field referee and game manager.



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9. Winning coaches are to report final scores to the league on the game day.

## Ties

1. During the regular season and tournament, ties go into a sudden death format.
  - a. After the coin flip to determine first possession, teams will alternate 4 down series from the 15-yard line.
  - b. A winner is determined when one team scores during its possession and the other does not.
  - c. If a second overtime period is necessary, each team must then go for two points on the conversion attempts.

## Time

1. The game has 22 minute halves. (Continuous clock for each half --see: "starting the game").
2. One time out per team per half. One minute timeouts. Timeouts cannot be called in the last three minutes of either half. No time outs. (Exception: Injuries. Both games on the field will halt until player(s) can be removed as soon as safety dictates).
3. 8 minute half-time/10 minutes between games.
4. Teams must be on site and ready to play when scheduled.
5. If a team(s) are late and cannot start when the referee officially starts, they will begin play as long as a team has 5 players.
6. Forfeit will occur after 10 minutes of the 1st half.





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## Team Formation and Player Participation and Fees

1. Teams are formed by school. It is expected that all participants on a team will be from the same school unless decision has been made by the league to add players from multiple schools.
2. All teams must have a minimum of 10 players. The maximum roster is 13 players. Preferred roster size is 11 players.
3. All participants must be entering the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade (Junior Varsity) and 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade (Varsity) school years during the fall of the league's games.
4. All participants must be registered as a team member and have guardian signed league waiver forms.
5. All rosters will be frozen before the first game of the season begins.

## Coaches Participation

1. All coaches must be registered with the league. (head and assistant coaches)
2. All coaches will have a background check performed before being cleared to be able to coach in the league.
3. No team may have more than four (4) coaches on the sidelines during the game. No parents can be on the sideline with the team. On offense, one of those coaches is allowed on the field.
4. Coaches will have to sign a coaching contract that ensures that he/she upholds sportsmanship requirements and takes responsibility for his/her actions and takes responsibility for enforcing actions of the league regarding the actions of his/her team and parents.



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## Post Season Tournament

1. All teams will be included in a post season tournament or playoff.
2. Most likely, the post season tournament or playoff will be double elimination.
3. By the beginning of the season, it will be communicated how teams will be seeded, etc. As of the time of this writing, the number of teams in the league is still a variable.

## Parents/Guardians

1. Parents/Guardians are required to sign a waiver that is detailed in registration.
2. Parents/Guardians of each player must also complete a sportsmanship agreement and turn in to the head coach before the first game of the season begins.
3. Parents/Guardians are expected to understand and accept the rules of the league and maintain good sportsmanship and appropriate language. The league has a zero-tolerance policy.
4. Parents/Guardians are required to ensure that guests also maintain good sportsmanship and appropriate language.
5. Fans will be asked to not sit behind the other teams' bench during a game. And, if possible, all fans will be on the opposite side of the field from the players.

## Players



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1. Players are required to wear the uniforms issued by the league.
2. All players are required to wear a mouthpiece.
3. The League has evaluated the use of protective headgear and believes that it could be helpful in preventing head injuries and will allow headgear. But, it is optional.
4. All players are allowed to wear tennis shoes, plastic or rubber sole football cleats. No baseball cleats with metal spikes may be worn by a player during a game.
5. No baseball caps, sunglasses, necklaces, bracelets, rings, jewelry of any kind or piercings of any kind may be worn by a player during a game. Players required to wear prescription glasses must wear glasses with safety lenses and secure the glasses to their head by using an adjustable strap.

Version 5.1.17 - by Memorial 7, LLC

