

THE COMPLETE SET OF

OFFICIAL RULES

2003



Endorsed By
National Football League Players



www.popwarner.com

\$5

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Little Scholars, Inc., Langhorne, PA 19047*

**IN THE NAME OF
POP WARNER**

*We Promise that we will
work together
as a team.
Respecting and abiding by
all the rules.
Always striving to win,
but above all
playing fair.
So win or lose
We will do our best,
in the true spirit
of good sportsmanship,
for the glory of football
and the honor of
our team*

by Shirley Menne



SPECIAL DEDICATION

To All Pop Warner Coaches & Administrators,

You provide the first real football or cheer leading experience for the children you coach. Remember how important that experience is for them — both now and long into the future.

Keep it safe and fun for them, and you'll be rewarded for years to come.

All of us at the National Football League Players Association salute you for your efforts on behalf of the children and on behalf of the great sport of football."

*Gene Upshaw, Executive Director
NFL Players, Inc.*

*** IMPORTANT NOTE - RULE CHANGES ***

**FOR EASY REFERENCE, ALL RULE CHANGES
ARE NOTED IN RED INK.**

2003 RULE CHANGES

TACKLE FOOTBALL

A-5-S1; A rostered adult representative (21 years or older) must be present for practices, games and functions.

A5- S2; An Assistant Coach must be at least 18 years of age or a high school graduate. A team may have a maximum of four (4) assistant coaches, plus a maximum of one (1) Coach-Trainee, (1) Equipment Manager, (1) Trainer, (1) Team Parent and (1) Administrator. (Please note this applies only to Football. See Spirit section for squad coaching members

A-5-S3; Coach trainee, must be a minimum of 16 years of age.

A-6-S-4; No local team/squad may be allowed to participate in Regional/National sponsored championship and or bowl games if it has not met the nationally published scholastic requirements.

A-15-S1; Pop Warner strongly recommends League/Associations discourage “parties/practice sessions” at coach’s homes. All the activities/practice sessions that are referenced in A-15-S1, must include a minimum of 2 coaches in attendance the entire session.

R-1-S6; Delete Older/Lighter 10 year old from Mitey-Mite Division

R-20-S1-E; A participant may practice with a school team up until the first game, but not participate and/or be rostered with that school team once the first regular season game begins.

R-22-S1; Lopsided/Intentionally Running up Score; Please review, this rule is completely new.

R-25; Scouting football teams is permitted in the form of video tape, film and written reports. Scouting is only permitted during a game situation. Scouting any type of practice is strictly prohibited.

R-27-S-1-B; A bowl game is a post season game between teams of different leagues. Teams may play post season games within their league as long as the maximum number of games is not exceeded.

R-28-S2-A; Delete in its entirety.

2003 RULE CHANGES

FLAG FOOTBALL

A-4-R-3-S3-C; Any type of pants may be worn provided said pants have no front or side pockets.

CHEER & DANCE

Spirit Rule changes are too numerous to mention in this section. Please review the new rules in the Spirit Rules Section of the Rulebook.

EDITORIAL CHANGES

Introduction to rules-S2; For all purposes, the Pop Warner Playing Season shall be defined as August 1st through December 31st or the last game/competition, which ever comes first.

A-20; All Pop Warner participants, football, spirit, and flag, must have the Official Authorized Pop Warner patch displayed on every uniform for games and competitions in order to participate.

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

All coaches, football and spirit participants will abide by a Code of Conduct which includes the following provisions. If any of these rules are broken, the League shall have the authority to impose a penalty. Coaches shall:

- S1:** Not smoke and/or use smokeless tobacco on the field.
- S2:** Not criticize players/spirit participants in front of spectators, but reserve constructive criticism for later, in private, or in the presence of team/squad members if others might benefit.
- S3:** Accept decisions of the game officials and judges on the field and in competitions as being fair and called to the best ability of said officials.
- S4:** Not criticize an opposing team, its players, spirit participants, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or by gesture.
- S5:** Emphasize that good athletes strive to be good students and that both are physically and mentally alert.
- S6:** Strive to make every football and spirit activity serve as a training ground for life, and a basis for good mental and physical health.
- S7:** Emphasize that winning is the result of good “teamwork.”
- S8:** Not engage in excessive sideline coaching and shall not leave the bench area to shout instructions from the sidelines.
- S9:** Together with team officials, be jointly responsible for the conduct and control of team fans and spectators. Any fan who becomes a nuisance and out of control will be asked to leave.
- S10:** Not use abusive or profane language at any time.
- S11:** Not “pile it on;” not encourage their team to get a commanding lead and raise the score as high as it can. In these instances, every effort shall be made to let all players play.
- S12:** Not receive any payment, in cash or kind, for services as a coach in Pop Warner Football/Spirit. This includes any coach, expert, consultant or choreographer, regardless of his/her roster status.
- S13:** Not permit or encourage “sweating down” tactics in order for a player to make the team weight.
- S14:** Not recommend or distribute any medication, controlled or over the counter, except as specifically prescribed by participant’s physician.
- S15:** Not permit an ineligible player or spirit participant to participate in a game.
- S16:** Not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
- S17:** Abstain from the possession and drinking of alcoholic beverages and the possession or use of any illegal substance on both the game and practice fields.
- S18:** Remove from a game or practice any participant when even slightly in doubt about his/her health, whether or not as a result of injury, until competent medical advice is available.
- S19:** Control their fans. Remember, as a team coach, you’re responsible for your team, and fan reaction will usually be in step with your reaction.
- S20:** Uphold all rules and regulations, National and local, regarding Pop Warner Football, Cheerleading and Dance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS **7-10**

PART I-THE POP WARNER PROGRAM	11
REGIONS AND NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS	11
NATIONAL REMARKS	11
ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL	11
GOALS & PHILOSOPHY OF THE POP WARNER PROGRAM	11
PART II-POP WARNER STRUCTURE	13
DEFINITIONS	13
S1-LEAGUE:	13
S2-ASSOCIATION:	13
S3-TEAM:	13
S4-DIVISION:	13
INTRODUCTION TO THE RULES	14
PART III-POP WARNER REGULATIONS - ALL PROGRAMS:	15
ARTICLE 1: POWERS/AUTHORITY OF LEAGUE	15
ARTICLE 2: BOUNDARIES	15
ARTICLE 3: RESTRICTION AGAINST DUAL MEMBERSHIP:	15
ARTICLE 4: VARIANCES/ADMINISTRATIVE WAIVERS:	16
ARTICLE 5: COACHES REQUIREMENTS	16
ARTICLE 6: REGISTRATION	17
S1-PARENTAL CONSENT:	17
S2-MEDICAL EXAMINATION:	17
S3-PROOF OF AGE:	18
S4-SCHOLASTIC FITNESS:	18
ARTICLE 7: FORMATION OF TEAMS AND SQUADS	18
ARTICLE 8: MANDATORY CUTS	18
ARTICLE 9: VOLUNTARY CUTS	19
ARTICLE 10: CERTIFICATION	19
ARTICLE 11: RETENTION OF ELIGIBILITY	20
ARTICLE 12: DROPS AND ADDS	20
ARTICLE 13: NO ALL-STARS	20
ARTICLE 14: AWARDS	21
ARTICLE 15: PRACTICE	21
ARTICLE 16: CAMPS	22
ARTICLE 17: IMPORTANT POINT-MEDICAL	22
ARTICLE 18: CHARGING ADMISSION	23
ARTICLE 19: PROTESTS	23
ARTICLE 20: PATCH REQUIREMENT	23
PART IV-ENFORCEMENT POLICY	24
POLICE POWERS/HEARINGS & APPEALS	24
MINIMUM MANDATED PENALTIES	24
S1-ADULT OFFENSES	24
S2-JUVENILE OFFENSES:	25
S3-TEAM AND ASSOCIATION OFFENSES	25
S4-REGIONAL AND NATIONAL PLAY-OFFS:	25

PART V - 11-MAN TACKLE PLAYING RULES	27
RULE 1: AGES AND WEIGHTS	27
S1-OPTIONS OF LEAGUE:	27
S2-JULY 31 CUTOFF-LEAGUE AGE:	27
S3-OPERATION OF SCHEMATIC:	27
S4-FOR ALL AGE/WEIGHT DIVISIONS:	27
S5-SPECIAL NOTE FOR MITEY-MITES:	28
S6-TACKLE AGE/WEIGHT SCHEMATIC:	28
RULE 2: INITIAL WEIGH-IN; FIRST PRACTICE	28
RULE 3: IN-SEASON DETERMINATION OF WEIGHT	29
S1-IDEAL METHOD:	29
S2-ACCEPTABLE METHOD:	29
S3-CHALLENGE METHOD:	30
S4-INTEGRITY OF WEIGH-IN:	30
RULE 4: IN-SEASON WEIGHT INCREASE	30
RULE 5: FAILURE TO PASS IN-SEASON WEIGH-IN	30
RULE 6: CUTTING OF PLAYERS	30
RULE 7: CERTIFICATION OF PLAYERS	30
RULE 8: ROSTER SIZE	31
S1-MAXIMUM ROSTER SIZE:	31
S2-MINIMUM ROSTER SIZE:	31
RULE 9: MANDATORY PLAY RULE	31
RULE 10: THE FIELD AND MARKINGS	32
RULE 11: GAME BALL	32
RULE 12: PLAYER DESIGNATIONS	33
RULE 13: REQUIRED EQUIPMENT	33
RULE 14: BLOCKING AND TACKLING RESTRICTIONS:	34
RULE 15: LENGTH OF PERIODS	34
RULE 16: INTERMISSION LENGTH	34
RULE 17: TIME CLOCK	34
RULE 18: TIME-OUTS	34
RULE 19: PLAYERS	34
RULE 20: REGARDING INELIGIBLE PLAYERS	35
RULE 21: SCORING VALUES	35
RULE 22: SCORES	35
S1-LOPSIDED/INTENTIONALLY RUN UP SCORES:	35
S2-FULL INVESTIGATION:	36
RULE 23: SIDELINE PERSONNEL:	36
RULE 24: RADIOS AND COMMUNICATION DEVICES	36
RULE 25: SCOUTING	36
RULE 26: NO TAXI SQUADS	37
RULE 27: PRACTICE	37
S1-PRE-SEASON:	37
S2-WARM WEATHER PRECAUTIONS:	37
S3-MANDATORY BREAKS:	37
S4-FULL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT REQUIRED:	37
S5-CONTROLLED INTER-SQUAD SCRIMMAGE:	37
RULE 28: SCHEDULES	38
S1-SCHEDULED GAMES	38
S2-SCHEDULING PROHIBITIONS:	39
S3-COMMON REQUIREMENTS-ALL SCHEDULING:	39
RULE 29: POST-SEASON BOWL GAMES	39

