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Agreed Rules, Policies and Procedures – Tackle Football – ASA Combined League Updated February 2021

The following Rules, Policies & Procedures (“Football Rules”) apply to all teams, players, parents and coaches participating in the combined tackle football league administered by the Allen Sports Association (ASA) regardless of the member organization that accepted the team’s registration.

Prior to May 1 each year, the presiding officer (“Commissioner” or “Football Director”) from each member organization’s Volunteer Football Board (“Football Board”) will review this document, agree all modifications thereto, and certify the Football Rules contained herein. The most current certified version of the Football Rules will be posted to each member organization’s website and available for download at all times.

JOINT STATEMENT ON SPORTSMANSHIP

The combined tackle football league administered by ASA exists to promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, fellowship, recreation and competition through voluntary participation in youth sports. This league is recreational in nature and is intended to give children a safe environment to participate in the tradition of American football.

As such, all participants (including, but not limited to, coaches, players, parents and fans) are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship and adhere to the letter and spirit of league rules and regulations at all times. ASA has a zero tolerance policy with regard to poor sportsmanship, abusive language, willful violations of league rules and violent behavior.

Each Head Coach is responsible for the actions of his/her Assistant Coaches, players, parents, and fans during both practice and games. Good sportsmanship should be encouraged and demonstrated at all times without exception.

Coaches, players, parents and fans that use verbally abusive language, engage in violent or threatening behavior, and/or repeatedly and willfully violate league rules will be ejected, asked to leave the field, and will face disciplinary action up to and including removal from the league without refund. Local police will be notified in the event of criminal behavior.

Section 1: LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

The respective Football Boards of each member organization will share the administrative duties associated with the combined tackle football league (“Combined League”) in which its teams participate and actively collaborate to resolve any discrepancies in rules interpretation, conflicts between teams, and/or any other issues as required.

Master Scheduler

The master scheduler will be responsible for administering the game and playoff schedules for the Combined League and coordinate with member organizations, local parks departments and or school districts to ensure field availability, review reported conflicts with the individual Sports Specialists at member organizations, and confirm any/all schedule revisions and the timing with which these are to be published to member organization websites.

Oversight Committee

The ASA Football Commissioner, the Master Scheduler, and one (1) board member from Rockwall/Heath, Wylie, and Little Elm will comprise an Oversight Committee to ensure coordination across member organizations. The Oversight Committee will be primarily responsible for ensuring consistent rules interpretations, between member organizations the master game schedule, league-wide communications to be routed thru member organizations, conflict resolution, reviewing player transfers, maintaining a master file of team rosters and official player weights, agreeing final league standings/playoff seeding, and ensuring overall coordination between the Football Boards of each member organization.

The Oversight Committee is the judge of fact in all questions of eligibility regarding players and coaches and shall be the final authority on all matters of eligibility.

Any issue raised in or pertinent to the Combined League that is not otherwise covered by this rules document shall be left to the sole discretion of the Oversight Committee.

Football Boards

Individual member organizations will maintain their respective Football Boards to serve as Division Coordinators, provide coaches with a point of contact for questions/concerns, disseminate announcements from the Oversight Committee, and to act as an advocate to the Oversight Committee and member organizations for their teams.

Each member organization is responsible for ensuring that the structure, composition, and level of authority of its Football Board is appropriate to support the teams it registers for the Combined League and is consistent with organizational rules and by-laws.

League Communication Process

The Head Coach is directly responsible for the behavior of his/her assistant coaches, players, parents and fans and for all team interactions with the league, football board members and game officials. Head coaches are the point of contact and representatives for their team in all matters related to the Combined League and the member organization through which the team is registered.

The Head Coach has a duty of candor to inquiries from the Oversight Committee and Football Board. Where a coach is requested or required to meet with his/her Football Board for any reason, including disciplinary investigations, the coach is expected to answer questions honestly and in a forthright manner.

Likewise, the Head Coach is entitled to responsiveness from their Football Board including, but not limited to, an explanation of rules in question, a rationale for any decision rendered by the Football Board, and a reasonable right to appeal decisions in accordance with their member organizations rules and by-laws.

In an effort to promote clear and direct communications head coaches must be the voice of the team and should follow the following communication process.

- All inquiries to the Combined League should be originated by the Head Coach and directed to the appropriate Division Director as assigned by their Football Board.
- If the Division Director is unable to resolve the issue, the matter is to be escalated to the member organization's Commissioner for review. The Commissioner, at his/her discretion, may refer the matter to the Football Board at large, escalate the issue to the Oversight Committee, or defer to the appropriate authority as needed for resolution.
- Each member organization's Football Board has a duty to review and respond to inquiries raised in good faith and through appropriate channels in a timely manner. While not always practical, the Board should strive to resolve any questions or issues prior to the inquiring team's next game.
- Each member organization's Football Board has a duty to treat all inquiries raised in good faith and through appropriate channels in an appropriate and professional manner based upon fact. Specific communications regarding the inquiry shall be kept confidential, and the identity of the inquiring team is to be protected. Retaliation against teams making inquiries in good faith is expressly forbidden.
- Inquiries raised outside of the protocol specified above (including, but not limited to, phone inquiries to ASA Customer Service) will result in a delayed response.

Section 2: COACHES

- All coaches must meet the minimum age requirements set forth by the member organization that issues his/her coaching credentials as of the date his/her team is registered.
- All coaches must have a valid coach's badge issued by the member organization thru which the team is registered. Badges must be available at all times during games and must be submitted for inspection per the request of game officials, representatives of the Football Board and or facility and field supervisors. Coaches without a valid badge will be asked to leave the sideline.
- Teams are authorized have up to six (6) coaches on the sideline during games. For purposes of this guideline, game officials will consider any adult inside the players' box to be a coach. Adults without a valid coach's badge will be asked to leave the sideline.
- All coaches must have a valid Tackle Football Certification from USA Football.

