

## **Western Ohio Jr. Football Conference 2021 Playing Rules**

*\*NOTE: The WOJFC uses Ohio High School Football Rules with the following modifications.\**

### **Article I - General Rules (All Grade Levels)**

#### **1.1 Playing Rules**

**1.1.1** The National Federation of State High School Football Association rules, as adopted by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (O.H.S.A.A.), and the adopted rules of the WOJFC, will be the playing rules of the WOJFC for all grade levels.

#### **1.2 Certification**

**1.2.1** "Only" Certified Eligible Ball Carriers/Receivers on offense "Non-Stickered Players" can be in ball eligible positions. Certification for players

**1.2.2** "Only" Certified "Eligible" Ball Carriers/Receivers on offense "Non-Stickered Players" can run the ball or receive a pass. Certification for players:

**1.2.3.** Game balls are Wilson composite or similar make. Preferred to have the official WOJFC logo but not required. Ball sizes will be K2 for Bantam and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and TDJ for 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. The league will provide one set every other season to each organization. Next set will be given for the 2021 Season.

#### **1.3 Game Duration**

**1.3.1** There will be four (4) timed (stopped clock) ten (10) minute quarters, with three time-outs per team, per half. There will be a minimum ten (10) minute halftime, which is flexible to cover halftime events. Host Site can reduce Halftime to no less than (5) minutes, due to delays. Both Head Coaches must agree with the Home Site request. \*\*Restriction: Halftime will NOT be shortened if the temperature is above 85 degrees to allow for rest and rehydration.

**1.3.2** In Bantam Third and Fourth grades if during the Second Half, any team is ahead by 30 points and BOTH team Head Coaches have verified ALL players on both teams have met the minimum 5 play rule for the second half, and both Head Coaches agree that any part of the Second Half may now be a running clock. An Official Time Out will be called and both Head Coaches, Home Site Rep and Head Official will meet on the field and both Head Coaches will show Home Site Rep the minimum play sheets for second half and both HC's will state they agree to start a running clock for remainder of the Second Half. Home Site Rep will document the Game sheet of the agreement and when clock started as a running clock.

#### **1.4 Scoring**

**1.4.1** Scoring will follow O.H.S.A.A. rules with the following.

\*\*Exceptions:

Extra point scored by a run into the End Zone will count as (1) point.

Kicking a PAT will count as (2) points.

Forward Pass caught in the End Zone will count as (2) points. The receiver must catch the pass in the end zone. \*\*Special Note: A forward pass caught outside of the end zone and run across the goal line will count as (1) point.

All grades may have any pink stickered player be on the end position for offense and eligible to be a legal receiver for extra point pass plays. HC must notify HO for any pink stickered player that will be at the end position as eligible receiver. Pink Stickered player may not catch pass except in the end zone, if outside end zone play will be dead.

**1.4.2** It is important to note that the point rule does not apply to the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade division. However, WOJFC still encourages all clubs and teams to follow good sportsmanship. (refer to point rule Bylaw 9.4)

#### **1.5 On-Field Coaches**

**1.5.1 Grades 4th, 5th, 6th Grades: 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade are** permitted to have 1 coach on the field of play for offense and one coach for defense on the field of play Week 1, only, for 4th grade one coach offense and defense for the first 4 games only., 3<sup>rd</sup> grade 2 coaches for offense and defense for first 4 games and 1 coach for the last 4 games and tournament. (Note premier weekend counts as a game)

**1.5.1a Bantam:** is permitted to have 2 coaches on the field of play for offensive and 2 coaches on the field of play for defense during the course of the game.

**1.5.2 All Grade Levels:** "Once the ready for play whistle is blown" if an on-field coach gives any "one" or more player(s) instructions a huddle must be called and instruction given to all 11 offensive players by the on field offensive coaches. If any offensive player leaves the huddle all play instruction must stop for both offense and defense "No Physical, Verbal or Non-Verbal communication with the on-field players can be given by any on field coach. All offensive huddles must be a minimum of 5 yards from the line of scrimmage. The on-field coaches are NOT permitted to become involved with the play or communicate with the players at any time during the play. The on-field coaches must stay ten (10) yards behind the deepest player or official "whichever is deepest" at all times.