RULE 30: TIE BALL GAMES	40
RULE 31: CONTACT WITH OFFICIALS	41
RULE 32: REGIONAL/NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ELIGIBILITY	41
PART VI-6, 8, AND 9-MAN TACKLE PLAYING RULES	42
ARTICLE 1: AGES & WEIGHTS	42
ARTICLE 2: ROSTER SIZE	42
ARTICLE 3: POST-SEASON PLAY	42
ARTICLE 4: “SLAUGHTER” RULE	42
ARTICLE 5: 6-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES	42
ARTICLE 6: 8-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES	43
ARTICLE 7: 9-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES	43
PART VII-POP WARNER FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS	45
INTRODUCTION	45
ARTICLE 1: ORGANIZATION	45
ARTICLE 2: REGISTRATION	45
ARTICLE 3: DIVISIONS OF PLAY	45
ARTICLE 4: FLAG FOOTBALL RULES	46
RULE 1: PLAYERS	46
RULE 2: PLAYING FIELDS	46
RULE 3: EQUIPMENT	47
RULE 4: PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT	48
RULE 5: REFEREES	48
RULE 6: THE RULES OF THE GAME	48
RULE 7: SCORING VALUES	52
RULE 8: TIE GAME	52
RULE 9: INJURED PLAYERS	52
RULE 10: PRACTICES	52
RULE 11: SCHEDULES	52
RULE 12: TOURNAMENT PLAY	53
RULE 13: PENALTIES	54
RULE 14: PROTESTS	56
PART VIII-POP WARNER SPIRIT RULES	57
SPIRIT ORGANIZATION	58
S1-LEAGUE LEVEL	58
S2-ASSOCIATION LEVEL	59
S3-SQUAD LEVEL	59
RULE 1: AGES / DIVISIONS	61
RULE 2: SQUAD SIZE	62
RULE 3: FORMATION OF SQUADS	62
S1-TRYOUTS	62
S2-TYPES OF SPIRIT SQUADS	62
RULE 4: MANDATORY CUTS	64
RULE 5: REGARDING INELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS	65
RULE 6: DROPS AND ADDS	65
RULE 7: NO ALL-STARS	65
RULE 8: MASCOTS	65
RULE 9: PRACTICE	66
RULE 10: CAMPS	69
RULE 11: GENERAL SQUAD MANAGEMENT	70

S1-SPORTSMANSHIP/CONDUCT	70
S2- COACHES' RESPONSIBILITY	70
S3-GENERAL SQUAD REQUIREMENTS	71
S4-PARTICIPANT APPAREL	72
RULE 12: POP WARNER SAFETY	75
S1-SPOTTING	75
S2-DISMOUNTS	75
S3-DROPS	77
S4-PENDULUMS & FLATBACKS	77
S5-PARTNER STUNTS & PYRAMIDS	78
S6-EXTENDED STUNTS	80
S7-POP /SWEEP /TOSS	81
S8-TRANSITIONAL STUNTS	81
S9-INVERTED POSITION	82
S10-TUMBLING	82
S11-USE OF POMS	82
S12-USE OF SIGNS	83
RULE 13: COMPETITIONS	83
RULE 14: SPIRIT TERMS	100
S1: CHEERLEADING TERMS	100
S2: JUMPS	104
S3: DANCE STYLES	105
S4: DANCE TERMS	105

PART I-THE POP WARNER PROGRAM

REGIONS AND NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Administration of Pop Warner Football is divided into a series of regions. The number and composition of regions is determined and may be changed from time to time by the Joint Advisory Committee of Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. National Pop Warner Headquarters is located at: 586 Middletown Boulevard, Suite C-100, Langhorne, PA 19047 or www.popwarner.com. When writing to Headquarters, use your official team or league stationery.

NATIONAL REMARKS

Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. is dedicated to the boys and girls who participate in Pop Warner Football, and to their safety and enjoyment. The rules for Pop Warner activity of any type as published in this book are to be followed scrupulously. Failure to enforce them can result in legal actions and/or loss of charter. Each family and each adult volunteer in the program must be covered by medical and liability insurance of some type. Although Pop Warner Football is a statistically safe sport, such insurance should include coverage for “participant risk.” All Pop Warner Football activities are open to both boys and girls, including “mixed” teams/squads. However, for the sake of convenience, these rules refer to participants as if of the male gender only.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL

The Pop Warner Administrative Manual is designed to keep each League and team-sponsoring organization up-to-date on all administrative matters, as well as to contribute to their business-like operation. This rulebook and the Administrative Manual **DO NOT BECOME PERSONAL PROPERTY**, but belong to the team or organization to which the volunteer belongs. Both are to be returned to the organization when the volunteer leaves.

GOALS & PHILOSOPHY OF THE POP WARNER PROGRAM

Pop Warner Football is an international program operated for the benefit of its youthful participants. Since 1929, the program’s philosophy has been: Academics and Athletics go hand-in-hand. At every level, Pop Warner Football seeks to develop well-rounded young men and women who learn not only the fundamentals of football, cheerleading and dance but also the importance of education, in an atmosphere conducive to developing sound mind, body and character - and having a good time along the way!

The general objectives of Pop Warner Football are to inspire youth, regardless of race, creed, religion or national origin, to practice the ideals of sportsmanship, scholarship, and physical fitness, as reflected in the life of the late Glenn Scobie "Pop" Warner.

Pop Warner strives to make the game "fun" for all boys and girls. Coaches must constantly keep in mind the ages of the participants. The program stresses learning lessons of value far beyond the playing or spirit days of the boys and girls involved, such as: self-discipline, teamwork, concentration, friendship, leadership, and good sportsmanship.

With such goals in mind, and by providing an opportunity to participate in an organized, supervised environment with emphasis on maximum safety and participation, Pop Warner Football offers young men and women a unique experience.



PART II-POP WARNER STRUCTURE

DEFINITIONS

S1-LEAGUE:

The term “League” has two definitions, each separate and distinct as applicable:

- A. It is a legal term to define a type of League/Conference, **or**
- B. It is a grouping of teams of the same ages and weights (playing division) into a “league” for scheduling purposes.

A League consists of a minimum of four (4) teams playing in the same Age/Weight division. Leagues are issued a charter by Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. All Leagues are responsible to National with the assistance of the appropriate Regional Administrator(s) on behalf of Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc.

S2-ASSOCIATION:

Associations are organizations that sponsor and administer one or more teams. They raise money, buy equipment, recruit coaches, secure fields, etc.

Associations are characterized by specific geographical coverage. In cities, they often adopt commonly understood neighborhood names. In the suburbs, they usually take the town name. In rural areas, an association name may embrace an entire county (or a substantial part of it). An association’s recruiting area is approved by its League and is normally consistent with its geographical name.

When there are no associations, a League is intramural.

S3-TEAM:

A team is the universal, basic unit of organization. At minimum, a team consists of a group of participants organized under the direction of a coaching staff in a given Age/Weight division. Each football team may have a maximum of two spirit squads, one primary cheer and one dance squad.

S4-DIVISION:

Division has several meanings, the most common of which refers to one of the seven (7) Age/Weight classifications: Mitey-Mite (MM), Junior Peewee (JP), Peewee (P), Junior Midget (JM), Midget (M), Junior Bantam (JB), and Bantam (B). The basic ages and weights for each division of play are listed in Rule 1 S:6.

Another use of the word is to designate a sub-grouping of a League, such as “National-American divisions” or “East-West divisions.”
NOTE: Requests from National for “division of play” refer solely to the Age/Weight classifications.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RULES

S1: The rules contained herein ARE REQUIRED to be enforced by each league, conference and federation in Pop Warner Football.

S2: FOR ALL PURPOSES, THE POP WARNER PLAYING SEASON SHALL BE DEFINED AS AUGUST 1ST THROUGH DECEMBER 31ST **OR THE LAST GAME / COMPETITION, WHICH EVER COMES FIRST.** All Leagues, administrative personnel, coaches, players and spirit participants are subject to disciplinary action for violations of Pop Warner rules and regulations at any time during a stated playing season.

S3: NO RULES WILL BE ADDED AFTER AUGUST 1ST UNLESS IT IS A SAFETY ISSUE.



PART III-POP WARNER REGULATIONS -ALL PROGRAMS

ARTICLE 1: POWERS/AUTHORITY OF LEAGUE

- S1:** The League has, among its powers, the obligation and authority to enforce National rules. In addition, it has the right to make National Pop Warner rules more stringent than those appearing in this book, with the exception of the scholastic fitness requirement. Examples would be: increasing Mandatory Play, from the minimum of 6 plays to any higher number; establishing a 2-year instead of a basic 3-year spread; eliminating the “older/lighter player” category while keeping the basic 3-year spread; and so on.
- S2:** A League may not make National rules less strict-that is, it cannot increase maximum weight, decrease or eliminate minimum weight, abolish Mandatory Play, etc.
- S3:** Leagues may also establish their own rules, which shall have full force and effect within their own jurisdiction and will be fully backed up by National, provided:
- A. Said rule(s) is(are) consistent with those appearing in this book;
 - B. Said rule(s) is(are) adopted in accordance with procedures outlined in the Pop Warner Administrative Manual;
 - C. Copy of said rule(s) is(are) on file with National.

ARTICLE 2: BOUNDARIES

- S1:** A League is responsible for the establishment of its own boundaries. However, it shall not infringe upon the territorial rights or boundaries of another chartered League.
- S2:** TRANSFER BETWEEN Leagues: Any team or association seeking to withdraw from one League to join another League may do so only with the prior written agreement of the Leagues involved and with the written concurrence of the appropriate Regional Director. In the event the two Leagues cannot agree upon the terms of the move, the Regional Director shall rule on the matter, with either party retaining the right to appeal the decision to the National Football Commissioner.

ARTICLE 3: RESTRICTION AGAINST DUAL MEMBERSHIP

No League or member association holding a Pop Warner charter may enter any one of its teams into membership in any other youth football program.

ARTICLE 4: VARIANCES/ADMINISTRATIVE WAIVERS

- S1:** Variances shall only be granted for Ages and Weights, as shown on the Age/Weight schematic (See Rule 1 S6). A deviation from any other rule is called an Administrative Waiver.*
- S2:** Variances/Administrative Waivers shall only be granted upon a sworn written application executed and verified by the Chief Executive Officer of the League, attesting that the Variance/Administrative Waiver sought is based upon good cause and can be shown to be in the best interest of Pop Warner players and spirit participants assuring their safety.
- S3:** All Variance/Administrative Waiver applications for the prior year will be reviewed annually by the Football/Cheerleading Executive Committee (FCEC), which will give guidance to its members and to the National Football/Cheerleading Commissioner(s) in considering Variance/Administrative Waiver requests for the upcoming season.
- S4:** No Variance or Administrative Waiver shall be considered by the National Football/Cheer & Dance Commissioner(s) without the prior written recommendation of the appropriate Regional Director.
- S5:** Variances/Administrative Waivers shall be granted ONLY by the written order of the National Football/Cheer & Dance Commissioner(s) and shall be valid for the current season only.
- S6:** No one granted a Variance shall be granted a post-season bowl game for that year, unless the opposing team has an identical Variance.
- *Leagues may, upon good cause shown in writing, request an Administrative Waiver as to other (non-age/weight) rules and regulations, as explained above. Only those Administrative Waivers which serve in the best interest of Pop Warner Football both locally and nationally will be given consideration.

ARTICLE 5: COACHES REQUIREMENTS

A team's or squad's coaching staff is in complete charge of the team or squad whenever it is together on the practice or playing field, traveling as a group to and from practice sessions and games, or together for any team function, such as a banquet. The coaching staff is under the direction of the Head Coach; other coaches are called Assistant Coaches. The following applies to all coaches:

- S1:** A Head Coach must be at least 21 years of age. **A rostered adult representative (21 years or older) must be present for practices, games and functions.**
- S2:** An Assistant Coach must be at least 18 years of age or a high school graduate. **A team may have a maximum of four (4) assistant coaches, plus a maximum of one (1) Coach-Trainee, (1) Equipment Manager, (1)Trainer, (1) Team Parent and (1) Administrator. (Please note this applies only to Football. See Spirit section for squad coaching members)**
- S3:** Teams/squads are permitted to carry a Coach-Trainee, who must be a minimum of 16 years of age.

