



Rapid City Junior Football

Rules of Play

Tackle Football

I. General

a. Overview of Rules

- i. Rapid City Junior Football (RCJRFB) follows the football rules of the South Dakota High School Activities Association (S.D.H.S.A.A.) and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), except where specific exceptions are listed in this document or the General Rules. If no exception is stated, S.D.H.S.A.A. rules apply.

b. Timing of the Game

- i. No clock is used. Quarters are measured by the number of plays. Each quarter is sixteen plays.
- ii. All plays shall be counted against the 16-play total including kickoffs and extra points. Plays involving accepted penalties that result in the replay of a down will not be counted. If a team scores on the last play of the half of the game, the extra point will be allowed and will be not counted as a play.
- iii. The Offense must snap the ball within 40 seconds of the time the Official spots the ball ready for play. Delay of game penalties will be enforced.

c. Stripers

- i. Stripers are designated by a black stripe on their helmets. Stripers are restricted to playing positions in the offensive and defensive lines. Stripers may not line up as Wide Receivers. Stripers are not allowed to advance the ball, with the following exceptions:
 1. Stripers may catch a pass, beyond the line of scrimmage, and advance the ball as a Tight End.
 2. Stripers may advance the ball if they intercept a pass or recover a fumble.
 3. A Striper may be a Punter.

II. Field of play – allowances

- a. The field of play shall be 80 yards in length.
- b. End zones shall be 10 yards in length.
- c. Normal S.D.H.S.A.A. rules are enforced for ball placement and penalties.

III. Field of Play – Set-Up/Game Play

- a. The scheduled home team is responsible for setting up the field equipment (end-zone pylons, yard markers) before the start of games.
- b. The scheduled home team is responsible for picking up the field equipment (end-zone pylons, yard markers, play count/score sheets) after the last game of the day.
- c. The scheduled home team is responsible for obtaining the down/yard marker crew (one person for the down marker, two people for the yard marker chains)

- i. During extra-point kicks and field goals, the down/yard marker crew is responsible for holding the uprights during the kick in the location designated by the officiating crew.
 - d. When two teams have similar colored jerseys, the visiting team will wear an alternate-colored jersey supplied by RCJRFB. The alternate jerseys are returned after the game.
 - e. The home and visiting teams are responsible for keeping the player sideline clean.
 - f. The RCJRFB Board of Directors (BOD) is responsible for cleaning the spectator side of the field.
- IV. Offensive Formations
 - a. Any legal offensive formation as described in the NFHS Football Rules Book is allowed.
 - i. Exception: Unbalanced offensive lines are prohibited.
 - b. Pre-snap motion is allowed as described in the NFHS Football Rules Book.
 - c. The offensive line splits may not exceed one (1) yard.
 - d. No double-team blocking, pulling, traps, cross-blocking or other advanced blocking schemes are allowed.
- V. Defensive Formations
 - a. Any defensive sets are allowed except for the restrictions below.
 - b. Defensive players shall line up as follows:
 - i. No defensive lineman is permitted to line up over the center.
 - ii. Down Lineman must use a three or four-point stance. Interior linemen may not stunt on a pre-designed or premeditated play upon the snap of the ball.
 - iii. Defensive Ends may line up in a two-point stance.
 - iv. The Defensive End may either line up head-to-head with the corresponding Offensive End or may line up on the outside shoulder of the Offensive End.
 - v. The Defensive Ends foot closest to the Offensive Center must be no further outside than the Offensive Ends outside foot.
 - vi. In the event the Offensive End is split, the Defensive End may line up no further than one - (1) yards from the Defensive Tackle.
 - vii. Linebackers and Cornerbacks may line up no closer than two - (2) yards from the line of scrimmage.
 - viii. Safeties may line up no closer than five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage.
 - ix. No players may blitz, scrape or stunt on a pre-designed or premeditated play upon the snap of the ball.
 - x. Linebackers, cornerbacks, and safeties may react to offensive plays—such as a running play—and cross the line of scrimmage to make a tackle.
 - xi. Defensive linemen and linebackers are required to get into positions of alignment. Defensive players are prohibited from deliberate pre-snap movements for causing an offensive procedure violation. This rule also applies to PAT and Field Goal attempts. Violation of this rule shall result in a defensive encroachment penalty.
- VI. Scoring
 - a. Scoring will be done in accordance with S.D.H.S.A.A. rules with the following exceptions:
 - i. Upon scoring a touchdown, the scoring team must declare to the head official their intent to either kick or run an offensive play for a PAT.