1st infraction - verbal warning

2nd infraction - 5 yards penalty (added yardage after play on defense and at previous LOS on offense or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS)

3rd infraction - 10 yards penalty (added yardage after play on defense and at previous LOS on offense or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS)

4<sup>th</sup> infraction and beyond - 15 yard automatic first down on defense end of play/ 15 yard at snap on offense loss of down or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS )

All other penalty yardage assessments will be in accordance with O.H.S.A.A. playing rules.

(Exception: On field coaches are permitted to call timeouts, prior to snap of ball and must be acknowledged by officials before being granted. If any on-field coach calls a time out and that time out is called too late for the official to stop play, and the call for time out causes any delay by any player, the official will immediately whistle play dead.

Penalty: Team that caused violation will be assessed a dead ball 5 yard penalty and repeat the down.)

**1.5.3 Bantam and 3rd Grade "Only":** Once the ready for play whistle is blown all 11 offensive players must huddle together with the on field offensive coaches. If any offensive player leaves the huddle all play instruction must stop for both offense and defense "No Physical, Verbal or Non-Verbal communication with the on field players can be given by any on field coach. All offensive huddles must be a minimum of 5 yards from the line of scrimmage. The on field coach is NOT permitted to become involved with the play or communicate with the players at any time during the play. The on field coaches must stay ten (10) yards behind the deepest player or official "whichever is deepest" at all times. \*Special note: coaches may assist players to their proper position, but NO play instruction can be given.

1st infraction - verbal warning

2nd infraction - 5 yards penalty (added yardage after play defense and at previous LOS on offense or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS)

3rd infraction - 10 yards penalty (added yardage after play defense and at previous LOS offense or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS)

4<sup>th</sup> infraction and beyond - 15 yard automatic first yard on defense, end of play/ 15 yard at snap on offense, loss of down or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS)

All other penalty yardage assessments will be in accordance with O.H.S.A.A. playing rules. A specific example is a Facemask Penalty is either a 5 Yard or 15 Yard Penalty, depending on grasping of the Facemask or incidental contact.

(Exception: Bantam & 3rd Grade "ONLY" - An on field coach or game official for the purpose of gaining proper alignment "to make the play legal by rule" can only move an offensive lineman or defensive lineman to achieve the proper ready for play alignment. (NO play instruction of any kind can be given.)

**1.5.4** Any player receiving a second illegal helmet contact during the game will be ejected. Any team receiving 3 or more illegal helmet contact fouls during a game, the HC will report to the next WOJFC Board of Trustee Meeting.

## **1.6 Ineligible Players**

**1.6.1** All non-ball carrying players who are not certified to carry the ball will be issued a sticker by the WOJFC. This will be used for Player(s), Coaches and Officials to identify players in ball eligible positions.

**1.6.2** Any Offensive Player not on the Line of Scrimmage at the snap of the ball, must be a non-stickered player. Violation will be called as a Live Ball Foul.

Penalty: First two offenses will be a 5 yard penalty.  
Third Offense and beyond will be a 15 yard penalty.

**1.6.3** Except as provided for in Rule 1.4.1 on pass plays when the ball crosses the neutral zone no stickered players can be beyond the line of scrimmage or receive the pass. Violation will be called as a Live Ball Foul, ineligible player down field will be a 5 yard penalty, and a stickered player receiving or touching the ball will result in a 15 yard pass interference.

**1.6.4** Any question of player ineligibility should be handled by sending a coach or league representative to the opponent's sideline with a roster to jointly determine the player's eligibility. The game will not be stopped for this matter unless either team elects to call a timeout to check for a possible violation. If the player is determined ineligible, the Game Official shall be notified to stop play, the player shall be removed for the remainder of the game, the Head Coach will be assessed an unsportsmanlike 15 yard penalty, and the team if calling a time out, will get it back. In the event the questioned player is eligible, the team calling the timeout forfeits its time out.