- S4:** The Head Coach will determine the assignments of the Assistant Coaches.
- S5:** In the absence of a specialized, trained person affiliated with the team/squad in the medical area (physician, paramedic, specially trained volunteer), one of the coaches must be the holder of a current Red Cross Certificate in Community CPR and First Aid or its equivalent.
- S6:** Coaches are to be selected by methods approved by League rules and/or by-laws.
- S7:** Once approved for coaching, a coach is automatically terminated at the close of each season. To coach the following year, the same League approval is required. Any violation of the rules committed by a coach during the season, even though the hearing is not held until after the close of the season, is still under the jurisdiction of the sponsoring association and/or League.
- S8:** Coaches do not make team or League policy. Rather, they carry it out. However, on the playing and practice fields, the coaching staff is in complete charge and shall not be interfered with except in cases of rules violations and any other conduct deemed by higher authority to be contrary to the welfare of youth.
- S9:** The Head Football Coach has final responsibility for his/her actions, those of his/her assistant coaches, players, staff and parents.
- S10:** The Head Spirit Coach has final responsibility for his/her actions, those of his/her assistant coaches, spirit participants, staff and parents.
- S11:** Each League shall establish its own rules regarding the placing of coaches with sons, daughters or siblings within its own boundaries.

ARTICLE 6: REGISTRATION

A candidate cannot begin practice with a team or squad until he/she has "signed up." To register, the candidate must sign a standard, locally-supplied form approved by the League. The sign-up fee, if any, may be collected at this time. All coach trainees and teen demonstrators under the age of 18 must be registered/certified in the same manner as all other minors participating in Pop Warner Football, Cheer and Dance. All candidates must furnish the following:

S1-PARENTAL CONSENT:

A written statement from either parent or the legal guardian, stating that the child has his or her permission to play, cheer or dance. The League or team may supply a standard form for this.

S2-MEDICAL EXAMINATION:

A signed statement from an examining physician that the candidate is physically fit and there are no observable conditions which would contra-indicate him playing football or her cheer/dance. Note: If regular school medical examination was performed after January 1 of the current year, and the results are releasable to

parents, a copy of such a report may be used in lieu of a new examination.

SPECIAL NOTE: A person with a loss of limb may participate provided that the individual has a signed statement of approval from an examining physician and that the use of the limb is no more dangerous to players than the corresponding human limb, and does not place an opponent at a disadvantage.

S3-PROOF OF AGE:

A certified copy of the birth certificate on file bearing the seal of the issuing office of the state of birth is the best guarantee of reliability of claimed birthdate. Passports are also reliable. Military ID cards are acceptable. Certified wallet-size certificates issued by a state or commonwealth are acceptable. Any other alleged "proof of birthdate," including photo copies of "originals," are to be accepted only upon the willingness of the team administration to have its schedule forfeited should fraudulent application later be determined.

S4-SCHOLASTIC FITNESS:

Proof of satisfactory progress in school is required. A 2.0/70% or the equivalent shall be the minimum grade point average acceptable to participate. In cases of doubt, conflict of opinion, **or if a valid report card is not submitted, the nationally published scholastic eligibility form shall be used and deemed final.** NOTE: This rule as it relates to scholastic grades may not be made more stringent by any team, association, or league, as other rules may be. **No local team/squad may be allowed to participate in Regional/National sponsored championships or bowl games if it has not met the nationally published scholastic requirements.**

ARTICLE 7: FORMATION OF TEAMS AND SQUADS

Tryouts of any kind within Pop Warner are prohibited. Tryouts are defined as any means used to ascertain the level whereby a participant is placed on a team/squad, including assessments, evaluations, or any other method used to place a participant in Pop Warner. Not more than 35 players shall be assigned to a football team or spirit squad at the start of pre-conditioning on August 1st or the later starting date of the association, whichever comes first.

ARTICLE 8: MANDATORY CUTS

Any participant must be cut who:

- S1:** is found to have signed up as a result of parental pressure or tells team management he/she does not really want to play/cheer/dance.
- S2:** refuses or cannot furnish the 4 required items-Parental Consent, Medical Examination, Proof of Age, and Scholastic Fitness.
- S3:** is found to be simultaneously trying out for a school tackle football team, or who, once the season starts, is found to be participating on a school tackle football team or spirit squad.

However, participation in a school flag football program, if required by the curriculum of the school PE program, or participation in non-Pop Warner spirit squad tryouts only, during the Pop Warner season, is allowed.

- S4:** is a member of any other organized Pop Warner football/spirit team/squad or non-Pop Warner football/spirit team/squad.
- S5:** attempts to intimidate fellow participants in practice by word and/or physical deed. No refunding of fees shall be required.
- S6:** is an extreme discipline problem (and then, only with the concurrence of the League).

ARTICLE 9: VOLUNTARY CUTS

A participant shall be considered a voluntary or “self-cut” participant when he/she simply no longer shows up at practices or games of his/her own free will.

While voluntary cuts are not charged to any team for the purpose of these regulations, a coaching staff may attempt to disguise its cutting pattern by arranging practices in such a way as to discourage participants of lesser ability into quitting on their own. While these practices are not common, they have been known to occur and are considered intentional avoidance of the rules and regulations and are, therefore, punishable as a result of a hearing.

If a team or spirit squad loses 20% or more of its assigned participants prior to certification, it is mandatory that the association investigate the causes for the participants voluntarily leaving the team or spirit squad, and take whatever appropriate action may be needed. The results of this investigation shall be reported to the League and the League shall have final authority as to whether appropriate actions were taken.

ARTICLE 10: CERTIFICATION

- S1:** Certification is that process whereby the team or association will file with the League of which it is a member, a complete roster of players and a complete roster of spirit participants for the regular season schedule.
- S2:** A certified copy of each roster will be forwarded by the League to PWLS, and to the Regional Director (or his/her designee) by the announced deadline. This is a certified roster in that the League has accepted the information at a pre-season session with its teams and spirit squads, based upon information submitted, and the teams and spirit squads are restricted to these participants for the balance of the season (except for allowed “Drops” and “Adds,” see Article 12).
- S3:** This will be accomplished on the official Pop Warner Football or Spirit roster form, or on any form developed by a League, providing that the form is approved by National Pop Warner Headquarters.
- S4:** Certification must be completed prior to the opening game of the regular League schedule. The procedures for accomplishing certification are discussed hereafter. To be certified onto a team or squad roster, a participant shall qualify under the following:

- A. Eligibility according to residence shall be decided by the League when the candidate resides in an area other than that authorized for the association by the League and on file at PWLS.
- B. Each association shall attempt to assign a first-time participant to the lowest age and weight division for which he/she is qualified.
- C. Once certified for a particular age/weight division, a participant shall not be permitted to recertify to a lower division of play during the current season under any circumstances, but based on the information available shall be permitted to approve recertification to a higher division of play.
- D. Ages shall be verified by birth certificate as specified in Article 6, S3.
- E. Associations will require a new picture of a football player or spirit participant at least every two (2) years.
- F. It is the responsibility of the league board members to conduct weigh-ins. Players should be in a stripped mode (gym shorts). A league board member is not permitted to weigh-in his/her own team.

ARTICLE 11: RETENTION OF ELIGIBILITY

Once certified, a participant must meet the following requirements to retain eligibility:

- S1:** Transfer policy in case of change of residence will be decided by the League.
- S2:** Retain parental consent.
- S3:** Maintain sound physical condition.
- S4:** Continue to maintain sound scholastic standards. In cases of doubt, a League shall have the right to require a written statement by the school administration, which shall be deemed final.

ARTICLE 12: DROPS AND ADDS

- S1:** A team or squad may add participants to its certified roster as long as said roster was certified below the maximum number permitted, or to replace those originally certified and no longer on the team or squad for any valid reason.
- S2:** Each League shall establish its own Drops & Adds cutoff date, but no player or spirit participant may be added to any roster after the first Monday of October of the current season.

ARTICLE 13: NO ALL-STARS

All-Star teams or squads are prohibited in Pop Warner Football. Any organization found to play a game(s) with All-Star players, or perform cheer/dance at a competition or exhibition event with All-Star spirit participants, from different rosters of regular season teams or squads will have its charter revoked.

ARTICLE 14: AWARDS

S1: In compliance with the “team” concept and in view of the ages of Pop Warner participants, no participant will be singled out as “best lineman,” “best offensive back,” “most valuable player/spirit participant,” etc., for the presentation of a special award. Such adulation should be given to an athlete after his Pop Warner days, if he/she justly deserves it by performance at the High School level. Individual awards may be presented, but must be given to all team or squad members.

S2-SPECIAL NOTE FOR PLAYERS: Awards for individual performances displayed on the helmets are prohibited (i.e., no stars, hatchets, footballs, etc.). The only decal allowed is the team logo and/or an official Pop Warner logo.

ARTICLE 15: PRACTICE

S1-DEFINITION: To prevent possible bending of the rules and as a protection for children, practices are defined as a gathering of players or spirit participants, without minimum number, in the presence of at least one (1) coach, where one or more of the following activities take place:

- A. chalk talk/skull session
- B. viewing of fundamentals film
- C. group conditioning
- D. individual skills sessions (QB, receiving, blocking, tackling, kicking, etc.)
- E. group skills sessions
- F. dummies and other inanimate contact
- G. play run through without pads (shorts & T-shirt)
- H. play run through with equipment, but without contact
- I. Intra-squad scrimmages with full pads and equipment

As can be seen, a so-called “party” at a coach’s home, where films are shown, or where football or spirit teams are talked about, can be deemed a practice session, as can a “party” at a parent’s home where one or more coaches are present. Use of a football field is not required to satisfy the definition of a “practice session.” Each League is directed to establish a policy with respect to home videos and/or films of games or competitions and the viewing thereof. **Pop Warner strongly recommends League/Associations discourage “parties/practice sessions” at coaches homes. All the activities/practice sessions that are referenced in A-15-S1, must include a minimum of 2 coaches in attendance the entire session.**

S2: Pre-season practice shall not begin until August 1st (or later). The actual date will be determined in accordance with climate and other factors determined by the League in establishing a common starting date for all teams within its jurisdiction.

S3: All practices must be attended by one person holding a Red Cross Community CPR and First Aid Certificate, or its equivalent, if not by an EMT or volunteer physician (such as a parent of one of the participants).

S4-BEFORE LABOR DAY: No team or squad may schedule more than 10 hours of practice per week before Labor Day. A week is defined as seven (7) consecutive calendar days. Not more than 2-1/2 hours of practice may be scheduled on any one day.

S5-AFTER LABOR DAY: Practices after Labor Day weekend are limited to 6 hours per week. A week is defined as seven (7) consecutive calendar days. Practices after Labor Day weekend are not to exceed 2 hours per day.

S6-BREAKS: Break time is not counted against the ten (10) or six (6) hours per week or 2-1/2 or 2 hours of allowed practice time.

S7-CONTROLLED INTER-SQUAD SCRIMMAGE: After the first week of practice (10 hours) for conditioning, and after the second week of practice (10 hours) in pads in which contact has occurred, teams may engage in joint practice sessions with other team(s) in what are called controlled inter-squad scrimmages. So as to avoid any misinterpretation, 20 hours of practice is required before inter-squad scrimmages may occur.

S8: Any player added after a team has formed and/or after the season has started, must be subject to the same 20 hours of conditioning as mentioned in S7 of this article.

