



Rapid City Junior Football

General Rules

Rule 1: The rules of play for each age group league are based on the following:

- a. Flag (1st – 3rd Grade) – USA Football Flag Football (5v5, 7v7) rules.
- b. Tackle (4th – 6th Grade) The most recent publication of the National Federation of State High School Associations Football Rule Book.
- c. Rapid City Junior Football (RCJRFB) Board of Directors (BOD) reserves the right to adopt alternative rules of play when necessary and appropriate.

Rule 2: The BOD shall prepare and present to the respective Association teams' head coach, before the start of team practices, rosters listing the players' names, addresses, and telephone numbers. After the initial rosters are prepared and presented to the respective teams' head coach, the Board, in its sole discretion, may make any additions or changes to the rosters.

Rule 3: Eligibility - Association teams will be grouped in leagues by grade level as follows:

- a. First – Third Grade: All boys or girls shall be in the first, second, or third grade and shall not be 9 years or older, on or before October 31 of the playing year.
- b. Fourth – Sixth Grade League: All boys or girls shall be in the fourth, fifth, or sixth grade and shall not be 12 years old or older, on or before October 31 of the playing year.

Rule 4: Registration – All players must submit a completed registration and participation fee before the end of the registration period to be considered for team play.

Rule 5: Team formation and player placement

- a. All players on a team must be registered with the RCJRFB.
- b. A youth player who meets the age, registration and assignment requirements in these league rules is considered an eligible player.
- c. Team formation will be random based on RCJRFB guidelines.
- d. Criteria for a player assignment will not include consideration for the ability of the player or the relative strength of the team.
- e. All forms of recruiting, invitations and tryouts are prohibited at all levels. Coaches, players, and parents will have no direct input or involvement with the assignment of players to their teams.
- f. All boys or girls qualifying for the teams will become the player pool for team formation.

- g. The player pool is defined as the group of players not previously assigned to a team roster and have registered before equipment handout.
- h. Team placements are made from the players in the corresponding player pool for each grade league.
- i. Team capacity is capped at 10 players per team in the flag league and 22 players per team in the tackle leagues. Team capacity may be exceeded at the discretion of the BOD under special circumstances.
- j. The team formation guidelines intend to promote team continuity during the years a player spends in each league to enhance each player's football experience.
- k. Teams will be formed using the following criteria in order:
 - i. The head coach (coach appearing on valid team roster) has the right to have their child/children on the team he/she coaches if the player(s) qualify for that league. Child is defined as: Natural\step-child\adopted\foster\or ward.
 - ii. Returning players will be guaranteed the same team assignment if signed up before date established (late registration) by the board provided there are enough returning players to form the team or there is roster space still available on the team.
 - iii. Players are assigned by area elementary/middle schools.
 - iv. Players are assigned by east/west/north and south locations.
 - v. If east/west/north and south is not possible, placement will be by team availability.

Rule 6: During gameplay, coaching staffs on the sidelines are limited to a maximum of one head coach and three assistants of which one will serve as the required play recorder. Any other adults/students are prohibited on the team's sideline. No other person shall be allowed on the sidelines without approval by the Rapid City Junior Football.

Rule 7: All head and assistant coaches must complete a registration on the Rapid City Junior Football website. Time or play recorders do not have to be a coach.

Rule 8: Recruiting of players to influence the registration process or to coerce parents or players to change teams is prohibited.

Rule 9: All officials shall be furnished and assigned to each game by the BOD, or its authorized representative. No game protests shall be allowed. The head official at each game has the final say.

Rule 10: A player must meet the following weight limitations at the official weigh-in date, time, and place as established by the BOD to be eligible to play in the offensive or defensive backfield in their respective leagues.

- a. First – Third Grade League: No weight limits
- b. Fourth – Sixth Grade League: 120 pounds or less

Rule 11: Any Player whose weight exceeds the weight limitations described in Rule 10 shall be designated by the BOD, or its authorized representative, as a Striper. When the BOD or its authorized representative designates a player as a Striper, the player shall play as a Striper during the entire playing year.

Rule 12: The BOD shall place a single black stripe on the helmets of all players designated as Striper. No person or entity, other than the BOD, or its authorized representative, is authorized to remove or change the black stripe placed on the helmets designated as Striper. Unauthorized removal or change of the black stripe placed on the helmet of player designated, as a Striper shall subject the offending party or parties to dismissal from the association.

Rule 13: Maximum Weight Gain

- a. The maximum weight gain rule is intended to promote the health and welfare of the athlete.
- b. A player will have only one official weigh-in. Once he or she steps on an official scale, there will be no waivers of the Striper Rule for those over the weight limits.
- c. The BOD may conduct a second weigh-in for any team prior to the midpoint of the season.
- d. Re-weighing of any team or player can only be called by and conducted by the BOD.
- e. The second weigh-in can be conducted without notice and will be held on regular game nights at the BOD designated location.
- f. Any Player who gains more than 10% of his original body weight at the weigh-in and is now over the striper rule limits for their grade is subject to having a stripe added to his helmet and being required to meet the requirements of a striper.
- g. All weights will be rounded down to the next whole number (e.g., 105.7 = 105).
- h. Any violation of this rule subjects the offending team to forfeiture of the game.