**1.6.5** If a coach cannot present a roster to support a child's eligibility, the guidelines of 1.6.1 and 1.6.2 shall be as followed, the child must be removed from the game and the Head Coach will be assessed an unsportsmanlike 15 yard penalty. In the event that a coach refuses to cooperate by checking rosters, the Head coach will also be assessed a second unsportsmanlike 15 yard penalty and ejected from the game.

### **1.7 Penalties for Restricted Zone Infractions**

**1.7.1** At no time during regulation playing time shall any spectator or person be permitted in the end zones or at the goal posts. In the case of the first infraction, in a given game, it shall result in a warning given by the game officials and an announcement made to the spectators by the field public address.

**1.7.2** A second infraction in a given game shall result in a penalty. If the infraction is on the offensive team, 15 yards from the ensuing spot or line of scrimmage and loss of down. If on the defensive team, a 15-yard penalty yards from the ensuing spot or line of scrimmage and an automatic first down for the offensive team.

**1.7.3** In case of repeated infractions, for a given game and/or at more than one (1) level of play on a given game day could result in a forfeiture of the game and/or games played that day and be cause for review and/or action taken as deemed appropriate by the Board of Trustees for the WOJFC. Any repeated infraction must be addressed in writing to the Communications Officer by the Monday meeting following the infraction. After proper warning has been issued, game officials can require that a person(s) including spectators be removed from the playing field and/or spectator area for a given game day. Game officials can delay the play of the game until said person is removed from the area.

### **1.8 In Game Protests**

**1.8.1** A protest must be made to the Head Official at the time of the infraction of the rules (not judgment calls) prior to the snap of the next play. The protest must be made by the Head Coach after calling a timeout. If the Head Coach wins the protest, he will not be charged a timeout.

### **1.10 Clock Procedures**

The following timing procedures shall be used by the Officials to time all WOJFC games.

**1.10.1** The clock will be stopped on plays that result in an incomplete pass, a ball carrying players goes out of bounds, and will not start until the SNAP OF THE BALL.

**1.10.2** The clock will be stopped (if live, stops when the play is whistled dead) on all penalties, and will start with the referee's READY FOR PLAY whistle, unless Rule 1 applies.

**1.10.3** The clock will be stopped on all first down's, and start after the chains reset, teams have 11 players on their side of the ball, and the ball is MARKED READY FOR PLAY.

**1.10.4** The clock will be stopped on all NON PUNTING team change of possessions (fumbles, interceptions, 4th down plays, penalty resulting in loss of down). After the chains reset, and both the offense and the defense have 11 players on the field, the ball is MARKED READY FOR PLAY game clock will restart. Exception: see rule 1.10.1.

**1.10.5** The clock shall stop after every team punt is completed in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades and will not restart until the SNAP OF THE BALL of the new team's possession. Bantam see rule 2.5.2

**1.10.6 - 4th, 5th, and 6th Grades Teams** will have 30 seconds after the "ready for play whistle" is blown to snap the ball.

**1.10.7 - Bantam / 3rd Grade Teams** will have 40 seconds after the “ready for play whistle” is blown to snap the ball.

**1.10.8** The clock shall start for each new team possession after touchdowns, successful field goals, and safeties, when teams set with 11 players, chains are set, and ball is MARKED READY TO PLAY.

**1.10.9** The clock shall stop for the start of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarters until the SNAP OF THE BALL.

**1.10.10** The clock shall stop for all injuries and remained stopped until the injured player has cleared the field and has been replaced with a new player.

**1.10.11** The Home Team announcer shall call the next game’s teams to the end zones before the game start time.

Home Team shall announce team rosters 10 minutes before each game time, or immediately after the existing game is over, if there are less than 10 minutes remaining until that game’s start time.

**1.10.12** Suggestion for Timekeepers, any official on the field can stop the clock, (waving both arms above the head), but the referee WILL ALWAYS start the clock (winding arm in a circular motion).

**1.10.13** Qualified personnel should operate the clock, chains and down markers and they must be a minimum of fifteen (15) years of age. A 15-yard penalty may be enforced against the home team at the discretion of the head official for failure to have a chain gang *or clock operator* in place at the start of game. All Clock and Chain Gang personnel are required to meet with the League Rep/Alternate, Site Reps and Game Officials before each game. All Chain Gang members are required to wear a YELLOW or ORANGE REFLECTIVE VEST, at all times during the game and half time.

