

**STAMFORD YOUTH FOUNDATION  
Mitey Mite Football  
(Children entering grades 1-2, plus  
grade 3 with league director  
approval, in the fall)**

**League Rules 2017**

Updated 4/28/17

**UPDATES NOTED IN RED**

Introduction:

The primary goal of SYF Elementary School Football is to teach the youth of Stamford football techniques, teamwork and responsibility to oneself and the team. *The players must know that their participation in the league is a privilege, not a right.* As such, their privilege to remain on the team is constantly evaluated against a list of criteria that include, but are not limited to: grades, behavior in school and in practice, school/practice attendance and being good citizens.

It is the responsibility of the coaches to enforce the League Rules and to conduct themselves according to the Coaches Agreement they have signed. Infractions of the rules will require disciplinary action to be taken by the football board. The extent of the sanction to be determined by the league Director. Sanctions could range from warnings to suspension, game forfeiture or removal of the coach from the league. Basic and accepted common football rules will be utilized except with the league modifications noted below. Any change or modification to the league rules noted below require a SYF BOD member approval.

**Parent's Responsibility**

The parents are expected to uphold and support the agreement they made, with their child, in the Player and Parent/Guardian Contract.

**Parents are required to have their children's league fees current before equipment will be distributed. Requests for refunds will be honored before July 31 and will incur a \$50 processing fee, requests for refunds after July 31 will NOT be honored. IF A CHILD REGISTERS AFTER JULY 31, THEY WILL BE ASSESSED A \$50 LATE CHARGE.**

Parents are required to either pick up, or make alternate pick up arrangements, for their children that coincide with the ending practice time. Coaches are required to remain at the field until all players are picked up. Parents who do not arrange for pick up, or are habitually late in pick up, put their child at risk of being removed from the program. It is within the coach's right to request that a player be removed from his roster for habitually late pick up or lack of appropriate pick up arrangements.

In the spirit of good sportsmanship, it is expected that parents and other spectators will cheer for their team, not against the opposing team.

Taunting, verbal abuse and profanity directed at any participant, coach, official and support staff of SYF **will not be tolerated.** A parent and/or spectator identified in one Incident Report will be suspended from entering a Facility hosting a SYF activity for the following week's game/activity.

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IN ADDITION THE LEAGUE WILL NOT TOLERATE THE USE OF PROFANITY AND INCITEFUL LANGUAGE DURING THE COURSE OF THE GAME. IF ANY PLAYER, COACH OR SPECTATOR IS HEARD TO HAVE USED THIS INCITEFUL TYPE OF LANGUAGE, THE HEAD REFEREE WILL STOP THE GAME AND CALL BOTH COACHES TO THE CENTER OF THE FIELD AND GIVE EACH TEAM A WARNING. THIS WARNING WILL EXTEND TO THE PLAYERS, COACHES AND SPECTATORS. THE SECOND TIME THE REFEREE HEARS THIS TYPE OF LANGUAGE, THE TEAM RESPONSIBLE WILL BE ASSESSED A 15 YARD PENALTY. THE THIRD TIME THIS TYPE OF LANGUAGE IS HEARD DURING THE COURSE OF THE GAME, THE HEAD REFEREE WILL ASSESS A 15 YARD PENALTY TO THE OFFENDING TEAM AND THAT PERSON, (PLAYER, COACH OR SPECTATOR) WILL BE EJECTED FROM THE GAME AND FACILITY IMMEDIATELY. THAT PERSON WILL THEN BE SUBJECT TO HEARING TO DETERMINE THEIR ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE FOR THE REST OF THE SEASON AS A PLAYER, COACH OR SPECTATOR. ANY PERSON RECEIVING A SECOND OFFENSE WILL NOT BE ALLOWED AT AN SYF EVENT FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON AND WILL HAVE TO APPLY TO BE REINSTATED BY THE SYF COMMITTEE AND/OR BOARD. BASED UPON THE SEVERITY OF THE OCCURANCE—A REFEREE MAY CHOOSE TO ASSESS A PENALTY OR EJECT A PLAYER/SPECTOR/PARENT OR COACH AT THEIR DISCRETION WITHOUT FOLLOWING THE GUIDELINES ABOVE.

A second offense will result in a season long suspension for that parent/spectator. The player's eligibility will not be affected. If the suspended parent/spectator attempts to attend an SYF event while under suspension, the player will then be suspended for the remainder of that season.

