

**MID MARYLAND YOUTH FOOTBALL &
CHEERLEADING LEAGUE
(MMYFCL)**

2023

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES



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Revision History

This section is presented for reference purposes only. Please refer to the cited Article for the actual rules change. If any conflicts exist between this section and the Articles of the SOP, the Articles of the SOP take precedence.

26 Mar 14

- Add Red Stripe Players to two younger ages at each age group 6-8 thru 10-12 (**Art. IX, Sect. 9.01**)
- Remove rule allowing player to retrieve cup at weigh-in (**Art. IX, I.**)
- Add restriction on filming opposing sideline (**Art. XI**)
- Add requirement for mandatory two spotters per team (**Art X, 1.**)
- Add requirement for spotter to leave field after completion of duties (**Art. X, 10.**)
- Add requirements for scale approval (**Art. IX, M.**)
- Add section on splitting up teams (**Art. V, E. & F.**)

24 Jul 14

- Remove restriction on high school players (**Art. II, D.**)

25 Sep 14

- Allow eye black strips with “Heads Up” logo (**Art. IV, D.**)
- Add rule restricting coaches from touching opposing players (**Art. XIII, D.**)

6 Oct 14

- Add penalty for illegal kick at 6-8 and 7-9 (**Art. VIII, Sect. 8.02 & Sect. 8.03**)
- Amend rule about pre-weighs and weigh-in (**Art. IX, I.**)

26 Feb 15

- Reinstate restriction on high school players (**Art. II, D.**)
- Change Age and Weight Chart to add Red Stripe players for all ages within an age group and to make the 11-13 Red Stripe weight unlimited. (**Art. IX, Sect. 9.01**)
- Add requirement for head coach to possess SOP on sidelines (**Art. VII, J.**)
- Add requirement to note eligibility status of players on Spotter Sheet (**Art. IX, I.**)
- Add notations for eligibility to spotter procedures. (**Art. X, H. 3.**)
- Add requirement for head coach to save signed Spotter sheets and produce them if necessary (**Art. X, H. 11.**)

25 Aug 15

- Corrected title of **Art. IX, Section 9.02.**

15 Sep 15

- Item B: Add “...or engage...” to defensive red stripe player operating guideline (**Art. IX, Sect. 9.02**)
- Item C, 2.: Add “... (see **Appendix A**)...” to definition of unbalanced formation (**Art. IX, Sect. 9.02**)
- Item E, 2.: Clarify forfeit consideration in Red Stripe Violation penalties (**Art. IX, Sect. 9.02**)
- Add **Appendix A, Red Stripe Eligible Positions (Appendix A)**

5 Oct 15

- Clarify the definition of a “punch” in the Players Code of Conduct (**Art. XIV, A.**)

24 Mar 16

- Update Age and Weight Guidelines with changes approved by the Executive Board (remove OBLs, make 11-13 into 14U, add weight to each age group) (**Art. IX, Section 9.01.**)
- Remove the requirement to pull the starting backfield when a team is ahead by 27+ points and amend the penalty for violating the restrictions on plays to a 15-yard Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty assessed to the head coach and a loss of down (**Art. VIII, F-I.**)
- Add restriction of quarterback middle run at the 8U level (**Art. VIII, Section 8.02.**)
- Add allowance for play card wrist bands (wrist coaches) to be worn on belt (**Art. IV, C.**)
- Clarify restrictions on recruiting to include all electronic communications (**Art. III, B.**)

Revision History

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8 Aug 16

- Change Pitbull Rules for 8-man teams. (**Art. VIII, Section 8.01**)

28 Jun 17

- Change Red Stripe Rules to allow defensive players to line up in an outside shade on the offensive tackle. (**Art. IX, Section 9.02**)
- Update Age and Weight Guidelines with changes approved by the Executive Board (raise Unrestricted weights, make Red Stripe weight unlimited for all ages) (**Art. IX, Section 9.01.**)
- Edit position eligibility of defensive players in a balanced formation to allow for an outside shade on the Offensive tackles. (**Appendix A**)

27 Sep 17

- Update Age and Weight Guidelines to correct contradictory Pit Bull unrestricted weight to 75.9 lbs. (**Art. IX, Section 9.01.**)
- Various inconsequential grammar and spelling edits

25 Jul 18

- Add Player Transfer Rule (rule will become affective for 2019 season). (**Art. II, E.**)
- Add number of officials for 7U. (**Art. VI, E.**)
- Move Field Layout Diagrams from **Art. VII A.** to **Appendix B.** (**Art. VII, A.; Appendix B**)
- Add 7U football size to chart. (**Art. VII, K.**)
- Add **Section 8.01 Flag Football Rules** and **Section 8.03 7U Rules**. Renumber Pit Bull, 8U & 9U Rules to 8.02, 8.04 & 8.05, respectively. (**Art. VIII, Sections 8.01-8.05.**)
- Update **Weight Allowance** chart with Flag and 7U. (**Art. IX, P.**)
- Update **Football Age and Weight** Chart with Flag and 7U. (**Art. IX, Section 9.01.**)
- Various inconsequential grammar and spelling edits

24 Jul 19

- Adopt USA Football's recommendations on full contact practice limits in preseason and during the season. (**Art. V, C.**)
- Tape of a uniform design for designating red stripe players will be supplied by the league and must be used as specified. (**Section 8.02, B.; Art. IX, E.; Section 9.02, E.**)
- Change referee coverage for 12U and 13U to 4 officials. (**Art. VI, E.**)
- Amend references to not making weight from the rules set. (**Art. XI, Q-T.**)
- Remove American, Centennial and Liberty divisions from Minimum Play Chart. (**Art. X, A.**)

3 Sep 21

- Multiple updates required for "unweighted" divisions. Edits are too extensive to document individually.

9 Sep 22

- Clarified running between the guards for 7U and 8U (**Section 8.03, G, 8.04 F**)

14 Aug 23

- amend red stripe rules for kickoff and kick return (**Section 9.02, D**)
- players missing protective cup may re-weigh in before kickoff (Section 8.05, J)

Article I. REGISTRATION AND CERTIFICATION

- A. The Executive Board shall determine team certification dates for football each year. Dates of cheerleading certification will be determined by Cheerleading Vice President/Area Directors.
- B. Each Football Player must be certified by MMYFCL each year to be eligible to participate in official league play. Certification will take place prior to the start of the regular season.
- C. Certification will consist of verification of age by date of birth for the division of play the player will be participating during the season.
- D. Age verification will be accomplished by presenting to MMYFCL officials at the certification a current Maryland MVA picture ID or an official MMYFCL League-issued ID card. An out-of-state ID card is permitted for any player who currently resides out of state (e.g., Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia or Delaware). A Military Dependent ID card (United States Uniformed Services Identification Card) is also an acceptable form of certification. Any player not eligible for a state-issued ID card may obtain an official league-issued MMYFCL ID card for a fee determined each year and on specific dates and locations set each year by the Executive Board. The league will determine the circumstances that qualify each player for a league ID.
- E. Official Roster Forms must accompany each team at Certification. All roster must be submitted electronically 48 hours prior to the certification date. Rosters must be on the official MMYFCL Roster Form.
- F. The following will constitute an official roster: All players on the roster must meet the age standard for the specific team, all information must be completed on the form, all forms must be typed and emailed to MMYFCL, and finally it must be approved, stamped and laminated by the MMYFCL official on site.
- G. All rosters are due at the designated certification dates; players may be added to rosters through the 2nd certification date as determined by the MMYFCL board. There will be a fee for roster recertification that will be determined by the Executive Board each year.
- H. Players are only able to move from one certified roster to another at the recertification as long as that player does not play for the team he is rostered in a game, whether he checked in or not. If he plays even one play for the first team, he will remain on that roster for the entire season.

Article II. ELIGIBILITY

- A. All MMYFCL programs may have eligible cheerleading teams (and pom or dance squads) participate with their football programs at both home and away games. Eligible cheerleading teams are defined as any teams participating in the official MMYFCL Cheer Competition **OR** any team that does not participate in any outside cheer competitions between 1 Aug and the last MMYFCL Super Bowl of the season and participates solely in sideline cheering.
- B. Parental consent for each player must be kept on file by each program.
- C. Each player must meet Certification requirements for the team on which he plays. Cheerleaders must meet age and squad requirements as outlined in the Cheerleading Bylaws to participate in league-sponsored cheerleading competitions. Refer to the MMYFCL Cheerleading SOP for further eligibility requirements.
- D. No player/participant shall be a member of more than one team in the MMYFCL. They must not be on a high school football roster (9th grade or higher) or participate in high school cheerleading. This applies during the MMYFCL season (1 Aug thru the last MMYFCL Super Bowl game).

- E. No player/participant may participate in the MMYFCL while living in or being housed in a juvenile detention facility.

