

Nittany

Youth

Tackle Football

Rulebook

Adult Code of Conduct

ADULT CODE OF CONDUCT

- F1:** In order to uphold the goals of Nittany Youth and ensure that all participants have the benefit of a safe and fun learning environment, all parents, guardians and other adult attendees of Nittany Youth events, including but not limited to practices, competitions, and banquets, must behave in a respectful, courteous and sportsmanlike manner at all times.
- F2:** Any adult found using alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs, appears impaired, who is flagrantly rude, attempts to intimidate, verbally abuse, heckles, taunts, ridicules, boos, throws objects and/or uses vulgarity or profane language/gestures with an official, coach, volunteer, staff member, participant or other event attendee, will receive a verbal warning and/or be asked to leave a Nittany Youth event. The requesting Association may also provide a written warning to the individual regarding the misbehavior. In addition, the adult's children may also be removed from the event at the discretion of said Association. Any adult who commits one of the above stated offenses a second time, shall be banned at the discretion of the NYFCL Board from any and all Nittany Youth events for a period of one year from the date of the second offense. At the discretion of the NYFCL Board, their children may also be removed from the program(s) for that time period.
- F3:** Any adult who physically assaults an official, coach, volunteer, staff member or participant or threatens grave bodily harm shall be banned from any and all Nittany Youth events for one year from the date of the offense. At the discretion of the NYFCL Board their children may also be removed from any and all Nittany Youth programs for that same period of time. After the ban has expired, if the individual commits another offense of the adult code of conduct, the individual will be permanently banned from any and all Nittany Youth events and the individual's children may also be permanently removed from any and all Nittany Youth programs.

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

All coaches 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 as in the enforcement section contained herein. Coaches shall:

- F1:** Not smoke and/or use smokeless tobacco on the field.
- F2:** Not criticize players/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.
- F3:** Accept decisions of the game officials and judges on the field as being fair and called to the best ability of said officials.
- F4:** Not criticize an opposing team, its players, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or by gesture.
- F5:** Emphasize that good athletes strive to be good students and that both are physically and mentally alert.
- F6:** Strive to make every football activity serve as a training ground for life, and a basis for good mental and physical health.
- F7:** Emphasize that winning is the result of good "teamwork."
- F8:** Not engage in excessive sideline coaching and shall not leave the bench area to shout instructions from the sidelines.
- F9:** 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.
- F10:** Not use abusive or profane language at any time.

- F11:** Not "pile it on" or 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.
- F12:** Not receive any payment, in cash or kind, for services as a coach in Nittany Youth Football/Spirit. This includes any coach, expert, consultant or choreographer, regardless of his/her roster status.
- F13:** Not permit or encourage "sweating down" tactics in order for a player to make the team weight.
- F14:** Not recommend or distribute any medication, controlled or over the counter, except as specifically prescribed by participant's physician.
- F15:** Not permit an ineligible player to participate in a game.
- F16:** Not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
- F17:** 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.
- F18:** 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.
- F19:** 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.
- F20:** Uphold all rules and regulations of Nittany Youth Football and Cheer League.

PART I - THE NITTANY YOUTH STRUCTURE

DEFINITIONS

F1-LEAGUE:
The term "League" shall mean Nittany Youth Football & Cheer.

A League consists of a minimum number of teams as decided by the League, playing in the same Age/Weight division.

F2-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.

F3-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.

F4-DIVISION:
Division has several meanings, the most common of which refers to one of the two (3) Age/Weight classifications: **Bantam (B), Junior (JR), Senior (S)** The basic ages and weights for each division of play are listed in Rule 1 F:3.