- All coaches must comply with any and all terms and conditions requirements as specified by their member organization including, but not limited to, submission to a background check and/or completion of a coach's contract and application.
- All coaches are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times without exception. The Head Coach has primary responsibility for correcting poor sportsmanship and violations of rules among his team's Assistant Coaches, players, parents and fans.
- Head coaches are directly responsible for all team interactions with the league, their member organization's Football Board, board members and game officials.
- Each member organization and its Football Board reserve the right to revoke a coaching badge and terminate a coaching assignment at any time for willful violations of these Football Rules and/or failing to demonstrate proper sportsmanship.
- All terminations of coaching assignments by the applicable Football Board will be honored by all other member organizations without exception.
- The Oversight Committee reserves the right to refer disciplinary matters to the appropriate Football Board for review in accordance with member organization rules and by-laws.

Section 3: LEAGUE STRUCTURE

The Combined League is composed of Divisions formed based upon school grade subject to maximum age limits consistent with UIL rules followed in Texas high school sports. Certain rules (including, but not limited to, number of players per side, ball carrying weight limits, field dimensions, ball size and extra points) differ between Divisions. The Oversight Committee is responsible for ensuring that Division-specific rules are age appropriate and are applied consistently throughout the Combined League.

Age-specific rules are discussed in detail in subsequent sections of this document. The key differences between age groups are summarized in the table below.

Division	Grade	Max Age at Sept 1	Players per Side	Ball Carrier Max Weight	Field Dimensions	Game Ball
D2	2 nd Grade	9	9 v 9	85.0 lbs	Standard 100 yd	K2
D3	3 rd Grade	10	11 v 11	100.0 lbs	Standard 100 yd	K2
D4	4 th Grade	11	11 v 11	115.0 lbs	Standard 100 yd	K2
D5	5 th Grade	12	11 v 11	125.0 lbs	Standard 100 yd	TDJ
D6	6 th Grade	13	11 v 11	135.0 lbs	Standard 100 yd	TDJ

League Format

Teams will play games against opponents within their age appropriate division. Please see Section 4 for information regarding Player Eligibility.

All divisions will play an eight (8) game regular season. The specific format of the regular season will vary based on the number of teams enrolled in a division, field availability, weather, scheduling conflicts with school events, etc. While most games are scheduled for weekends, weeknight games are possible. The Oversight Committee and member Football Boards reserve the right to adjust the regular season format as needed based upon field availability, weather, and the competitive balance in each division.

All divisions will have post-season play. The Oversight Committee and member Football Boards reserve the right to adjust postseason format and split playoff brackets as needed based upon the number of teams enrolled in each division, field availability, weather, and the competitive balance within each division.

Weather permitting, all teams will have the opportunity to play in at least one postseason game.

Upon the request of game officials, the visiting team will need to supply three volunteers to serve as the chain crew on game days.

Tiebreaker Process

For purposes of seeding playoff brackets, the Combined League will use the following process to break ties and determine final standings:

1. Win/Loss Percentage
2. Results of Head-to-head match-ups
3. Fewest Points Allowed Head-to-head
4. Coin Flip

Game Scheduling Policy and Cancellations

All game schedules are maintained by the Master Scheduler and validated by the Oversight Committee. Member Organization Football Boards do not participate in setting regular season schedules or in determining team match-ups.

The Master Scheduler will work directly with member organizations, local parks departments and local schools to ensure field availability and to confirm the safety status of field conditions. Field closures due to inclement weather are at the sole discretion of local parks departments and/or local schools. Please note that cancellation notices are often received late in the day. Notification of game cancellations will be posted to member organizations websites as soon as received.

Games cancelled prior to kickoff will be rescheduled as quickly as reasonably possible.

Games in progress that are halted after the mid-way point of the third quarter will be deemed officially complete, and the score at the time of cancellation will be recorded as final.

Games in progress that are halted with a point differential of 14 points or more will be deemed officially complete regardless of the point of stoppage, and the score at the time of cancellation will be recorded as final.

Games in progress halted prior to the mid-way point of the third quarter and with a point differential of 13 points or less will be resumed from the point of stoppage. Coaches from both teams and the game officials must record the down, distance, spot of the ball and the time remaining and report to the Master Scheduler.

Incomplete and cancelled games will be rescheduled as quickly as possible based upon field conditions, weeks remaining in the season, availability of game officials and available field space. While the Master Scheduler will make every effort to handle rescheduled games as equitably as possible, the Combined League cannot honor any requests for specific days, times or locations for rescheduled games.

COVID-19 Return to Play Violations

Up to date ASA COVID-19 Return to Play guidelines can be found on the ASA website.

Any violation of ASA COVID-19 Return to Play guidelines may result in immediate sanctions, including forfeit of games, suspension of coaches and/or players, and removal from the league.

Scouting, Use of Electronics and Cameras

Coaches, players, and parents are prohibited from scouting or making any recording of the practice(s) of any other team. In the Combined League for any reason.

Coaches, players, and parents are prohibited from scouting or making any recording of any practice or scrimmage held at a league-provided practice field for any reason.

Coaches, players, and parents may scout or record video of any Combined League game subject to the following guidelines.

- Only scorekeepers and authorized personnel will be allowed in the press box during games held at stadium locations. Teams will not be allowed to video from the press box.
- Drones cannot be operated within 500 feet of a game or practice field for any reason. The use of drones to record games or practices is expressly prohibited.