Article III. RECRUITMENT

- A. Active recruitment of players, cheerleaders or coaches from another MMYFCL program's current or previous year's roster is prohibited and will be deemed a rules violation which will be subject to a Rules Committee review which could result in suspension, game forfeiture, playoff ineligibility, and expulsion for all involved parties.
- B. Recruitment violations are described as:
 - 1. Telephone calls, personal home visits or meetings with the individual player, coach, or family member to discuss the benefits of joining your program.
 - 2. Emails, texts or any other form of electronic or written communications to the individual player, coach, or family member to discuss the benefits of joining your program.
 - 3. Giving unsolicited cards or contact information to individual players, coaches, or family member to discuss the benefits of joining your program.
 - 4. Extending targeted invitation via email, texts or any other form of electronic communications, mail or personal handout to a player, coach, or family member for a program's sponsored event at which the benefits of joining your program will be discussed or promoted.
 - 5. Public announcements via newspaper advertisement, signs, or posted fliers will not be deemed as recruiting, however the sending of these items to a targeted individual player, coach, or family member will be deemed as recruiting.
 - 6. When a former coach leaves a program, the coach may send an email to his former players informing them that he will not return to the program. The coach cannot mention the new organization he is coaching for to his former players in this email or any other form of electronic communications.
- C. If a head coach and/or assistant coach changes programs within the MMYFCL and plans to be listed on the certified roster in any capacity for the new program in the next MMYFCL season, the only player(s) who played in the former program during the preceding season that may play for the new team he is now a part of, without restriction, is (are) the son(s) of the transferring coach(es). A maximum of two coaches from the same team in the former organization may coach together on the same team in the new organization. If more than the allotted players are on the new organization roster and were on the previous organization roster the year prior, the coaches from the previous organization's roster will not be allowed to coach with that team. This restriction will expire after one full season at the new program.

Article IV. EQUIPMENT

- A. All players must be equipped as follows (See **Section 8.02 Flag Football Rules** for flag equipment):
 - 1. Helmet with face guard – NOCSAE approved for age and weight
 - 2. Durable Shoulder pads
 - 3. Athletic supporter and protective cup
 - 4. Football pants with thigh, knee, hip, and butt pads.
 - 5. Mouthpiece must be colored and attached to the face guard. A "pacifier"-style lip guard mouthpiece is acceptable and does not require any attachment to the facemask.

6. Game jersey with contrasting color numbers on front and back. All jersey designs must be approved by the Director of Football Operations or the Rules Committee before game use.
 7. Socks and athletic shoes or Football cleats in accordance with NFHS rules.
 8. Jersey will be tucked in during game. If “shimmel” jerseys are worn, the entire team must be wearing them.
 9. The MMYFCL has jurisdiction over game uniforms. MMYFCL must approve all color changes or alternate uniforms and will settle any dispute over non-contrasting uniforms.
- B. All players must be properly equipped at the official check-in, including socks and all pads and a cup. Helmets are not required at check-in. Any player checking in and stating his name without any item except cup will be deemed ineligible for the game. Any player checking in without a cup may check at halftime if no other equipment is missing. For weighted divisions no uniform item may be changed or added after weigh-in (if applicable). See Rules Violations or penalties.
- C. Play card wrist bands (wrist coaches) are to be worn on the forearm and may extend no further than the elbow or may be attached to the belt of the player’s pants. Any player is allowed to wear a wrist coach. Wrist coaches are not required at weigh-in.
- D. Players may wear eye shade strips containing the USA Football “Heads Up” logo in addition to eye shade as defined in the NFHS Football Rules Book, Rule 1-5, Art. 3 c. 3.

Article V. PRACTICE, PRESEASON GAMES, TEAM SIZE AND FORMATION

- A. 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:
1. Chalk talk/skull session
 2. Viewing of fundamentals, practice or game films
 3. Individual/Group conditioning
 4. Individual/group skills sessions
 5. Dummies or other inanimate contact
 6. Play run through without pads
 7. Play run through with equipment, but without contact
- B. The MMYFCL recognizes three divisions in the calendar year:
1. **Preseason:** The preseason period begins on or about 1 August (See Paragraph H.) and continues until the Sunday before the first day of school in the first MMYFCL county to return to school.
 2. **Season:** The season is the period between the first Monday in the first week of school in the first MMYFCL county to return to school and continues until the end of the last MMYFCL Super Bowl game.
 3. **Offseason:** The offseason period begins at the end of the last MMYFCL Super Bowl game and continues until the official preseason start date (on or about 1 Aug).
- C. There are no restrictions on practice or team activities during the offseason period. Full contact (tackling to the ground) shall be limited to 30 minutes per practice, not to exceed 120 minutes per week during the preseason timeframe and not to exceed 90 minutes per week during the season timeframe as defined in B. above. The weekly limit does apply to pregame warmup but does not apply to that week’s game.
- D. Preseason and Postseason games are permissible.

- E. The MMYFCL is divided into Divisions which group teams of competitive strength. The programs are placed in the appropriate Division by the Executive Board based on various factors including previous regular season records and program history. Within each Division teams are formed based on the age and weight guidelines (see Section 9.01). In the top divisions each program is required to fill a team at each age level. In the lower divisions, programs are allowed to form one or more teams at any age level for which the program has qualified players.

The current MMYFCL division structure is as follows:

National	Most competitive teams (1 st teams)
American	More competitive teams (mostly 1 st teams)
Centennial	Competitive teams (mostly 1 st teams)
Federal	Least competitive (2 nd or higher teams)

- F. Programs are to evaluate all players during the preseason and are to place each player on the appropriate team based on skill level and experience and in accordance with the age and weight guidelines. If a program will place two or more teams in the same division (e.g., two Federal 8U teams), the talent and experience level of the available players are to be split evenly between those teams. If the Rules Committee determines that any team was deliberately formed outside of these guidelines, the Rules Committee will impose penalties on the offending program which may include, but are not limited to, forfeiture of games, post season bans and/or suspension or expulsion of the offending coaches and program administrators.
- G. A maximum of twenty-eight (28) players is permitted on each team.
- H. A minimum of sixteen (16) players is required to have a valid certifiable team.
- I. Practice hours are unlimited during preseason. Practice is limited to Six (6) hours a week in season. The first date of preseason practice will be determined by the MMYFCL Board during the offseason.
- J. The board will determine game dates for each division based on the number of teams in the division and the calendar.
- K. During a bye week each team may practice the normal six hours during the week and an additional two hours on Saturday or Sunday.
- L. Cheerleading programs must follow the guidelines regarding squad size, practices and preseason activities as outlined in the Cheerleading SOP.

Article VI. OFFICIALS

- A. Officials must be dressed in high school federation or NCAA uniforms.
- B. The scheduled home team pays officials during the season. Neutral site game expenses will be split evenly
- C. Official's payment for post season will be determined each year by MMYFCL.
- D. Home team shall provide a chain crew of adults 18 or older to work with the officials on the home side of the field. Visiting team has option of providing one of the three chain gang members. Chain Gang Volunteers are not permitted to heckle, coach, cheer or use electronic devices. Additionally, Chain Gang members shall not relay information across the field regarding the opposing team during the game or at halftime. Violators are subject to Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalties at the referee's discretion and to disciplinary action from the Rules Committee.

- E. Officials game coverage shall be as follows:
1. Flag, 5/6 Tackle – Use game moderator as described in Sections 8.01 & 8.02.
 2. 7U – Two (2) officials minimum
 3. 8U, 9U, 10U and 11U – Three (3) officials
 4. 12U, and 13U – Four (4) officials

Article VII. HOME TEAM RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Home team shall provide a regulation size football field and provide sideline markers and goal post pads. The Flag field shall be coned off to 80 yards by 40 yards. The Home team must provide a space for cheerleaders of both the home and away teams on the sideline and in front of or in close proximity of spectators for all games. (see Figure 1.1) Should a field not permit spectators on both sides of the field, cheerleaders are to be provided space to cheer on the same side as their fans. This space should measure no less than four (4) yards deep and seven (7) yards long and be separate from the football coaches and player area on the sideline. If a field has less than 10 yards from sideline to spectators (e.g. turf fields or high schools) cheerleaders are to be provided a reasonable space in front of spectators. This space will be marked with tape so that football coaches and players refrain from entering the area. It is recommended that cheerleading areas be approximately one (1) yard off the sideline to provide a small safety buffer between football players and cheerleaders. (See **Appendix B. Field Layout Diagrams**)
- B. The field must be roped off for crowd control from back of end zone to back of end zone on each side of the field. The rope shall be at least ten (10) yards back from the sidelines and at least two (2) yards back from cheerleading spaces. A field does not have to be roped off if the field cannot be accessed by fans, such as a high school field. Any field not properly roped off, by game time, as indicated above may result in a forfeit for the home team. The only people allowed behind each end zone will be two camerapersons per team. The board may approve exception to the crowd control rule based on the layout of fields. Camerapersons are not allowed in coaching area of the opposite team and must yield to individuals on sidelines (referees, coaches, players, chain crew, spotters, cheerleaders.)
- C. Fans are not allowed inside of the ropes at any time during the game day unless expressly invited onto the field by a referee in the case of an injury. Cheerleaders and other authorized on-field personnel may form postgame “tunnels” inside of the ropes. Parents are allowed to do so outside of the ropes but not inside.
- D. The home team must have the proper chains and down markers. The chains will be on the home team side.
- E. The home team must greet each visiting football and cheerleading team and show them their sideline/cheer space, area to warm-up, weigh-in area, restroom facilities, and location of concessions.
- F. The home team must review jersey colors via MMYFCL Web site and contact the visiting team no later than Wednesday prior to the game to verify directions and jersey color. Home team has choice of colors if a conflict of colors exists.
- G. The home team must call the visiting team and the Director of Football Operations if the game will not be played because of weather or field conditions as soon as possible. Every effort must be made to give notice at least two hours prior to game time. Circumstances surrounding game cancellations are subject to review by the Rules Committee.
- H. The home team must provide a site director, who will be responsible for keeping all games on schedule and reporting all incidents to the rules committee. The Site director

must be identified by an article of clothing that league will provide (neon yellow vest). All coaches must cooperate with this person to ensure smooth game day operation. The penalty for a home team not providing a Site Director: \$100/game for the first offense, 2nd offense loss of home game(s) and/or fine up to \$250; 3rd offense loss of home games and fine of \$500

- I. Each MMYFCL Head Coach is required to a copy of the current MMYFCL SOP readily available on the sidelines and is required to review the SOP with the officials and the opposing coach if a rules question arises during the game.
- J. Each team will provide an official game ball for their team to use. The Official MMYFCL Footballs are shown in the table below. **Any ball stamped with NFHS logo is allowed.** Any ball not listed that does not have a NFHS logo stamped on the ball may be submitted to the Rules Committee for approval as long as the make, model number and size (e.g., Wilson TDY Youth size football) is either printed on the ball or can be verified from product literature. Any ball used in a game must be approved and added to this table prior to use.