**Any parent/spectator that physically assaults a referee, player, spectator or coach in a game or in a practice will immediately and permanently be barred from any SYF sponsored game or event and they will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. That person's child (children) will be immediately removed from their team for the remainder of the season.**

#### **Coaches Eligibility**

All coaches must sign the Coaches Code of Conduct.

Coaches MUST maintain Good Citizenship on and off the field. Any type of legal issues, abusive language aimed at the children or any other type of behavior that the football director deems detrimental to the welfare of the children could be cause for immediate suspension.

Any coach that is ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike behavior will also be suspended for the following week's game(s). A coach that is ejected - must **immediately** leave the **field/playing area/stadium**. They will NOT be allowed to coach their remaining games during that weekend (if any). **A SUSPENSION INCLUDES ALL COACHING DUTIES THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND, PLAYOFFS AND CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES INCLUDED. AFTER BEING EJECTED FROM A GAME AND WHILE SERVING THEIR SUSPENSION - THE SUSPENDED COACH WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN (or, BE IN)**

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**THE STADIUM OR STANDS. THIS INCLUDES ALL GAME DAY ACTIVITIES INCLUDING ANY PRE-GAME WARM-UPS OR PREPARATION. COACHES TRYING TO CIRCUMVENT THIS RULE WILL RECEIVE AN INDEFINITE SUSPENSION AND THEIR TEAMS' GAME(S) ARE SUBJECT TO FORFEIT.**

**Any coach that physically assaults a referee, player, spectator or opposing coach in a game or in a practice will immediately and permanently have his coaching privileges revoked.**

**Player Eligibility**

Mitey Mites-

All players must agree to code of conduct

**Players in this division must be entering the 1<sup>ST</sup> OR 2<sup>th</sup> grade (3<sup>RD</sup> GRADERS MAY REQUEST ENTRY INTO THIS DIVISION VIA EMAIL TO LEAGUE DIRECTOR) in the fall of the season playing.**

Players will be placed onto teams randomly with great effort given to the equal disbursement of players in both grades.

Returning players will be placed onto their team from the prior season unless a parent requests otherwise.

At Directors discretion, players may be accepted from surrounding communities. These players will be placed onto teams using the above placement method.

**Practice/Scrimmages**

A team can practice no more than 3 times per week before the start of the school year. After the start of the school year, a team is allowed no more than 3 practices per week. A team may practice no more than two nights during the school week. The school week is defined as Sunday through Thursday

No practice can run longer than 90 MINUTES.

A practice is defined as a meeting between the players and the coach in which football technique and/or strategy are reviewed, practiced and/or discussed. This would include meetings and film sessions.

A player must attend 5 conditioning practices before they can play in a game.

A player must be eligible to play in a game by the second week of the season. If by that time they are not eligible, they will be removed from the roster

Attendance must be taken at every practice. Habitual absence and/or tardiness are sufficient reasons for removing a player from the squad. Documentation must be provided and the Football Board notified before any player is removed from the squad.

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In addition to the basic football equipment, coaches must insure that the following items are available at the practice field for every practice:

- Cell Phone
- Water
- Medical Kit

At least one coach must remain at the practice facility until the last player has been picked up. The coach is not required to put up with habitual tardiness from a parent picking up a child. Habitual tardiness on the part of a parent is sufficient grounds for removing the child from the squad. A coach must document this using the Incident Report Form and present his request for removing the player to the Football Board before taking any action.

Scrimmages with other teams are allowed under the following conditions:

- A scrimmage counts as a practice.
- Only one scrimmage per week is allowed.

Scrimmages with teams outside of the SYF Elementary School league are not allowed.

### **Injuries**

A Football Injury Reporting form must be completed for any player who requires medical attention from either the coaching staff or Emergency Personnel. **The form must be completed and submitted to the Safety coordinator within 24 hours of the occurrence.**

**Any injury that requires Emergency Personnel to be called to the field must be reported to the league director. In the event either of these two people is unavailable, the Coach should contact any other member of the Football committee.**

### **Incident Report**

An Incident Report form has been developed in order that inappropriate and/or dangerous behavior can be documented and brought formally to the attention of the Football Board. This form covers the actions of anyone who is involved or attends a Stamford Youth Foundation Event – Players, Coaches, Parents and Spectators. All Incident Report forms should be submitted to the Elementary School Commissioner who will address the issue. The Commissioner will bring the Incident Reports to the attention of the Football committee as they deem necessary – repeat offenders, health and safety issues, etc. The board will take action that is deemed appropriate up to and including removal from the league.

