



## **GSL TACKLE DIVISIONS 2017 RULES AND REQUIREMENTS**

The GSL is comprised of teams from the North Shore and other partner teams, playing American rules football. The GSL's mandate is to provide an environment for children aged 6 to 13 to learn the skills of football in a safe but competitive environment. The GSL schedules games for the regular season and hosts the GSL Championships. The GSL Executive shall determine any required interpretation of any rule. The GSL Executive shall also review situations or incidents not covered by the GSL Rules and Requirements or irregularities that arise during the course of the season. For the Flag Division, please also refer to the specific Flag Division Rules.

### **Section 1-The Field**

- A. Playing fields shall be marked as required under the rules set out in the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) rulebook.
- B. Team benches shall be in designated positions at the center of the field (at Norgate Field). Parents and all other spectators will NOT be permitted in this area as per the signage on the field. For other fields, parents and spectators must also follow the directions regarding appropriate spectating areas as set out by the officials.
- C. Team benches shall be a minimum of five (5) yards and an optimum of ten (10) yards from the sidelines
- D. Yard markers shall be placed one (1) yard outside the field of play.
- E. For safety reasons, all goal posts shall be properly padded.
- F. All GSL fields are 80 yards long and 53.3 yards wide, with 10 yard end zones. The 40 yard line is center field. All kickoffs shall be placed 10 yards from center on the kicking team's side (the 30 yard line). All kickoffs after safeties shall be placed at the 20 yard line on the kicking team's side.

## **Section 2 - The Ball**

- A. The game is played with the GSL designated game ball.
- B. The home team will provide a GSL designated game ball.
- C. All footballs in the game will be controlled by the officials. The size of the football for each Division is as follow:

Pee Wee TDJ

Minor TDY

## **Section 3 - The Game**

Unless otherwise specified in this document, the rules and mechanics of GSL tackle football adhere to The National Federation of High Schools (NFHS).

In the interests of safety and to promote good sportsmanship and healthy football, the following rules are GSL-specific modifications of existing NFHS rules:

- A. No free blocking zone. All blocking must be made at the front, from the waist to the shoulders and must be performed with the hands (ie: no shoulder or blind-side blocking). The GSL does not allow any cut blocks, chop blocks, crackback blocks or any other form of blocking in which the principle area of contact is the legs, back or head, anywhere on the field at any time. Illegal blocking is a 15 yard penalty.
- B. No illegal numbering. Any number can play any position, although officials strongly encourage coaches to make sure players wearing numbers 50-79 are proper lineman and not receivers (the head ref is to ask the coach in the pregame if his receivers have any unusual numbers, so there aren't any misunderstandings). Ineligible by number is not a penalty, however ineligible by position still is.
- C. There is no play clock, however officials strongly encourage coaches and players to get plays off in a timely manner, and the head official reserves the right to stop the main time or start a play clock if he or she feels that a team is stalling or wasting time. Play clock is 25 seconds and may also be employed in close games late in the 4th quarter where possession is critical. The penalty for a delay of game is 5 yards and the clock stops until the next snap.
- D. The away team will call the coin toss. The winner of the toss will elect to defer or receive.
- E. Game length:
  - Pee Wee and Minor will play four (4) ten minute quarters.
  - The final two minutes of each game are stop time.
- F. Each team may call three (3) time outs per half.
- G. All timeouts stop the clock however only team timeouts restart the clock at the snap. All other timeouts (injuries, equipment, unusual delays, etc.) start at the referee's ready signal.
- H. The Head official may call an official's time out and a time out for injury at any time.