Division	Official Football
Pit Bull	Wilson Mini
Flag	Wilson Mini
7U	Wilson K2, Nike 1000K, Baden 500JR, Under Armour Pee Wee
8U	Wilson K2, Nike 1000K, Baden 500JR, Under Armour Pee Wee
9U	Wilson K2, Nike 1000K, Baden 500JR, Under Armour Pee Wee
10U	Wilson K2, Nike 1000K, Baden 500JR, Under Armour Pee Wee
11U	Wilson TDJ, Nike1000J, Baden 5000J, Under Armour Junior
12U	Wilson TDY; Nike1000Y, 500Y, 1001, 1005, 1205, Under Armour Youth
13U	Wilson TDY; Nike1000Y, 500Y, 1001, 1005, 1205, Under Armour Youth

- K. Make up games (rain-outs) / rescheduling will be handled by the MMYFCL BOD
- L. At halftime, cheerleaders have priority use of the field for halftime shows. Football players, coaches, spectators or others should not be using the field during halftime shows. Cheerleading halftime shows will take place at or around the 50-yard line of both the home and visiting teams, or be centralized to spectator viewing areas. If announcements or music is played at games, this should not occur during cheerleading halftime shows, unless it is part of the halftime performance. Halftime shows for each program are to be limited to three (3) minutes each for a total time of six (6) minutes combined for the entire halftime period. Programs with more than one squad performing at a halftime of one game must split their time to not be longer than three (3) minutes total.
- M. Music may only be played during a game at a team timeout, at the end of a quarter or at halftime, or after a touchdown. Any music played must be the radio-edited versions. Announcers are allowed, but the announcer shall not disparage the opponents in any way over the microphone or broadcast anything electronically from when the offense huddles up until the whistle ends the play (i.e., no play-by-play). Portable speakers may be used during warmups as long as the music does not interfere with any official game-site activity and as long as the music is at an acceptable volume. They must be turned off when approaching the game field.

Article VIII. PLAYING RULES AND GAME RESULTS

- A. MMYFCL will follow the National High School Federation Rule Book except where noted.
 - 1. Point after touchdown will be (1) point for run or pass; (2) points for kicking
 - 2. Games will be four (4) ten-minute quarters with clock controlled by referee. The game clock will be governed by Federation rules with the following exception: the clock will stop on change of possession. The referee will start the clock when the down marker is set and the ready for play whistle is blown. The clock will start on the snap if the previous play was out of bounds, an incomplete pass, or a team time out was granted.
 - 3. Maximum of 2 overtimes if necessary at all divisions 7U through 13U in the regular season. Overtimes will be played out until there is a winner in the playoffs.
 - 4. Game results must be e-mailed or called in by Sunday at 12:00 noon EDT. Also, any ejections that occur in the game, players that missed check-in, or any other incidents must be reported to the league at this time **by both coaches**. Failure to report will result in disciplinary action against the coach, team and/or program.
- B. If a team cannot provide enough players to start (9) or continue (8) a game (amended from the National High School Federation Rule Book), the opposing team will be awarded a forfeit win. The score will be reported as it stands at the time of the forfeit if the opposing team is winning or 2-0 if there is no score at the time of forfeit or if the opposing team is losing. Any team that forfeits due to lack of players is responsible for referee fees for that game regardless of which team is the home team, or for the entire referee fee for a neutral site game. Forfeits for lack of players are strongly discouraged and the forfeiting team and program are subject to further penalties at the discretion of the Executive Board and the Rules Committee.
- C. Any player who is ejected from a game must remove his shoulder pads immediately and may remain on the sidelines for the remainder of the game. The player will face a suspension of a minimum of one game. Any coach or admin who is ejected from a game must leave the premises immediately and will face a suspension of a minimum of one game. All coaches and admins serving a suspension will not be allowed to attend the game for the team(s) for which the coach or admin is rostered while on suspension and must not be on the property where the game is being played during the game. Players serving a suspension may attend the game and be on the sidelines but not in uniform. Failure to comply will result in additional suspensions or expulsion.
- D. Teams must be prepared to take the field and begin play 15 minutes prior to the official start time noted on the MMYFCL Schedule at the discretion of the game officials.
- E. Teams taking the field during pregame from the end zone shall not pass the 35-yard line. A violation will result in a suspension for the offending head coach of no less than one week.
- F. Common sportsmanship must prevail when a team is ahead of another team by 27 points. Quarterbacks/running backs may run with the ball following the snap or may hand off to another player who may run with the ball. The runner is allowed to use the entire line of scrimmage and is not restricted to running between the tackles. No passes, pitches, multiple handoffs, fake punts or trick plays are allowed. Failure to comply will result in the following penalty: 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty assessed to the head coach and loss of down. Violators of the spirit of any of the 27-point rules will be subject to disciplinary action by the Rules Committee.
- G. Once the score difference is 27 points the clock will continue to run. There will be no kickoffs for the trailing team – they will take possession of the ball at the 50-yard line.

- H. **Suspended games - Player Eligibility:** Once a team has checked in, the roster for that game is official, even if the game is suspended / postponed prior to kickoff. Both coaches are responsible for saving the original spotter roster for proof of player eligibility. Both coaches shall also note any players deemed ineligible for the opposing team on the back of their spotter roster and both coaches shall sign off on the back of both spotter rosters. If a game is suspended in the first half, all players who were eligible to play in the original game may participate in the resumption of the game without a re-check-in. Any players who were not present for the original check-in may not play in the first half and may check in at halftime. Any player deemed ineligible at the original check-in for any reason (not properly equipped, injured, suspended, etc.) is not eligible for the continuation of the game. If the game is suspended in the second half, only players who checked in and were eligible at the original check-in may participate.
- I. For the safety of both players and cheerleaders, no stunting should occur on the sidelines. Stunting may occur at halftime shows, provided ground and weather conditions permit.

Section 8.01 Flag Football Rules

A. General

1. Eligibility: 5-6-Year-old Children
2. Safety Glasses must have a secured strap
3. Mouthpieces are mandatory
4. All players are to split time evenly.
5. Seven (7) Players on Field at a time
6. Minimum Plays – All players should play an EQUAL amount of time.
7. Two (2) Coaches are allowed on field for each team
8. All players must have 12-inch flags with two flags hanging from side of the body and a third flag hanging from behind the body.
9. Jerseys must be tucked inside of pants and flag belt before the start of a play.
10. GAME TIME - Two running 20-minute halves. Each team is allowed two (2) timeouts a half. The clock will stop during the timeout. The last drive of a Half will end when either the offense scores a touchdown, or the offense turns the ball over on downs.
11. There are no kickoffs. The ball will be placed on the offense's 30-yard line to begin play after a score or at the beginning of each half.
12. The running clock shall stop following a score and will start again when the ball is ready for play on the 30-yard line. There are no PAT's in Flag Football.
13. Scoreboards are not to show the score during Flag games. These games are instructional only and the score is not kept.
14. Penalty yardage will be assessed in accordance with NHSF rules and the SOP. Penalty distances will not be prorated relative to the shortened (80 yard) field.
15. Home teams must provide a stopwatch to the volunteer referee.
16. PLAYCLOCK: The offense has 40 seconds from the end of the last play to snap the ball for the next play. Failure to do so results in a 5-yard penalty for Delay of Game.
17. Home teams must provide a copy of these rules to volunteer officials.
18. All coaches must have a copy of these rules in their possession during each game.