Rule 14: Mandatory Play Rule

- a. First – Third Grade League: Each player must play two (2) full quarters per game without substitution.
- b. Fourth – Sixth Grade League: Each player must play one (1) continuous full quarter without substitution per game and sit one (1) continuous full quarter per game without substitution.

- i. Teams of 15 players or more can complete Rule 14 in its entirety.
 - 1. Teams with less than 15 players cannot complete Rule 14 in its entirety.
 - 2. In this case, a team must still play all players one (1) continuous full quarter but will not be held to the requirement to sit all players one (1) continuous full quarter.
- c. Regardless of the number of players on a team, the player participation sheet is required to be completed by the coach (See Rule 15).
- d. In the event a player is injured during his quarter to play, the coach must return the injured player to the game when the player's health allows.
 - i. The injured player is replaced with another player at the coach's discretion. The coach does not need to alter the player participation schedule established before the start of the game. (Example: The injured player is replaced by a player who is on their quarter to sit out. The replacement player does not need to make-up plays he/she did not sit out).
- e. Playing time may be restricted for non-attendance of practice, disciplinary reasons or due to injury. Restriction of playing time must be documented on the player participation sheets and presented to the BOD (see Rule 15).
- f. A player reserves the right to excuse himself or herself from this rule voluntarily. However, coaches are prohibited from coercing players into surrendering their right to play.
- g. Punters and kickers are exempt from this rule. If a kicking play is required during the quarter, the punter/kicker can come in for the kicking play and then return to the sideline for their required quarter to sit out.
- h. This rule shall include all playoff and championship games. The Board will review all complaints. Violation of this rule will result in the following actions:
 - i. First Offense: Forfeiture of game
 - ii. Second Offense: Forfeit of game and suspension of head coach for one (1) game including all practices.
 - iii. Third Offense: Expulsion of head coach from the league.

Rule 15: Each team must have a completed player participation sheet to start the game.

- a. Each completed player participation sheet is given to the head official at the pre-game coin toss.
- b. The head official will exchange the completed player participation sheets between the two teams.
- c. The head official will declare a forfeit for one or both teams if the player participation sheet is not presented at the pre-game coin toss.

- d. The player participation sheet must show any reason a player will not meet his mandatory playtime. (e.g, failure to attend practices, disciplinary reasons or due to injury, etc.).
- e. The player participation sheet and game score sheet for each team are turned in to the equipment shed at the completion of the game.
- f. The BOD retains the player participation sheets and game score sheets for documentation and reference.
- g. This rule includes all playoff and championship games.
- h. The player participation sheet is available on the RCJRFB website.
- i. Failure to provide a completed participation sheet will result in the following actions:
 - i. First Offence: Forfeiture of game.
 - ii. Second Offence: Forfeiture of game and suspension of head coach for one (1) game including all practices.
 - iii. Third Offence: Expulsion of head coach from the league.

Rule 16: The Association provides the following equipment to players with registration:

- a. First – Third Grade League
 - i. Flag Belt
 - ii. Game Jersey/Shirt
- b. 4th-6th Grade League
 - i. Helmet
 - ii. Guardian Cap
 - iii. Shoulder Pads
 - iv. Padded Football Pants
 - v. Game Jersey

Rule 17: All other equipment including mouthguard, practice jersey, footwear, protective cup, etc. is the responsibility of the player.

Rule 18: A player is allowed to use their own supplied equipment in place of the issued items provided the player informs the BOD of this choice prior to use and complies with the following guidelines:

- a. Helmet
 - i. Must be NOCSAE (National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment) certified withing the last 10 years
 - ii. Shell of the helmet must be white to match Association issued helmet.
- b. Pants
 - i. Must be padded.
 - ii. Must be black to match issued pants