F5-ELIGIBILITY:

A player is eligible if they meet the criteria under the Age/Weight Divisions, has been physically cleared to play and has parental/guardian permission to play.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RULES

- F1:** The rules contained herein ARE REQUIRED to be enforced by each Association participating in Nittany Youth Football and Cheer League.
- F2:** FOR ALL PURPOSES, THE NITTANY YOUTH PLAYING SEASON SHALL BE DEFINED AS AUGUST 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, OR THE LAST GAME/COMPETITION, WHICH EVER COMES FIRST. All Associations, administrative personnel, coaches, players and spirit participants are subject to disciplinary action for violations of Nittany Youth rules and regulations at any time during a stated playing season.
- F3:** NO RULES WILL BE ADDED AFTER MAY 1st OF EACH YEAR UNLESS IT IS A SAFETY ISSUE.

PART II - NITTANY YOUTH REGULATIONS

ARTICLE 1: POWERS/AUTHORITY OF THE ASSOCIATIONS

- F1:** Each Associations has, among its powers, the obligation and authority to enforce these rules. In addition, it has the right to make its rules more stringent than those appearing in this book. Examples would be: increasing Mandatory Play, from the minimum of 10 or 12 plays (depending on division) to any higher number.
- F2:** An Association may not make rules less strict - that is, it cannot increase maximum weight, abolish Mandatory Play, etc.
- F3:** Associations participating in play-offs will follow all NYFCL Rules as printed in this book.

ARTICLE 2: BOUNDARIES

- F1:** An Association is responsible for the establishment of its own boundaries, with agreement of said boundaries by the NYFCL. However, it shall not infringe upon the territorial rights or boundaries of another chartered Association.
- F2:** Associations must establish boundaries. Boundaries will be set by a defined, readily recognizable format, i.e. town limits, school districts, streets, etc.

ARTICLE 3: DUAL MEMBERSHIP

An Association holding a Nittany Youth charter may enter any one of its teams into membership in any other youth football program (i.e. American Youth Football).

ARTICLE 4: WAIVERS OF RULES/CHARTER COMMITTEE

Nittany Youth & Cheer shall have a Board consisting of two voting members from each Association. The Board shall be responsible for reviewing, granting, suspending or revoking the privileges of any association's charter in addition to implementing acceptance conditions of new associations.

- F1:** Waivers regarding players wishing to play outside their Association's boundaries, shall only be granted upon a written application executed and verified by the President of the Association, attesting that the waiver sought is based upon good cause and can be shown to be in the best interest of Nittany Youth players.
- F2:** All waivers expire annually on December 31st.
- F3:** Only waivers which, serve in the best interest of Nittany Youth Football will be given consideration.

ARTICLE 5: COACHES REQUIREMENTS

The coaching staff of each team is to be in complete charge of the team whenever it is together whether on the practice or playing field, traveling as a group to or 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 all other coaches shall be known as Assistant Coaches. The following applies to all coaches:

- F1:** A Head Coach must be at least 21 years of age. An adult representative (21 years or older) must be present for practices, games and other team functions.
- F2:** Every Assistant Coach must be at least 18 years of age or older.. A football team may have a maximum of six (6) assistant coaches, (1) Team Parent and (1) Administrator.
- F3:** Teams are permitted to carry a Coach-Trainee as an assistant, who must be a minimum of 16 years of age.
- F4:** The Head Coach will determine the assignments of the Assistant Coaches.
- F5:** In the absence of a specialized, trained person affiliated with the team 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 the P.R.E.P.A.R.E. Course by the National Center for Sport Safety (www.sportssafety.org) or their equivalent.
- F6:** Coaches are to be selected by methods approved by each respective Association.
- F7:** Once approved for coaching, a coach is automatically terminated at the close of each season. To coach the following year, the same Association approval is required. Any violation of the rules committed by a coach during the season, even if a hearing is not held until after the close of the season, is still under the jurisdiction of the sponsoring association.
- F8:** Coaches do not make team or Association 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/or any other conduct deemed by higher authority to be contrary to the welfare of youth.
- F9:** The Head Football Coach has final responsibility for his or her actions, those of his or her assistant coaches, players, staff and parents.
- F10:** Each Association shall establish its own rules regarding the placing of coaches with sons, daughters or siblings within its own boundaries.