B. Playing Field

1. 80 X 40 Yd Field. First Possession of each half starts at 30-yard line
2. Cones should be set G-20-40-20-G
3. A Down marker must be used to mark the line of scrimmage.
4. A Box marker may also be used to identify the first down

C. Defense

1. Defensive Lineman must line up at least one yard off the line of scrimmage
2. No more than 3 linemen are allowed for any play. Those three defensive linemen and only those three can rush.
3. No Defensive Lineman may line up over the offensive center or in the gap between the center and the guard. Lining up head-up on the guards is acceptable. Linemen may rush through the gap between the center and guard so long as they start head up on the guard.
4. Defensive Tackles cannot be lined up any farther outside of the offensive tackle than head up. This means they can't line up outside of the tackle and "blitz" into the backfield.
5. All remaining defensive players must be at least 4 yards off the line of scrimmage and may not cross the line of scrimmage. (They cannot rush)
6. De-Flagging: THERE SHALL BE NO TACKLING OF THE BALL CARRIER, PASSER, OR KICKER (15 YARD PENALTY.) The player is down when the flag is removed from waist. The Defensive player shall hold the flag above his head. An accidental touching of the body by defensive player shall not be considered a violation; however, touching the head or face shall be a VIOLATION. A defensive player must go for the passer's flag and not the arm.
7. Interceptions are a live ball and may be returned

D. Offense

1. Every player must carry the ball at least once in the game before any other child can carry the ball a second time.
2. The offense has 4 plays (Downs) to advance the ball past the next 20-yard zone line identified by the cones regardless of distance.
3. 5 players must be set on line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball. Two of those players must be within two yards of the center. The other two may be split out anywhere along the line of scrimmage.
4. **All linemen (except the center) must be in a 2-point stance (standing) at the start of a play. No 3- or 4-point stances allowed**
5. BLOCKING - A Blocker must be on his feet at all times while blocking. The center, after snapping the ball in a normal crouch, must stand straight up before blocking. A Blocker CANNOT use his HANDS.
6. **The BALL CARRIER CANNOT use hands or arms to protect flag, CANNOT lower his head to drive off or run into defensive player, and CANNOT hurdle to prevent a defensive player from removing flag. If a player who carries or catches a ball has an untucked shirt before the start of a play, the play will be dead (no gain or loss of yards and no loss of down on the play) and the ball will be placed at the original line of scrimmage. If a ball carrier's shirt becomes untucked during the play as a result of defensive contact, the play may continue until the flag is**

pulled. If the shirt becomes untucked without being caused by defensive contact, the ball is dead at that spot (down and distance are applied as if the flag were pulled).

7. PASSING – the two remaining backfield men are eligible passers. All pass attempts will be made from behind the line of scrimmage.
8. RECEIVING - ALL Players are eligible to receive a forward pass. A receiver may catch a ball even if he steps out of bounds or out of the end zone as long as he comes down with one foot in bounds. If offensive and defensive players catch a pass simultaneously, the ball is declared dead and awarded to the offensive team.
9. A dead ball occurs if the center's snap hits the ground before reaching a backfield man or when the ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble or muffed ball. **THERE ARE NO FUMBLE RECOVERIES in Flag Football!** Down and distance of the play are applied at the spot of the fumble.
10. Offense has 40 seconds from the end of the previous play to put ball in play. Failure to do so results in delay of game penalty of five yards.
11. The offense may elect to punt by informing the referee. The referee will advance the ball thirty yards and the ball will be turned over to the other team.

Section 8.02 PIT BULL RULES

- A. The Mid Maryland Youth Football and Cheer League's Pit Bull Division shall use the NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION RULES for eight-man football except as modified below. However, no yardage penalties are assessed during a game and therefore referees will not be used. It is the responsibility of the On-Field Game Moderator, as discussed below, and the coaches to maintain control of the game.
- B. Pit Bull teams are required to certify rosters. All players must be a minimum of 5 years of age and must have turned 5 by August 1st prior to the beginning of the season. No player shall be older than 6 years of age prior to August 1st of that season. Players turning 7 after August 1st of the season are permitted. All players shall be weighed in the presence of the home and visiting head coaches just prior to beginning the game. All players that weigh over 75.9 lbs (with all equipment except helmet) cannot run the ball or advance the ball on a fumble and shall be designated with tape on their helmet. A roll of tape of the same design will be supplied to each program by the league. An approximately four-inch-long strip of tape shall be affixed to the front of the helmet just above the top of the facemask and another approximately four-inch-long strip of tape shall be affixed across the back of the helmet, not to cover up the certification and warning stickers on the helmet.
- C. Games will have a drop-dead time limit of 90 minutes after scheduled start time regardless of game situation at that point. Games will consist of four 16 minute quarters. A quarter is designated as 8 consecutive minutes of offense and 8 consecutive minutes of defense per team. (e.g., the visiting team begins on offense for 8 consecutive minutes and may run as many plays and score as many touchdowns within these 8 minutes; the visiting team then switches to defense for 8 consecutive minutes, thus completing one quarter). Upon scoring, the offensive team will regain possession at the 40-yard line to continue play until their 8 minutes of offense has expired. Clock runs continuously and is stopped only for injuries, equipment adjustments, attitude adjustments, weather delays or other unexpected events or emergencies. The clock is also stopped at approximately

the 4-minute mark of every 8-minute possession for approximately 1 minute to allow teams to make substitutions. Half time intermission is 10 minutes. Cheerleaders may perform a halftime show at Pit Bull and Flag football games.

- D. The home team shall provide a person (preferably a coach from another age group team or another representative from the Football Program) to control and moderate the game. The On-field Game Moderator will be in charge of blowing the whistle to end play, running the clock on the field (where one is not available on the scoreboard), placing the ball and maintaining control and the pace of the game. This moderator should also let coaches know when their players are continually not abiding by the rules of football such that these actions can be corrected (e.g., face masking, holding, offsides, etc.).

It is recommended that each program appoint an On-field game moderator for the season for each Pit Bull team to assure consistency and familiarity with the rules.

- E. The purpose of this program is instructional only. Therefore, **no scores or standings will be kept.** Scoreboards are not to show the score during Pit Bull games.
- F. Since the program is instructional, players are to play a minimum of 2 quarters of offense AND 2 quarters of defense per game. When team rosters exceed 16 players, no player shall play more than 2 quarters offense and defense except where there is no other alternative (e.g. injury, attitude problems etc.). It is the Head Coach's responsibility to ensure that this rule is followed. Spotting is not required. However, complaints from parents and other coaches in regard to playing time may result in the imposition of spotting, probation, suspension, etc. at the discretion of the MMYFCL Rules Committee.
- G. To be consistent, all games should be played on half of a regulation football field, reduced in width (marked by cones at the top of the numbers, or 9 yards from each sideline) with the first play of each drive starting on the opponent's 40 yard line. However, a well-marked (with field paint or cones) reduced-width field is acceptable if a regulation field is not available. The offensive teams of both the home and visiting teams shall drive toward the same end zone (i.e. defensive teams of the home and visiting teams should defend against the same end zone.). Visiting team begins the **first and third quarters** on offense, and the home team begins the **second and fourth quarters** on offense.
- H. If the offense fumbles the ball or the defense intercepts a pass, the play will be whistled dead and the offense will retain possession. In the case of a fumble behind the line of scrimmage or an interception anywhere in the field of play, the ball will be spotted at the line of scrimmage where the play began. If the fumble occurs past the line of scrimmage, the ball will be spotted at the spot of the fumble. Neither team may advance a fumble or an interception under any condition.
- I. The ball is to be placed where the ball is blown down with the exception that there will be no loss of yardage on plays. If the runner is tackled behind the line of scrimmage, the ball is returned to the original line of scrimmage.
- J. Once the QB is under center, all coaches must remain 10 yards away from all players. In addition, if a player (especially one carrying the ball) is moving towards a coach during the play, the coach must move out of the way of the player to maintain a 10-yard distance. Once the ball has been snapped, coaches on the field shall remain silent until the play is whistled dead.
- K. No more than 4 coaches per team are allowed on the field during play. No defensive player can play over center or in the guard-center gaps. Defensive guards may not shoot the A gap. Defensive guards must line up on the B gaps (outside shoulder of guards) to the extent possible depending on offensive alignment and must be in the down position

(three or four point stance). Defensive ends shall line up no wider than outside shoulder of the Tight ends, or, if faced with an offensive formation of less than 5 down linemen, across from the position the Tight End would occupy in a standard two-tight end formation (for eight-man, TE-G-C-G-TE). Four (4) defensive linemen (no more and no less) must be on the line of scrimmage between one and two yards from the ball; all other players must be at least five (5) yards off the line of scrimmage and must not move forward until the ball is snapped (i.e. no blitzing). When faced with an unbalanced offensive formation, the defensive line may shift to be head up on an offensive lineman and as long as no defensive lineman is over center or in the guard-center gaps. The outermost defensive linemen will be considered defensive ends and may be in an upright stance. The interior defensive linemen must be in the down position (three or four point stance). These rules apply everywhere on the field including at the goal line. Offensive guards shall have no more than 18-inch splits. **Due to this alignment, the QB may not run the ball between the guards (A gaps or over center) from any formation.**

Note: The Pit Bull program is instructional. The goal is to get the ball snapped and the play executed both defensively and offensively. Defensive coaches shall ensure that their defensive guards are not converging over the center immediately after the snap of the football. This typically results in the ball not being snapped (or snapped incorrectly) and therefore the play not being executed (neither offensively nor defensively). The defensive coach should also encourage the defensive lineman to go on the snap of the ball or movement of the offense, not the cadence. Since there are no penalties at this level, everyone knows the ball is being snapped on the first signal.

- L. The head coach and Program is responsible for the conduct of his players and spectators. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated, and the offender is subject to disciplinary action by the Rules Committee Reference Mid Maryland Youth Football and Cheer SOP for Equipment Requirements.
- M. The Instructional Program Director will settle any disputes.