S9: The following exercises and drills are banned from all practices and pre-game warm-ups; leg lifts, neck bridges (sometimes referred to as neck rolls) and bull in the ring. Leg lifts with knees bent are acceptable.

ARTICLE 16: CAMPS

S1: No Pop Warner organization or personnel associated within, shall require or mandate that a Pop Warner football team or spirit squad, in part or in whole, with or without coach(s) attend a football or spirit camp. There shall be no exceptions. However, a Pop Warner football or spirit team/squad, in part or in whole MAY attend a camp if they so choose to, providing the following conditions are met:

- A. Coach or other team affiliated personnel does not make it MANDATORY.
- B. Camp provides as part of its services an accident insurance plan for camp participants.

S2: Any camp, whether it be for players or spirit participants, shall not be endorsed or sponsored by National Pop Warner, or by any League, Association, or Team, which does not provide as part of its services, an accident insurance plan for the camp participants.

ARTICLE 17: IMPORTANT POINT-MEDICAL

The home team or hosting organization has the responsibility to provide medical coverage at each game or competition. In the absence of a physician and or ambulance on the site, the minimum safety requirement will be the presence of one individual associated with the home team/host organization who is currently

EMT qualified or is currently certified in Red Cross Community First Aid and Safety or its equivalent.

Work together with your local EMTs to establish an emergency plan that fits your specific area and needs. Your emergency plan should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. introduce or identify trainer/health care provider to visiting coach;
- B. home team/host organization review emergency plan with visiting team;
- C. designated duties for coaching staff and or athletes;
- D. “how to call EMS” next to phone;
- E. specific directions to your facility for emergency medical service (EMS);
- F. emergency numbers;
- G. injury report forms;
- H. treatment authorization card;
- I. list of administrators that the coach is required to contact.

Practice your emergency plan early in the season, and repeat often throughout the season. A similar plan should be in place for teams traveling to away games.

All teams are recommended to have a staff member carry the entire team’s medical release forms and emergency numbers for all players and spirit participants in case in an emergency their parent(s) or guardian must be reached. Having the family physician’s number opposite the participant’s name is also recommended.

ARTICLE 18: CHARGING ADMISSION

No mandatory admission shall be charged to participating players, spirit squads, or coaching staff members of a team playing any Pop Warner game, whether it be a regular season game, post-season game, post-season bowl game, League playoff game, or Regional or National playoff game. Donations may be solicited at the gate.

ARTICLE 19: PROTESTS

- S1:** Only protests involving the eligibility of a player or spirit participant shall be considered.
- S2:** Protests are decided in accordance with the administrative procedures of the League.
- S3:** Teams, Associations and Leagues have the responsibility to communicate protests as soon as they are known to exist. Lack of prompt notification may result in denial of the protest.

ARTICLE 20: PATCH REQUIREMENT

All Pop Warner participants, football, spirit, and flag, must have the Official Authorized Pop Warner patch displayed on every uniform for games and competitions **in order to participate**. Patches may only be placed on designated areas on the uniforms as determined by National.

PART IV-ENFORCEMENT POLICY

POLICE POWERS/HEARINGS & APPEALS

All Pop Warner organizations-Leagues, Associations, and Teams, will be called upon from time to time to do the following:

- A. Resolve disputes between member organizations and individuals.
- B. Take action to enforce National and local rules and regulations.
- C. Discipline both adult and juvenile members.

NOTE: NATIONAL POP WARNER DOES NOT HANDLE APPEALS. Each League is advised to set up its own tribunal to handle matters in a timely fashion at the local level. **WARNING:** Failure to do so could result in being taken to court. National Headquarters will intervene only in rare instances **AT ITS SOLE DISCRETION.**

MINIMUM MANDATED PENALTIES

Minimum mandated penalties for specific offenses are required by the rules to assure that punishment for the most serious infractions will occur on a uniform, national basis.

S1-ADULT OFFENSES

- A. **RUN-UP SCORE:** A finding of “guilty” shall result in Probation at a minimum; Suspension if the conduct is found to have been intentional; and Dismissal in the case of a repetitive pattern (malice).
- B. **ENDANGERMENT OF JUVENILES:** Suspension for 1 year, to permanent suspension upon repeated offense.
- C. **TEACHING PROHIBITED OFFENSIVE & DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES:** Suspension for 1 year, to permanent suspension upon repeated offense.
- D. **FIGHTING:** Suspension for 1 year, to permanent suspension upon repeated offense.
- E. **CHEATING:** Suspension for 1 year; permanent suspension upon second offense.
- F. **THREATS:** Suspension for 1 year; permanent suspension upon second offense.
- G. **GAMBLING ON GAME OUTCOME:** Suspension for one year.
- H. **LACK OF COOPERATION/ OBSTRUCTION:** Suspension until compliance is achieved.
- I. **VIOLATION OF MANDATORY PLAY RULE:** 1st violation: Suspension (may be reduced to probation); 2nd violation: Dismissal if original suspension still in effect, probation revoked and original suspension reinstated.

Upon suspension of any penalty provided herein, an accused shall be placed on probation, among the general conditions of which shall be: (1) that the accused be and remain of good behavior and that he strictly enforce all rules and regulations of Pop Warner;

and (2) that the accused prepare and submit to his League his written plan to supervise implementation of the Mandatory Play Rule (MPR).

In addition, a player denied his required number of plays will start the next game and receive double the number of mandatory plays in that game. The failure of a convicted coach to comply with this provision will be deemed a second violation.

S2-JUVENILE OFFENSES:

Fighting, intimidation, or disrespect for authority shall be cause for ejection from a game/competition. Any player/spirit participant ejected from any game/competition for cause shall be ineligible for participation in their next game/competition. A second ejection during the same season shall be cause for removal from the team for the balance of that season.

S3-TEAM AND ASSOCIATION OFFENSES

A. FAILURE TO KEEP FAITH WITH JUVENILES &

PARENTS is defined as any deliberate practice of a team or association which placed the health, welfare and safety of juveniles in jeopardy, or exploits or treats them in such a manner that the juvenile becomes a "tool" of the team.

To file this charge, the violation must result from team or association policy, and not be an aberration of one individual. This implies that the practice is carried out by order of, or with the knowledge of, the officership, and no steps are taken to end it.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Probation of the organization coupled with permanent suspension of its president and all others who participated in the practice. Upon a second offense, suspension of the organization until all officers are removed.

- B. FIGHTING/RIOTING/INCITEMENT TO RIOT:** Game related: forfeiture of the game for first offense; forfeiture of the season for second offense within the same season. Scrimmage-related: at the discretion of League.

S4-REGIONAL AND NATIONAL PLAY-OFFS:

Investigations and hearings concerning Regional and National Championships, Competitions and Play-offs will be conducted by the National Office and/or appropriate Regional Staff.



**POP WARNER
11-MAN TACKLE FOOTBALL
PLAYING RULES
(PAGES 27 - 41)**



**POP WARNER
6-, 8-, AND 9-MAN TACKLE
FOOTBALL
PLAYING RULES**



PART V - 11-MAN TACKLE PLAYING RULES

Except as specifically modified for Pop Warner Football, all games are to be played under the state rules for varsity football of the applicable governing body-either the individual state member of the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations or the National Collegiate Athletic Association. It is recommended that each coach be provided with a copy of the current year's high school rules. Write to the National Federation at PO Box 690, Indianapolis, IN, 46206, web address: www.nfhs.org or to the NCAA at PO Box 6222, Indianapolis, IN, 46206-6222, web address: www.ncaa.org.

RULE 1: AGES AND WEIGHTS

S1-OPTIONS OF LEAGUE:

The use of a July 31st cutoff date is not mandatory. A League may set a later, but not earlier cutoff date (between August 1 and December 31st of the same year). If it does so, and its teams meet others in post-season bowl play, it has voluntarily "spotted" its opponent(s) with a small (often theoretical) "age advantage."

Use of the so-called "older/lighter" player is not required. A League may set a later, but not earlier cutoff date (i.e., January 1st as opposed to July 31st of the prior year).

Leagues may set stricter, but not less strict rules. For example, in the Peewee Division, a League may choose to use only a 9-10, or a 10-11 age spread. It may increase the minimum weight, or decrease the maximum weight or both, but it may not decrease or abolish the minimum weight or increase the maximum weight.

S2-JULY 31 CUTOFF-LEAGUE AGE:

The player's age on July 31st of the current year shall be the player's age for the coming season.

S3-OPERATION OF SCHEMATIC:

The schematic provides a uniform series of three basic years of age qualification for each division of play, with a fourth year of eligibility falling under more stringent weight restrictions (the "older/lighter" player). The "older/lighter" player is indicated by an asterisk. (See Rule 1, S6)

S4-FOR ALL AGE/WEIGHT DIVISIONS:

- A. Leagues may set a later cutoff date than July 31st up to December 31st.
- B. Leagues are not required to allow "older/lighter" player.
- C. Leagues setting cutoff later than July 31st cannot use older/lighter players.

S5-SPECIAL NOTE FOR MITEY-MITES:

Although the game is serious to the kids, from the adult viewpoint, Mitey-Mite is strictly a training division, completely free of any pressure to win, with a total emphasis on learning. While scores are kept, no local championship may be declared, nor is post-season play allowed.

There shall be no blitzing, or rushing of punts, field goals or point after touchdown (while attempting a kick) in Mitey-Mite play.

S6-TACKLE AGE/WEIGHT SCHEMATIC

Division Name	Ages	Certification Weight Range	End of Season Max.
MITEY-MITE No older/lighter for Mitey Mites	7-8-9	45-85 lbs.	94 lbs.**
JUNIOR PEEWEE (older/lighter)	8-9-10 11*	55-95 lbs. 55-75 lbs.	104 lbs.** 84 lbs.**
PEEWEE (older/lighter)	9-10-11 12*	70-110 lbs. 70-90 lbs.	119 lbs.** 99 lbs.**
JUNIOR MIDGET (older/lighter)	10-11-12 13*	80-125 lbs. 80-105 lbs.	134 lbs.** 114 lbs.**
MIDGET (older/lighter)	11-12-13-14 15*	95-145 lbs. 95-125 lbs.	154 lbs.** 134 lbs.**
JUNIOR BANTAM (older/lighter)	12-13-14 15*	115-160 lbs. 115-140 lbs.	169 lbs.** 149 lbs.**
BANTAM (older/lighter)	13-14-15 16*	130-175 lbs. 130-155 lbs.	184 lbs.** 164 lbs.**

The asterisked () provisions in each division allow the so-called "older but lighter" player to also qualify. The last year of eligibility falls under more stringent weight restrictions, per above.

A LEAGUE SHALL NOT ADD THE "IN-SEASON" GROWTH ALLOWANCE AS A MEANS OF UPPING MAXIMUM WEIGHTS.

RULE 2: INITIAL WEIGH-IN; FIRST PRACTICE

Until the first practice session, no convenient means will exist for the team to conduct this weigh-in. Its purpose is to serve as one final check of qualification and to screen out for special attention each player whose weight will bear watching by the team staff, the players, and parents throughout the practice period, because it is slightly below the minimum or slightly above the maximum weight for that particular division. Those failing the initial weigh-in will not continue as eligible candidates for the team (See Rule 6). The initial weigh-in is not the certified weigh-in and may be conducted on less than a medical quality scale.

RULE 3: IN-SEASON DETERMINATION OF WEIGHT

Each team will have its players checked PRIOR TO EACH GAME during the season to assure that the weight standards are being maintained.