ARTICLE 6: REGISTRATION

A participant cannot begin practice with a team until he/she has "signed up." To register, the candidate must sign a standard 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 Nittany Youth Football and Cheer League. All candidates must furnish the following:

F1-PARENTAL CONSENT:

A written statement from either a parent or legal guardian, stating that the child has their permission to participate. The Association may supply a standard form for this.

F2-MEDICAL EXAMINATION:

Each Association is responsible for ensuring that every participant has evidence of a current physical examination from any Licensed State Examiner; (i.e. Medical Doctor, Registered Physician Assistant, Registered Nurse Practitioner, etc.) who has determined the participant is physically fit and without any observable conditions, which would contra-indicate their participation in football. Note: If a regular school medical examination was performed and the results of which are releasable to parents, a copy of such a report may be used in lieu of a new examination. It shall be at the discretion of each Association to determine what constitutes "current".

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.

F3-PROOF OF AGE:

A copy of the participants birth certificate on file with the state of birth shall be the most recommended form of proof of age. Any other alleged "proof of birth date are to be accepted only upon the willingness of the team administration to have its schedule forfeited should fraudulent application later be determined.

ARTICLE 7: FORMATION OF TEAMS AND SQUADS

Tryouts of any kind within Nittany Youth are prohibited. Tryouts are defined as any means used to ascertain the ability of a participant where this information is used to place a participant on a team, including assessments, evaluations, or any other method used whereas at the end of such evaluation a child would be excluded from participation. Participants may participate in the above scenario at the discretion of each Association provided every child is placed on a team and no one is excluded. Placement of players shall be at the discretion of each Association, in accordance with their policies, provided those policies are not in conflict with the Nittany Youth policies.

Not more than 30 players shall be assigned to a football team at the start of pre-conditioning on August 1 or the later starting date of the association, whichever comes first.

ARTICLE 8: MANDATORY CUTS

Any participant must be cut who:

- F1:** Is found to have signed up as a result of parental pressure or tells team management he/she does not really want to participate.
- F2:** Refuses or cannot furnish the 3 required items-Parental Consent, Medical Examination, and Proof of Age.
- F3:** Attempts to intimidate fellow participants in practice by word and/or physical deed. No refunding of fees shall be required.
- F4:** Is an extreme discipline problem (and then, only with the concurrence of the Association).

ARTICLE 9: VOLUNTARY CUTS

A participant shall be considered to have voluntary or "self-cut" when he/she simply no longer shows up at practices or games of his/ her own free will despite repeated attempts to contact them.

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.

Any team loses 20% or more of its assigned participants prior to certification, shall be subject to a mandatory investigation by the teams respective Association to ascertain the cause for the participants voluntarily leaving the team, and take whatever appropriate action may be warranted. 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

- F1:** 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 for the regular season schedule.
- F2:** A certified copy of each roster will be placed in the front of each team book and remain there throughout the season. Team books must be at every practice and game. This is a certified roster in that the Association has accepted the information at a pre-season session with its teams based upon information submitted, and the teams are restricted to these participants for the balance of the season.
- F3:** 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 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 area authorized for the Association by the League.
 - 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 without the written approval of the NYFCL Board.
 - D. Ages shall be verified by birth certificate as specified in Article 6, F3.
 - E. Associations shall require a new picture of a football player at least every two (2) years.

ARTICLE 11: RETENTION OF ELIGIBILITY

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

- F1:** Transfer policy in case of change of residence will be decided by the League.
- F2:** Retain parental consent.
- F3:** Maintain sound physical condition. At the start of the season, any player having been declared unfit for play by a physician, or deemed to be of questionable condition for play by their Association, shall be required to provide to their respective association a statement, signed by a physician, clearing them to play. This rule shall exclude a minor game injury that is treated on the field (i.e. non-medical emergencies).

ARTICLE 12: DROPS AND ADDS

F1: A team 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.