Section 8.03 7U RULES

- A. The purpose of this classification is primarily for instruction, with posted scores and a playoff system.
- B. 7U shall follow the same rules to which division they are playing.
- C. To begin each half and after every score, the ball will be placed on the receiving team's own 35-yard line in place of the kickoff.
- D. If a team elects to punt the referee will mark off a declared punt of 20 yards rather than physically punting the football. If the result of the walk off would place the ball between the opponent's goal line and the 20-yard line going out, the ball will be placed on the 20-yard line and the opponent will assume possession from that point.
- E. A field goal and PAT (Point After Touchdown) kick shall be a free kick; i.e., no rush from the defense. Neither the offense nor defense shall move across the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball. The kicking team shall be allowed to take a direct snap and must place the ball on the block directly behind the center, and at least 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage. A successful PAT kick is worth 2 points, a field goal is worth 3 points, a pass play PAT is worth 2 points, and a run play PAT is worth one point. If an illegal kick is attempted, a 5-

- yard penalty will be assessed, and the down will be replayed. The offending head coach may face further disciplinary action from the league for the infraction.
- F. The defense must have five (5) players line up at least five (5) yards off the line of scrimmage, leaving a maximum of six (6) players lined up within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage. Once the offense has come to the line, any defensive player lined up within five yards of the line of scrimmage may not move forward until the ball is snapped. Once the ball is snapped all players can advance. No defensive player can advance inside of five yards from the line of scrimmage before the snap regardless of how many defensive players are there when the offense comes to the line. Penalty for this violation is five (5) yards; this is a live ball foul and the offense has the choice of the play or the penalty.
 - G. On Defense - **No defensive players can line up in the prohibited zone, defined as the center-guard gaps (A gaps) and directly over center within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage. No player can shift through the prohibited zone prior to the snap.** Defensive tackles may be head up on the guards and tackles or on outside shoulder (B & C Gaps) of the guards and tackles. **Due to this alignment, the player receiving the snap may not run the ball between the guards (into the prohibited zone) from any formation.**
 - H. The defense may employ a goal line defense when the offense has five (5) or less yards to go for a TD, allowing the defensive lineman to be in the offensive gaps between the center and guards. However, no one is allowed directly over the center within three yards of the line of scrimmage. Linebackers and other defensive players can be 3 yards from the L.O.S. The player receiving the snap may run the ball between the guards (A gaps or over center) when the offense has five (5) or less yards to go for a TD
 - I. The center may position and grip the ball as necessary to snap the ball. This would include placing the ball parallel to the line of scrimmage, allowing his hand, head and shoulders to be in the neutral zone.
 - J. Two (2) coaches from each team will be permitted on the field during the game. Once the **offense is set** the coaches on the field cannot speak or coach in any way and must remain ten (10) yards behind the team's most distant player from the line of scrimmage for the duration of the play. Failure to comply will result in a ten (10) yard penalty and possible disciplinary action by the Rules Committee.
 - K. Offensive Guards can have no more than 18-inch splits.

Section 8.04 8U RULES

- A. The purpose of this classification is primarily for instruction, with posted scores and a playoff system.
- B. 8U shall follow the same rules to which division they are playing.
- C. All Punts are dead ball plays until the ball is kicked. The offensive team must announce its intention to punt. Once a punt is declared, the clock will stop and will restart as soon as the ball is punted. The offense must then punt the ball and the defense may not interfere with such attempts. No player may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. Penalty for violation of this rule is 5 yards. The punting team must assume a normal punt formation with no more than 18-inch splits tackle-to-tackle and remain in the same formation until the ball is kicked. The punter must remain within the tackles and behind the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. The receiving team must line up with a minimum of 6 players within two yards of the line of scrimmage anywhere along the LOS and may not move until the ball is punted. **Alternate Punting Rule:** The punting team may choose to mark off a declared punt of 20 yards rather than physically punting the football. If the result of the walk off would

- place the ball between the opponent's goal line and the 20-yard line going out, the ball will be placed on the 20-yard line and the opponent will assume possession from that point.
- D. Field goals and PAT (Point After Touchdown) kicks will be a free kick in the same way as the punt. Neither the offense nor defense shall move across the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball. The kicking team shall be allowed to take a direct snap and must place the ball on the block directly behind the center, and at least 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage. A successful PAT kick is worth 2 points and a field goal is worth 3 points. If an illegal kick is attempted, a 5-yard penalty will be assessed and the down will be replayed. The offending head coach may face further disciplinary action from the league for the infraction.
 - E. The defense must have five (5) players line up at least five (5) yards off the line of scrimmage, leaving a maximum of six (6) players lined up within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage. Once the offense has come to the line, any defensive player lined up within five yards of the line of scrimmage may not move forward until the ball is snapped. Once the ball is snapped all players can advance. No defensive player can advance inside of five yards from the line of scrimmage before the snap regardless of how many defensive players are there when the offense comes to the line. Penalty for this violation is five (5) yards; this is a live ball foul and the offense has the choice of the play or the penalty.
 - F. On Defense - **No defensive players can line up in the center-guard gaps (A gaps) or directly over center within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage and they cannot shift through the A gaps prior to the snap.** Defensive tackles may be head up on the guards and tackles or on outside shoulder (B & C Gaps) of the guards and tackles. **Due to this alignment, the player receiving the snap may not run the ball between the guards (A gaps or over center) from any formation.**
 - G. The defense may employ a goal line defense when the offense has five (5) or less yards to go for a TD, allowing the defensive lineman to be in the offensive gaps between the center and guards. However, no one is allowed directly over the center within three yards of the line of scrimmage. Linebackers and other defensive players can be 3 yards from the L.O.S. The player receiving the snap may run the ball between the guards (A gaps or over center) when the offense has five (5) or less yards to go for a TD
 - H. The center may position and grip the ball as necessary to snap the ball. This would include placing the ball parallel to the line of scrimmage, allowing his hand, head and shoulders to be in the neutral zone.
 - I. Two (2) coaches from each team will be permitted on the field during the game. Once the **offense is set** or **the ball is on the kicking tee on a kickoff** the coaches on the field cannot speak or coach in any way and must remain ten (10) yards behind the team's most distant player from the line of scrimmage for the duration of the play. Failure to comply will result in a ten (10) yard penalty and possible disciplinary action by the Rules Committee.
 - K. Offensive Guards can have no more than 18-inch splits.

Section 8.05 9U RULES

- A. All Punts are dead ball plays until the ball is kicked. The offensive team must announce its intention to punt. Once a punt is declared, the clock will stop and will restart as soon as the ball is punted. The offense must then punt the ball and the defense may not interfere with such attempts. No player may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. Penalty for violation of this rule is five (5) yards. The punting team must assume a normal punt formation with no more than 18-inch splits tackle-to-tackle and remain in the same formation

- until the ball is kicked. The punter must remain within the tackles and behind the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. The receiving team must line up with a minimum of 6 players within two yards of the line of scrimmage anywhere along the LOS and may not move until the ball is punted.
- B. Field goals and extra point kicks will be a free kick like the punt. Neither the offense nor defense shall move across the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball. The kicking team shall be allowed to take a direct snap and must place the ball on the block directly behind the center, and at least five (5) yards behind the line of scrimmage. A successful extra point kick is worth 2 points and field goals are worth 3 points. If an illegal kick is attempted, a 5 yard penalty will be assessed and the down will be replayed. The offending head coach may face further disciplinary action from the league for the infraction.
 - C. The defense may have NO MORE than six players within three (3) yards of the line of scrimmage at the start of any play, and no player other than the allotted six may move forward toward the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped. ONCE the ball is snapped all players can advance. So for clarification, if you have a 6-3 or 6-2 defense then, the linebackers MUST be at least three (3) yards back off the line. Once the ball is snapped they can advance (or blitz, if you prefer); however they cannot advance inside of three yards from the line of scrimmage before the snap. If you are playing a 4-4 then 2 of your linebackers must be three (3) yards off the ball. Penalty for this violation is five (5) yards; this is a live ball foul and the offense has the choice of the play or the penalty.
 - D. One coach is allowed on the field for National, American and Centennial levels, and two coaches are allowed on the field for the first half of the regular season at the Federal level. Once the **offense breaks the huddle** or **the ball is on the kicking tee on a kickoff** the coaches on the field cannot speak or coach in any way and must remain at least ten (10) yards behind the team's most distant player from the line of scrimmage for the duration of the play. Failure to comply will result in a ten (10) yard penalty and possible disciplinary action by the Rules Committee.
 - E. The center may position and grip the ball as necessary to snap the ball. This would include placing the ball parallel to the line of scrimmage, allowing his hand, head and shoulders to be in the neutral zone.