- Rule 19:** Shoes shall be made of a material which covers the foot (canvas, leather or synthetic) attached to a firm sole of leather, rubber or composition material which may have cleats, or which may be cleat less. Any cleat worn must be intended for football use. No metal cleats are allowed. Removable cleats shall conform to requirements as outlined in the NFHS Football Rules.
- Rule 20:** No player in the tackle leagues shall be allowed to participate in practices or games played without a mouthguard after helmets and pads are issued.
- Rule 21:** No jewelry, watches, or wearable technology can be worn during games.
- Rule 22:** Players will check-in all issued equipment at the RCJRFB equipment building immediately following each team's final game.
- Rule 23:** No team may meet or practice before the announced starting date.
- Rule 24:** The football week shall begin on Monday. Each team is limited to five playing periods per week. A playing period is defined as a practice or game in which the players are engaged. The intent is that each team engages in a maximum of four practices and one game or three practices and two games during each football week of the season.
- Rule 25:** Practice periods are not to exceed two hours in length. The first three practice periods are for conditioning only and shall not exceed one hour in length. No player shall participate in team practices until that player has participated in three one-hour conditioning practices.
- Rule 26:** Any teams scheduled to play the late game may warm up on the designated practice fields. No teams, players, or coaches scheduled for the late game shall be on a field where they are scheduled to play while the early game is in progress.
- Rule 27:** All teams are allowed controlled scrimmages with another RCJRFB team after the second week of team practice provided the teams are within the same grade level.
- Rule 28:** Any team, which cannot begin a game with the required number of eligible players (7, 9 or 11 players depending on league structure for that league set by BOD) shall forfeit the game unless the game is officially postponed or canceled by the RCJRFB President, or his or her authorized representative. The RCJRFB President will reschedule postponed games.

Rule 29: Tackle - If at any point a team is trailing by 21 or more points during the first or second half of a game, the trailing team can elect to take the ball at their own 30-yard line in lieu of a traditional kickoff.

Rule 30: Tackle - If at any point a team is trailing by 35 or more points during the second half of a game, the trailing team can elect to conclude the game at any point prior to reaching regulation time.

Rule 31: In the result of a tie during the regular season, the following criteria will determine league standings:

- a. Results of head-to-head competition during the regular season.
- b. Fewest points allowed during the regular season.
- c. Coin toss

Rule 32: Overtime: 10 Yard Line Overtime procedure for Play-offs.

- a. An overtime period is un-timed after a regulation game has ended with the score tied during the playoffs only.
- b. There is no overtime during regular season games.
- c. 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 three-minute intermission during which both teams may confer with their coaches. All Officials will assemble at midfield, review the overtime procedure, determine the number of second-half time-outs remaining for each team and discuss how penalties, if any, including any carry-over penalties from the regulation contest, will be assessed to start the overtime procedure. They will inform the coaches of the number of time-outs each team has remaining and any special penalty enforcement that apply.
- d. At the coin toss in the center of the field, the visiting team's captain shall be given the privilege of calling the coin while it is in the air. The winner of the coin toss shall be given the choice of offense or defense first or designating the end of the field at which the ball will be put in play for this set of downs. The loser will have his choice of the other options.
- e. Each team shall be permitted one additional time-out during each overtime period plus any unused second -half regulation game time-outs. The final score shall be determined by totaling all points scored by each team during regulation time and overtime periods.
- f. All overtime periods will start on the 10-yard line or succeeding spot if a carry-over penalty has been administered.
- g. Each team will have four downs to score.
- h. If still tied after the first overtime period, the process will be repeated until a winner has been determined.

- i. This rule has been summarized from the National Federation of State High School Associations and shall take precedence.

Rule 33: The BOD shall provide a down-marker, ten-yard chain, yardage markers, pylons, and football for each field of play on game days. The home team of each game shall be responsible for the operation of the down marker, the ten-yard chain, the yardage markers, goal posts, pylons, and the football.

Rule 34: The BOD will provide a pee-wee sized ball for each first-third grade game and a junior size football for each fourth-sixth grade game. The Game Ball shall be provided by the RCJRFB. No other ball shall be used. The Head Referee shall be responsible for the delivery and return of the game ball to the equipment shed.

Rule 35: Each team and their coaches shall be responsible for keeping spectators orderly and behind any spectator boundary.

Rule 36: Anyone (players, coaches or spectators) using or shouting abusive or profane language, or otherwise displaying un-sportsman-like conduct, is subject to removal from game premises and dismissal from the Association.

Rule 37: No person or entity, other than the Association, is authorized to present an award, trophy, gift, or another tangible thing, to any Association player, coach, or team. This rule is not meant to prohibit a team from presenting a small token of appreciation to its coach or coaches at the end of the year or parents from providing a small participation award to players, not to exceed a value of \$15.00 per player after the last season game is played.

Rule 38: Commercial broadcasting of any Association game is prohibited.

Rule 39: Videotaping of a participant by friends and relatives for personal enjoyment is allowed.

- a. Videotaping of games for scouting other teams is prohibited.
- b. Film exchanges among coaches and managers are prohibited.
- c. Drone aircraft are not permitted to fly over the field.

Rule 40: The first violation of Rules 12, 14, or 36 will result in disqualification from championship play. Subsequent violations will result in immediate and permanent dismissal of the violator from the Association.

Rule 41: All matters relating to the Association not explicitly covered in the Bylaws, Rules of Play, and these General Rules, are to be determined by the BOD in its sole discretion