

2017 UNIFIED FOOTBALL BY-LAWS FOR GAME OFFICIALS





ROME FLOYD UNIFIED FOOTBALL BYLAWS

Section D. Governing Rules

1. Governed by the current rules and regulations of the GHSA Constitution and By-Laws and by the National Federation Edition of Football rules for the current year, with exceptions as noted in the Rome-Floyd Unified Youth Football Program.
2. The UFC reserves the right to consider special and unusual cases that occur from time to time and rule in whatever manner is considered to be in the best interest of the overall program.

Section F. Sideline Decorum

1. Authorized sideline persons include head coach, four assistant coaches and the players.
2. All coaches must wear a UFC issued Coach's Pass to stand on the sidelines. Anyone without a Coach's Pass will not be allowed on the sidelines. Officials and/or program staff will be permitted to remove anyone without a Coach's Pass from the sidelines.
3. In an effort to promote a quality program, all coaches should adhere to the following dress code: shirt, shoes (no sandals or flip flops) and pants/shorts (no cutoffs). Additionally there should be no logos or images that promote alcohol, tobacco or vulgar statements.

Section C. Length of Games

1. A regulation game shall consist of four (4) eight minute quarters.
2. Clock Operation AFTER change of possession.
 - A. Kick-Offs
 - Any kick-off that is returned and the ball carrier is downed in the field of play, the clock will start with the Ready-For-Play signal.
 - Any kick-off that is returned and the returner runs out of bounds or the ball is fumbled out of bounds by the ball carrier; the clock will start with the ensuing snap.
 - Any kick-off that enters into the end zone and is a touchback, the clock will start with the ensuing snap. Remember a kick continues to be a kick until the ball is possessed by a player on the field of play. Mere touching is NOT possessing.
 - Any kick-off that travels out of bounds; the clock will start with the ensuing snap. Where the ball is spotted depends on the rule applicable to the cause of the ball going out of bounds.
 - If a kick-off is downed by the kicking team within the ten (10) yard zone between the two Free-Kick lines or is legally recovered after going 10 yards and having touched the ground before recovery; the clock will start with the Ready For Play signal. To emphasize for a kick-off to be legally recovered by the kicking team the ball must a) travel ten yards untouched by the kicking team and touch the ground order in which these two criteria occur does not matter or b) if kick-off is first touched by the receiving team within the ten yard zone it is a free ball, will belong to the recovering team and the clock will start on the Ready For Play signal.

- After any muff of a kick that is recovered in the field of play by either team, the clock will start with the Ready For Play signal.
- B. Punts and Field Goal Attempts
- Kick fielded by a receiver in the field of play and returned or a ball becomes dead in the field of play. Clock will start with the Ready For Play signal regardless of which team has possession.
 - Any kick that enters the end zone is a touchback. The ball will be placed on the 20 yard line and the clock starts on the ensuing snap.
 - Punt/Field goal attempt that goes out of bounds prior to the end zone; the ball will be brought in at the inbounds spot and the clock will start on the snap. Same is true if a kick was returned but then fumbled out of bounds.
 - After any muffed punt/field goal attempt and recovered in the field of play, the clock will start with the Ready For Play signal.
- C. Clock Status due to change of possession due to turnover (i.e., fumble, interception, etc.) or failure to convert a fourth down attempt into a first down:
- After a fumble recovered by the defense, the clock will start with the Ready For Play signal (any fumble that goes out of bounds is retained by the team last in possession and the clock starts on the ensuing snap).
 - After an interception, the clock will start with the Ready For Play signal.
 - After a failed attempt to make a first down on a fourth down play:
 - (a) Play ends in the field of play and short of the first down stake, possession goes over to the opponent and the clock will start with the Ready For Play signal.
 - (b) If the play ends with the runner going out of bounds or fumbling out of bounds short of the line to gain, the possession goes to the opponent and the clock starts on the ensuing snap.
 - (c) If the play ends with an incomplete pass, the possession goes to the opponent and the clock starts on the ensuing snap.
- D. Junior Pee Wee Division (**Automatic Punts**) *2017 New Rule* and Kick Offs
- Automatic Punts – The offensive team must verbally state their intentions of punting before leaving their huddle. After verbal declaration of punting, the clock will stop until the change of possession. There will be **no punts in the 8 & under division**, the ball will be marked 30 yards from the line of scrimmage or half the distance from from inside the 20-yard line by the referee. The ball cannot be spotted deeper than the 10-yard line.
- E. Kick Offs – After the ball is placed on the **20 yard line**, clock will start on the Ready For Play signal.
- F. Pee Wee Division (**Dead Ball Punts**) *2017 New Rule* and Kick Offs
- Punts will be a dead ball kick; all defensive players will take a knee during the kick except for one defensive punt receiver. The ball will be spotted where the receiver catches or controls the ball. All punts must be from long snapped formation. Delay of game can still be called even though punts are dead ball.
 - Kick Offs will be from the 40-yard line.
- G. Mite Division Punts (Live Ball Punts) *2017 New Rule* and Kick Offs
- Punts start out as a dead ball and once the punter is in control of the snapped football the official blows the whistle and the play becomes live, the defense must have seven (7) players on the line of scrimmage and two (2) players whom cannot be no more than 5 yards off the line of scrimmage, this allows for two (2) punt receivers for the punt return team. The intent of the rule is to keep teams from developing a wedge prior to the ball becoming live, and to help aid in the realism of the punt return portion of the game. By Rule, Mite Division Punts become live once the official whistles in that the punter has control of the snapped football which at that moment makes the punt returnable or gives the opportunity for a blocked punt. **No fake punts will be allowed.**

