

Southeast Idaho Youth Football League

2021 General Game Rules

Article I: PLAYING RULES

Section A: CURRENT NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (NFHS) RULES OF PLAY, WITH FREE SUBSTITUTION, WITH THE FOLLOWING MODIFICATIONS:

Note: Directors/Field Commissioners will not overrule the game official's game rulings except in the case to clarify League General Game Rules:

1. The playing field dimensions will be:

8th grade: NFHS regulation size

7th grade: NFHS regulation size

6th grade: 80 yard field

5th grade: 80 yard field

2. The size of the balls to be used in play:

8th grade: Youth leather composite ball.

7th grade: Youth leather composite ball.

6th grade: Youth leather composite ball.

5th grade: Youth leather composite ball.

3. Game time:

8th grade: 10 minutes per quarter stop-clock.

7th grade: 10 minutes per quarter stop-clock.

For all 7th and 8th grade games of A vs. B teams, the time will be adjusted to 8 minute quarters.

Note: B team head coaches can request 10 minute quarters, by notifying the head referee and clock operator before the game.

6th grade: 8 minutes per quarter stop-clock.

For 6th thru 8th during the regular season two overtimes will be played (1st and goal from the 10 yard line) and starting with the 3rd OT the ball will be placed on the 3-yard line. Teams can kick the XP for 2 points or run/pass for 1 point.

5th grade: 8 minutes per quarter stop-clock.

For 5th only, one (1) KC overtime will be played during the season. The game will end in a tie following the one overtime session.

4. ALL GRADES will start their offense on their own 30-yard line at the beginning of each half, after a successful field goal, or after any extra point(s) attempt (except for ONSIDE play).
5. The Designated Play Monitor and/or Director/Field Commissioner shall confer with the Head Coach as to all players' participation per SIYFL Operating By-Laws Article VII, Section B, #13 (Minimum Playing Time Rule) near the four-minute mark in the 2nd and 4th quarters. The Designated Play Monitor must determine if any player has not met the required playing time and if needed, request that those players not meeting the required playing time be inserted into the game as soon as possible. The Designated Play Monitor and/or League Director/Field Commissioner can have the game stopped at this point, if deemed necessary, to ensure players are inserted into the game as soon as possible. Coach can be ejected from the game for "unsportsmanlike behavior" and face further game suspensions by the League.

Note 1: ALL grade levels will have 2-minute quarter breaks, 5-minute half time, and 3 timeouts per half.

6. **X-Man Rule:** All players exceeding the maximum ball carrying weight must play a defensive or offensive line position. These players will be referred to as an "X-Man player". These players are required to wear a League provided orange wristband during all games.
- a. X-Man players are not allowed on Safety special teams in 6th, 7th and 8th grade.
 - b. All X-Man players must be on the line of scrimmage prior to or at the snap of the ball; offensive X-Man must be set at snap of ball and can be in a 2 point stance, defensive X-Man must be in a 3 or 4 point stance; and any part of the player's body must be in the Free Blocking Zone prior to and at the snap of the ball.
 - i. Note: Free Blocking Zone is defined, per NFHS rules, as a rectangular area extending laterally 4 yards either side of the spot of the snap and 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage.
 - ii. See Attachment D for examples of Free Blocking Zone X-Man examples.
 - iii. Penalty: 1st infraction warning to sideline; 2nd infraction 5- yard penalty, 3rd infraction 15 yard "unsportsmanlike" penalty on sideline.
 - c. X-Man defensive linemen are to be in a 3 or 4 point stance on the line of scrimmage prior to and at the snap of the ball. X-Man defensive linemen are not allowed to drop into pass coverage.
 - d. X-Man defensive ends are required to be in a 3 or 4 point stance. X-Man players at defensive ends are legal, provided they are on the line of scrimmage prior to and at the snap of the ball and they are within the Free Blocking Zone as defined above. X-Man defensive ends are allowed to drop back into pass coverage no further than the "flat area" (typically, 5 yards on either side of the line of scrimmage from sideline to hash-marks) as defined in the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) football rulebook.
 - e. X-Man players at an offensive end or tight-end position are not eligible to carry or catch the ball, and/or run a pass route; their role will be limited to a blocking tight-end. These players must be set at the snap of the ball and can be in a 2 point stance or in a 3 or 4 point stance and they are within the Free Blocking Zone as defined above.
 - i. X-Man offensive end or tight-end, must be on the line of scrimmage prior to or at the snap of the ball.
 - ii. X-Man offensive end or tight-end, can not be put in motion. They are an extension of the offensive line.
 - iii. X-Man players are not able to advance, pitch, toss, pass, catch, or run with the ball. The play is considered dead when an X-Man player has possession of the football.