Article IX. GAME CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

- A. All teams must be checked-in at least 30-minutes prior to the start of each scheduled league game. Late players are permitted to be checked in before the start of the game, or at the half if they arrive after the start of the game. Some divisions and/or age groups may be designated as “unweighted”, meaning that there are no weight restrictions for players at any position on the field. Those teams will disregard any rules pertaining to weigh-ins in this operating procedure.
- B. The head coach or designated coach, a team administrator of each team, and the players shall be the only ones permitted in the weigh-in area. NO FANS, PARENTS, OR OTHER COACHES ARE PERMITTED IN THE CHECK-IN AREA.
- C. Weigh-in must be done on a digital scale (See Article IX.K.)
- D. The official laminated team Roster, game day spotter’s sheet and an approved identification card (see Article I.D) for all players must be presented. A player without an approved ID card will not be eligible to play. In the event that the Official Roster or ID cards are not present at the time of check-in, these items must be produced by halftime of the game. If these items

- are not present at halftime, the second half may be played upon mutual consent of both teams, but the team without a roster and/or IDs will forfeit the contest regardless of outcome. In addition, the Head Coach of the offending team will be suspended for one game.
- E. A roll of tape of the same design will be supplied to each program by the league to designate red stripe players. Each home team must have this roll of tape at the scales for both teams at each weigh-in. If a team has a red stripe player and the league-supplied roll of tape is not at the scale, the head coach of the home team will be suspended for one game.
 - F. The Spotter Sheet shall reflect the jersey number(s) that each player is expected to wear during the game. If for any reason at check-in or after a player must wear another jersey with a different number, the spotter sheet must be updated at the time to reflect the current jersey number. At no time shall jersey number differences affect a player's eligibility. If the player matches the ID card and the name on the official roster, he is eligible regardless of jersey number.
 - G. The opposing coach shall review each ID card, the laminated roster and the spotter sheet as the player states his name, taps his/her cup and steps on the scale (if applicable). This procedure shall constitute the official check-in for that player.
 - H. Any player qualifying for that game as a red stripe player shall be designated as such on the spotter roster by making a check mark in the Red Stripe (**RS**) column on the spotter sheet.
 - I. Any player qualifying for that game shall be designated as such on the spotter roster by making a check mark in the Eligible (**E**) column on the spotter sheet. Any player who does not qualify for check-in for any reason will be designated as such by marking an X in the Eligible (**E**) column. The reason for the player not being eligible will be noted in the **Notes** column on the spotter roster. Reasons for ineligibility include, but are not limited to, over weight limit, absent, sick, injured, improperly equipped, no ID, etc. **See Spotter Procedures, Article X, H.**
 - J. Check-in shall be conducted without helmets. All cups, socks and pads will be checked at the check-in. Any player stepping to the opposing coach and stating his name without any item of required equipment as listed in Article IV will be deemed ineligible for the game. ~ If any player violates this rule, the head coach is subject to a minimum one game suspension. If any player is found to be wearing any part of the uniform that has been altered and that presents a safety hazard will be disqualified for a minimum of that game, and that player's head coach is subject to a minimum one game suspension with the length of the suspension to be based on the severity of the violation. If a coach/admin from one team suspects that a player from the opposing team has an equipment alteration or omission that must be verified by removing articles of clothing, he must contact the Site Director and have both head coaches summoned to the scales immediately. The player in question must remain at the scale until the issue is resolved. At this time, the Site Director must contact a member of the Executive Board to ensure that the MMYFCL is aware of the situation. If necessary, the Executive Board member will instruct the head coach to remove or display the uniform article in question. **Exception:** players who approach the scale or check-in without the appropriate athletic supporter/protective cup (as described in Article IV. Equipment) are allowed to retrieve that piece of equipment and check-in again provide it is before the start of the game (kickoff). The athletic supporter/protective cup is the only piece of equipment allowed to be retrieved, any other missing equipment will deem the player ineligible for the game.
 - K. No uniform item may be changed or added after weigh-in (if applicable). Violators will be subject to disciplinary action by the Rules Committee. ****THESE EQUIPMENT RULES DO NOT APPLY TO DIVISIONS/TEAMS DESIGNATED AS "UNWEIGHTED". ****

- L. Each player must play in the same equipment he has on during the weigh-in if applicable). ***Players will remain dressed in weigh-in uniform between weigh-in and game time.*** Players will be permitted to remove cold weather gear prior to stepping on the scale but must play without it. Gloves and forearm pads in accordance with NFHS rules and wrist coaches as defined in Article IV will be allowed to be added after weigh-in.
- M. All check-ins will be conducted in full uniform except for the helmet. Pre-weigh-ins (if applicable) are allowed prior to the first player of each team stepping on the scale for official check-in. Official check-in is defined by when your team is lined up at the check-in location and your first player announces his name, taps his cup and steps onto the scale 9if applicable). If your opponent has already lined up his team and completed his check-in, your team is still allowed to pre-weigh until your team begins official check-in. Official game check-in will occur only once for each player and the result is final.
- N. Digital Scale approved by the league will be used. Each scale must have written approval from the Director of Football Operations including the make and model of the scale and this approval must accompany the scale at each weigh-in. Scale shall read in either one tenth pound increments or in ounces. All digital readings will be rounded down. Ex. 115.9 digital reading = 115 lbs. Players must be a full pound over to miss weight. (On a scale reading oz., 115 lbs. 15 oz = 115 lbs., where 1 lb = 16 oz)
- O. Game Weight is determined by the MMYFCL weight chart for each division of play, plus any in season weight that MMYFCL has agreed upon prior to the season. Starting with the second weekend of games, an additional one-pound allowance will be given to each age group from 7U thru 13U for every designation (unrestricted, Red Stripe) every other week. This weight allowance becomes effective on Friday of the week specified on the Official Weight Chart.
- P. Equipment allowances without helmets:

Division	Weight Allowance
Pit Bull	n/a
Flag	n/a
7U	8 lbs.
8U	8 lbs.
9U	8 lbs.
10U	8 lbs.
11U	8 lbs.
12U	10 lbs.
13U	10 lbs.

- Q. When a player is deemed ineligible for a game because of improper and/or missing equipment, he must remove his shoulder pads at the scale if he plans to remain on the team sideline. He may not attempt to check-in again at half time of a game in which he did not qualify for the pre-game check-in. He will be eligible to participate in the pre-game check-in procedure for the next game.
- R. A Player must meet check-in criteria once in the first four (4) league-scheduled games to be deemed eligible for the remainder of the season.
- S. Deleted.
- T. **Game Postponements/Cancellations:** There will be three scenarios pertaining to check-in and player eligibility depending on the situation of when the game is cancelled:

1. If the game is cancelled prior to check-in, the official check-in will occur prior to the rescheduled game. The weights for the week the game is actually played will be used to determine eligibility, not the weights from the original schedule date (if applicable). For example, if a game is postponed in the second week of the season and played in the last week in October, the weight for the last week of October will be used.
2. If a game is postponed after the official check-in and before the start of the second half, the game will be resumed with the players who were deemed eligible at the official check-in for the first half. Any player who did not check in at the official check-in may be checked in at halftime and may play in the second half. The weights for the week the game is actually played will be used to determine eligibility. Any player who did not qualify at the official check-in may not participate in the game no matter when it is continued.
3. If a game is postponed after the start of the second half, the game will be resumed with the players who qualified at the official check-in. Any player who did not qualify or was not present may not be added for the continuation of the game.

Section 9.01 AGE AND WEIGHT GUIDELINES

MMYFCL has designated divisions of play based on age and weight for football and age for cheerleading. The age determination date for the season is August 1 of each year. All players may have any birth date between August 2 of the current season and August 1 of the following year. In cheerleading the age group breakdowns are specified in the Cheerleading Bylaws.

FOOTBALL AGE and WEIGHT CHART			
Division	Age	Max. Unrestricted Weight	Red Stripe Players
Pit Bull	5-6 years old	75.9 lbs.	unlimited
Flag	5-6 years old	n/a	n/a
7U	5-7 years old	85 lbs.	unlimited
8U	6-8 years old	95 lbs.	unlimited
9U	7-9 years old	110 lbs.	unlimited
10U	8-10 years old	120 lbs.	unlimited
11U	9-11 years old	135 lbs.	unlimited
12U	10-12 years old	n/a	n/a
13U	11-14 years old	n/a	n/a

Section 9.02 MMYFCL RED STRIPE RULE (7U thru 13U Divisions):

- A. The Red Stripe concept allows heavier players to play football with the children their own age, but in a restricted role. These players may weigh over the maximum weight for an unrestricted player as specified in the chart above. Each Red Stripe player will be designated as such during weigh-in before each game based on his weight relative to the unrestricted weigh limit for that week. Players falling between the maximum unrestricted weight and the Red Stripe weight limit for that week must be marked with tape on the front and back of their

helmets. A roll of tape of the same design will be supplied to each program by the league. An approximately four-inch-long strip of tape shall be affixed to the front of the helmet just above the top of the facemask and another approximately four-inch-long strip of tape shall be affixed across the back of the helmet, not to cover up the certification and warning stickers on the helmet. Red stripe players must play between the tackles except as noted. There is no set roster limit on red stripe players; however, to avoid a forfeit, there must be four players below the red stripe weight on the roster to fill out the team on the field to begin a game, and three players thereafter (see Article VIII. B.), and as long as the maximum roster size is not exceeded.