#### **\*\*Special Notes:**

Chain Gang Members are **NOT** permitted to use in any fashion electronic equipment “Cell Phones, etc.” in their possession at any time during the game or half time. Penalty for having electronic equipment could result in the immediate removal from the game. Chain Gang Members are **NOT** permitted to communicate in anyway with players, coaches or team parents during the game or half time. Penalty for said communication could result in the immediate removal from the game and/or a 15 yard penalty against the home team under the discretion of the head official.

#### **1.11 Bad Weather**

The purpose for these guidelines is to provide a default policy to those responsible for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of contests based on the presence of thunder and/or lightning. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

**1.11.1** Proactive Planning: Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during events. In the event of any lightning or thunder, the game shall be immediately stopped, and all players, coaches and fans will be removed from the field for thirty (30) minutes.

**1.11.2** Thirty Minute Rule – Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming play. The Head Official shall report the time of the lightning/Thunder to the League Rep/Alt Rep or Site Rep.

**1.11.3** Once a game has been suspended in the first half due to weather, that game cannot resume for 30 minutes from the time of the last thunder or lightning. The game cannot resume if the restart time is within 30 minutes of the next scheduled game. If the game is suspended due to weather in the second half and three or more plays have been completed in the 2nd half, the game is halted and deemed a complete game. the same guideline is used for night games. note: no day games can start after 5:30 p.m. and night games cannot start past 9:30 p.m. without WOJFC Executive board approval. if games are delayed due to inclement weather the start times of the following game will be adjusted accordingly.

**1.11.4** The same weather delay schedule shall be followed on Sunday. No games that are suspended or cancelled will be made up, with exceptions for Tournament Games.

**1.11.5** Clubs are encouraged to develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby shelters. Hold periodic reviews for appropriate personnel. For more detailed information, refer to the “Guidelines for Lightning Safety” contained in the NHFS Sports Medicine Handbook, which can be obtained by calling 800-776-3462. \*\* Special Note: During tournament play if any games are delayed due to weather by 1 hour or more, the announcements shall be performed at half time. If games get back on schedule announcements then can be prior to game.

### **1.12 Kicking (PAT's, Field Goals) Bantam, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th Grades**

**1.12.1** There will be no kickoff. The ball will be placed on the 35-yard line to start play for the 1st & 3rd quarters and after all touchdowns and field goals. The ball shall be placed at the opponent's 45 yard-line after a safety.

**1.12.2** The kicking of extra points and/or field goals is permitted. There will be no weight limit restrictions placed on the kicking team. Any team lining up to kick the ball must kick. A muffed field goal attempt inside the 20 yard line will result in the ball being placed on the 20 yard line and turned over to the opposing team, outside the 20 yard line the ball will be returned to the original line of scrimmage and turned over to the opposing team. A muff is defined as the placeholder having to move their pivot point (one foot) to retrieve the ball. The holder on field goals and extra points may kneel or stand to receive the snap but must immediately go to the kneeling position for the kick. A holder may rise to catch a snap and the ball may roll to the holder. The holder may use a 2 inch tee and cannot place the ball on their shoe as a tee.

**1.12.3** The coach on the field must advise the referee of his intent to kick. There will be no rushing by the defense on PAT's or field goals. Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty re-kick or re-declare. There are no returns on any field goal attempts.

**1.12.4** When attempting field goals, or PAT's, the kicker will have ten (10) seconds and punts five (5) seconds to kick the ball, after the snap from center. Violation: Dead Ball 5 yard penalty re-kick or re-declare.

**1.12.5** There will be no fake punts, field goals, or extra points, immediate dead ball whistle. Violation: Dead Ball 15 yard penalty and lose of down. On TFP penalize at 35 yard line and change of possession.

### **1.13 Tournament Overtime Procedures**

**1.13.1** First possession in overtime will be determined by a coin flip, as if to start the game. Winner of flip chooses which end of field to start play or take first possession. The start of overtime shall remain at the one end of the field until there is a winner. Team losing first flip gets second overtime choose of first possession or defense and it alternates with each subsequent overtime period.