7. **ONSIDE Play:**

- All grades:** Current National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS) rules are in effect.
- a. A team after a successful field goal **OR** extra point(s) attempt can attempt an ONSIDE play.
 - b. The ONSIDE play will start on the team's own 30 yard line with a 4th and 10 yards to go for first down situation.
 - c. The Head Coach of the team attempting an ONSIDE play must notify the referee immediately after the successful field goal or any extra point(s) attempt.
 - d. **Each team will be limited to two (2) ONSIDE attempts per half.**
 - e. IF the team does not get a 1st down, the ball is turned over to the other team at the spot of the ball.

Note 1: The team attempting the ONSIDE play can run an offensive play, kneel down, run the ball out the back of the end zone, punt, fake punt, etc. If there is a pre-snap penalty, the team still has the options to decide what to execute accordingly. The team cannot decide to then not execute the ONSIDE play. A pre-snap penalty can be either positive or negative for the team attempting the play.

Note 2: For 5th grade, should the team decide to PUNT the ball rather than attempt an offensive play, the play is a declared dead ball punt. As defined in the next section.

8. **Punts Teams:**

6th, 7th, and 8th grade: Current NFHS rules are in effect. The punter must be at or under the ball carrying weight; no X-Man player can punt the ball. This is an offensive ball carrying position.

- a. All X-Man rules apply.
- b. The restrictions apply to both Punt and Punt Return teams.

5th grade: Declared Punt: The punt is a dead ball play without rush with a free declared punt. Game clock will run normal.

- a. There is no weight restriction for the punter, since this is a dead ball kick; all other X-Man rules apply.
- b. The punt is considered a dead ball play without rush and a team must notify the officials of their intention to punt. Teams cannot fake a punt or execute a quick kick.
- c. The referee should spot the ball accordingly and start their 25-second play clock. The offensive team must notify the referee of their intention to punt or not punt prior to spotting the ball or immediately thereafter. The referee will notify the opposing team and coach of their intentions. The official shall then give the defensive team time to get into formation prior to putting the ball in play.
- d. The ball will be long snapped from the center.
- e. The offensive or defensive players are not allowed to cross the line of scrimmage during the punt.
- f. Defensive team are allowed up to four players back to receive the punt. The other 7 players must be within 5 yards of the line scrimmage.
- g. Undeclared punts made by the offensive team will be returned to the original line of scrimmage and will be penalized 5 yards.
- h. The ball will be declared dead at the point at which the receiving team has gained control of the ball. If the receiving back muffs the ball forward or the receiving team blocks the punt forward, the ball is declared dead at the point where it was first touched.

9. Point-After-Touchdown (PAT) Conversions (untimed down)

6th, 7th, and 8th grade: Current NFHS rules are in effect with the following exceptions:

- a. Conversions may be made by passing or running plays from scrimmage and will count 1 point and,
- b. Kicking of extra points will count 2 points.
- c. The kicker and holder must be at or under the ball carrying weight; no X-Man player can kick or hold the ball. These are offensive ball carrying positions.
- d. All X-Man rules apply.

5th grade: Current NFHS rules are in effect with the following exceptions:

- a. Conversions may be made by passing or running plays from scrimmage and will count 1 point.
- b. Kicking of extra points will count 2 points.
- c. No weight restriction for the kicker and holder; all other X-Man rules apply.
- d. The kicking of a conversion attempt is considered a dead ball play and a team must notify the officials of their extra-point attempt. 5th grade teams cannot fake an extra point kick.
- e. The referee will notify the opposing team and coach of their intention to kick the conversion on the next play. The official shall then give the defensive team time to get into formation prior to kicking the ball.
- f. The ball will be long snapped from the center for kick attempts.
- g. The offensive or defensive players are not allowed to cross the line of scrimmage during the kick attempt.
- h. Undeclared kicking conversions made by the offensive team will be returned to the original line of scrimmage and will be penalized 5 yards.