- ii. If the offensive team chooses to kick, the team must line up in a legal RCJRFB formation and kick an extra point with the following exceptions:
 - 1. During the PAT-kicking attempt, the defensive team is prohibited from crossing the line of scrimmage. Crossing the LOS will result in a penalty for defensive encroachment.
 - 2. The ball must be long snapped between the center's legs and fielded by the holder. The kick can be attempted provided the holder can field the snap without leaving their position. If the holder cannot field the snap from the holding position (one knee on the ground), the ball is ruled dead.
 - 3. All offensive and defensive players except for the holder must remain in a two or three-point stance during the kick attempt. Failure to maintain a two or three-point stance during the kick will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
 - 4. The offensive team has ten (10) seconds after it is "set" by the referee's whistle to execute the kick.
 - 5. Extra points scored because of a kick will be scored as 2 points.
- iii. Extra points scored because of a running or passing play will be scored as 1 point.
- iv. A field goal attempt must be declared and executed as per the procedure specified for kicking an extra point.
- v. When field goal attempt is missed from inside the 20-yard line, the ball is spotted on the 20-yard line. A missed attempt outside the 20-yard line, the ball is spotted at the line of scrimmage.

VII. Punting

- a. When an offensive team wishes to punt the ball to the opposing team, the offensive team must declare to the head official that they are going to punt the ball.
- b. The offensive team will line up in a punting formation with the following stipulations:
 - i. The player designated as the punter will line up 7 - 15 yards behind the LOS to receive the snap. The ball must be long snapped between the center's legs to the designated punter. If the ball touches the ground, the punter may field the ball and complete the punt.
 - ii. Until the ball has been punted, the offensive team is prohibited from moving from their set positions. Moving from their set positions will result in an illegal motion penalty.
- c. The Defensive team will line up in a legal defense with the following exceptions:
 - i. The one or two designated safeties will line up deep enough to field the punt.
 - ii. Until the ball has been punted, the defensive team is prohibited from moving from their set positions. Moving from their set positions will result in a defensive encroachment penalty.
- d. Once the ball has been kicked, both teams will resume live play with the receiving team becoming the offense and the kicking team the defense.
- e. No "fake" punts are allowed.

VIII. Blocking in the free zone

- a. Definition: The Free blocking zone is a rectangular area extending laterally 4 yards either side of the spot of the snap and 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage. A player is in the free-blocking zone when any part of his body is in the zone at the snap
 - b. Blocking below the waist and crab blocking is permitted in the free-blocking zone when the following conditions are met:
 - i. By offensive players who are stationary and in the zone at the snap.
 - ii. By defensive players who are in the zone at the snap.
 - iii. The contact is in the zone.
 - c. No clipping is permitted in the free-blocking zone
- IX. The free-blocking zone disintegrates, and the exception for a player to block below the waist or crab block is not to continue after the ball has left the zone.
- X. Unsportsmanlike conduct
 - a. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. Swearing
 - ii. Fighting
 - iii. Arguing with officials
 - iv. Any behavior that detracts from the integrity or purpose of the game
 - b. When such conduct occurs:
 - i. A major penalty will be assessed.
 - ii. The individual(s) involved will be ejected from the game.
 - iii. A League Official must be notified immediately after the game for appropriate follow-up.
 - c. This rule applies to players, coaches, and spectators.
 - d. Game officials have full discretion to eject any individual based on the severity of the offense.
 - e. Anyone ejected from a game will receive an automatic one-game suspension, regardless of their role (player, coach, spectator).
 - f. If a coach's or parent's behavior warrants further action, the Board of Directors (BOD) may impose additional penalties on the associated team as deemed appropriate.
- XI. Flagrant Fouls
 - a. Any player who commits a flagrant foul will:
 - i. Be immediately ejected from the game.
 - ii. Receive an automatic one-game suspension.
 - b. Repeated offenses will be reviewed by the Board of Directors (BOD) and may result in expulsion from the league.