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**Playoffs- Uniform**

Playoffs will be calculated at the end of the season with the top 4 teams records in the regular season.

Place 1 vs Place 4

Place 2 vs Place 3

Championship game will be on the same day as the playoffs between the winner of the two prior playoff games.

Players may keep their game jerseys.

**Game Rules**

**I. Timing and Overtime**

1. Games are played on a 40-minute continuous clock with two twenty minute halves. The clock stops only for timeouts.
2. Halftime is five minutes long.
3. Each team has one 60-second time out per half.
4. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
5. In the event of an injury the clock will stop and then restart when injured player is removed from the field of play.
6. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game is a tie.
7. In tournament or playoff situations, an overtime (OT) Period will be used to determine a winner. OT format is as follows:
  - a. Each team is allowed a minimum of one possession, with a college football style shootout.

**II. Scoring**

1. **Touchdown:** 6 points
2. **PAT (Point After Touchdown):** 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (12-yard line)  
Note: 1 point PAT is pass only, 2 point PAT can be run or pass.
  - a. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-pt. conversion (from the 12-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged time out. Decision cannot be changed after a penalty. Interceptions on conversions cannot be returned.
3. **Safety:** 2 points

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- a. A Safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in the end zone.

**III. Live Ball/Dead Ball**

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play and may advance ball or score.
4. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
5. Any official can whistle the play dead.
6. Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground.
  - b. The ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
  - c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
  - e. The ball carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground.
  - f. The ball carrier’s flag falls out.
  - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
  - h. The 7 second pass clock expires.
  - i. Inadvertent whistle.

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet were at the time of the fumble.

**IV. Running**

1. The ball is spotted where the runner’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the player’s front foot.
2. The quarterback cannot directly run with ball. The quarterback does have the ability to scramble in the back field, but cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. The quarterback is the offensive player that receives the snap.

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3. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offensive may use multiple handoffs.
  - a. "Center Sneak" play – The ball must completely leave the center's hands on the snap and he/she must step backwards off the line of scrimmage in order to receive a direct handoff from the QB before advancing the ball.
4. Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind.
5. "No-Run Zones," located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either zone of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE. (Reminder: Each offensive squad approaches only TWO No-Run Zones in each drive – one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).
6. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
7. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
8. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
9. Spinning is allowed, but players may not leave their feet to avoid a flag pull. Jumping in the air in a forward motion to advance the ball, while attempting to avoid a flag pull, is not allowed. Lateral moves to the left or right are permitted.
10. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
11. No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.
12. Offensive players must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball carrier.
13. Flag Obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

**V. Passing**

1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed, but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.

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3. The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, the down is consumer and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule no longer is in effect.
  - a. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS).

**VI. Receiving**

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense
5. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
6. Interceptions are returnable but not on conversions after touchdowns.

**VII. Rushing the Passer**

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball is handed of, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a Rush Line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
  - a. A legal rush is:
    - i. Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
    - ii. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handled off by the quarterback.
    - iii. If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7 yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
    - iv. If a rusher leave the rush line early and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage, they may legally rush the quarterback.
  - b. A penalty may be called if:



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- i. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – Illegal Rush (5 yards LOS and first down).
    - ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – Offside (5 yards LOS and first down).
    - iii. Any defensive player, not line up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off – Illegal Rush (5 yards LOS and first down).
  - c. Special Circumstances:
    - i. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback, seven second clock in effect.
    - ii. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before they play, however, if they do send a rusher, the rusher must verify with the official that they are in the correct position.
    - iii. If rusher leaves the 7-yard line before the snap, he/she may immediately drop back to act as defender with no offside penalty enforced.
- 4. Players rushed the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.
- 5. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. If the “path or line” is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense’s responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher’s path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher’s responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.
- 6. A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterback’s feet are when flag is pulled.
  - a. A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

**VIII. Flag Pulling**

- 1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- 2. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
- 3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier’s possession at any time.

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4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

**IX. Formations**

1. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
  - a. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
  - b. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
2. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.
3. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
4. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.