- Coaches and/or parents may record games in which their team plays from the bleachers on their sideline, from behind either end zone, or from any other location approved by game and league officials. Under no circumstances will a coach or parent be allowed to record games from the opponent's sideline.
- Coaches and/or parents may record league games in which other teams play for scouting purposes, provided that the Coach/parent videotapes such game(s) from a neutral location (end zone location or bleachers in a stadium setting). Under no circumstances will a coach or parent be allowed to make a scouting video from immediately behind another team's sideline.
- All cameras must be kept a safe distance from the playing surface. Game and league officials reserve the right to require videographers to move their equipment for safety reasons or to comply with these rules at any time.

Section 4: PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

All teams, players, and coaches must be fully and properly registered through ASA in order to be eligible to participate in the Combined League.

The individual Football Boards are responsible for ensuring the eligibility of all players registered through the member organization being served. Any questions regarding player eligibility should be escalated to the Oversight Committee as soon as they arise.

As noted above, the Oversight Committee is the judge of fact in all questions of eligibility regarding players and coaches and shall be the final authority on all matters of eligibility.

Age Requirements

Player age requirements are based upon school grade subject to maximum age limits consistent with UIL rules followed in Texas high school sports. Maximum ages for each division are reflected in the table in Section 3: League Structure.

- Any second grader that turns 9 prior to September 1 will not be eligible to play for a team in D2, but he/she could play for a team in D3.
- Any third grader that turns 10 prior to September 1 will not be eligible to play for a team in D3, but he/she could play for a team in D4.
- Any fourth grader that turns 11 prior to September 1 will not be eligible to play for a team in D4, but he/she could play for a team in D5.
- Any fifth grader that turns 12 prior to September 1 will not be eligible to play for a team in D5, but he/she could play for a team in D6.
- Any sixth grader that turns 13 prior to September 1 will not be eligible to play for a team in the Combined League.

Notwithstanding the requirements above, a player may "play up" one (1) year above the division for which he/she otherwise qualifies at the discretion of the Football Board. The member organization

through which the player is registered may require a waiver from the child's parents as a condition of accepting the registration to "play up".

Individual member organizations may, at their discretion, require proof of player age via birth certificate and verification of school enrollment as a condition of registration.

Ball Carrier Weight Limits

The following are the weight limits applicable to the ball carrying positions in each league. All players must be weighed by league officials to be eligible to play.

<i>Division</i>	Maximum Weight
<i>D2 – 2nd Grade</i>	85.0 lbs.
<i>D3 – 3rd Grade</i>	100.0 lbs.
<i>D4 – 4th Grade</i>	115.0 lbs.
<i>D5 – 5th Grade</i>	125.0 lbs.
<i>D6 – 6th Grade</i>	135.0 lbs.

The following rules apply with respect to the posted ball carrying weight limits shown above.

- The weight recorded for any player at the time he/she is weighed by league officials will be deemed official for the entire season.
- All players with official weights less than or equal to the ball carrying weight limit may play any position without restriction subject to minimum participation rules.
- All players with official weights above the posted ball carrying weight limit will be required to wear an approved sticker or marking on the back of their helmet.
- On defense, players with official weights above the posted ball carrying weight limit may play any position without restriction subject to minimum participation rules. All such players may advance a fumble or interception until tackled or forced out of play.
- On offense, players with official weights above the posted ball carrying weight limit must play a "down-lineman" position (center, offensive guard, offensive tackle, or tight end) and be completely set at the snap of the ball. Players over the weight limit cannot line up in the offensive backfield or as a wide receiver, take a snap, go in motion, accept a handoff or lateral, or advance a fumble. A player over the weight limit playing tight-end may catch a forward pass thrown beyond the line of scrimmage and advance the ball after completing the catch.
- On special teams, players with official weights over the ball carrying weight limit may line up on the front line on kick-off returns. They may not line up as a holder for field goals or extra points in leagues with live kicks. A player over the weight limit may be used a kicker on kick-offs, field goals and extra points. Kickers weighing over the weight limit cannot participate in a fake field goal or advance the ball via run or pass.

Prohibition against Players Playing on Two Teams

No player may play on any team in the Combined League if he/she plays in any other organized fall football tackle league. There are no exceptions to this rule.

If a player participates in a Combined League game and is found to also play on a team in a different organized fall football league, the team for which the player played will forfeit each game in which that player participated and the player will be removed from the league. Coaches that knowingly use a player that plays on multiple teams will be subject to disciplinary measures in accordance with the rules and by-laws of the member organization through which the team is registered.

Section 5: TEAMS AND TEAM STRUCTURE

Roster Size

For D2 the maximum allowed roster size is 18 players. For all other Divisions the maximum roster size is 22 players. Team requests to exceed the maximum roster size will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Oversight Committee.

Team Formation

Teams will be formed in accordance with the rules and by-laws of the member organization through which the coach and players are registered.

Each member organization is responsible for ensuring that all team registrations are consistent with organizational rules and by-laws and comply with the provisions set forth in the rules for the Combined League.

The Oversight Committee reserves the right to review team formation procedures and to propose changes as necessary to ensure a reasonable level of consistency across member organizations.

Prohibition Against “Select” Teams

Given the recreational nature of the ASA Football program, it is the Oversight Committee’s intention (with the full support of the ASA Football Board) not to allow “select” teams to participate in the Combined League.

The ASA Football Board reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to determine what constitutes a “select” football team. The board reserves the right to review team rosters, leagues in which the team has previously participated, and any other information deemed pertinent in determining whether or not a prospective team meets the criteria of a “select” team as set forth in the applicable member organization’s rules and by-laws.