S1-IDEAL METHOD:

The ideal method of in-season weight checks can only be used when all playing facilities used throughout the program include dressing facilities. If so, pre-game weigh-ins, in shorts, will be conducted before every game and will be scheduled so that they are completed not later than fifteen minutes before kickoff. A medical scale will be used. If not available, a lesser scale may be used if its accuracy can be checked against a weight of known value. The weigh-in will be conducted by a League-assigned Weigh Master.

S2-ACCEPTABLE METHOD:

The following alternate method of in-season weight check (with uniform and equipment allowance) shall be used where dressing facilities are not available:

- A. A weight allowance shall be established for the wearing of the uniform and protective equipment which will then be subtracted from the player's total scale weight. In cases of marginal overweight or marginal underweight, the team shall be entitled to a strip weight, in shorts, of the player concerned. Strip weight checks will be conducted in dignity, away from unnecessary personnel.

To facilitate the weigh-in process, the scale should be one that can be set up along "pass" or "fail" limits, i.e., be capable of being preset to balance at the maximum and minimum allowable weights for the particular division of play. In this way, a line of players can step onto the scale and have their weights quickly judged as falling at or below the maximum. Next, the scale can be reset to balance at the minimum "pass" weight so players can be judged to weigh at or above the minimum weight. For judging a player's weight, all weights shall be rounded to the nearest full pound-i.e., a player weighing less than 1/2 pound above a full pound will be rounded down, while a player at or above 1/2 pound will be rounded up.

- B. The following weight allowances for the wearing of equipment and uniform shall be used. All weights are without helmet. Cold climate areas: add 1 pound to all weights given when wearing full sleeve cotton jersey with undergarment.

Mitey-Mite.....	7 lbs.
Junior Peewee & Peewee.....	8 lbs.
Junior Midget & Midget	9 lbs.
Junior Bantam & Bantam.....	10 lbs.

S3-CHALLENGE METHOD:

Weight check by challenge or other than above prescribed methods is not acceptable.

S4-INTEGRITY OF WEIGH-IN:

Once a weigh-in has been conducted, no equipment shall be exchanged.

RULE 4: IN-SEASON WEIGHT INCREASE

The allowable increase in maximum weight for any division of play shall be calculated as follows, beginning with the first regular season game:

1st week	0 lbs.
2nd week	1
3rd week	2
4th week	3
5th week	4
6th week	5
7th week	6
8th week	7
9th week	8
10th week	9**

** No more than nine (9) pounds may be added to the maximum weight after the tenth week.

RULE 5: FAILURE TO PASS IN-SEASON WEIGH-IN

S1- WEIGH-IN BEFORE EACH GAME: A player failing a weigh-in will be disqualified from participation in that game only. He may sit with the team on the bench after he has removed his helmet and shoulder pads.

S2: Determination of Weigh Master as to the weight eligibility of a player is final.

RULE 6: CUTTING OF PLAYERS

In addition to those reasons listed in Articles 8 & 9, any player must be cut who:

- A. weighs 10 or more pounds above the maximum weight for the selected division of play, at the time of the initial practice session.
- B. weighs 3 or more pounds less than the minimum weight for the selected division of play, at the time of the initial practice session.

RULE 7: CERTIFICATION OF PLAYERS

In addition to the stipulations found in Articles 10-12, to be certified onto a team roster, a player shall qualify under the following:

- A. A player shall meet the age requirements as specified on the applicable age/weight schematic. (See Rule, 1 S6)
- B. At certification, a player who fails to make the weight for the team he has been practicing with, but falls into the weight bracket of another division, may be moved to the other division as part of certification.

- C. A League shall not add the “in-season” growth allowance to the certification weights as a means of upping the maximum weights.

RULE 8: ROSTER SIZE

S1-MAXIMUM ROSTER SIZE:

Not more than 35 players shall be certified onto a team roster. A team with less than 16 certifiable players will not be permitted to form and play.

S2-MINIMUM ROSTER SIZE:

A minimum of 16 players must be dressed and eligible to play at each game. Also, if you start a game with 16 players, you must maintain 16 eligible players during the game and finish the game with 16 players. Each League may establish a minimum number higher than 16, but once adopted, it must be kept for the entire season, including post-season bowl games. Each League shall have the option to determine whether or not a team which fails to dress the minimum number of players shall forfeit the game or whether the game shall be rescheduled. Any team which forfeits two successive games by reason of an insufficient number of players shall be investigated by the League for a determination as to whether to forfeit the balance of the season.

RULE 9: MANDATORY PLAY RULE

The following shall be the Minimum Mandatory Play Rule (MPR) for all Pop Warner teams. Each league may set a higher number of Mandatory Plays, but never less than the minimum set by PWLS. All MPRs should be based on eligible players at the time of the game.

16-25 players - 10 plays
26-30 players - 8 plays
31-35 players - 6 plays

- A. The plays must be from the line of scrimmage.
B. Kickoffs, extra points and free kicks shall not be used in fulfilling the MPR requirement.
C. A play shall not count toward fulfillment of the MPR if the play results in a penalty which causes the down to be replayed.
D. All players shall be provided their mandatory plays by participation in “active” plays, without the intent to minimize the action or integrity of the plays.

Plays such as, but not limited to, having the center snap the ball to the quarterback, and then the quarterback fall to the ground, while substitutes are playing the other positions, shall NOT be considered as active plays.

- E. All players shall receive their mandatory plays by the end of the third quarter, or they shall enter the game at the start of the fourth quarter, and remain

in the game until they have received their required number of plays.

Each League shall establish its own system for enforcing the MPR, and must print a simple handout describing its MPR in sufficient quantity so that a copy is made available to each coach throughout the entire League, before the beginning of the season. The Nationally preferred system is that used in the National games.

RULE 10: THE FIELD AND MARKINGS

- S1:** The home team is responsible for the preparation of the playing field and all required accessories for a game. All fields will be equipped and marked in accordance with high school standards. Lime and other caustics shall not be used.
- S2:** The bench area is reserved for players, coaches, and authorized team personnel only. The sidelines areas are reserved for the game physician and chain crew, with the balance of the sidelines kept clear except for the presence of medical and law enforcement personnel, and authorized members of the press. Each League shall be permitted to determine on which side of the field the chain crew shall operate. In the absence of a League stated position, the local high school rules shall apply.
- S3:** The 80-yard field is permissible for Mitey-Mites, Junior Peewees, and Peewees.

RULE 11: GAME BALL

- S1:** The ball shall be of a good grade of leather, rubber or composite material with specifications in the area of:

	Junior Ball	Intermediate Ball	High School Ball
Manufacturer	Jr. Peewee Peewee	Jr. Midget Midget Jr. Bantam	Bantam
Baden Leather (Rubber)	BF100L BF100-03	BF200L F200-03	FX500 or FX550 FX400
Rawlings	RF5J	RF5Y	ST5PRO
Spalding	Top-Flite J5J	Top-Flite J5Y	Top-Flite J5
Wilson	TDJ	TDY	TDP

Equivalent footballs may be used, but the specifications must fall within the range of those specified above for each division of play.

- S2:** The use of stick-um on the football or the application and use of such on any player's hands is not allowed.
- S3:** In the Mitey-Mite Division of Play ONLY, it shall be left to the determination of each league which ball shall be used during their games.

RULE 12: PLAYER DESIGNATIONS

- S1:** Each player shall wear a number between 1 and 99 inclusive. Numbers “0” and “00” are illegal and shall not be worn.
- S2:** During a game in which a PA system is used, the number of any player committing a foul shall not be publicly announced.

RULE 13: REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

The following items shall be worn by players in all divisions beginning with physical contact in practice sessions:

- A. Helmet: Only helmets bearing the NOCSAE Seal of Certification may be worn. All helmets must bear the current NOCSAE approved “Warning Label” in a visible position on the outside of the helmet. This “Warning Label” is the same label that is furnished by all helmet manufacturers and quality reconditioners. (Note: Regulations regarding chin straps and face guards are to be followed per the National Federation or NCAA regulations, whichever is applicable.)
- B. Shoulder Pads
- C. Pants: One Piece or Shell
- D. Hip Pads
- E. Tail Pads
- F. Thigh Guards
- G. Knee Pads
- H. Jerseys
- I. Mouthguard (Keeper Strap required)
- J. Athletic Supporter (male players only)
- K. Shoes: In all divisions of play: sneakers, molded rubber cleats (soccer style), or detachable rubber (football style) cleats are permitted. No metal cleats are permitted. Cleats may not exceed a 1/2” in length.
- L. Eyeglasses: When worn, shall be of athletically-approved construction with non-shattering glass (safety glass) or contact lenses.
- M. Any additional equipment worn by players shall be approved by the League.
- N. Jewelry of any type shall be prohibited, except religious or medical medallions, which must be covered by the player’s uniform.
- O. **The wearing of headgear containing knots, including beads and/or decorative hair ornaments is prohibited.**
- P. The Official Authorized Pop Warner Patch must be displayed on every uniform for games and competitions. Patches may only be placed on designated areas on the uniforms as determined by National.

RULE 14: BLOCKING AND TACKLING RESTRICTIONS

Both the National Federation and NCAA rulebooks contain extremely strong language on blocking and tackling. It is the responsibility of every Pop Warner coach to be fully informed of,

and abide by, all such rules of the governing body (National Federation or NCAA) under whose jurisdiction his state falls, and to review same every year. In addition to other specific prohibitions in the National Federation and NCAA rulebooks, no butt blocking, chop blocking, face tackling or spearing techniques shall be permitted. If such techniques or any others forbidden by the National Federation or NCAA rulebooks are taught by Pop Warner coaches, said coaches shall be dismissed from the program, upon being found guilty following a hearing.

RULE 15: LENGTH OF PERIODS

Maximum length of periods by division of play are:

Mitey-Mite, Jr. Peewee,	
Peewee, Jr. Midget & Midget.....	10 minutes
Jr. Bantam & Bantam.....	12 minutes

RULE 16: INTERMISSION LENGTH

Between 1st & 2nd; 3rd & 4th quarters.....	2 minutes
Between 2nd & third quarters.....	15 minutes

RULE 17: TIME CLOCK

The referee shall decide where the clock will be kept if the field is not equipped with a scoreboard timing device. In any event, the referee has final authority to have the clock kept on the field if, in his judgment, the home management's clock operator is not qualified.

RULE 18: TIME-OUTS

A team shall be permitted no more time-outs than are permitted by the rules of the current National Federation of State High School Associations or the current NCAA rule book, depending on which body governs a state or section thereof.

RULE 19: PLAYERS

- S1:** A free substitution rule is always in effect.
- S2:** It is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED** for a player or group of players to participate in any practice session or game with players from another division of play (i.e., Junior Midget vs. Midget).
- S3:** Injured player: Once removed by reason of injury, a player shall not re-enter the game without the approval of a currently certified EMT, paramedic, a person certified in First Aid and Safety, or available licensed physician.

RULE 20: REGARDING INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

Forfeiture of all games in which the ineligible player was a member of the team shall be the penalty applied to the team involved. There shall be no exceptions.

- S1:** There are six (6) unequivocal definitions of an ineligible player, from which there are no appeals:
 - A. Overweight or underweight.

- B. Overage or underage.
- C. Residing outside of legal boundaries without mutual agreement of appropriate Leagues and/or associations.
- D. Falsification of data concerning any of the above.
- E. Participation in school tackle football or any other non-affiliated football program and Pop Warner Football in the same season. **A participant may practice with a school team up until the first game, but not participate and/or be rostered with that school team once the first regular season game begins.**
- F. Failure to prove scholastic eligibility

S2: Participation in Regional/National bowl games may also be prohibited upon recommendation of the League and approval of the Regional Director.