- Kick Offs will be from the 40 yard line.

3. In the event of game stoppage due to weather or time limitations, a game will be suspended and completed at the next available time.
4. Each team shall be allowed three (3) time-outs per half. Halftime shall be 10-12 minutes.
1. Interior linemen will not be allowed to advance the ball on any kick return, punt return, fumble or lateral defensive play. *Interior linemen may **NOT** advance an intercepted forward pass.
2. Players that are designated as backs or ends will be allowed to play as interior linemen.
3. Weight restricted interior linemen cannot be used as receivers or backs.
4. Only the back or receiver that fumbles the ball will be allowed to advance the ball. Should the defensive team recover the fumble the play is dead at the recovery spot and there is a change of possession.

5. ***2017 New Rule* Pee Wee and Mites Only**

Restricted interior linemen (dot players) **will** be allowed to punt and/or kick field goals/point after touchdowns. Fake punts, fake field goal attempts or fake point after touchdowns will not be allowed. Field Goal attempts have the same rule except team awarded 3-points. (Dead Ball with no rush, defense can raise hands and try to block only-no jumping. The ball must be snapped to holder whom places on standard orange kicking tee and holder does not have to hold ball while ball is being kicked; in fact, kicker can actually adjust ball after being placed on the kicking tee by holder) Ball would be placed on the regulation 3 yard line.

6. Restricted position players **may never advance the ball**. Anytime a restricted position player, identified by their jersey number and orange dot on helmet, comes into possession of the ball during live play, the ball will automatically be blown dead from that spot. Position restricted players should be instructed to go to the ground if they ever come into possession of the ball.
7. Restricted position players on defense cannot line up wider than the **outside shoulder of the offensive tackle**.
8. Restricted position players are **required** to wear a number from 50-79 and wear an orange dot on their helmets.
9. Restricted position players are required to line up as follows:
 - a. **Offensive Players on Scrimmage Plays and Scrimmage Kicks (PAT's, FG's and Punts)** are required to line up as a down (3 or 4 point stance) **ineligible** lineman from tackle to tackle on the line of scrimmage during all plays. Maximum of 5 restricted players in the game at one time.
 - b. **Defensive Players on Scrimmage Plays and Scrimmage Kicks (PAT's, FG's and Punts)** are required to line up as a down (3 or 4 point stance) lineman from tackle to tackle on the line of scrimmage during all plays. Maximum of 5 restricted players in the game at one time.