Any team deemed a “select” team by the ASA Football Board will be considered to be a “select” team by all other member organizations. As such, any roster restrictions, conditional registrations, and/or denial of admittance to the Combined League imposed by the ASA Football Board on all “select” teams will be honored by all other participating member organizations.

In the event that individual member organizations disagree over the “select” status of any prospective team, the Oversight Committee will review the matter and make a final determination on the team’s eligibility to participate in the Combined League. In all such cases, the Oversight Committee is the judge of fact in all questions of eligibility regarding all new and returning teams and shall be the final authority on all matters of eligibility.

Returning Teams

For the purposes of this rules document, all tackle teams registered thru ASA or PSA for the previous football season are considered to be “returning teams” until the appropriate Football Board confirms otherwise.

Each member organization reserves the right to establish reasonable criteria for returning teams including, but not limited to, a minimum number of returning players and eligibility of returning coaches.

While team status will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, any such criteria used to determine whether or not a team is considered “returning” are to be applied uniformly to all teams in the applicable age Division.

Each Football Board reserves the right to disband or combine teams based on League enrollment. Disbandment or combination decisions rendered by the applicable Football Board will be honored by all other member organizations without exception.

Prohibition Against Recruitment of Players from Returning Teams

Coaches may not actively recruit any player from any returning team regardless of that team’s status or expected status for the upcoming season. If a player played on an ASA or PSA team in the prior year, all Coaches should consider such player a returning player to such team and may not actively recruit such player unless or until the applicable Division Coordinator confirms otherwise. Any dispute arising out of the recruiting or assignment of such returning player to another team shall be appealable to the Oversight Committee. Any Coach is found to be actively recruiting players from a returning team, will be subject to disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the applicable member organization’s rules and by-laws.

Returning Players Guarantee

Subject to the process and limitations set forth below, any player wishing to return to his team from the previous season will be guaranteed a spot on that team's roster for the upcoming season.

- No later than April 1st (prior to the upcoming season), the Head Coach of a returning team shall send an email to the parents of all players (or of each player, individually) inquiring as to the player(s) intent to return to the team for the current season. All players responding in the affirmative will be guaranteed a spot on the returning team's roster for the current season.
- The Head Coach may give a reasonable deadline of at least 15 days for the parent(s) of each player to respond. The Head Coach may assume that any player answering in the negative, or not responding by the reasonable deadline, will not be included on the returning team's roster for the current season. In no case, should the deadline for response be prior to the first day of registration for the coming season.
- The Football Boards of each member organization reserves the right to contact the parent(s) of any player, confirm that the Coach has met his obligation to invite all players from the previous season to return, and verify the choice of the parent(s) or player.
- Any dispute between a player (or the player's parent(s)) and the Head Coach regarding whether that player has the right to return to the team's roster for the upcoming season shall be reviewed and resolved by the applicable Football Board prior to the close of registration.
- Decisions rendered by the applicable Football Board in all such disputes will be honored by all other member organizations.

Player Transfers

Any player who played for an ASA or PSA team in the previous season has the option to request placement on a different team for the upcoming season. Players requesting a transfer will be considered as an "individual registration player" and a new team assignment determined based upon the rules and by-laws of the member organization through which the player is registered.

In order to protect the overall competitiveness of the league, requests to transfer to a specific team cannot be guaranteed. A transferring player's new team assignment will be dictated by the applicable rules and by-laws of the member organization through which the player is registered.

All player transfers between teams from different member organizations will be reviewed by the Oversight Committee to confirm that no violation of rules and by-laws governing player placement and prohibiting recruitment of returning players have occurred.

The Oversight Committee reserves the right to request changes in team assignment to remediate any rules violations that arise from player transfers.

Recruitment of New Players

Prospective players who did not play for an ASA or PSA Football Program team in the previous season and have not already registered through ASA for the upcoming season are eligible for active recruitment to join a team participating in the Combined League.

Once a player has registered with ASA, he/she becomes an “individual registration player” and is no longer eligible for recruitment. Team placement for all players in individual registration will be determined by the member organization through which the player registered in accordance with applicable procedures, rules and by-laws.

The Oversight Committee reserves the right to review team assignment procedures followed by all participating member organizations and propose changes as needed to protect the competitiveness of the Combined League.

Recruitment of returning players is expressly prohibited by the Combined League and all participating member organizations. The Head Coach is responsible for confirming the eligibility of all players being recruited by any representative of his/her team including, but not limited to, assistant coaches, parents, players and fans.

Individual Registration and “Wait List” Players

Individual Registration players are those players that sign up to play football through ASA’s open registration and pay the individual player registration fee. All such players will be placed on a team in accordance with the procedures, rules and by-laws of the member organization that accepted the registration. Players in the individual registration pool are not eligible for recruitment by any team in the Combined League.

Each member organization, at its discretion, may choose to maintain a “waiting list” for players registering after team rosters are set. Waiting List players will be placed at the sole discretion of the applicable Football Board in accordance with applicable procedures, rules and by-laws. Players on a “waiting list” are not eligible for recruitment by any team in the Combined League.

Section 6: REQUIRED EQUIPMENT AND GAME UNIFORMS

Game Ball

Each division is required to use the size of football as designated below:

- D2 – Wilson K2 or equivalent sized football of leather or composite material.
- D3 – Wilson K2 or equivalent sized football of leather or composite material.
- D4 – Wilson K2 or equivalent sized football of leather or composite material.

- D5 – Wilson TDJ or equivalent sized football of leather or composite material.
- D6 – Wilson TDJ or equivalent sized football of leather or composite material.

Each head coach is responsible for ensuring a well-maintained and properly inflated game ball is available for use in each game.