ARTICLE 13: NO ALL-STARS

All Star teams or squads are prohibited in Nittany Youth inter-league play. Nittany Youth rosters are valid from August 1 to December 31 of the current year. Any coach or participant found to have competed in any NYFCL inter-league game(s) with All Star participants from different rosters of regular season teams will forfeit future eligibility for all Nittany Youth programs. Participation in events outside of Nittany Youth Football inter-league play shall be exempt from this rule.

ARTICLE 14: AWARDS

F1: In compliance with the "team" concept and in view of the ages of Nittany Youth 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 Nittany Youth 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.

F2-SPECIAL NOTE FOR PLAYERS: Awards for individual performances displayed on the helmets (i.e. stars, hatchets, footballs, ect.) shall be at the discretion of each Association.

ARTICLE 15: PRACTICE

F1-DEFINITION: After August 1st of each year and as a protection for the participants and to prevent possible bending of the rules, practices are defined as a gathering of players, 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 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 Association is directed to establish a policy with respect to home videos and/or films of games and the viewing thereof. Nittany Youth strongly recommends Associations discourage "parties/practice sessions" at coaches homes. All practice sessions must include a minimum of 2 coaches in attendance during the entire session.

F2: All practice sessions must include a minimum of 2 coaches in attendance during the entire session.

- F3:** Pre-season practice shall not begin until August 1 (or later). The actual date will be determined in accordance with climate and other factors determined by the Association in establishing a common starting date for all teams within its jurisdiction.
- F4:** 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).
- F5-BEFORE LABOR DAY:** No team 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.
- F6-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.
- F7-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.
- F8-CONTROLLED INTER-SQUAD SCRIMMAGE:** After the first 10 hours of practice for conditioning, and after the second 10 hours of practice 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.
- F9:** Any player added after a team has formed and/or after the season has started, is required to complete the same 20 hours of conditioning as mentioned in F8 of this article.
- F9:** The following exercises and drills are banned from all practices and pre-game warm-ups; leg lifts and bull in the ring. Leg lifts with knees bent are acceptable.

ARTICLE 16: CAMPS

- F1:** No Nittany Youth organization or personnel associated within, shall require or mandate that a Nittany Youth football team, in whole or in part, with or without coach(s) attend a football camp. There shall be no exceptions. However, a Nittany Youth affiliated football team, in whole or in part MAY attend a camp if they so choose, provided the following conditions are met:
- A. A Coach or other team affiliated personnel does not make it MANDATORY.
 - B. The must require adequate accident insurance for camp participants.

ARTICLE 17: IMPORTANT POINT-MEDICAL

The home team or hosting organization is responsible for providing medical coverage at each game. 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, the P.R. E. P.A.R.E. Course by the National Center for Sport Safety (www.sportssafety.org), or their 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 required to have a staff member carry the entire team's medical release forms and emergency numbers for all players so in the event of 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

Admission may not be charged to participating players, spirit squads, or coaching staff members of a team playing in any Nittany Youth game, whether it be a regular season game, post-season game, post-season bowl game, League playoff game. Donations may be solicited at the gate.

ARTICLE 19: PROTESTS

- F1:** Only protests involving the eligibility of a player shall be considered.
- F2:** Protests are decided in accordance with the administrative procedures of the League.
- F3:** Teams and Associations 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: MANDATORY BACKGROUND CHECKS

- F1:** Each Association is responsible for obtaining Act 151 clearances for each prospective coach and any individual who will have contact with participants, i.e. Team Parent, etc. After initial submission to the Association by a prospective coach or affiliated adult records will be kept and updated at the discretion of each Association.

Due to the fact that Nittany Youth has no direct operational control over the selection of volunteers, each Association shall be required to indemnify and hold harmless Nittany Youth against all legal actions based upon allegations arising from a failure to enforce all or part of this regulation. Failure to comply with all or part of this regulation may result in the suspension or revocation of the association charter, the removal of the association and/or its volunteers, ineligibility for participation in play, and as well as significant legal liability.