ARTICLE VI. SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Section A. Junior Pee Wee Division

1. There will be no noseguard over center. Quarterback sneaks will not be allowed. Defense will be allowed to blitz through the B and C gaps. No defensive linemen will be permitted to line up over the offensive center or in the gaps between the center and the guard on any play. Junior Pee Wee only engages guard on guard. All middle linebackers must be three (3) yards from the line of scrimmage prior to the snap of the ball.
2. No punts. If offensive team decides to turn over the ball, it will be placed 25 yards from the line of scrimmage. No change of possession will begin any closer than their opponent's 20 yard line.
3. No kick offs will be allowed.
4. One coach from each team will be allowed on the field to call offensive plays and set defensive plays. Coaches on the field are there to help call plays and line the defense up for the next play. At no time is it appropriate for these on-field coaches to question the judgment of the officials. On the field coaches will be removed during the playoffs.

5. Defensive coach will be allowed to communicate with his team until the offensive team comes out of their huddle. After the offensive team comes out of their huddle neither coach (offense or defense) on the field can talk to their players. Coaches on the field must be 25 yards from the line of scrimmage.
6. The officials can remove the "on the field coach" if the coach is in violation of any provisions. Officials will issue one warning before removing coach from the field. If a coach is removed from the field, no replacement may enter the field.
7. Offensive line formations must have an eligible receiver on each end of the line of scrimmage.

1. **Grace Period:** A ten minute grace period from the scheduled starting time for teams not having eleven (11) players will be granted for the first game each day.
2. **Running Clock:** Anytime a team is leading by 24 or more points, the clock will run continuously, stopping only for injuries, official time-outs, the time between the P.A.T. attempt and the kick off. If the point spread is reduced to less than 24 points, the clock will return to normal timing procedure. If the difference is 24 or more at the beginning of or anytime during the fourth quarter, the clock will run continuously except for injuries and time outs.
3. **Ejections:** All coaches and players are subject to being ejected from any game, if in the judgment of the officials their actions warrant such ejection.
 - a. Any coach, manager, team scorekeeper or assistant who is ejected for any reason must leave the sports complex immediately and may be subject to further discipline by the UFC. Failure to comply immediately may result in loss of coaching privileges.
 - 1) A person ejected from a game will also be suspended from coaching or attending the next game on the team's schedule.
 - 2) A person ejected from games twice in one season will be suspended for the remainder of the program.
 - b. Any player who is ejected for any reason must remove helmet and shoulder pads and remain on player bench for the remainder of the game in which the ejection occurred.
 - 1) Any player ejected from a game will also be suspended from the next scheduled game and may not be present on the team sideline or bench.
 - 2) Any player ejected from 2 games in one season will be suspended from the remainder of the program.
4. **Hard Casts:** Hard casts are prohibited. Players will not be allowed to play with any type of hard cast regardless of padding, parent release or doctor's release.
5. **Forfeits:** A team must have eleven (11) players to start a game. A team must have a minimum of eleven (11) players to finish a game. Any team unable to meet this requirement will forfeit the game in question.

6. ***2017 New Rule***

Point After Touchdown: After each touchdown, the offensive team will be allowed a P.A.T.

- a. A one (1) point attempt from the three (3) yard line for running or passing in each age division.
- b. A two (2) point attempt from the three (3) yard line for kicking thru the uprights. (Dead Ball with no rush, defense can raise hands and try to block only-no jumping. The ball must be snapped to holder whom places on standard orange kicking tee and holder does not have to hold ball while ball is being kicked; in Fct, kicker can actually adjust ball after being placed on the kicking tee by holder) Ball would be placed on the regulation 3 yard line.
- c. Any player is allowed to kick a P.A.T., restricted interior linemen will be allowed to kick a P.A.T., and restricted interior linemen cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
- d. When a team elects to kick a P.A.T., they must kick the ball. Anything else will be deemed a missed attempt. No running or passing will be allowed.

Section E: Overtime

1. An overtime period is untimed play after a regulation game has ended with the score tied. During an overtime period, each team has the opportunity for an offensive series of downs. However, an overtime period may include only one offensive series of downs if the defensive team scores a safety or touchdown.