Note 1: If the game field has no goal posts on either side of the field, then the offensive team can either place the ball on the 3 yard line for 1 point attempt, or they can place the ball on the 5 yard line for a 2 point attempt. This rule only applies if there are no goal posts on either side of the field.

10. Field Goals Teams:

6th, 7th, and 8th: Current NFHS rules are in effect and will count for 3 points.

- a. The kicker and holder must be at or under the ball carrying weight; no X-Man player can kick or hold the ball. These are offensive ball carrying positions.

- b. All X-Man rules apply accordingly.

5th grade: Declared Kick. Field goals will count for 3 points. Game clock will run normal. This is a dead ball play without rush with a free declared kick. Current NFHS rules are in effect with the following exceptions:

- a. No weight restriction for the kicker and holder; all other X-Man rules apply.
- b. The field goal kick attempt is considered a dead ball play with normal running clock and a team must notify the official of their field goal attempt. 5th grade teams cannot fake a field goal kick.
- c. The referee should spot the ball accordingly and start their 25-second play clock. The offensive team must notify the referee of their intention to kick prior to spotting the ball or immediately thereafter. The referee will notify the opposing team and coach of their intention to kick a field goal on the next play. The official shall then give the defensive team time to get into formation prior to kicking the ball in play.
- d. The ball will be long snapped from the center.
- e. The offensive or defensive players are not allowed to cross the line of scrimmage during the kick.
- f. Undeclared kicks made by the offensive team will be returned to the original line of scrimmage and will be penalized 5 yards.
- g. The ball will be declared dead at the point at which the receiving team has gained control of the ball. If the receiving back muffs the ball forward or the receiving team blocks the field goal attempt forward, the ball is declared dead at the point where it was first touched.

11. Safety Teams:

6th, 7th, and 8th grade: Current NFHS rules are in effect and will count for 2 points to the opponent.

- a. No X-Man players will be allowed on the Safety Kick or Safety Return teams.
- b. If either team is unable to put 11 ball carrying eligible players (non-X-Man players) on the Safety Kick-Off or Safety Kick-Off Return teams, then the two teams will reduce the number of players to 10 or 9 as needed.
- c. If either team is unable to put a minimum of 9 ball carrying eligible players (non-X-Man players) on the Safety teams, then the offensive team will start from their own 30 yard line. The head coach needs to inform the referee before the game if this may be a possibility so that they are aware of the situation.

5th grade: Current NFHS rules are in effect and will count for 2 points to the opponent.

- a. The “free kick” will be a punt by the offensive team. The punt is a dead ball free kick by the offensive team from their 20yd line. This is a timed down on the kick.
- b. There is no weight restriction for the punter, since this is a dead ball kick. X-Man players can line up on the Safety teams in 5th and 6th. This is a dead ball play. There is no rush nor return by the teams.
- c. The punt is considered a dead ball play.
- d. The referee will notify both teams of the punt. The official shall then give the defensive team time to get into formation prior to putting the ball in play.
 - e. Defensive team are allowed up to four players back to receive the punt. The other 7 players must be within 5 yards of the line scrimmage.
- f. The offensive and defensive players are not allowed to cross the line of scrimmage during the punt.
- g. The ball will be declared dead at the point at which the receiving team has gained control of the ball.
- h. If the receiving back muffs the ball forward or the receiving team blocks the punt forward, the ball is declared dead at the point where it was first touched.

Section B: Teams must be ready to commence the game, including 11 eligible players, within 10 minutes of the scheduled starting time. PENALTY: Possible forfeiture of the game, with a 6-0 score in favor of the opponent.

- Any team that voluntarily forfeits their game may be ineligible for all playoff, championship, and any other post-season games. If the team forfeiting is not eligible for then current post-season games then the penalty may be applied to the next season. The Head Coach may also be suspended for the next schedule League game. All actions will require a 2/3rds vote by the Board.

Section C: The League or game officials reserve the right to suspend, postpone, or cancel games due to weather, darkness, or other conditions necessary for the safety of the players, coaches and spectators.