RULE 21: SCORING VALUES

Touchdown	6 points
Point after TD by run or pass	1 point
Point after TD by kick	2 points
Safety (awarded to opponent)	2 points
Field goal	3 points
Forfeit (offended team wins by)	1-0

RULE 22: SCORES

S1-LOPSIDED/INTENTIONALLY RUN UP SCORES:

Any time a team goes up by 28 points or more, the following will occur:

- A. The official clock will become a running clock and once started can only be stopped for injury of a player or at the discretion of a referee. It cannot revert to a game clock operation for the remainder of the game.
- B. Once 28-point difference is obtained between the two opponents, the winning team cannot pass the ball or run sweeps outside the tackle. If the winning team fails to abide by this rule, each violation will be a loss of down and a 5- yard penalty. This is at the discretion of the game referee.
- C. There will be no Blitzing once the clock becomes a running clock and the lopsided rule is in effect.
- D. There will be no on sidekicks at kickoff.
- E. The winning defense team cannot advance a fumble or pass interception. The ball is blown dead immediately. The winning offense may start play action from this point.
- F. The winning team shall make every effort to replace starting players with reserves. Failure to do so will call for an immediate investigation and possible one game suspension if found guilty.
- G. Any coach who employs types of plays without the intent to maximize the action of play shall be in violation of this rule.

- H. The teams are still required to complete the mandatory play rule.
- I. An investigation will be conducted if a game ends with a score differential of 28 points or more.

S2-FULL INVESTIGATION:

When the statements of the coaches are in disagreement, the League shall require the Head Coach and all Assistant Coaches of each team to submit written answers to the following questions:

- A. What in your opinion caused the lopsided score?
- B. Is there any ill will or animosity among the coaching staff of Team A toward the coaching staff of Team B?
- C. To your knowledge, have there been any threats between and among the children prior to the game?
- D. Has your team ever been involved in a lopsided score before?
- E. What actions were taken by the coaching staff of Team A to prevent the score differential from reaching 28 points after it reached 18 points?
- F. In retrospect, is there anything you feel could have been done to prevent the score differential from reaching 28 points? If so, what?

Based upon the answers to the foregoing questions, the League shall determine whether or not to conduct a Hearing. The answers to these questions may not be used in any way at the hearing, unless presented at the hearing by one of the witnesses.

RULE 23: SIDELINE PERSONNEL

In addition to the coaching staff, a team may have additional support personnel positioned within a team box during the game. The total number of team support personnel, including coaches, in a team box shall not exceed 10.

RULE 24: RADIOS AND COMMUNICATION DEVICES

No radios or other communicative devices shall be allowed during game situations to relay information to the coaching staff on the sidelines.

RULE 25: SCOUTING

Scouting football teams is permitted in the form of video tape, film and written reports. Scouting is only permitted during a game situation. Scouting any type of practice is strictly prohibited.

RULE 26: NO TAXI SQUADS

No team is permitted to run a “taxi” or “reserve” squad.

RULE 27: PRACTICE

In addition to the requirements for practice in Article 15, the following also apply:

S1-PRE-SEASON:

In all Leagues, the first week of practice shall be devoted entirely and exclusively to conditioning, not wearing pads; however, helmets shall be permitted. Leagues may add more time beyond this required first week for the conditioning period.

S2-WARM WEATHER PRECAUTIONS:

Teams must guard against serious heat problems, which in extreme high school and college cases have occasionally resulted in death. The training regimen of any team practicing under high heat and/or humidity conditions must:

- A. Limit or eliminate laps entirely. Do not assign laps for disciplinary reasons.
- B. Schedule practices for early evening, after sun is low in sky.
- C. Give players all the water they want to drink, when they want it. Do not substitute soft drinks for water.
- D. Each coach must keep an eye on all players and his fellow coaches for the slightest sign of heat exhaustion or fatigue.
- E. A fifteen minute break is mandatory in the middle of each practice, not to be counted against practice time.

S3-MANDATORY BREAKS:

A mandatory 10 minute break after each hour of practice shall be required. Break time is not counted against the hours per week or per day allowed practice time.

S4-FULL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT REQUIRED:

At all practices, pre-season or in-season, where person-to-person or person-to-dummy contact takes place, each player must be dressed in the full complement of protective equipment described in Rule 13, "Required Equipment."

S5-CONTROLLED INTER-SQUAD SCRIMMAGE:

After the first week of practice in pads (contact) has occurred (which cannot be any earlier than the second full week of practice-the first week being conditioning), teams are permitted to engage in joint practice sessions with other teams in what are called controlled inter-squad scrimmages.

In a controlled inter-squad scrimmage, there is prior agreement between coaching staffs that:

- A. Coaches will be permitted on the field.
- B. Long time-outs are taken between plays so that coaching staffs can instruct and critique their players.

- C. Coaching staffs may inform each other of the plays they are going to run so one team can concentrate on its offensive sets while the other improves its defense and vice-versa.
- D. Officials can be present during scrimmages.
- E. Game score is not kept; scoring is not the primary goal.
- F. No official time is kept other than to assure the practice maximum is not violated. A mandatory ten minute break is taken at the end of one hour, said break not to be counted against the allowed practice time.
- G. No player or team is permitted at any time to engage in a controlled scrimmage or any form of contactdrills involving a player, players, or team from a different Age/Weight division of play.

RULE 28: SCHEDULES

S1-SCHEDULED GAMES

- A. The chart in sub-section B summarizes the number and types of games teams may play during a season by each Age/Weight division.
- B. A League may schedule a maximum number of total season games as shown in Column D. The maximum number of each type of game permitted by division of play is shown in columns A, B, and C. A League may schedule fewer regular season games than the maximums shown in column B, but not less than six (6).

	Regular Pre-Season Exhibition (Max.) (A)	Total Season Schedule (Max.)* (B)	Post Season Bowl Games (Max.) (C)	Num. of Games (Max.) (D)
Division:				
MM**	1	10	0	11
JP	1	11	2	12
P	1	11	2	13
JM	1	11	2	13
M	1	11	2	13
JB	1	11	2	13
B	1	11	2	13

* Regular Season Schedule includes any League playoffs.

In any division, a team may play any combination of games in columns A, B, and C (up to the maximum in each column), but shall not exceed the total number of games in Column D. Pre-season exhibitions (Column A), league playoff games (part of Column B), and post-season bowl games (Column C) are not

required to be played. Regional/National playoffs and championships are not included in any of the above.

Bowl Games are defined as post season games between teams of different leagues. Teams may play post season games within their league as long as the maximum number of games is not exceeded.

** Mitey-Mites are not permitted post-season play.

S2-SCHEDULING PROHIBITIONS:

- A. Under no circumstances will a team be allowed to play a game, scrimmage, or practice against a team of another division (i.e., Junior Midget vs. Peewee, Midget vs. Jr. Bantam, etc.).
- B. No team may schedule a game against a team whose ages and weights are not FULLY in compliance with those printed in this rulebook, unless both teams have identical approved Variances.

S3-COMMON REQUIREMENTS - ALL SCHEDULING:

The following requirements apply to all scheduling beginning with practice and ending with post-season bowl games:

- D. All rosters from its League must be on file with National Headquarters and Region Headquarters by the first Monday in October.
 - E. Requests to participate must be made by the designated League official only.
 - F. All bowl game contracts shall require the written approval of the Leagues involved.
- S3:** Strip weights are not required, but there shall always be official weigh-ins in accordance with Pop Warner's standard weigh-in procedures as outlined in Part V, Rule 3.
- S4:** All special criteria such as fees, etc., shall be immediately sent to a team expressing interest in playing the game.
- S5:** The applicable state standard (NCAA or National Federation) and the Pop Warner National Rulebook will be the only rules in effect at all bowl games, and Regional or National Championships.
- S6:** Any League or team that arranges a bowl game(s) without approval from the Region Director or his designee, will be subject to disciplinary action, which could include a fine not to exceed \$500.00, as decided by the Region Director.

RULE 30: TIE BALL GAMES

- S1:** In the Mitey-Mite division, all tie games shall stand as ties. In the other divisions, the League shall have the option of breaking ties in all regular season and post season games.
- S2:** Ties shall be broken in League playoff/championship games using the established high school tie-breaker for the state in question, or a special League plan in case the high school tie-breaker is of a type that does not quickly resolve the tie, and games are scheduled back-to-back on the same facility. Leagues and states shall determine if ties in championship games will be broken in accordance with the playoff game tie-breaker above, or if such ties will result in co-champions.
- S3:** Ties during regular season games are allowed to stand as ties. However, if as the result of any regular season tie, a situation develops whereby two teams are tied for first place and one team has to be selected to represent its league in the League playoff series, a special tie-breaking game (1 extra game) will be played during mid-week, between the last regularly scheduled game and the first playoff round. The provisions of Rule 27, S3: "Common Requirements to All Scheduling," will apply.
- S4:** In all Regional/National Championship Games, the "ten yard overtime procedure" tie-breaker as outlined in local National Federation High School Rules will be used without exception.
- S5: Sudden Death tie-breakers are prohibited.**

RULE 31: CONTACT WITH OFFICIALS

If a player or adult should strike (hit) a game official, the offender shall be subject to suspension or to being banned from Pop Warner activities.

RULE 32: REGIONAL/NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ELIGIBILITY

- S1:** Must be declared League/Conference Champions.
- S2:** Must have filed a certified roster with the Region and National by the specified cut-off date.
- S3:** It is highly recommended that football teams competing be accompanied by the corresponding spirit squads at all games, except when the region cheer championships are being held at the same time.
- S4:** All teams must be accompanied with a copy of the certified roster, league registration forms with photo identification, birth certificates, medical release forms, and scholastic eligibility forms.
- S5:** An absentee sheet for any participant absent from a certified roster must accompany said team.

PART VI-6, 8, AND 9-MAN TACKLE PLAYING RULES

All Pop Warner Rules and Regulations apply to 6, 8, and 9-man football except for those differences outlined in the National Federation Rules. Certain modifications to the Federation Rules will be used to suit the philosophies of Pop Warner Football.

These options are available for those areas which are sparsely populated and whose high school football programs are involved with 6,8, and 9-man football. Others wishing to implement 6, 8, and 9-man football, which are not in the areas mentioned above, must give reasons for the request and have written permission from the National Football Commissioner.

ARTICLE 1: AGES & WEIGHTS

Without exception, the same ages and weights apply to 6, 8, and 9-man football as are used in all Pop Warner 11-man tackle programs. (See Rule 1, S6)

ARTICLE 2: ROSTER SIZE

	<u>minimum</u>	<u>maximum</u>
6-Man Football	10	15
8-Man Football	12	18
9-Man Football	14	20

ARTICLE 3: POST-SEASON PLAY

Post-season play is allowed in 6, 8, 9-man Pop Warner Football. Post-season play must be against chartered Pop Warner League 6, 8, 9-man football teams of similar ages and weights.

Under no circumstances may 6, 8, 9-man Pop Warner teams be merged to play against 11-man teams at any time. Further, 11-man teams may not drop players to permit playing a game with 6, 8, 9-man Pop Warner teams.

ARTICLE 4: "SLAUGHTER" RULE

When one team is 36 or more points ahead at the end of the first half or it takes this lead during the second half, the game is ended at that point.