2. **Instructions:** When the score is tied at the end of the fourth period, the referee will instruct both teams to return to their respective team boxes. There will be a 3 minute intermission during which both teams may confer with their coaches. All officials will assemble at the 50 yard line, review the overtime procedure and discuss how penalties (if any) will be assessed to start the overtime procedure. At the end of the intermission, the officials will inform the coaches on time outs and any specialty penalty enforcements that apply.
3. **Coin Toss:** At the coin toss in the center of the field, the visiting team captain shall be given the privilege of calling the coin while it is in the air. The winner of the toss shall be given his choice of defense or offense first, or of designating the end of the field at which the ball will be put into play for this possession. The loser will have his choice of the other options. The referee will indicate the winner of the toss by placing a hand on his shoulder. To indicate which team will go on offense, the referee will have the captain face the goal toward which his team will advance and indicate this with the 1st down signal. The other team captain will face the offensive captain with his back toward the goal he will defend.
4. **Time Outs:** Each team will be allowed one time out for each extra period. Time outs not used during the regulation periods may not be carried over to extra periods. Time outs between periods shall be charged to the succeeding period.
5. **Overtime Series and Scoring:** To start the overtime, the offensive team shall put the ball in play; first and ten on the defensive team's 15 yard line anywhere between the inbound lines. That series shall be terminated, by any score by the offensive team or as soon as the defensive team gains possession of the ball.
 - a. If the team on offense scores a touchdown, it is entitled to the opportunity for a try unless the points would not affect the outcome of the game.
 - b. A field goal attempt is permitted during any down.
6. If the defensive team gains possession, the ball becomes dead immediately and the offensive team's series of downs has ended.
7. After the first team on offense has completed its series of downs, the first team on defense will become the offensive team with the ball in its possession at the same 15 yard line, anywhere between the inbound lines. Both teams will use the same end of the field during each series of downs to ensure equal game conditions and consistent.
8. If the score remains tied after each team has given a possession in an overtime period, then the procedure shall be repeated with other overtime periods until a game winner is determined. In this case, there shall be an intermission of two minutes. At the subsequent meeting of team captains the loser of the overtime coin toss will be given first choice of the options. If additional overtime periods are required, then the first options will be alternated with no coin toss.
9. If the score remains tied after 2 overtime periods, any team which scores a touchdown MUST attempt a 2 point try. A KICK try is not allowed and will not be counted.
10. If the defensive team scores a safety or touchdown, the game is ended.
11. The team scoring the greatest number of points in the overtime shall be declared the winner. The final score shall be determined by totaling all points scored by each team during regulation time and overtime periods.
12. No try will be attempted if the winner of the game has been determined.
13. **Penalty Enforcement:** All fouls are enforced during each possession as they are during any normal game situations.

ARTICLE VII. EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM

Section A. Properly Equipped Player

1. Equipment: Tennis shoes or cleats are mandatory for play in all Unified Football League activities. Shoes with rubber molded cleats are the only permissible cleats.
2. A properly equipped player for youth football must wear at minimum, the following equipment:
 - a. A certified helmet with face guard, chinstrap and mouth guard attached to the face guard
 - b. Properly fitted shoulder pads
 - c. Properly fitted football pants with pads protecting hips, butt, thighs and knees
3. Approved footballs are as follows:

- a. Tiny Mites & Junior Pee Wee: Nike Spiral Tech 1000 Pee Wee Size 6
 - b. Pee Wee: Nike Spiral Tech 1000J Junior Size 7
 - c. Mite: Nike Spiral Tech 1000Y Youth Size 8
4. Each team will be responsible for providing an approved game ball.
 5. Uniforms: All jerseys must have at least 6" numerals on the front and 8" numerals on the back. Coaches are responsible for ordering uniforms.
 - a. All restricted players over the running backs/receiver weight limit **MUST** wear a uniform number between 50-79.
 - b. All non-restricted players under the running backs/receiver weight limit **MUST** wear a uniform number between 1-49 and 80-99.

ARTICLE IX TINY MITES DIVISION

Section A. Tiny Mites Division Rules

The following are rules specific to the Tiny Mites Division and must be adhered to.