PART III-ENFORCEMENT POLICY

POLICE POWERS/HEARINGS & APPEALS

All Associations chartered under Nittany Youth may be called upon from time to time to do the following:

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

INVESTIGATION OF OFFENSES

Upon notification to any Association of an alleged rules violation involving any of the listed offenses, the Association must investigate the alleged violation and take action when warranted in accordance with the "Minimum Mandated Penalties" section. The investigation may include but is not limited to, requiring a written statement describing the incident, reviewing video footage of the alleged incident, speaking to witnesses, etc.

Upon conclusion of the investigation, should the Association deem there to be just cause to warrant the issuance of a penalty as listed in the "Minimum Mandated Penalties" section, said penalty must be issued in writing detailing the alleged violation, and include statement verifying the Association has investigated the incident and deems it to be a violation of a specific offense, and the penalty to be imposed in accordance with the minimum mandated penalties.

Upon receipt of a notification of rules violation, should the alleged offender wish to appeal the decision of the Association, they must notify their respective Association President in writing of their wish to appeal and present, in person, their case for appeal at the next available NYFCL Board meeting. Presentation should include any item deemed by the alleged offender to be valuable in their defense of the violation (i. e. video footage, presentation of witnesses, etc.). However, presentment of an appeal or obtainment of reversal of the Association decision shall not negate the enforcement of the penalty imposed, it shall serve only to "reset" the penalty of any future violation (i.e. the next violation would only be a first violation, etc.)

At the conclusion of the presentation of the appeal, the NYFCL Board shall discuss, if needed, the alleged violation and determine if the subject Association acted in accordance with the rules as listed herein. Ruling of the NYFCL Board shall be final.

MINIMUM MANDATED PENALTIES

Minimum mandated penalties for specific offenses are required to assure that punishment for the most serious infractions will occur on a uniform basis. Offenses shall be divided into two categories, Major Offenses and Minor Offenses as defined below:

F1-MAJOR OFFENSES:

- B. **ENDANGERMENT OF JUVENILES:** Endangerment of juveniles shall be defined as any reckless act which would endanger a child physically or emotionally. Suspension for one (1) year, to permanent suspension upon repeated offense.
- D. **FIGHTING:** Fighting shall be defined as any violent, tumultuous behavior. Suspension for one (1) year, to permanent suspension upon repeated offense.
- E. **CHEATING:** Cheating shall be defined as any deliberate, intentional infraction of any rule or directive for the specific purpose of a gain. Suspension for one (1) year; permanent suspension upon second offense.
- F. **THREATS:** Threats shall be defined as anything communicated directly or indirectly, whether written or verbal, to a person with intent to cause them fear, harm, terror or inconvenience. Suspension for one (1) year; permanent suspension upon second offense.
- H. **LACK OF COOPERATION/ OBSTRUCTION:** Lack of cooperation shall be defined as any failure to abide by the general rules, regulations, policies or directives of the NYFCL or any game official. Suspension until compliance is achieved.

F2 MINOR OFFENSES:

- A. **RUN-UP SCORE** (as defined in Rule 21 F1 & F2): 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. **TEACHING PROHIBITED OFFENSIVE & DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES:** Suspension for one (1) game for the first offense, to permanent suspension upon repeated offense.
- C. **GAMBLING ON GAME OUTCOME:** Suspension for one (1) year.
- D. **VIOLATION OF MANDATORY PLAY RULE:** First violation: Suspension for one game (may be reduced to probation); Second violation: Dismissal if original suspension still in effect, probation revoked and original suspension reinstated.

- E. **FALSIFICATION OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION:** Suspension for one year, to permanent suspension for repeat offense. This would include, but not be limited to, parental consent, medical examination and proof of age.

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 Nittany Youth; and (2) if in violation of the Mandatory Play Rule, that the accused prepare and submit to his Association his written plan to supervise implementation of the Mandatory Play Rule (MPR), until such time as an investigation by the Association has been completed and a decision rendered.

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.

F2-JUVENILE OFFENSES:

Fighting, intimidation, or disrespect for authority shall be cause for ejection from a game/competition. Any player or 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.