The game officials are responsible for ensuring that all game balls comply with the provisions above and may at their sole discretion disallow any ball deemed to be the wrong size or improperly inflated.

Player Equipment

All equipment should be in accordance with NCAA rules and NOCSAE safety standards and regularly checked by the coach and player's parents. Player equipment is subject to inspection by game and league officials at any time. As a matter of safety, any player with missing or non-confirming equipment will be removed from the game until the non-conformance is remediated to the satisfaction of the game officials.

All football players must provide their own equipment to include the following:

- Appropriate footwear. All cleats should be molded rubber or plastic. Metal cleats are not allowed.
- A properly fitted football helmet that includes a face mask, 4-point chin strap, and a mouthpiece. All helmets must meet NOCSAE safety standards.
- Properly fitted football shoulder pads.
- Football pants that include hip, tail, thigh and knee pads.

All helmets, pads and mouthpieces must be worn during any contact period, practice or game.

Tinted visors and eye shields are expressly forbidden. Only clear shields will be allowed for use in games per league rules.

Game Uniforms

~~In order to prevent jersey color conflicts, each team must have two jerseys of different colors that can be used during games at Coach's discretion or in order to resolve a color conflict with the opposing team. Teams may elect to use numbered practice jerseys as their secondary jersey.~~

~~All jerseys must be clearly numbered on the front and back, and each player's number should match the official roster on file with league officials. All players should wear the same (or similar color jersey to the rest of their teammates.~~

~~The designated **HOME** team will have the choice of jersey color to be worn in each game. It is the responsibility of the designated **VISITING** team to wear a contrasting color jersey.~~

~~The game officials shall be the judge of fact in determining whether or not a jersey color conflict exists. The referees, at their sole discretion, may ask the visiting team to change jerseys or use scrimmage vests as needed to resolve a color conflict.~~

~~Helmet decals and spirit awards must not cover the league approved helmet marking for players with official weights above the posted ball carrying weight limits.~~

~~Game uniforms are not included in player registration fees. Member organizations, at their sole discretion, may publish guidelines and/or maximum costs to player families for game uniforms.~~

All players must wear a jersey that is consistent in color with his team and is numbered on front and back. The jersey must have clearly visible, permanent numerals measuring at least 8 and 10 inches in height front and back, respectively. The number must be of a color that is clearly in distinct contrast with the color of the jersey, irrespective of any border around the number. The visiting team shall wear white jerseys; however, the home team may wear white jerseys if the teams have agreed in writing prior to the game. If the home team wears colored jerseys, the visiting team may also wear colored jerseys, if and only if the home team has agreed in writing prior to the game.

Section 7: PLAYER PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Because the Combined League is recreational in nature, all players are required to play in accordance with minimum play time requirements specified in the ASA rules.

Minimum Play Time Requirements

Each player must, at a minimum, start on either offense or defense and play on that unit for the entire game (including any overtime period). A player may, at the coach's discretion, change units only at the end of a half.

A player may play both offense and defense so long as minimum play time is satisfied for every other player present on game day.

Shuttle Position Rule

If a team has 18 or more available players at the start of the game coaches, at their discretion, may designate one starting position on offense and one position on defense as "shuttle position" that is shared by two players and remain in compliance with minimum play time requirements. Players designated as shuttle players must rotate every other play during the game while their assigned unit is

on the field throughout the entire game. If a team has less than 18 available players at the start of the game the shuttle position rule can NOT be used.

Approved Exceptions to Minimum Play Time Requirements

- **Use of a Shuttle Position as described above** – the Head Coach is encouraged to communicate the use of a shuttle player with opposing coaches and game officials prior to the game to help avoid confusion.
- **Roster rotation with a big lead** – In “hot clock situations”, a team that is winning by more than 24 points may elect to rotate stronger players to the bench and give less experienced players and back-ups more game reps. See Provisions for Lopsided Scores – All Divisions on page 20 and Prohibition Against Running up the Score on page 21.
- **Injury or Illness** - Any player that leaves the game due to injury or illness should not be returned to play until he/she is fit to do so. The Coach is encouraged to remove the player’s helmet and/or shoulder pads if an injured or ill player will not return to the game.
- **In-game Unsportsmanlike Conduct** – If a player is removed from a game at the coach’s discretion due to unsportsmanlike conduct, the coach must provide a written explanation to the parent and the appropriate Division Coordinator.
- **Absenteeism for Practice and/or Other Misconduct** – If a player will not be allowed minimum play time due to unexcused absences from practice or other misconduct, the coach must notify the parent and appropriate Division Coordinator at least twelve hours prior to the game in which discipline is being imposed, **via email**.

Violations of Minimum Play Requirements

Minimum play time cannot be denied arbitrarily. The coach’s criteria for denying any player minimum play time must be consistently and uniformly applied to all players on the roster.

If a violation of minimum play time is noted by league or game officials during the course of the game, the following process will be followed:

- First noted violation: offending coach is warned and asked to correct the violation immediately.
- Second noted violation: 15-yard penalty with loss of down is imposed; offending coach is asked to correct the violation immediately.

- Third violation: The game will be declared a forfeit.

Violations that are reported after the fact will be reviewed by the applicable Football Board with appropriate disciplinary measures imposed for confirmed violations. Coaches that intentionally violate the minimum play time rule will face disciplinary sanctions up to and including forfeiture of games and termination of his/her coaching assignment.

Section 8: PRACTICE GUIDELINES

The Head Coach is responsible for scheduling, planning and conducting practices in accordance with the guidelines and provisions contained within this document. For the purposes of practice guidelines contained herein, the “League Week” is defined as Sunday through Saturday.