**1.13.2** Each team will take first possession of the ball at the opponent's 20-yard line, and be given four downs to either score, or make a first down. If a first down is made, the team will receive four additional downs to try and score. Both teams will get a chance to score in overtime.

**1.13.3** If, at the end of the first overtime period, the score remains tied, each team's subsequent possession will begin at the opponent's 10-yard line, and each team will be given four downs to try and score.

**1.13.4** There shall be only 1 time out per team in all Overtime periods. No carryover of time outs from regulation into overtime or overtime to overtime.

### **1.14 Play of the Game**

**1.14.1** Players must wear only molded sole athletic shoes, rubber or plastic non-removable cleats, while participating in the WOJFC. If a player wears any form of screw-in, non-molded or metal cleats, he/she shall be immediately expelled for the remainder of the game and the situation reviewed by the Board for other possible action. All mouthpieces and mouth piece straps must be a color or clear and attached to the helmet.

**1.14.2** All male players must wear a hard-protective cup. Female players must wear a hard or soft cup.

**1.14.3** Any player with a cast, soft cast, and hard support brace of any kind cannot practice or play in a game until the device has been removed and a doctor has granted a clearance for the child to resume playing. Head coach must keep the clearance for play signed by the physician with team roster and player paperwork. In the case of a documented concussion. Clearance to play from the physician must also be on file with the team organization and WOJFC

**1.14.4** If a team does not have 11 properly equipped players at the time of the coin toss, that team shall forfeit the game.

**1.14.5** Any player removed due to improper equipment must remain out of the game for 3 plays, so equipment can be properly replaced or repaired. Once equipment is corrected the team may use a time out or wait till quarter ends or half time to have the Head Official of that game approve the equipment in question. If approved, player may re-enter game. If equipment not approved, player will remain out for

remainder of game." If same player must leave for equipment issue by official again, that player may not re-enter for remainder of the game.

**1.14.6** Any Home Site that does not have the OHSAA 2 yard restricted zone marked as required by OHSAA, the Home Team will receive a 15 yard penalty to start the game and a 15 yard penalty prior to the start of each additional game. If the designated Home Team is NOT a team from the hosting Home Site penalty will be assessed to either team, but the Host Site will be fined \$100 per game that the 2 yard restricted zone is NOT marked.

**1.14.7** When the Head Coach is ejected from a game, the coaching staff of that team must notify the Head Official immediately as to who will be the acting Head Coach of that team for remainder of the game.

**1.14.8** An individual Coach, Player, Sideline Personnel or Spectator that receives 2 unsportsmanlike penalties, 1 flagrant unsportsmanlike penalty or an ejection from a game is subject to discipline under the WOJFC By-Laws.

**1.14.9** In Bantam, Third and Fourth grades if a pink stickered player recovers a fumble or intercepts a pass the play will become dead at the spot of fumble recovery or interception and change of possession.

**1.14.10** In 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades if any team is ahead in score by 29 points, in the second half, and all players from both teams have played 5 plays in second half, the clock will become a running clock if both coaches agree. WOJFC clock rules. Both teams are still required to get 5 plays for all players on their team.

## **Article II – Tackle Program Rules**

### **2.1 Play of the Game**

**2.1.1** The offense is will have 30 seconds after the "ready for play whistle" is blown to snap the ball.

### **2.2 Punting – 4TH/ 5TH/ 6TH Grades**

**2.2.1** You must notify the official (who in turn notifies the opposing team) of intent to punt. Defense must be given the opportunity to set. Notification of intent to punt must be given within 10 seconds after the ball is whistled ready for play. Failure to inform the official within the 10 seconds of intent to punt would require the offense to take a time out if they still wish to punt or be penalized a five-yard delay of game. (If a time out is called after notification is given; the offensive team must re-declare their intention to the Head Official after time out is ended. The defense is notified by Head Official and given time to set.

**2.2.2** No weight limit on kicker (intended receivers must meet weight restrictions).

**2.2.3** Both defense and offense must have seven (7) players on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. The 5 Offensive Players (from tackle to tackle) must be no farther apart than fingertip to fingertip.