1. Games suspended for weather, darkness, or other will be considered a draw or tie if less than half of the game has been played. If half or greater than half of the game has been played, then the game will be considered complete. In most cases, the League will strive to play the game to half time, to be considered complete.
2. If a suspended game has been considered a draw or tie, and the outcome of this game affects the playoff team selection, then the League will make all efforts to reschedule the game to finish accordingly.
3. If not possible to reschedule the game, then the League will apply Article III: Tie Breaker rules.

Section D: **Mercy Rule (All Grades)** - 32 point or more spread ("20 and 20 rule").

1. When the point spread is 32 or more points, the losing team will start **ALL** their offensive possessions on the opposing 20 yard line (ALL GRADES).
2. The winning team will start **ALL** their offensive possessions no better than their own 20 yard line (ALL GRADES).
3. The winning team will not be allowed to **PASS** (forward, backward, or lateral) nor PITCH the football. The QB must handoff the ball to another player, the receiving player will not be allowed to PASS or PITCH the football.
4. If the winning team does PASS or PITCH the football, they will be penalized with an "Unsportsmanlike" penalty against the sideline and the appropriate penalty yardage will be assessed accordingly.
5. For 7th and 8th grades, neither team will accept kick-offs and both teams will start their offensive possession on the appropriate yard line.
6. Continuous running clock during the last 4 minutes of the 4th quarter for 5th/6th; and last 5 minutes for 7th/8th grades, respectively. Clock will run except for time-outs or official clock stoppage.
7. Normal play will resume when point spread is 31 points or less.

Section E: Traveling teams will be considered guests for the coin toss.

Article II: FIELD RULES

Section A: Parents, spectators, players, and coaches must maintain Good Sportsmanship attitudes. No yelling or derogatory remarks will be tolerated. The League or official/referee(s) reserves the right to remove any parent, spectator, player, or coach from the field. Parents and spectators must stay outside the designated coaches box area on the fields. Further, parents and spectators must be no closer than the track around the football field or outside the sideline restriction line painted or burned on the field. Only coaches and players will be allowed inside the track.

Section B: Coaches need to maintain good conduct of themselves, players, assistant coaches, and spectators during the game.

Section C: Coaches or person(s) on behalf of a coach, may observe, take written notes, or videotape the playing of opposing teams only at League scheduled games so long as observations or videotaping does not interfere with the playing of the game. Observing coaches or person(s) on behalf of a coach must be either in the end-zone area or in the stands with other spectators.

Section D: Coaches and players will be responsible for the cleanup of the field after their game.

Section E: Only players and coaches are allowed in the designated coaches' box area on the playing field. The League, head coach, or game officials can remove any person from the coaches' box as needed. Coaches taking pictures of their team must stay inside coaches' box area.

Section F: For games when only three (3) referees are officiating; the chain set and down marker will be alternated from one side of the field to the other at half-time. This will allow both sidelines to have a sideline referee on their sideline during the game. Each sideline will need to provide their chain crew; if possible.

Note: If officials are aligned on each sideline and one head referee, then the chain set and down marker will remain on same sideline as start of the game.

Section G: Ladders will not be allowed on or around the playing fields.

Section H: Fixed signs/banners need to be placed a minimum safe distance of 12 feet from all sidelines.

Section I: No alcoholic beverages or intoxicated behavior, no tobacco of any type, no vapor or e-cigarettes will be tolerated at any SIYFL activities, including practices.

Section J: Artificial noisemakers are not permitted. Exception: Cheerleaders (only) may use megaphones at football games. Artificial noisemakers are items such as (but not limited to) megaphones, air horns, bells, rally sticks, whistles, and clickers. Artificial noisemakers are not allowed per Idaho High School Activities Association.

Section K: Except for emergency vehicles, and SIYFL vehicles, NO vehicles shall be driven or parked in the close proximity of the playing fields.

Section L: Flying drones or cameras are not allowed to be flown over playing fields, parking lots, school property, Portneuf Complex, or anywhere near players or parents attending the games; due to risk of injury.