F3-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 Association coupled with permanent suspension of its president and all others who participated in the practice. Upon a second offense, suspension of the Association 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 the Association.

PART IV - 11 -MAN TACKLE PLAYING RULES

Except as specifically modified for Nittany Youth 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 have their own 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

F1-JULY31 CUTOFF-LEAGUE AGE:

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

F2-SPECIAL NOTE FOR BANTAMS:

Although the game is serious to the kids, from the adult viewpoint, Bantam 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, but post-season play is permitted. **One (1) coach is permitted on the field except during kick-offs and punts (Bantam and Junior)**

There shall be no rushing of punts, field goals or point after touchdown (while attempting a kick) in **Bantam & Junior** play.

F3-TACKLE AGE/WEIGHT SCHEMATIC

Division Name	Ages	Certification Weight Maximum (lbs)	End of Season Max Maximum (lbs)
BANTAM	8 and under	Unlimited (75lbs. To carry the ball)	75lbs
JUNIOR	10 and under	Unlimited (100 lbs. To carry the ball)	100lbs
SENIOR (older/lighter)	12 and under 13*	Unlimited (132 lbs to carry the ball). 125 lbs.	132 lbs. 132 lbs.

The asterisk () provision allows a so-called "older but lighter", player to also qualify. The last year of eligibility falls under more stringent weight restrictions, per above. Older/Lighters shall be limited in the Senior Division shall be distributed evenly amongst the teams.

All players in the Bantam, Junior and Senior divisions exceeding the ball carry weight must have a stripe placed on the helmet, said stripe must be in a contrasting color to the helmet. All players will be weighed weekly. Any player having been designated as over the ball carry weight, via the placement of a stripe on their helmet, shall be required to play in any of the following positions: any position on the offensive line, tackle to tackle, any defense position and any special team position.

RULE 2: INITIAL WEIGH-IN; FIRST PRACTICE

Until the first practice session, no convenient means will exist for the team to conduct a 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 above the maximum weight for that particular division. Those failing the initial weigh-in will continue as eligible candidates for the team. 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

At such time as mutually agreed upon by the Head Coaches, each team will have its players weighed PRIOR TO EACH GAME during the season to assure that the weight standards are being maintained.

F1-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 an Association-assigned Weigh Master.

F2-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 the team shall be entitled to one (1) 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 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. 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.

Bantam.....	6lbs
Junior	6 lbs.
Senior	7 lbs.

F3-CHALLENGE METHOD:

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

F4-INTEGRITY OF WEIGH-IN:

Once a weigh-in has been conducted, no equipment shall be exchanged unless the equipment is found to be unsafe or damaged.

RULE 4: IN-SEASONWEIGHT INCREASE

There are no allowable increase in maximum weight for any ball carrier or ball player in any division:

- Bantam ball carry weight 75lbs + equipment (81lbs)
- Junior ball carry weight 100lbs + equipment (106lbs)
- Senior ball carry weight 132lbs + equipment (139lbs)
- 13yr. olds 125lbs + equipment (132lbs)

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

F1-WEIGH-IN BEFORE EACH GAME: In the Bantam, Junior and Senior division, a player failing a weigh-in will have stripeput on his helmet, and may play only on the offensive(tackle to tackle) or anywhere on the defense.

F2: Determination of Weigh Master as to the weight eligibility of a player is final.

F3: Those players having exceeded the ball carrier weight requirement, in both the Junior and Senior divisions, must be designated with a stripe on their helmet and may not carry the ball during the week of play. Stripes must be a contrasting color to the helmet. Those players having been designated with the stripe shall be required to play in any of the following positions: any position on the offensive line, tackle to tackle, any defense position and any position on special teams. No player deemed over the ball carrying weight, by virtue of a stripe or similar marking on their helmet, shall be permitted to advance the ball on any play.

RULE 6: CERTIFICATION OF PLAYERS

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.
- 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.

RULE 7: ROSTER SIZE

F1-MAXIMUM ROSTER SIZE:

A maximum of 30 players shall be certified onto a team roster. You must maintain 13 eligible players during the game and finish the game with 13 eligible players.