ARTICLE 5: 6-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES

6-man tackle football can be played on a 100-yard field. However, if available, the 80-yard field should be used. If necessary, a 100-yard field can be converted to 80-yards with special markings, such as pylons. The smaller field is 80 yards between goal lines and 40 yards wide with 15-yard side zones. The location of the goal posts will remain the same.

11-man rules are used for 6-man football with these modifications:

Rule 1: The offense must advance the ball 15 yards instead of

10 in four downs.

- Rule 2:** At least 3 offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage.
- Rule 3:** There will be no direct running of the ball across the line of scrimmage.
- Rule 4:** The ball may be advanced across the line of scrimmage in the following ways:
- A. Kick
 - B. Forward pass
 - C. Clear pass (lateral) behind the line of scrimmage, e.g., the receiver of the snap (quarterback, tailback, etc.) must execute the clear pass (lateral) to another player before the ball can be advanced beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Rule 5:** If a fumble occurs before a clear pass (lateral) and if an offensive player recovers it, he may not carry it beyond the scrimmage line.
- Rule 6:** If a passer catches his own forward pass, it is incomplete.
- Rule 7:** All players are eligible to catch a forward pass except the passer.
- Rule 8:** Kickoffs are made from kicker's 30-yard line.
- Rule 9:** On an 80-yard field, the ball is snapped after a touchback and is free kicked after a safety from the 15-yard line.

ARTICLE 6: 8-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES

If available, the 80-yard field should be used for 8-man football. If so, the same field restrictions apply to the 8-man field as for 6-man football.

11-man rules are used for 8-man football with these modifications:

- Rule 1:** At least 5 offensive players will be on the line at the snap.
- Rule 2:** Only players at the right and left ends of the line are eligible pass receivers.
- Rule 3:** All backs are eligible pass receivers if they are legally behind the line of scrimmage at the snap. The passer cannot catch his own pass.
- Rule 4:** Direct running is allowed in 8-man football.
- Rule 5:** On the 80-yard field, the ball is snapped after a touchback and is free kicked after a safety from the 15-yard line.

ARTICLE 7: 9-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES

The 100-yard field will be used for 9-man football.

11-man rules will apply to 9-man football with these modifications:

- Rule 1:** At least three receiving team players will be within five-yards of their free kick line.
- Rule 2:** At least five offensive team members will be on the scrimmage line at the snap of the ball.



**POP WARNER
FLAG FOOTBALL
RULES AND REGULATIONS
(PAGES 45 - 46)**



PART VII-POP WARNER FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

INTRODUCTION

In addition to the general regulations found in Parts I-III, the following Pop Warner Flag rules govern all participants playing Pop Warner Flag Football (PWFF).

Membership is open to any legitimate sponsor, such as recreation departments, YMCAs, Boys Clubs, PAL, and so forth. Requests for flag leagues to operate in chartered Pop Warner tackle league territories will be considered by the National Football Commissioner.

Flag leagues become members of Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. If sponsoring PWFF, tackle leagues (already members) do not gain a second membership. Separate registration fees are charged for flag membership.

ARTICLE 1: ORGANIZATION

The LEAGUE is the basic unit of organization which consists of a minimum of four (4) teams in the same age division.

ARTICLE 2: REGISTRATION

Each league must conform to the insurance provisions found in Part 1 National Remarks.

ARTICLE 3: DIVISIONS OF PLAY

S1: League age cut-off date is July 31st of the current year and shall be the participants league age for the coming season.

S2: There are no height or weight restrictions on players.

<u>Division Name:</u>	<u>Ages:</u>
Cub	5 - 6 - 7
Bobcat	8 - 9 - 10
Wildcat	11 - 12 - 13
Panther	14 - 15 - 16

S3: Cheerleaders shall follow the overall age and division of play referenced in S2 above. In addition, all flag spirit squads must follow Pop Warner Spirit Guidelines as outlined in the spirit section of this rulebook.

S4: Ages shall be verified by methods outlined in Part III, Article 6, S-3.

S5: If a player starts a season in one division, he must finish in that division.

S6: A player is ineligible if he is a member of a school tackle program or if he is playing Pop Warner tackle football. He is also ineligible if he is competing in another flag football program (unless as part of school curriculum).

S7: A player shall furnish a written consent to play from either parent or legal guardian.

S8: A signed statement from an examining physician that the candidate is physically fit and there are no observable conditions which would contra-indicate him playing football or her cheering. Note: If regular school medical examination results are releasable to parents, a copy of such report, if not older than January 1st of the current year, may be used in lieu of a new examination.

ARTICLE 4: FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

RULE 1: PLAYERS

- S1:** A game is played between two teams consisting of eight (8) players each.
- S2:** Each team roster shall have a maximum of 24 players, and a minimum of 10 players. A forfeit will result when the minimum is not met.
- S3:** Only players appearing on the official team roster form (supplied by HQ) are to be counted as players. The Roster is completed before the first game of the season and verified by the league in a process called "certification."
- S4:** The offensive team must have five (5) players on the line and three (3) in the backfield. The defensive team may choose any formation except in kicking situations.
- S5:** Mandatory Play Rule: All players will play a minimum of 10 plays. Failure to abide by this rule will result in forfeiture of that game.
- S6:** A team will have 30 seconds to put the ball in play after the ready signal.

RULE 2: PLAYING FIELDS

- S1:** The field shall be rectangular with lines and zones and shall conform to either of the two designs mentioned below.
- A. 100-yard field: This field measures one hundred and twenty yards in length, divided into 5 zones of twenty yards each between two end zones of ten yards each. It is 53 1/3 yards wide.
- B. 80-yard field: This field measures one hundred yards in length, divided into 4 zones of twenty yards each between two end zones of ten yards each. It is 40 yards wide.
- C. Goal Posts are unnecessary as points after TD (conversion) are made only by passing or running and there are no field goals kicked.
- D. A conversion line will be marked 3 yards from the goal line and at an equal distance from each sideline.
- E. a kickoff area will be marked (usually by an "X") as follows:
1. 100-yard field: from the 40 yard line.
 2. 80-yard field: from the 30 yard line (middle of second zone and equal distance from the sidelines).
- S2:** The following field equipment will be used:

- A. A Down Marker will be used to indicate the number of the down.
- B. A Zone Marker will be used to indicate the distance to go for a first down (placed at the forward zone line).
- C. Corner Flags with flexible staffs will be placed at the four sections of the end zones and the sidelines. Soft pylons may be used if flags are unavailable.

RULE 3: EQUIPMENT

S1-GAME BALL

Each PWFF league will determine which ball will be used during its games.

S2-FLAGS

- A. Each player must wear a belt with the number of flags designated as “standard” by the league, which will be either 2 or 3 flags.
- B. The flags will be attached to a belt and extend orhang from each side of the player’s body. When using three flags, the third will hang from the rear of the player’s body.
- C. Flags will be 14-20 inches long and a minimum of 2 inches wide.
- D. The belt must be tight to prevent being turned around during a de-flagging.
- E. The home team will wear light flags and the visitors will wear dark flags.
- F. The securing of flags to the body, waist or belt, other than provided by S-2-B, is illegal.
- G. Jerseys cannot be worn over flags.
- H. If a player’s flag is inadvertently lost, he is ineligible to handle the ball.
- I. Flags are to be of contrasting colors, different from game uniform. Definitions of uniform shall be game pants and/or jersey.

NOTE: The flags will be attached to a belt made for that purpose. Such a belt has equal resistance at the point of attachment of flags, thereby ensuring an equal effort necessary to de-flag a player.

S3-GAME UNIFORMS

- A. All team members must wear the same color jersey.
- B. All uniforms must have the Official Authorized Pop Warner Patch displayed in the designated areas as determined by National.
- C. All jerseys will be numbered, front and back.
- D. **Any type of pants may be worn provided said pants have no front or side pockets.**
- E. Jerseys will be tucked in at all times.
- F. Sneakers are the preferred shoe; however, non-detachable, rubber-cleated shoes are allowed. No other footwear is acceptable.

S4-EYE GLASSES

Eye glasses, when worn, shall be of athletically-approved construction with non-shattering glass (safety glass).

S5-MOUTHGUARDS

Mouthguards are required, no keeper strap is necessary.

RULE 4: PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT

S1: Spiked or street shoes.

S2: Padding of any kind, including hard surface padding such as shoulder pads, hip pads, and helmets.

S3: Hard metal or any other hard substance on a player's clothing or person.

S4: Anything that conceals the flags.

S5: Slick or sticky substances such as grease or glue.

S6: Any equipment, in the opinion of the referee, that will endanger or confuse players.

RULE 5: REFEREES

S1: There will be at least two (2) referees.

S2: The league may assign more than two referees for a game.

S3: There shall be at least three (3) referees for a sanctioned PWWF playoff or championship game.

S4: Each game official will carry a handkerchief and drop it whenever an infraction occurs.

RULE 6: THE RULES OF THE GAME

S1-PLAYERS

The free substitution rule is always in effect and a player may enter the game any time the ball is dead.

S2-TEAM CAPTAINS

A. Each team will have at least one captain on the field at all times during the game.

B. The captain will address the referees only on matters of interpretation and to obtain information.

S3-TEAM COACHES:

One coach for each team will be permitted on the field in the Cub and Bobcat Divisions only.

S4-TIME

There will be:

A. Two 15-minute halves for the Cub, Bobcat and Wildcat divisions.

B. Two 20-minute halves for the Panther division.

C. Three (3) time-outs per half.

D. Ten (10) minutes between halves.

S5-KICKOFFS

Each half will start with a kickoff.

- A. The 100-yard field kickoff will be from the 40-yard line.
- B. The 80-yard field kickoff will be from the 30-yard line. (Although this yard line is not diagrammed, the kickoff line will be marked with an appropriate symbol, usually an "X".)
- C. There shall be no on-side kickoffs permitted, and the kicking team shall not be permitted to recover the kickoff under any condition.
- D. When a kickoff goes out of bounds the receiving team shall have the option of:
 - 1. Taking the ball at the point where it went out of bounds
 - OR
 - 2. Accept a five (5) yard penalty and re-kick the ball.

S6-PUNTING

- A. The offensive team may punt at any time.
- B. A punt is always a free kick.
- C. Punting intentions are announced to the referee by the captain, or acting captain.
- D. Rushing the punter is prohibited. No offensive or defensive player may move across the line of scrimmage until the kick has been made.
- E. Free Catch-There shall be a free catch of a punt. The receiver shall signify his intentions for a free catch by waving his hand clearly over his head.

S7-DOWNS (First down and zone to go)

- A. Each team will have four consecutive downs to advance the ball into the next zone or to score a touchdown.
- B. Once a team enters into the next zone, it is a first down and a new series of downs begins.
- C. A team failing to move the ball into the next zone will lose possession. The opposing team takes over at the point where the ball is declared dead and begins its series of first down and zone to go.
- D. The forward part of the ball touching any line will be the determining factor in measuring for a first down.
- E. A down will be repeated if provided for by the rules (See Rule 13.)
- F. When the offensive team is within the last zone and has a first down, it will be first down and goal to go.
- G. At the conclusion of each down, the referee will place the ball in the center of the field (equal distance from sidelines-not on a hash mark).

S8-DE-FLAGGING

- A. There shall be no tackling of the ball carrier, passer, or kicker.

- B. The player carrying or having possession of the ball is down when the flag is removed from his waist (deflagging). The defensive player shall hold the flag above his head and stand still.
- C. The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier to remove his flag. An accidental touch of the body or shoulder while reaching for the flag shall not be considered a violation; however, touching of the head or face shall be considered a violation.
- D. A defensive player may not run over, push, or pull a blocker away from him. He may push him sideways if he gets past him, but he cannot push the blocker down.
- E. A defensive player must go for the passer's flag. He cannot touch the passer's arm.