- B. Red stripe players must play as linemen. While on defense red stripe players must remain in the free blocking zone while it exists, or must engage or penetrate the offensive line before leaving the free blocking zone. They may not drop back into a linebacker role or a defensive back role on defense. While on offense, red stripe players may pull, cross-block or perform any other task that an offensive lineman typically performs.
- C. The red stripe player may NOT advance the ball at ANY time (e.g. a fumble, interception, kickoff or punt return – the play will be blown dead when the red stripe player is in possession of the ball – the ball will be spotted at that point). A red stripe player may intercept passes and recover fumbles. Red stripe players must play from a two-, three- or four-point stance in the tackle, guard or center positions on offense and from a three- or four-point stance either head-up on or inside of the offensive tackles on defense as defined as follows:
 - 1. On offense, a red stripe player may play the Center position (the Center being defined as the player snapping the ball), the Offensive Guard position (defined as one player to the right or left of the Center on the line of scrimmage), or the Offensive Tackle position (defined as one player to the right or left of the Guard on the line of scrimmage); under no circumstance shall the red stripe player ever be an eligible receiver, even if he would be considered “eligible” under normal football rules. Because he is ineligible, that player will be considered an ineligible lineman under normal football rules for all intent and purposes and be subject to any resulting penalty (e.g. ineligible receiver down field).
 - 2. On defense, a red stripe player must lineup with his inside shoulder in line with the outside shoulder of the Offensive tackle when viewed from the end zone (“outside shade” of the tackle) OR between the Offensive tackles (the Offensive Tackle as defined in the preceding paragraph) no more than one yard off of the Line of Scrimmage. However, if the offense elects to employ an unbalanced formation (see **Appendix A**), the defensive red strippers may choose to line up anywhere along the line of scrimmage that they wish with no restrictions whatsoever (but still in a three- or four-point stance and no more than one yard off of the Line of Scrimmage).
- D. Red Stripe players are allowed to play on kickoff or kick return teams however they will not be allowed to advance the ball. If a red stripe player recovers the ball on a kickoff, the ball is dead at that spot. Red Stripe players are allowed to kick the ball off.

A red stripe player may serve as the Punter (when the offensive team is in a traditional punt formation – i.e. the red stripe player is set 7-15 yards behind the Center to receive the snap) or Place Kicker (in the case of a PAT or Field Goal attempt); however, in either case, if the football (after leaving the center’s hands) hits the ground at any point in time prior to the punt/kick, the play will be immediately blown dead and the ball is downed at the spot where it hit the ground. After the ball is kicked, the red stripe player may operate as any other red stripe player in accordance with these rules.

- E. Any violation of the above rules as they pertain to red stripe players will result in the following:
1. The assessment of a 15-yard Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty against the offending team after completion of the play. Penalty will be assessed from the previous spot and will result in a loss of down if the penalty is committed by the offensive team. The only exception would be if the opposing team elects to take the result of the play over the enforcement of the penalty.
 2. The offending team's Head Coach will be reported to the MMYFCL rules committee will be referred to the Rules Committee for disciplinary action.

Article X. MANDATORY PLAY RULE & SPOTTER PROCEDURES

- A. Each player must participate in the game and abide by MMYCFL mandatory play rule.

Conference	Number of Players	Minimum Required Plays Per Game for Each Player
National	19 or less	8 plays
National	20 or more	6 plays
American	19 or less	8 plays
American	20 or more	6 plays
Federal	19 or less	10 plays
Federal	20 or more	8 plays

ANY DEAD BALL PLAY IS NOT INCLUDED AS A PLAY ON THE MANDATORY PLAY COUNT.

- B. The number of Minimum Required Plays for each team is determined by the number of players eligible to play at the opening kickoff. For example, suppose a National team has a roster of 22 players. Nineteen players check in successfully and are eligible to play at the opening kickoff. The minimum number of plays per player is then eight plays, as shown in the chart above. If two more players check in at halftime, bringing the number of players to 21, the minimum number of plays per player remains at eight plays. These two players only require four plays to meet their minimum because they arrived at halftime. (See Article X, E.)
- C. Each player should have all of his or her mandatory plays by the conclusion of the third quarter. If any player does not have their mandatory plays completed by the conclusion of the third quarter the player(s) shall start the fourth quarter and remain in the game until the mandatory plays are completed regardless of whether the team is involved in offensive, defensive or a special teams play. They must be inserted into the game immediately to complete all mandatory play requirements. (See SPOTTER PROCEDURES, Section G.)
- D. All players who missed the pre-game weigh-in and who weigh-in at half time are only required to meet half of the mandatory plays required and, like other players, should meet the play requirement by the end of the third quarter. The spotter must be notified of their active presence on the sideline prior to the start of the second half.
- E. Mandatory play sheets must be placed in game jersey numerical order.
- F. Head coach must supply opposing coaching staff with a properly completed league form for any player not participating due to disciplinary reasons.
- G. SPOTTER PROCEDURES:**

1. Each team must provide two spotters: one to spot the opposing team and an assistant spotter to help the opposing team's spotter to spot the assistant's team. If a volunteer spotter(s) cannot be found, an assistant coach(es) must spot for that game. The spotters are to be positioned on the appropriate sidelines from the 30-yard line to the goal line. Spotters are not permitted in the coaches box/team area (30 yard line to 30 yard line). Spotters (and Chain Gang Volunteers) are not permitted to heckle, coach, cheer or use electronic devices to signal information regarding the opposing team or it could result in team penalty. Spotters will not interfere with Referees, Coaches, Cheerleaders or Chain Gang volunteers.
2. The spotter shall mark the plays of the opposing team's players on the official MMYFCL Mandatory Play Sheet. Once the plays have been accomplished the coach of the opposing team shall be notified. The spotter will also notify the official if a player is completing their mandatory plays in the fourth quarter.
3. The Spotter shall use the official MMYFCL Mandatory Play Sheet provided by the opposing head coach at weigh in. The opposing head coach will list the names of all players on the roster in jersey numerical order. The coach will then give the form to the opposing coach at check-in. Each coach will note all players' eligibility on the form during check-in by marking a check or an "X" in the "E" column. The check mark will indicate that the player has successfully checked in for that game and the "X" will indicate he has not. The opposing coach will then add a notation to the "Notes" column to indicate why the player did not successfully check in (absent, not properly equipped, etc.). Also, if a player has successfully checked in as a red stripe player, the opposing coach will put a check mark next to that player under the "RS" column. No mark will be made if the player is not playing as a red stripe player. If the coach believes any player is late and may arrive in time to check in by halftime, the "E" column will be left blank until that player checks in. If the player checks in at halftime, the opposing coach shall mark the "E" column with "1/2". If the player does not arrive by halftime, the "E" column will be marked with an "X" and a notation that the player was absent will be added to the "Notes" column at that time. Upon completion of the check-in, the head coach will then pass the form on to his spotters for that day.
4. The Spotter must be aware of the number of plays required for each player. This is based on the number of eligible players that day who check in. See chart above.
5. Spotters will check mark the boxes each time a player is in the game for a play.
6. ALL plays are counted, including kick-offs, punts, extra points. A dead ball penalty is not a play, thus it is not counted.
7. All players on the Mandatory Play Sheet who appear at the scale fully equipped to participate and check-in for the game should have all plays satisfied by the end of the 3rd Quarter. If a player appears at the check-in location fully equipped to participate and check-in, it will be deemed that the coaching staff intends for that player to participate in the game. If at such time after check-in and prior to the completion of the game a player can not satisfy the minimum play rule due to injury or illness, a coach from that player's team must notify the spotter immediately. Furthermore, the player will immediately remove his shoulder pads. The spotter will then strike the player out and note the reason given for the player not satisfying the minimum play requirement. If all players have not satisfied their plays by the end of the 3rd Quarter, the Spotter **must stop the game before the beginning of the 4th quarter** and inform referee and the opposing coach what player(s) need to be entered into the game to satisfy their play requirement. The

player(s) must be inserted in the game immediately whether the team is on offense, defense or special teams. The player(s) must remain in the game until all of the required plays are satisfied. The spotter shall indicate those plays played during the fourth quarter with a “4” on the spotter sheet.

8. If any Red Stripe player has not satisfied his minimum plays by the end of the third quarter he must play in every play during which he is eligible until his minimum plays are met. The Red Stripe player shall not violate the Red Stripe rules to fulfill his minimum play requirement.
9. Any violation of the minimum play rule may result in suspension and/or forfeit at the Rules Committee’s discretion depending upon the circumstances of the violation.

NOTE: Upon completion of the all plays, the spotter will print and sign his name and return the sheet to a team coach or team administrator of the team on the spotter sheet. If the fulfillment of minimum plays is in question, the spotter is to note on the form in writing any discrepancies, thoroughly and specifically. Once the spotter form has been returned, the spotter must leave the field and watch the remainder of the game from outside of the ropes.

10. Each head coach is responsible for saving the spotter sheet for each game for the entire season. If a question arises about a game the head coach will be required to provide a copy of the signed spotter sheet if requested by the league. Failure to provide the spotter sheet will be referred to the rules committee for disciplinary action

Article XI. SCOUTING

Any representative of an MMYFCL team or program can film his own team’s practices or games. Any representative of a team or program can film any other team’s regular season or playoff games. No representative of any MMYFCL team or program can film any other team’s practices or scrimmages/preseason games. No representative of any MMYFCL program may attend another MMYFCL program’s practice unless on official MMYFCL business or with the prior approval of both program directors. No representative of any MMYFCL team or program can film any other team’s coaches or sideline activities during games at any time.

Article XII. TIE BREAKER PROCEDURES

- A. Tie breaker procedures for a balanced schedule
 1. Record/Winning percentage
 2. Head to Head
 3. Coin Toss / Card Draw
- B. Tie breaker procedures for an unbalanced schedule
 1. Record/Winning percentage
 2. Head to Head
 3. Total winning percentage of all your opponents
 4. Coin Toss / Card Draw

Article XIII. COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. Uphold all rules and regulations of Mid Maryland Youth Football and Cheer.