Section M: Lightning Delays

1. If thunder is heard or lightning is seen, then suspend play (games or practice) when lightning strikes are within a ten (10) mile radius of the field as determined by a lightning-detection device or mobile phone app like WeatherBug.
2. 30 minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes before resuming play provided lightning is outside the ten (10) mile radius.
3. Any subsequent lightning within the ten (10) mile radius will reset the 30 minute wait clock.
4. Refer to Playing Rules, Article I, Section C for further details on game management.

Article III: TIE BREAKER

Section A: Tie games will be decided by National Federation of State High School Association's 10-Yard Line Overtime Procedure.

1. For 5th grade games, only one KC overtime will be played. Teams can be tied at the end of the KC overtime.

Section B: Division or Conference Ties will be decided in the following manner:

1. Division records; Conference record if no Division within the Conference.
2. Head-to-Head winner.
 - a. Head-to-Head to determine playoff seeding. When determining playoff seeding, if four teams have the same division record, then head-to-head to amongst the four teams will be applied.
 - b. If the four teams have the same head-to-head records amongst the four teams, then Conference Record of A or B games respectively (does not include any crossover games with A or B teams), and finally a random draw of names from a hat will determine the playoff seeding. Equalizing the Conference Records accordingly (eg. 4-1 vs. 3-1 records are equal since the 3-1 team could win the 5th game or 3-2 vs 3-1 are equal since the 3-1 team could lose the 5th game; 4-1 vs. 2-2 are not equal since the 2-2 team could win the 5th game and at best be 3-2 or 3-1 vs. 2-3 are not equal since the 3-1 team could lose the 5th game as still be better at 3-2).
3. Conference Record of A or B games respectively (does not include any crossover games with A or B teams). If there is a tie after Division Record and Head-to-Head tie breakers, then Conference

Record will be applied. Equalizing the Conference Records accordingly (eg. 4-1 vs. 3-1 records are equal since the 3-1 team could win the 5th game; 4-1 vs. 2-2 are not equal since the 2-2 team could win the 5th game and at best be 3-2 or 3-1 vs. 2-3 are not equal since the 3-1 team could lose the 5th game as still be better at 3-2). Once a tie is broken then reverse the order of the tie breakers.

4. For playoffs, the National Federation of State High School Association's 10-Yard Line Overtime Procedure (Kansas City Overtime) will apply.
 - a. KC Overtime will only be played if there are two or more teams that has to play-into the playoffs. If all teams are already in the playoffs and tied, then seeding will be determined by "blind draw" for seeding purposes. 1st Draw = Highest Seed; 2nd Draw = 2nd Highest Seed, etc.
 - b. For all KC Overtime games, we will limit the total time to three complete rounds of play (A vs B; Loser vs C, and the two teams that have not played will then play = 1 round). Draw for A, B, C (1st draw = C, 2nd draw = B, 3rd draw = A). If all three teams finish 1-1; then start a SECOND ROUND of Play with a new DRAW. KC complete when teams finish 2-0, 1-1. 0-2. At the end of the third round, if all three teams are still tied, then we will do a "blind draw" to determine the winner. KC Overtime games will likely be played on a school night and it is not our intention to play games late into the night.
 - i. The League will make every effort to play the KC playoff games with lights.
 - ii. If the League is not able to secure a field with lights, then the total time will be limited to three complete rounds of play or approximately 1.5 hours, whichever occurs first.

Note 1: If possible, KC Overtime playoff games will be played prior to the last game of the regular season.

Article IV: PLAYOFFS

Section A: For "All Play" conferences, the first place team in each division will play the second place team in the other respective division. The two winning teams will advance to the championship game while the losers will play in the consolation game. This would assume A conference only; no B conference.

Section B: For "A and B" divisions, the first place team in "A" division will play the fourth place team in the "A" division, while the second place team in the "A" division will play the third place team in the "A" division in the playoffs. The winners will advance to the championship game. This format of play will be done for both A and B divisions.

1. A and B divisions do not play each other in the playoffs.
2. No consolation games will be played with this format.
3. Teams that lose their playoff game will return their equipment immediately following their game.

Section C: If there is only one conference and one division, the first and fourth best record teams, and second and third best record teams will play. The winners will advance to the championship game, while the losers will play in the consolation game. OR the League may determine a new format for the consolation game as needed.