1. Age and Weight Limits: All players must be 5 years old prior to September 1st of the current year. Weight restrictions for Running Backs and Receivers is 70 lbs. Any player over 70 lbs. will be designated as a lineman (restricted position player). There will be a minimum weight limit of 35 lbs. for all players.
2. All restricted position players must be on the line of scrimmage in a 3 or 4 point stance prior to the snap of the ball. Designated linemen may never advance the ball. Anytime a restricted position player, identified by their jersey number (50-79) comes into possession of the ball during live play, the ball will be automatically blown dead from that spot. Position restricted players should be instructed to go to the ground if they ever come in to possession of the ball.
3. Maximum number of restricted position players on the field at any one time is five. Defensive restricted players are required to line up within the inside shoulder of the tight end.
4. Any team, who is found to allow a position restricted player to intentionally play an illegal position may have their coaching status suspended or terminated, upon review of the Unified Football Committee.
5. Maximum number of players is 28 and minimum is 16. The team must use a 2 platoon system with players split evenly between offense and defense regardless of the total number of players on the team. Example: 19 players=10 players on offense and 9 on defense / 25 players=12 offense and 13 defensive players. Head coaches are strongly encouraged to play their players equal amounts of time.
6. Clarification of Swing Players: When the game begins, all eligible players must be designated as either offense or defense. If the team has fewer than 22 players at the start of or any time during a game, either the offense or the defense must have 11 players designated as such and this designation cannot change during any half. Example: If a team has 18 players eligible for a game, 11 of these must be designated as either offense or defense. Only these players are eligible to swing. The other 7 players must play as designated for an entire half.
7. Field length is 60 yards.
8. Coaching Staff: Two coaches are allowed on the field for the first half of the season's games and one coach thereafter. Only one coach may address the referees and the team in the huddle. The second coach may only assist with the position of players. Once set, both coaches must remain at least 15 yards back from the line of scrimmage.
9. Once the ball is set, the offensive team has 40 seconds to execute the next play.
10. No kickoffs are permitted. At the start of the game and when the offensive team crosses the goal line, the ball is set on the 30 yard line of the team in possession.
11. Punting is not permitted. On the 4th down, the offense has the option of a) running or passing the ball or b) turning the ball over to their opponent's 30 yard line.

12. Penalties: Major penalties = 10 yards / Minor penalties = 5 yards.
13. Game time and timeouts: Game will consist of two 22 minute halves with a 10 minute half time. The game clock is a running clock and is stopped for timeouts, change of possession (restart of the snap) and injury only. Each team may have two timeouts per half.
14. No score will be kept or posted on the scoreboard. There are no tiebreakers permitted.
15. No try for point after touchdown.
16. The play will be blown dead if the ball is fumbled behind the line of scrimmage. If fumbled beyond the line of scrimmage, the ball is live unless the fumble is caused by the deliberate action of the defensive player to strip the ball. CLARIFICATION OF STRIPPING THE BALL: Fumbles, which in the judgment of the Game Officials, are caused by the deliberate action of a defensive player to "strip" the ball from the ball carrier, shall be ruled a dead ball foul and a penalty of 5 yards shall be assessed against the defense from the spot of the foul. Coaches who are found to be teaching this technique shall be guilty of Teaching Prohibited Techniques and shall be subject to dismissal or suspension.
17. **Playing Time:** All players must play either offense or defense. This designation may not be changed during a half. Minimum plays for each player is 15. An official MPR (Mandatory Play Rule) sheet must be kept for each game and turned into the field supervisor after each game.
18. **Offense:** The offense must use a balanced, two tight end formation. Ends may not be split out. All offensive backs must line up between the tight ends except for one back, which may be split out no more than 5 yards outside the end. Shotgun formations are permitted, provided the ball is passed, pitched or handed off by the player initially receiving the snap from the center. Motion is not permitted.
19. ***2017 New Rule* Defense:** No player may line up over the center. Player must be at least 3 yards off the center. Defense must have no more than 6 and no less than 4 players on the line of scrimmage. Defensive linemen must line up head to head with an offensive lineman, except the center. Defensive line must be in a 3 or 4 point stance at the snap of the ball. Defensive line must be one yard off the line of scrimmage. Linebackers and defensive backs must be at least 3 yards off the line of scrimmage. Blitzing shall be defined as any linebacker or defensive back moving toward the line of scrimmage prior to the snap. No defensive back or linebacker may cross the line of scrimmage between offensive tackles.
20. The official game ball will be the Nike Spiral Tech 1000 Pee Wee Size 6. No other ball may be used.
21. Tiny Mites are permitted a maximum of two jamboree scrimmages and 8 regular season games. No post season playoffs will be permitted.
22. Practices: Pre-season practices are limited to a maximum of 3 times per week for no more than 90 minutes each. During game season practices are limited to a maximum of 2 times per week for no more than 90 minutes.