**Violation:** Live Ball 5 yard penalty.

**2.2.4** Punter must be a minimum of five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap.

**2.2.5** There are no muffed snaps on a punt. The Punter must stay between the Tackles upon punting. (Punter cannot run to the end of Offensive line and punt). The ball must be kicked within five (5) seconds after the snap.

**Violation:** Live Ball 5 yard penalty re-kick or re-declare.

**2.2.6** Offense and defense shall have No line contact or crossing the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap and until ball is kicked. **Violation:** Dead Ball 5 yard penalty re-kick or re-declare

**2.2.7** Prior to the snap for punt, there are no loud noises or yelling permitted by the receiving team or kicking team.

**Violation:** Live Ball 5 yard penalty re-kick or re-declare.

**2.2.8** If the punted ball strikes an offensive player (behind the line of scrimmage), or does not cross the neutral zone, the ball is dead and will be spotted at the original line of scrimmage, and results in a change of possession, if 4th down.

### **2.3 Punting – 5th and 6th Grades Only**

**2.3.1** Following the kick of the ball, O.S.H.A.A. rules apply.

**2.3.2** No offensive or defensive players can move until the ball is kicked.

**2.3.3** Ball is live if first touched by the receiving team after it crosses the neutral zone. Muff of punt by receiving team and recovered by kicking team can't be advanced by the kicking team. If Defense touches ball within the expanded neutral zone, touching is ignored as muff by Defense.

**2.3.4** A PINK stickered player may be back as a blocker for the receiving team during the punt, but if the PINK stickered player touches the ball, ball is dead at that spot

## **2.4 Punting for 4th Grade Only**

**2.4.1** There are no punt returns in 4th grade.

**2.4.2** No minimum yardage shall be given. Actual spot of the ball will be actual yardage gained via the kick. The ball is declared dead once downed by the receiving team or blown dead by an official. The downed deepest spot will be the point of first touching by receiving team or ball goes beyond first touching and downed by receiving team.

**2.4.3** If the ball is kicked or downed inside the 10-yard line, the ball will be placed on the 10-yard line and marked ready for play (change of possession takes place). If the ball is kicked in the end zone, the ball will be placed at the 20-yard line and marked ready for play.

## **2.5 Punting for Bantam & 3rd Grade Only**

**2.5.1** There will be no punting. The ball will be advanced twenty-five (25) yards, but not inside the opponent's twenty (20) yard line.

**2.5.2** All punts shall have 15 seconds counted off the clock from the time the Head Official gives the start the clock signal for punts and the clock shall stop at the end of the 15 seconds, and the clock will start with the snap. After Bantam punt officials will give players 20 seconds to switch players after punt. Then in Bantam only clock will start with the ready for play whistle.

## **Article III – 3rd Grade Program Rules**

### **3.1 Play of the Game 3rd Grade (The following Rules apply to 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Games Only)**

**3.1.1** – 3rd Grade Teams will have 40 seconds after the “ready for play whistle” is blown to snap the ball.

**3.1.2** Defensive player(s) “nose guard and/or tackles” are NOT permitted to be over the center or in the “A” gaps at any time. Defensive player(s) “tackles” must be head to head with the offensive guards at the snap of the ball.

Defensive player(s) in front of the center or “A” gaps must be a minimum of two yards back from the line of scrimmage. Defensive lineman over offensive guards only must be in a 3 or 4 point stance at the snap. Defensive player(s) are permitted to line up and rush in all other offensive gaps (Not A Gaps). **Violation:** Live Ball 5 yard penalty

**3.1.3** A maximum number of defensive linemen on the line of scrimmage (sideline to sideline) at the snap of the ball will be six (6). All other defensive players must be two (2) yards off the line of scrimmage at the snap. A live ball foul will be called if more than six (6) defensive linemen are on the line of scrimmage.

**Violation:** Live Ball 5 yard penalty.

**3.1.4** Blitzing – Timed blitzing is NOT permitted at any time. All players must be in a set position at the snap of the ball. Blitzing is defined as moving toward the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball.