S9-BLOCKING

- A. A blocker must be on his feet at all times while blocking. All linemen, except the center, must not assume the three point stance or otherwise spring from a coiled or crouching start. Instead, they must simply stand at the line of scrimmage and await the snap. The center, though crouching, if he is to block, must first stand straight up.
- B. Cross body and roll blocking are not permitted.
- C. A blocker cannot use his hands.
- D. Blocking shall be done with the arms and body in the form of shoulder and brush blocking only.
- E. A defensive player cannot block or push a ball carrier out-of-bounds.
- F. Butting, elbowing or knee blocking is not permitted.
- G. There will be no two-on-one blocking for the ball carrier beyond the line of scrimmage.
- H. Blocking a player from behind is not permitted (clipping).
- I. There will be no interlocking blocking.
- J. A defensive player will be restricted in the use of his hands to the blocker's body and shoulders.

S10-BALL CARRIER

- A. The ball carrier cannot use his hands or arms to protect his flags. The defensive player must have the opportunity to remove the ball carrier's flags.
- B. The ball carrier cannot lower his head to drive or run into a defensive player.
- C. Stiff-arming by the ball carrier is illegal.
- D. The ball carrier cannot spin or hurdle to prevent a defensive player from removing his flags.
- E. He may run in any direction until the ball is declared dead.

S11-CENTER (also see S9:A)

- A. The center must snap the ball between his legs.
- B. He must have both feet on the scrimmage line with no part of his body beyond the forward point of the ball.
- C. He may adjust the long part of the ball at right angles to the scrimmage line for one time only.

S12-PASSING

- A. All backfield men are eligible passers.
- B. Passing will be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage only.
- C. A lateral pass is a pass thrown parallel to the line of scrimmage or back toward the passer's own goal line. A lateral pass is not considered a forward pass.
- D. A forward pass is a pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage toward the defensive team's goal line.

S13-RECEIVING

- A. All players are eligible to receive forward passes.
- B. A receiver may catch a ball even if he steps out-of-bounds or out of the end zone as long as he comes down with one foot in bounds.
- C. Two or more receivers may touch a ball in succession resulting in a completed pass.
- D. If an offensive and defensive player catch a pass simultaneously, the ball is declared dead at the spot of the catch and the passing team is awarded possession.
- E. An offensive player cannot be out-of-bounds and return in-bounds to catch a pass. This will be ruled an incomplete pass.

S14-DEAD BALL

All balls touching the ground are immediately dead (except kickoffs and punts). For example, the ball is declared dead at the following times:

- A. When the ball carrier touches the ground with his body, other than hands or feet.
- B. When the ball carrier's flag has been pulled.
- C. If a pass receiver or ball carrier has a missing flag (ball is dead at that spot).
- D. Following a touchdown, safety or touchback.
- E. When the ball goes out-of-bounds for any reason.
- F. If the center snap hits the ground before reaching a backfield man.
- G. When the ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble or muffed ball. **THERE ARE NO FUMBLE RECOVERIES IN PWFF!**
- H. If a lateral pass touches the ground (ball is declared dead at that point). If a lateral pass goes out-of-bounds, the ball is ruled dead at the point it crosses the boundary line.
- I. If a forward pass strikes the ground or is caught at the same time by an opposing player(s).

- J. When a player on the kicking team touches a punt before a player on the receiving team.
- K. A free catch (cannot be advanced).

S15-GAME TERMINATION

When one team is 30 or more points ahead at the end of the first half or it takes this lead during the second half, the game is ended at that point. **THIS RULE ALSO APPLIES TO TOURNAMENT PLAY.**

RULE 7: SCORING VALUES

Touchdown	6 points
Safety	2 points
Points after touchdown:	
Passing	2 points
Running	1 point
Forfeit (offended team wins by)	1-0

RULE 8: TIE GAME

S1: Tie games will go into the record as such and will not be played off in regular season play.

S2: All Tournament Games:

- A. Ball will be placed in the center of the field. The referee will toss a coin in the presence of the two team captains. The winning captain will have the option of putting the ball in play at mid-field.
- B. Each team will have four (4) consecutive downs and the winner will be the team gaining the most yardage in its series of downs (penetration).
- C. Penalties will count as plus or minus yardage.
- D. Intercepted passes will count as incomplete passes.
- E. If the yardage is still the same at the end of each team's four down series, the series will be repeated.

RULE 9: INJURED PLAYERS

Once removed from a game because of injury, a player must sit out at least one down, and may not re-enter the game without the approval of attending medical personnel.

RULE 10: PRACTICES

S1: In the USA, practice cannot begin until August 1.

S2: Practices are limited to three days per week, not to exceed 1-1/2 hours each practice, while school is in session, and when school is not in session, practices are limited to four days per week, not to exceed 2 hours duration.

RULE 11: SCHEDULES

S1: Maximum number of games per season shall be as follows for each division of play:

	Pre-Season	Regular Season	Tournament
Division			
Cub	0	8	Yes*
Bobcat	1	8	Yes*
Wildcat	1	10	Yes*
Panther	1	10	Yes*

* Whatever number needed in the tournament program is allowed.

RULE 12: TOURNAMENT PLAY

- S1:** If a league decides to enter tournament play, it must have all its rosters on file with PWFF Headquarters.
- S2:** The league must have two tournament team rosters. One is retained by the tournament team and the other is sent to National Headquarters.
- S3:** Teams for which a tournament team roster copy has not been filed as directed above will be declared ineligible by the Tournament Director.
- A. Each team arriving at the tournament site brings its tournament roster.
- B. This roster will be matched against the PWFF HQ copy, which is sent directly to the Tournament Director.
- S4:** All divisions are allowed to enter Pop Warner Flag Tournaments upon approval of their leagues.
- S5:** Tournament teams will be allowed to play as many games as it takes to win at a tournament level, but may not play more than two (2) games in one day.
- S6:** PWFF Tournaments will consist of not less than two (2) nor more than four (4) teams per division of play in either a single or double elimination tournament. NOTE: Tournament Director must notify all participants of type of tournament at least one week in advance.
- S7:** PWFF Playoffs or Invitational Tournaments are played only as post-season games.
- S8:** Tournament teams will be selected by any method the league chooses.
- S9:** Players competing in tournament play must be listed on league and tournament rosters and must have played in at least one-half (1/2) of the team's regularly scheduled games prior to the start of tournament play.
- S10:** Particulars regarding Playoff and Invitational Tournaments will be available each year from the National Football Commissioner.
- S11-Awards for PWFF Tournaments**
- A. Each participating team shall receive a trophy for its place of finish in the tournament. Awards will be furnished by the host site.
- B. Participant awards for individual players will be left to the discretion of the host league.
- S12:** The host league shall determine which of the two standard PWFF playing fields will be used. The Tournament Director will inform all participants of same at least one week in advance.

RULE 13: PENALTIES

Since two football field sizes can be used, penalties are adjusted accordingly. The 100-yard field will be assessed the standard fifteen (15) and five (5) yard penalties. The 80-yard field will be assessed ten (10) and five (5) yard penalties. With this in mind, references to penalties will be given as (15-10) and (5-5) in the following listings.

S1-KICKOFFS:

If either team is offside on the kickoff, the penalty will be (5-5) and the ball will be kicked over again.

S2-LINE OF SCRIMMAGE-Centering

- A. Offside, defensive or offensive (5-5)
- B. Illegal snap (5-5)
- C. Failure to observe 30 second rule (5-5)
- D. Illegal motion-more than one backfield man in motion (5-5)
- E. Illegal formation, offense (5-5)

S3-PUNTING

- A. Failure to announce to the referee-(5-5) and punt is repeated, or the receiving team may take the ball at the spot where the ball is declared dead.
- B. If the kicking or receiving team enters the neutral zone before the punt-(5-5) from the spot where the ball is declared dead after the kick.
- C. Less than five players on the line of scrimmage for the offensive or defensive team-(5-5) from where the ball is declared dead after the kick.
- D. De-flagging a receiver after a fair catch signal-(15-10) from the spot of the foul.

S4-PASSING

- A. If an illegal forward pass is thrown and intercepted, the play will continue until the ball is declared dead. The intercepting team has the option of possession from that spot or accepting the penalty (5-5).
- B. Passer crosses the line of scrimmage-(5-5) and loss of down.
- C. Intentional grounding-(5-5) and loss of down.
- D. Offensive pass interference-(15-10) from line of scrimmage and loss of down.
- E. Defensive pass interference-first down from spot of infraction for the offensive team.

S5-DELAY OF GAME

- A. Continuing to play after the ball is dead-(5-5) from spot where the ball is dead.
- B. Recovering a fumble or falling on the ball (5-5).
- C. Advancing a fair catch (5-5).
- D. Unnecessary delay of game for any reason (5-5).

S6-FLAG WEARING AND DE-FLAGGING

- A. Tackling (15-10).
- B. Wearing the flags illegally (5-5).
- C. Ball carrier using his hands to prevent a defensive player from de-flagging (15-10).
- D. Holding, pushing, or hitting the ball carrier while de-flagging - (15-10).
- E. Leaving one's feet while de-flagging-(15-10) from spot of foul.
- F. Wearing one flag (5-5).

S7-ILLEGAL HAND-OFF

- A. If the ball is handed forward beyond the scrimmage line-(5-5) and loss of down.
- B. Handing or snapping a ball to a lineman (5-5).

S8-ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTIONS

- A. More than eight (8) men of the field (5-5).
- B. Substitution(s) while the ball is in play or before it is declared dead (5-5).
- C. Disqualified player entering game (15-10).

S9-BLOCKING

- A. Leaving feet to block (15-10).
- B. Cross body blocking or roll blocking (15-10).
- C. Illegal use of hands by blocker (15-10).
- D. Holding a defensive player (15-10).
- E. Defensive player blocking or pushing the ball carrier out of bounds (15-10).
- F. Butting, elbowing or knee blocking (15-10).
- G. Defensive player using hands illegally (5-5).
- H. More than two blockers for the ball carrier (on one defensive player) beyond the line of scrimmage (5-5).
- I. Clipping (15-10).
- J. Interlock Blocking-(15-10) from spot of foul.

S10-BALL CARRIER

- A. Stiff arming-(15-10) from spot of foul.
- B. Lowering head to drive or run into defensive player (15-10).
- C. Use of head (15-10).
- D. Use of hands or arms to protect flags (15-10).
- E. Spinning or hurdling (5-5).

S11-UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS

- A. Offensive and Defensive (15-10).
- B. Disqualification of guilty player or players if repeated.

S12-UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- A. Fighting (15-10)-offenders ejected from game.

- B. Defensive player pulling offensive player's flag to make him ineligible for play (15-10).
- C. Insulting and abusive language (15-10).
- D. Interference with progress of the game by coaches or any other team personnel (15-10).
- E. Illegal play (15-10).
- F. Team leaving field before game is completed (15-10).
Failure to return-Forfeit. Win for team remaining on the field.
- G. Failure of home team to control players or fans (15-10).
- H. Forfeit if not controlled.

RULE 14: PROTESTS

- S1:** Only protests involving rules' interpretations or the eligibility of a player shall be considered-never the judgment of an official in calling a play.
- S2:** Protests are decided at the local level in accordance with the administrative procedures of the league.

2003 OFFICIAL RULES



Endorsed By
National Football League Players