Levels of Contact

The Head Coach is responsible for ensuring that essential football skills and fundamentals are taught in a safe and organized manner. USA Football defines “Levels of Contact” that provide the basis for teaching football fundamentals in a step-by-step manner that allows players to build skills and confidence in a controlled environment while working their way up to live contact.

The essential football skills are to be taught using five levels of gradually increasing intensity as described below.

1. **Air:** Drills are run unopposed and without contact.
2. **Bags:** Drills are run with contact against a blocking dummy, shield, or other soft contact surface.
3. **Control:** Drills are run with contact against another player at a reduced speed with a pre-determined winner. All players are expected to stay on their feet.
4. **Thud:** Drills are run against another player at a competitive speed with no pre-determined winner. All players are expected to stay on their feet and a quick whistle ends the drill.
5. **Live:** Drills are run in game-like conditions at full speed. This is the only time players are taken to the ground.

For the purposes of these rules, the Oversight Committee defines “Contact Drills” as any activity involving player on player contact run at Control, Thud, or Live levels of intensity.

Preseason Practices (June through Labor Day)

Beginning the 3rd week in June, teams are allowed a maximum of three (3) “conditioning” practices per calendar week. Player’s may wear helmets during these “conditioning” practices, but no other equipment. No contact is allowed. Practices are limited to 2 hours inclusive of warm-ups, rest periods,

cool down and post-practice coach's remarks. All players should have access to fluids at all times, and rest periods should be built into each team's practice plan.

Beginning the 3rd week in July, teams are allowed a maximum of four (4) preseason practices per calendar week. Full equipment and player contact is allowed. Practices are limited to 2 hours inclusive of warm-ups, rest periods, cool down and post-practice coach's remarks. All players should have access to fluids at all times, and rest periods should be built into each team's practice plan.

Two-a-day practices are not allowed for any reason.

Per guidance from US Football, each team's practice plan should treat the first three weeks of practice as an acclimatization period designed to help young players adjusted to the challenges presented by the Texas heat.

During the acclimatization period, coaches may gradually increase the intensity of practice and gradually add the amount of equipment worn by the players. No "Contact Drills" are allowed during the acclimatization period.

After completing the three-week acclimatization period, teams may add "Contact Drills" including controlled scrimmages to their practice routines. Coaches must ensure that their practice plan includes a step-by-step progression from non-contact work against air and bags to live action. Once cleared to begin contact drills, teams should spend no more than 30 minutes per practice conducting drills at Thud or Live speed.

Regular Season and Postseason Practices (Labor Day through End of Season)

The regular season officially begins on Labor Day with the first regular season games played on the Saturday following Labor Day.

Once the regular season begins, teams are limited to four (4) team events per week. A team event is a game, practice, meeting, or film session. Practices are limited to 2 hours inclusive of warm-ups, rest periods, cool down and post-practice coach's remarks. All players should have access to fluids at all times, and rest periods should be built into each team's practice plan. No teams may practice after 9:00 pm. Two-a-day practices are not allowed for any reason.

Scrimmages

Although scrimmages are important to a team's preparation, please remember, the point is to practice in game-like conditions (not to play and win "extra games").

Regardless of format, the following rules shall apply to all inter-squad scrimmages conducted by teams participating in the Combined League.

- The coaches of the teams participating in are responsible for ensuring that the scrimmage is conducted in a controlled manner and on a safe and suitable field of play.
- Scrimmages are considered “Contact Drills” conducted during a team practice. As such, all scrimmages should be limited to one (1) hour inclusive of rest periods and teaching moments.
- League standards of sportsmanship apply at all times including games, practices and scrimmages. Abusive language and violent or threatening behavior is never acceptable.
- Teams and coaches that violate league rules regarding conducting scrimmages disciplinary sanctions up to and including practice limitations, removal from the League, and/or termination of coaching assignments.

Practice Fields

All practices must be held at a site or location that is appropriate for use, free of debris, and presents a safe environment for football activities. Access to city parks and school practice fields may be restricted by local ordinance and/or school district policy.

An individual member organization may, at its sole discretion, provide access to lighted practice facilities to the teams it registers. Teams that are granted access to lighted practice fields are expected to comply with all rules, regulations and ordinances governing field use at all times.

The Head Coach will be held individually liable for any fines or penalties assessed for misuse or unauthorized use of practice fields.

Section 9: GAME RULES

All games in the Combined League will be officiated by three (3) referees and governed by NCAA Rules modified to allow for age-appropriate play. Rules modifications and special provisions by Division are summarized in following table and described in greater detail below.

Any issue raised in or pertinent to the Combined League that is not otherwise covered by these Rules, Policies & Procedures shall be left to the sole discretion of the Oversight Committee and member Football Boards.

The Oversight Committee reserves the right to make exceptions to the rules, policies and procedures contained herein in special cases or under special circumstances.

The Oversight Committee reserves the right at any time to modify or apply any rule or item listed with the approval of each member organization’s Football Board.

Provisions for Lopsided Scores – All Divisions

A game is considered to have a “lopsided” score if

1. the score differential is 24 points or more at any time during the game, or
2. the score differential is 20 points or more in the 4th quarter

In the event of a lopsided score, normal timekeeping rules will be superseded, and “Hot Clock” (also referred to as “Mercy Clock”) procedures will apply as follows:

- The game clock will stop only in the event that the team behind on the scoreboard calls a timeout.
- The game clock will not stop for incomplete passes, first downs, ball out of bounds, dead ball punts, declared punts, extra points or changes of possession.
- The team that is ahead on the scoreboard may call timeout to avoid a delay of game penalty; however, the game clock will continue to run.
- In the event of an injury during a hot clock situation, the referees may elect to keep the game clock running.
- During “hot clock” situations, the team that is ahead will not kick off; the team that is behind will be awarded the ball on the 40-yard line (30-yard line in D2) in lieu of having to return a kick-off.
- Game officials may, at their discretion, end a game in a hot clock situation at any time if they perceive an abnormally high risk of injury.
- Once a game has gone to a “hot clock”, the remainder of the game will be played under “hot clock” rules.