Section D: If there are two divisions within one conference ("A" or "B") then the first place teams from each division will play the second place team from the other division. The winners will advance to the championship game. The League will strive to balance the two divisions.

Section E: 5th grade teams will not play post-season games (i.e. playoffs, consolation, or championship games). The League endorses the National Standards for Youth Sports developed by the National Alliance of Youth Sports 2001.

Article V: PLAYING TIME SUMMARY

Section A: Minimum Playing Time Rule for all players during regular season, playoff, consolation, and championship games.

1. **5th grade** coaches are required to play each eligible player a minimum of ten (10) live plays per game during regular season games, including all playoff and championship games. A player must play six (6) live plays the first half, and four (4) live plays the second half prior to the 4-minute warning in the 4th quarter. A player must be inserted into the game on the first offensive/defensive possession in the 4th quarter if that player has not received his/her appropriate playing time. A player must be placed

into the game in their natural playing position at the soonest available time. A “live play” is defined as a play from the line of scrimmage on offense or defense, **EXCLUDING PUNTS, PUNT RETURNS, AND SAFETIES, FIELD GOALS (FG) AND KICKING POINTS-AFTER-TOUCHDOWN (PAT) ATTEMPTS. All special team plays are considered “dead ball” plays.**

(i) **For games of “A” vs. “B” teams, the A team must play their players twelve (12) live plays during the games. Six (6) plays in 1st half and six (6) plays in 2nd half as defined above other than increased number of plays required.**

2. **6th, 7th, & 8th grade** coaches are required to play each eligible player a minimum of ten (10) live plays per game during regular season games, including all playoff and championship games. A player must play six (6) live plays the first half, and four (4) live plays the second half prior to the 4-minute warning in the 4th quarter. A player must be inserted into the game on the first offensive/defensive/special team possession in the 4th quarter if that player has not received his/her appropriate playing time. A player must be placed into the game in their natural playing position at the soonest available time. A “live play” is defined as a play from the line of scrimmage on offense or defense and special team play. Playing time on special teams (i.e. punts, punt returns, safeties, PAT attempts, and field goals) will only be considered as five (5) live plays per game, regardless of the number of times the special team was on the field.

(ii) **For games of “A” vs. “B” teams, the A team must play their players twelve (12) live plays during the games. Six (6) plays in 1st half and six (6) plays in 2nd half as defined above other than increased number of plays required.**

Article VI: CONCUSSION ACTION PLAN

To better manage instances of concussion in our sports program, Southeast Idaho Youth Football League (SIYFL) requires the following Concussion Action Plan:

1. All coaches must complete SIYFL’s current concussion management training. This training will include up-to-date information on the identification of concussion, the signs and symptoms associated with the injury, the risks involved with allowing athletes to continue to play while symptomatic, methods of concussion assessment, and the importance of gradual return to play practices.
2. Information about sports-related concussions will be provided to parents annually by our website and printed brochure.
3. If, during a practice or game, an athlete sustains a concussion or exhibits the signs, symptoms or behaviors of the injury, that athlete must be removed from all athletic activity immediately.
4. The coach is responsible to provide SIYFL’s **Athlete Concussion Medical Referral Form** to the athlete’s parent/guardian immediately following practice or game. If your team is playing in Pocatello, have the athlete go to Portneuf Complex fields and have Tri-Med Medical Services complete the referral form.
5. The coach is responsible to notify the League (siyfl.football@gmail.com) via email that they have provided the Athlete Concussion Medical Referral Form to their athlete. Include the players name and date this was provided to the parents/guardians of the athlete.
6. That athlete may not return to any practice or game activity until he/she is evaluated by a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussion (i.e., physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or athletic trainer).
7. The athlete and his/her parent/guardian must provide **written medical clearance** (Athlete Concussion Medical Referral Form) from that provider prior to the athlete being allowed to resume physical activity.
8. Once the athlete receives written medical clearance to return to physical activity, coaches will adhere to recommended clearance to play by a qualified licensed health care professional.

9. The coach is responsible to notify the League (siyfi.football@gmail.com) via email when the player was cleared to play and if any restrictions were recommended by the qualified licensed health care professional.