- I. In all games a two-minute warning will be given at the two (2) minute mark before half time and the end of the fourth quarter. The one (1) minute warning will be given out before the end of the first and third quarter.
- J. The last two minutes of each half adhere to proper stop time rules as specified in the NFHS rulebook (ie: clock stops for turnovers, scores, out of bounds, incomplete pass, penalties, etc.). Teams are encouraged to exercise proper clock management.
- K. The Head Official of the game has the right to rule where the time of the game is to be kept - on the field or on the sidelines. Decisions of the Head Official are final.
- L. Coaches have the right to request the time from the head official as much as they want.
- M. If a team is behind by 30 points or more at the start of the second half they will have the option to kick or receive the ball or scrimmage from their own 35 yard line. If they wish they may choose to defend at the beginning of the second half. During half time the two coaches can approach the Field Supervisor and ask that the Mercy Rule be put in effect if they both agree. If they don't agree then the Head Official can enforce the rule at the beginning or at any time during the 3rd quarter if he feels it is warranted once there is a 30-point spread. The Mercy Rule will be applied automatically in the 4th quarter if there is a 30-point spread. During "Mercy Rule Play" only the losing team shall be allowed time-outs, however the clock shall continue to run. The team that is behind by 30 points will have the option to accept the kick-off or scrimmage from their own 35-yard line whenever there is at least a 30-point deficit.
- N. Coaches are permitted on the field for the first two weeks after the Jamboree in Minor and for the first four weeks after the Jamboree in Peewee.
- O. In the first month of play coaches are permitted to enter "gentlemen's agreements" with each other regarding special plays or restrictions on schemas such as blitzing or punt rushing. The head official will authenticate this verbal agreement between both coaches pregame, and violation of these restrictions will be treated as fouls. These agreements can be revisited at halftime for further modification or even to rescind them. Above all, it is about fun and giving the players a fair chance at learning and playing the game of football.

#### **Section 4-Overtime for Playoff Games**

- A. When the score is tied at the end of the fourth quarter in playoff games there shall be a rest period of ten (10) minutes.
- B. Overtime shall be in a Texas Shoot-out format. There will be a coin toss and the winner will have the option of scrimmaging 1st or the choice of end. The teams will begin on the 20-yard line. The team will start the overtime at the designated yard line. Both teams will be allowed to scrimmage. The team leading after this will be the winner. If it is still tied the teams will scrimmage again from the designated yard line.

- C. The teams will continue until a team scores more points than their opponent in the shoot-out.
- D. The Head Official may call the game on account of darkness.
- E. If Overtime cannot continue immediately following the game because of darkness, then the shootout will be scheduled no later than Wednesday of the following week.

### **Section 5 - Playoff Structure**

- A. GSL Playoffs: If a division has 10 or more teams then the top 8 teams will make the playoffs, and when a division has 9 or fewer teams then the top 4 will make the playoffs.
- B. Rules for all playoff games  
The numbers of game plays for player participation is:  
20 players or less will be 13 plays  
20 players or more will be 10 plays
- C. Monitors for player participation: each team will supply 2 individuals, one will monitor their own team, the other the opposing team, thus having two monitors working together per team and the results will be forwarded to the Division Coordinator for final verification.
- D. The highest ranked GSL team in each division will be considered the home team.
- E. All grievances pertaining to the game after or during the game must be filed with the Division Coordinator via email no later than 30 minutes following game completion. A decision will be made by the GSL Executive. This decision will be final and not open to appeal.
- F. Only players and coaching staff are allowed at the bench. No children allowed (e.g. water boys), parents or spectators are permitted in this area.

### **Section 6 - Uniforms and Equipment**

- A. Mouth guards are mandatory. Tackle Division mouth guards must have tabs and be attached to the face guard The Officials will monitor to make sure that each player has the proper mouth guard, if not, the player concerned cannot play until he gets the proper mouth guard.
- B. Teeth Braces: If a player is wearing braces he may wear a special mouth guard, however he must inform the Head Official.

- C. No “stickum” or similar products shall be used by any player in any league play. Violators will be suspended for the game and given an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. Gloves may be used.
- D. Players must wear league-issued helmets. Any exceptions will require the expressed written consent of the GSL Executive.
- E. Clear visors are allowed without any documentation. All tinted visors must be authorized by the GSL Executive through a request to the Division Coordinator with supporting documentation from an Optometrist or Ophthalmologist.
- F. All Players are required to wear multi-cleated shoes. Shoes are to be rubber-moulded style only and may have unlimited cleats. No screw in or out cleats are allowed. A player wearing the illegal cleats will be ejected from the game and suspended for 1 additional game. The Head Coach shall also be ejected from the game and be suspended for one additional game.
- G. No player will be allowed on the playing fields wearing a cast or splint. No exceptions. A Plastic Air Cast will be allowed with a Doctors’ Certificate.
- H. No team shall use any radio communications between coaches or coaches and players. Teams shall also not use drones during any GSL games.