F2-MINIMUM ROSTER SIZE:

A minimum of 13 players must be dressed and eligible to play at each game. Also, if you start a game with 13 players, you must maintain 13 eligible players during the game and finish the game with 13 players. A team with less than 13 certifiable players will forfeit the game, but the game may still be played.

RULE 8: MANDATORY PLAY RULE

The NYFCL mandates that every player rostered on a tackle team must play a minimum of 12 plays per game. Each association may set a higher number of Mandatory Plays, but never less than the minimum set by NYFCL. All MPRs should be based on eligible players at the time of the game.

- A. A play shall not count toward fulfillment of the MPR if the play results in a penalty, which causes the down to be replayed.
- B. 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.
- C. 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.

NYFCL shall establish the system for enforcing the MPR, and must provide a handout describing the MPR to each Association. Each Association must ensure that it is made available to each coach throughout their entire Association, before the beginning of the season.

**** Mandatory plays will be monitored by at least one coach from each team using the NYFCL MPR form. The coaches shall meet at half time to verify their MPR with the representative from the opposing team. Each coach will be notified at that time of those players still needing plays and the number of plays still needed. The monitors will meet again between the end of the 3rd quarter and the start of the 4th quarter to once again compare MPR forms. Coaches must be notified at that time of any participant who has not received their 12 plays. Those players must be played according to letter D above. MPR forms will be signed by each monitor at the conclusion of the game and returned to their respective Head Coach who will turn them in to their respective Association.**

RULE 9: THE FIELD AND MARKINGS

F1: 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.

F2: 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.

RULE 10: GAME BALL

F1: The ball shall be of a good grade of leather, rubber or composite material with specifications in the area of:

Divisions of Play:		
---------------------------	--	--

	Bantam & Junior	Senior
MANUFACTURER	(Ball Size / Model Number)	
NIKE:	2000K	1000J or 2000J
BADEN LEATHER:		BF100L
(RUBBER):		BF100-03
RAWLINGS:		RF5J
WILSON:	K-2	TDJ

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

F2: The use of stick-um on the football or the application and use of such on any player's hands is not allowed.

F3: In the Junior Division of play ONLY, it shall be left to the discretion of each Association which ball shall be used during their games. Balls may be switched at change of possession.

RULE 11: PLAYER DESIGNATIONS

F1: Each player shall wear a number between 1 and 99 inclusive.

F2: During a game in which a PA system is used, the number of any player committing a foul shall not be publicly announced.

RULE 12: 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 or Compression Shorts (male players only)
- K. Shoes: In all divisions of play: sneakers, molded rubber cleats (soccer style), or detachable rubber or plastic (football style) cleats are permitted. No metal cleats are permitted. Cleats may not exceed 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.

RULE 13: 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 Nittany Youth 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, spearing techniques or horse collar tackling shall be permitted. If such techniques or any others forbidden by the National Federation or NCAA rulebooks are taught by Nittany Youth coaches, said coaches shall be dismissed from the program, upon being found guilty following a hearing.

RULE 14: LENGTH OF PERIODS

Maximum length of periods by division of play are:

Bantam, Junior & Senior Four 10 minute Quarters

RULE 15: INTERMISSION LENGTH

Bantam, Junior & Senior

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

Between 2nd & 3rd quarters 15 minutes

RULE 16: 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 17: 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 18: PLAYERS

F1: A free substitution rule is always in effect.

F2: It is STRICTLY PROHIBITED for a player or group of players to participate in any full contact practice session or game with players from another division of play.

F3: 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 19: REGARDING INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

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

F1: There are four (4) unequivocal definitions of an ineligible player, from which there are no appeals:

A. Overweight. Except in the case of the Senior division.

B. Overage or underage.

C. Residing outside of legal boundaries without mutual agreement of the appropriate Associations and approval from the NYFCL Board.