Prohibition Against “Running up the Score”

All Coaches must be aware that ASA considers intentionally "running up the score" to be unacceptable and unsportsmanlike behavior. In the event of a lopsided score, coaches are encouraged to do the following:

- Teams with the lead in a hot clock situation should rotate their stronger players to the bench and give less experienced players and back-ups more game reps.
- Avoid calling any trick or gadget plays when ahead in a hot clock situation.
- Give players under the ball carrying weight that do not normally carry the ball the chance to do so.

Illegal Defense

Any defensive player lined up head or inside the offensive tackles and on the line of scrimmage (LOS) must be in a 3 or 4 point stance at the snap of the ball. A defensive player is not considered a down lineman and, thus, is not required to be in a down lineman position, if he/she is set back from the LOS such that his/her helmet is behind the buttocks of any down lineman on the defensive LOS.

The penalty for illegal defense is a 5 yards.

Overtime

No tackle football game will end in a tie. Games tied at the end of regulation will be decided using the NCAA overtime rules modified in the following manner:

NCAA updated their overtime process during the 2021-22 season. Our Overtime rules have been updated accordingly.

No tackle football game will end in a tie. Games tied at the end of regulation will be decided using the NCAA overtime rules modified in the following manner:

- A coin-toss will determine order of possession, with the winner of the coin toss having the option to play offense or defense first.
- Each team will be given a chance to score from a first and goal situation beginning at the 10-yard line. A team's possession ends after a score, a turnover on downs, a fumble or an interception.
- If a 3rd overtime is reached, both teams will run alternating Extra Point plays from the 3-yard line instead of starting over at the 10-yard line.

Summary of Special Provisions for Games by Division

Item	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6
Game Play	9 v 9	11 v 11	11 v 11	11 v 11	11 v 11
Field Dimensions	100 yd	100 yd	100 yd	100 yd	100 yd
Game Ball	K2	K2	K2	TDJ	TDJ
Coach on Field	Allowed	1st Game only	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
"Mercy" Clock	+/- 24 pts or +/-20 in 4 th Qtr	+/- 24 pts or +/-20 in 4 th Qtr	+/- 24 pts or +/-20 in 4 th Qtr	+/- 24 pts or +/-20 in 4 th Qtr	+/- 24 pts or +/-20 in 4 th Qtr
Punts	Declared	"Dead Ball"	"Dead Ball"	"Dead Ball"	"Dead Ball"
Extra Points	Pass = 2 Run = 1 No Kicks	Pass = 2 Run = 1 Live Kick = 2	Pass = 2 Run = 1 Live Kick = 2	Pass = 2 Run = 1 Live Kick = 2	Pass = 2 Run = 1 Live Kick = 2
Field Goals	Not allowed	Live Kick = 3	Live Kick = 3	Live Kick = 3	Live Kick = 3

Rules and provisions regarding minimum participation, ball-carrying weight limits, and prohibitions against running up the score will apply to all age Divisions.

All field goal attempts in leagues where kicking is permissible are live plays. The defense may rush a field goal attempt, block the kick, and return for a touchdown.

Field goal attempts are not permitted in D2.

Special Provisions for Games in D2

- The game will be played with 9 v 9. As such, a legal offensive formation must have at least 5 players on the line of scrimmage.
- Games will be played on a regulation 100-yard field marked in 5 yard increments.
- Barring penalties, kick-offs will be from the 40-yard line. An onside kick must travel 10 yards before the kicking team may legally recover it.
- **One** coach per team will be allowed on the field during all regular and postseason games. The on-field coach may give verbal instructions in the huddle and prior to the snap (provided that the coach does not interfere with quarterback signals or the snap count).
- The on field coach must be positioned at least 10 yards behind the line of scrimmage at the snap and cannot physically or verbally intervene or interfere in play at any point. Touching a player while play is in progress and or providing on-field instructions while a play is in progress will result in a 15-yard illegal participation penalty. Game officials reserve the right to issue a warning prior to assessing illegal participation penalties (similar to sideline warnings).
- The on-field coach may not protest calls, argue with game officials or disrupt the game in any manner. Any unsportsmanlike conduct call against an on-field coach will result in an automatic ejection.
- On offense, D2 teams may declare a punt at any time. If a team declares a punt, the official will move the ball 20 yards downfield (but no further than the receiving team's 10-yard line) and award possession to the receiving team. Unless the game is in a "mercy clock" situation, the game clock will be stopped when the "kicking" team declares punt.
- In D2, extra points may be attempted via one offensive play from the 3-yard line. A successful conversion via forward pass thrown beyond the line of scrimmage will result in 2 points being awarded to the offense. A successful conversion via run or pass completed behind the line of scrimmage will result in one point awarded to the offense. Any return of an extra point attempt for score by the defense will result in 2 points awarded to the defensive team.
- There are no kicks for extra point or field goals allowed in any game in D2.