- B. Assure that each coach and organizational official has access to and has read all league regulations.
- C. Assure that each player knows and obeys the Players Code of Conduct.
- D. No coach shall make any physical contact with a player or coach of the opposing team for any reason at any time except for customary greetings during the pre- or post-game handshake or in administering aid in an emergency situation.
- E. Any coach or team official that knowingly allows an ineligible player to participate in a game will be subject to disciplinary action by the Executive Board.
- F. It is deemed proper ethics that anyone who knows in advance or has strong suspicions of an ineligible player should contact the Executive Board; Vice President or any member of the Executive Board as soon as possible.
- G. Accept decisions of the game officials on the field as being fair and called to the best ability of said officials.
- H. Together with game officials, be jointly responsible for the conduct and control of team's fans and spectators. Any fan that becomes a nuisance and is out of control is the responsibility of the coach and should be removed from the area.
- I. Do not leave the coach's area to shout instructions from sidelines.
- J. Do not criticize players in front of spectators, with gestures and loud noises, but reserve criticism until a more private situation arises.
- K. Do not criticize cheerleaders, an opposing team, its players, coaches or fans, by word-of-mouth or by gestures.
- L. Refrain from using abusive and profane language to anyone connected with the game, as a spectator, player, opposing coach or game official.
- M. Do not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct. An instruction to players to "get" another player or attempt to impose bodily harm to opposing players is considered incitement.
- N. Abstain from drinking of alcoholic beverages and smoking on both game and practice fields.
- O. Avoid running up scores. When a team leads its opponent by a total of 27+ points, they must make every possible attempt to hold the score down. This applies to Flag division through 13U divisions.
- P. Assure that no player practice or play in a game without proper equipment.
- Q. Remove from a game or practice, any player when slightly in doubt about his health, whether or not a result of injury, until competent medical advice is available.
- R. Assure that a player's scholastic achievement does not suffer because of participation in MMYFCL.
- S. Any coach who actively solicits a player from another organization by either making telephone calls, contacting players through any form of electronic communications or visiting players will be penalized.
- T. Only one "Speaking" Coach is allowed in the huddle on the field during a game time out. A second coach may provide water to the players.

Article XIV. PLAYERS CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. No fighting or hitting, kicking, striking or otherwise abusing opponents, teammates or cheerleaders at any time before, during or after a game, scrimmage or practice game, unless the action occurs in the course of normal events that would be acceptable to a football play such as, but not limited to, blocking, tackling, jamming a receiver, attempting to avoid a block, attempting to dislodge the ball, or by accident.

- B. No verbal or physical intimidation by making gestures such as victory laps, “we’re number one” chants or other attempts to “bring down” or otherwise demean will be tolerated.
 - C. Neither disrespectful behavior or derogatory comments aimed at cheerleaders nor purposeful physical actions into the cheerleading area are permitted. (i.e., running into cheerleading areas when play is not in proximity.)
 - D. Report to your coach any knowledge of an ineligible player or “ringer” on your team or another team.
 - E. No dirty or illegal playing techniques will be tolerated.
 - F. No talking back to officials, teammates, opposing players or coaches will be tolerated.
 - G. No profanity or childish displays of temper will be allowed at game or practice fields.
 - H. Disciplinary problems at school or unsatisfactory classroom performance will not be tolerated.
- I. **NOTE (ARTICLES XIII & XIV): THE PROGRAM IS EXPECTED TO ADDRESS THESE ITEMS WITH ALL THEIR PLAYERS AND COACHES PRIOR TO THE START OF THE SEASON. VIOLATIONS OF ANY OF THESE RULES WILL BE REFERRED TO THE RULES COMMITTEE FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION. HEAD COACHES AND/OR PROGRAM DIRECTORS WILL IMMEDIATELY REPORT ANY PLAYER OR COACH EJECTIONS TO THE LEAGUE BY 12:00 NOON THE DAY AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE GAME.**

Article XV. PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this code of ethics.
- B. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, cheerleaders, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports events.
- C. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of any personal desire to win.
- D. I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- E. I will provide support for coaches and officials working with my child to provide a positive, enjoyable experience for all.
- F. I will demand a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free sports environment for my child and agree to assist by refraining from their use at all youth sports events.
- G. I will remember that the game is for children and not for adults.
- H. I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.
- I. I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.
- J. I will always address any issues with my child’s coach in private.
- K. I will promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience within my personal constraints by assisting with coaching, being a respectful fan, providing transportation or whatever I am capable of doing.

NOTE (ARTICLE XV): VIOLATION OF THESE RULES WILL RESULT IN A REVIEW BY THE RULES COMMITTEE AND THE BOD AND VIOLATORS ARE SUBJECT TO PENALTIES UP TO AND INCLUDING SUSPENSION FOR THE SEASON.

Appendix A. RED STRIPE ELIGIBLE POSITIONS

On offense, a red stripe player may play the Center position (the Center being defined as the player snapping the ball), the Offensive Guard position (defined as one player to the right or left of the Center on the line of scrimmage), or the Offensive Tackle position (defined as one player to the right or left of the Guard on the line of scrimmage). All red stripe players must be in a three- or four-point (or squatting two-point “pass set” on offense) stance on the LOS. This document does not attempt to define all possible formations. The general idea is to prevent either side from gaining a competitive Red Stripe advantage by formation.

E **LT LG C RG RT** TE
 SB QB E
 RB

Players shown in red are eligible to be red stripe players. Defensive red stripe players must remain in a 3- or 4-point stance in an outside shade on RT and LT or between them on the LOS (balanced formation).

E LT2 **LT1 LG C RG RT1** RT2 E
 QB
 RB

Players shown in red are eligible to be red stripe players. Defensive red stripe players must remain in a 3- or 4-point stance in an outside shade on RT1 and LT1 or between them on the LOS (balanced formation).

LG C RG RT1 RT2 RT3 TE
E QB SB E
 RB

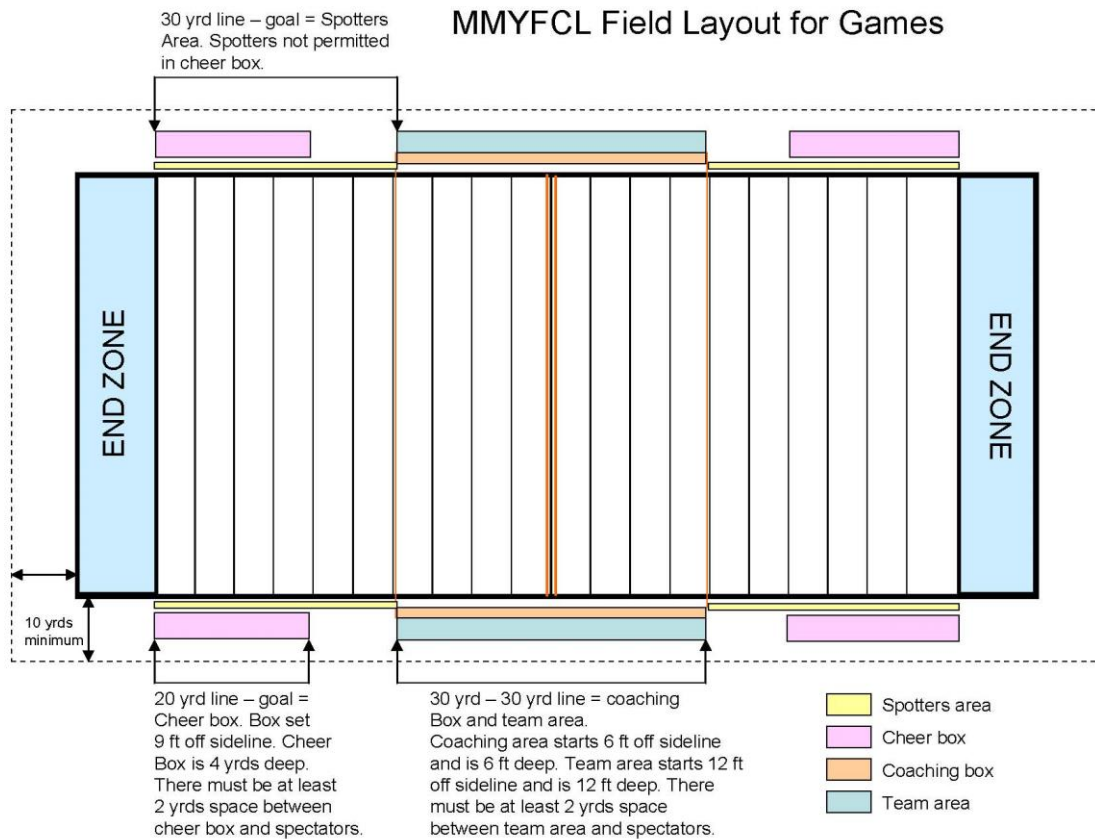
Players shown in red are eligible to be red stripe players. Technically, the left guard is eligible by alignment. However, he is ineligible as a red stripe player and therefore cannot be downfield on a forward pass play. Because the line is unbalanced, the defensive red stripe players must remain in a 3- or 4-point stance but may line up anywhere along the LOS.

E **LG C RG RT1** RT2 TE
 SB QB E
 RB

TE LG C RG RT1 RT2 TE
 SB QB E
 RB

Players shown in red are eligible to be red stripe players. Technically, the left end is eligible to be a red stripe player as we do not define a maximum split between linemen. However, he is ineligible and therefore cannot be downfield on a forward pass play. Because the line is unbalanced, the defensive red stripe players must remain in a 3- or 4-point stance but may line up anywhere along the LOS.

Appendix B. FIELD LAYOUT DIAGRAMS



MMYFCL Guideline for Game Day Field Personnel