D. Falsification of data concerning any of the above and/or registration as listed in Article 6 F1 through F3.

RULE 20: 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 21: SCORES

F1-LOPSIDED/INTENTIONALLY RUN UP SCORES:

Any time a team is leading by 30 points or more, the following will occur:

- A. If a team is leading by 30 points, impact players must be removed and seated on the sidelines with their helmets removed. However, should removal not be possible, those players shall be limited to playing on the offensive line only, tackle to tackle, until the point differential is less than 30 points.
- B. Once a 30 point differential is obtained the institution of a running clock must be in effect until such time as the point differential is below 30 points or the remainder of the game, whichever occurs first. Impact players are defined on offense as the backfield and on defense as the two inside linebackers and the two defensive ends. Every effort should be made to remove from the game those players defined as impact players provided they have achieved their mandatory plays.
- C. Once 30-point difference is obtained between the two opponents, the winning team cannot pass the ball. 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.
- D. There will be no Blitzing by either team once the clock becomes a running clock and the lopsided rule is in effect.
- E. There will be no on sidekicks at kickoff.
- F. 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.
- G. 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.
- H. Any coach who employs types of plays without the intent to maximize the action of play shall be in violation of this rule.
- I. The teams are still required to complete the mandatory play rule.
- J. An investigation will be conducted if a game ends with a score differential of 24 points or more and is requested by the losing team's head coach.

F2-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 30 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 30 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 22: 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 9.

RULE 23: 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 24: 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 25: NO TAXI SQUADS

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

RULE 26: PRACTICE

F1-PRE-SEASON:

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

F2-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 sufficient break is mandatory in the middle of each practice, not to be counted against practice time.

F3-MANDATORY BREAKS:

Sufficient mandatory breaks shall be required during the practice time to ensure the safety of the participants. At no time shall loss of breaks be permitted as a form of punishment. Break time is not counted against the hours per week or per day allowed practice time.

F4-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 12, "Required Equipment."

F5-CONTROLLED INTER-SQUAD SCRIMMAGE:

After the first 10 hours of practice for conditioning and the second 10 hours 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 10-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 contact drills involving a player, players, or team from a different Age/Weight division of play.

RULE 27: SCHEDULES

F1-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. An Association 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. An Association 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:				
Bantam	1	11	4	16
Junior	1	11	4	16
Senior	1	11	4	16

* 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.

Bowl games are defined as post-season games between different associations. Teams may play post-season games within their association as long as the maximum number of games is not exceeded.

F2-SCHEDULING PROHIBITIONS:

- A. Under no circumstances will a team be allowed to participate in any full contact playing of a game, scrimmage, or practice against a team of another division.
- B. No one 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.

F3-COMMON REQUIREMENTS - ALL SCHEDULING:

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

- A. Prior account will be taken of all local and state laws pertaining to the scheduling of athletic contests.
- B. A period of at least two (2) full days (48 consecutive hours) will elapse between the end of any game for a given team and the beginning of the next game for pre-season exhibitions, regularly scheduled league games, post-season and bowl games. The League shall be permitted to waive the two (2) full days (48 consecutive hours) to 1 day (24 consecutive hours) ONLY to permit the conclusion of the regularly scheduled season.

RULE 28: TIE BALL GAMES

- F1:** In the Junior 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.
- F2:** 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.

F3: 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, D3: "Common Requirements to All Scheduling," will apply.

F4: In all games, the "ten yard overtime procedure" tie-breaker as outlined in local National Federation High School Rules will be used without exception.

F5: Sudden Death tie-breakers are prohibited.

RULE 29: 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 Nittany Youth activities.

RULE 30: PROHIBITED TACKLES

Any type of tackle, which could be viewed as a "horse collar tackle" shall be banned. Failure to abide by this rule shall result in a 15 yard penalty further failure to abide will result in the player being benched for the remainder of the game and may result in permanent suspension of said player.

RULE 31: RULES MEETING

One coach from each team shall be required to attend a rules meeting where the interpretation of the rule book will be given. Failure to have a representative attend will result in disciplinary action.