**Exception:** “If an offensive player is in motion prior to the snap a (1) defensive linebacker or defensive end may be in motion with the offensive motion player. If the offensive player becomes set prior to the snap the defensive player must stop his motion.

**Violation:** Live ball penalty,

1st infraction - verbal warning

2nd infraction - 5 yards penalty (added yardage after play on defense and at previous LOS on offense or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS)

3rd infraction - 10 yards penalty (added yardage after play on defense and at previous LOS on offense or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS)

4<sup>th</sup> infraction and beyond - 15 yard automatic first down on defense end of play/ 15 yard at snap on offense loss of down or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS)

**3.1.5** The offensive line (tackle to tackle) must be spread no farther apart than fingertip to fingertip on the line of scrimmage.

**Violation:** Live Ball 5 yard penalty.

**3.1.6** Fumbles- fumbles (must touch the ground.), are live at the 3rd grade level. The ball cannot be advanced upon recovery. There is no stripping of the football allowed. **Violation:** Stripping the ball is a live ball 5 yard penalty enforced from spot of the foul, if accepted, repeat the down.

## **Article IV Bantam Only**

### **4.1 Play of the Bantam Game (The following Rules apply to Bantam Games Only)**

**4.1.1** – Bantam Teams will have 40 seconds after the “ready for play whistle” is blown to snap the ball.

**4.1.2** Defensive player(s) “nose guard and/or tackles” are NOT permitted to be over the center or in the “A” gaps at any time. Defensive player(s) “tackles” must be head to head with the offensive guards at the snap of the ball.

Defensive player(s) in front of the center or “A” gaps must be a minimum of two yards back from the line of scrimmage. Defensive lineman over offensive guards only must be in a 3 or 4 point stance at the snap. Defensive player(s) are permitted to line up and rush in all other offensive gaps (Not A Gaps). **Violation:** Live Ball 5 yard penalty

**4.1.3** Defensive lineman shall not dive block or bear crawl below the waist of offensive lineman at the snap. **Violation:** Live Ball 5 yard penalty, repeat the down.

**4.1.4** A maximum number of defensive linemen on the line of scrimmage (sideline to sideline) at the snap of the ball will be six (6). All other defensive players must be two (2) yards off the line of scrimmage at the snap. A live ball foul will be called if more than six (6) defensive linemen are on the line of scrimmage.

**Violation:** Live Ball 5 yard penalty.

**4.1.5** Blitzing – Timed blitzing is NOT permitted at any time. All players must be in a set position at the snap of the ball. Blitzing is defined as moving toward the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball.

**Exception:** “If an offensive player is in motion prior to the snap a (1) defensive linebacker or defensive end may be in motion with the offensive motion player. If the offensive player becomes set prior to the snap the defensive player must stop his motion.” **Violation:** Live ball penalty, 1st infraction - verbal warning

2nd infraction - 5 yards penalty (added yardage after play on defense and at previous LOS on offense or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS)

3rd infraction - 10 yards penalty (added yardage after play on defense and at previous LOS on offense or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS)

4<sup>th</sup> infraction and beyond - 15 yard automatic first down on defense end of play/ 15 yard at snap on offense loss of down or at dead ball spot if behind original LOS )

**4.1.6** Offensive line (tackle to tackle) must be spread no farther apart than fingertip to fingertip on the line of scrimmage. **Violation:** Live Ball 5 yard penalty.

**4.1.7** Offensive Blocking - Offensive Player(s) NO blocking below the waist at any time. No free blocking Zone in Bantam **Violation:** Live Ball 5 yard penalty, repeat the down.

**4.1.8** Fumbles - In the event of a fumble (ball makes contact with the ground.), the ball is dead where it hits the ground. There is no change of possession (except 4th down). Players can NOT steal (strip) the ball from the ball carrier. **Violation:** Stripping the ball is a live Ball 5 yard penalty from spot of the foul repeat the down.

**4.1.9** Interceptions - In the event of a defensive interception of an attempted forward pass or airborne lateral, the defense may take possession and advance the ball. (Ball must be in the air as part of a forward pass NOT a strip or fumble)