Special Provisions for Games in D3

- The game will be played 11 v 11. As such, normal rules regarding the legality of offensive formations will apply.
- Games will be played on a regulation 100-yard field with marked in 5 yard increments.
- Barring penalties, kick-offs will be from the 40-yard line. An onside kick must travel 10 yards before the kicking team may legally recover it.
- **One** coach per team will be allowed on the field during the first regular season game. The on-field coach may give verbal instructions in the huddle and prior to the snap (provided that the coach does not interfere with quarterback signals or the snap count).
- The on field coach must be positioned at least 10 yards behind the line of scrimmage at the snap and cannot physically or verbally intervene or interfere in play at any point. Touching a player while play is in progress and or providing on-field instructions while a play is in progress will result in a 15-yard illegal participation penalty. Game officials reserve the right to issue a warning prior to assessing illegal participation penalties (similar to sideline warnings).
- The on-field coach may not protest calls, argue with game officials or disrupt the game in any manner. Any unsportsmanlike conduct call against an on-field coach will result in an automatic ejection.
- After the first regular season game, coaches are not allowed on the field during the game.
- All punts are an elected free kick. Unless the game is in a “hot clock” situation, the game clock will be stopped when the offensive team announces their intention to punt. All offensive players except the center and the punter must take a knee along the LOS and remain in that position until the punt play is blown dead. All defensive players except two punt returners must take a knee within five (5) yards of the LOS and remain in that position until the punt play is blown dead. After the punt, the ball is spotted where it is first controlled by the defense/receiving team. If not controlled, the ball will be marked where it stops rolling or goes out of bounds.
- In D3, extra points may be attempted via one offensive play from the 3-yard line. A successful conversion via forward pass thrown beyond the line of scrimmage will result in 2 points being awarded to the offense. A successful conversion via run or pass completed behind the line of scrimmage will result in one point awarded to the offense. Any return of an extra point attempt for score by the defense will result in 2 points awarded to the defensive team.
- In D3, teams will have the option of attempting an extra point via a **live** kick from field goal formation. The ball will be snapped at the 3-yard line, and the defense will have the opportunity to rush the kick. A successful conversion via live kick will result in two points awarded to the offense. A defensive return of a blocked extra point attempt will result in 2 points awarded to the defensive team.

- There are no fake punts in D5 or D6. Any “fake punt” from a dead ball situation will result in a 15-yard penalty.
- Fake field goals for extra point are allowed in D5 and D6; however, any place kicker over the ball carrying weight limit cannot participate in the fake in any manner.

Special Provisions for Games in D4

- The game will be played 11 v 11. As such, normal rules regarding the legality of offensive formations will apply.
- Games will be played on a regulation 100-yard field with marked in 5 yard increments.
- Barring penalties, kick-offs will be from the 40-yard line. An onside kick must travel 10 yards before the kicking team may legally recover it.
- Coaches are not allowed on the field during the game.
- All punts are an elected free kick. Unless the game is in a “hot clock” situation, the game clock will be stopped when the offensive team announces their intention to punt. All offensive players except the center and the punter must take a knee along the LOS and remain in that position until the punt play is blown dead. All defensive players except two punt returners must take a knee within five (5) yards of the LOS and remain in that position until the punt play is blown dead. After the punt, the ball is spotted where it is first controlled by the defense/receiving team. If not controlled, the ball will be marked where it stops rolling or goes out of bounds.
- In D4, extra points may be attempted via one offensive play from the 3-yard line. A successful conversion via forward pass thrown beyond the line of scrimmage will result in 2 points being awarded to the offense. A successful conversion via run or pass completed behind the line of scrimmage will result in one point awarded to the offense. Any return of an extra point attempt for score by the defense will result in 2 points awarded to the defensive team.
- In D4, teams will have the option of attempting an extra point via a live kick from field goal formation. The ball will be snapped at the 3-yard line, and the defense will have the opportunity to rush the kick. A successful conversion via live kick will result in two points awarded to the offense. A defensive return of a blocked extra point attempt will result in 2 points awarded to the defensive team.
- There are no fake punts in D5 or D6. Any “fake punt” from a dead ball situation will result in a 15-yard penalty.

- Fake field goals for extra point are allowed in D5 and D6; however, any place kicker over the ball carrying weight limit cannot participate in the fake in any manner.

Special Provisions for Games in D5 and D6

- The game will be played 11 v 11. As such, normal rules regarding the legality of offensive formations will apply.
- Games will be played on a regulation 100-yard field with marked in 5 yard increments.
- Barring penalties, kick-offs will be from the 40-yard line. An onside kick must travel 10 yards before the kicking team may legally recover it.
- Coaches are not allowed on the field during the game.
- All punts are an elected free kick. Unless the game is in a “hot clock” situation, the game clock will be stopped when the offensive team announces their intention to punt. All offensive players except the center and the punter must take a knee along the LOS and remain in that position until the punt play is blown dead. All defensive players except two punt returners must take a knee within five (5) yards of the LOS and remain in that position until the punt play is blown dead. After the punt, the ball is spotted where it is first controlled by the defense/receiving team. If not controlled, the ball will be marked where it stops rolling or goes out of bounds.
- In D5 and D6, extra points may be attempted via one offensive play from the 3-yard line. A successful conversion via forward pass thrown beyond the line of scrimmage will result in 2 points being awarded to the offense. A successful conversion via run or pass completed behind the line of scrimmage will result in one point awarded to the offense. Any return of an extra point attempt for score by the defense will result in 2 points awarded to the defensive team.
- In D5 and D6, teams will have the option of attempting an extra point via a live kick from field goal formation. The ball will be snapped at the 3-yard line, and the defense will have the opportunity to rush the kick. A successful conversion via live kick will result in two points awarded to the offense. A defensive return of a blocked extra point attempt will result in 2 points awarded to the defensive team.
- There are no fake punts in D5 or D6. Any “fake punt” from a dead ball situation will result in a 15-yard penalty.
- Fake field goals for extra point are allowed in D5 and D6; however, any place kicker over the ball carrying weight limit cannot participate in the fake in any manner.