## **Section 7 - Players**

- A. All players must be recorded by name, number and starting position for any game as requested by the Division Coordinator or Field Supervisor for any given game.
- B. Players will provide proof of age at the time of registration or at any time after as required by the Registrar, Field Supervisor or Division Coordinator. (Documents that can be used to verify date of birth are birth certificates, passports, citizenship papers, official court orders, certification of birth certificates (with file number), baptismal certificates or a BC Identification/Care Card that shows birth date.
- C. Players are not allowed to play out of their Division.
- D. To ensure fairness and competitiveness of the teams it may be necessary after the first but by no later than the 2nd game of the year to reassign players to ensure team balance.
- E. The rosters will be frozen after the 2nd week of the season. One copy of the frozen roster shall be received by the Division Coordinator by midnight of the required date. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of further games until rosters have been received and confirmed. Playing of ineligible players/non-rostered players will result in the forfeiture of the game and possible further sanction. The Frozen Roster will become the official Roster for the remainder of the year.

- F. All players on the frozen roster must participate in a minimum three (3) regular season games to be eligible for the playoffs. If a player is unable to meet the requirements due to injury a Doctor's certificate is required before the playoffs.
- G. Player's ages are determined as of December 31 of the playing year. No exceptions.
- H. Regular Season Player Participation Rule: Each player is to be provided with a starting position (either Offense or Defense) and will be assigned and will play a starting position excluding special teams in each regular season game scheduled by the GSL (minimum 50% play). If this rule is not adhered to the team shall forfeit the game.
- I. Where it has been determined a team has used over-aged or otherwise ineligible players not approved by the league, all games previously played by the ineligible player will be forfeited.
- J. Officials must rule that a player leave the game if in their opinion the player is physically unfit to play. In any event an injured player must leave the game for at least one play.
- K. Players unable to participate in a game due to injury, illness or discipline shall not wear shoulder pads and helmets. Non-playing players may remain with the team except in cases of discipline, ejection and suspension.
- K. No player or parent of a player is to receive any type of compensation for a player to play in the GSL.
- L. No player will be reimbursed for any expenses they incur to attend practices or games that are not offered to the entire team unless approved by the GSL.

### **Section 8 - Field Officials**

As shown in the Agreement between the BCFOA and GSL.

### **Section 9 - Game Officials**

All field officials shall be appointed and scheduled by the Referee Coordinator. GSL coaches shall not be an official of a game in the division in which they are currently coaching. Game officials shall be responsible for recording and reporting the scores of each game to the GSL.

### **Section 10 - Sideline Officials**

The Home Team is responsible for providing downs persons, linespersons (yardstick personnel) and the game ball. These sideline officials shall work under the direction of the Head Linesperson. The lines persons will be operate from the side of the field as directed by the Head Linesperson.

## **Section 11 - Jurisdiction and Duties**

All field officials are equally responsible for the orderly conduct of the game. This includes the Field Supervisor, downs persons and linesperson.

## **Section 12 - Field Supervisor**

- A. The GSL will be responsible for providing a Field Supervisor at all home games. In most cases, The Field Supervisor will be a member of the GSL Executive but may also be a designated volunteer. The Field Supervisor shall be identifiable to the teams and officials. Partner leagues will also designate and provide a Field Supervisor for all away games.
- B. The Field Supervisor shall be responsible for ensuring that the player benches are in place, sideline yard markers in position, goal post protections are installed, yardsticks and down boxes are on the sideline and announcing equipment in place prior to the start of the game.
- C. The Field Supervisor may confer with the Head Official as required on matters such as game timing, equipment, player and spectator conduct and other issues as they arise.
- D. The Field Supervisor shall ensure that sideline officials are available for the start of the game.
- E. The Field Supervisor will observe the conduct of team officials, players on team benches and spectators. If required, the Field Supervisor will issue any instructions as required. In extreme situations, the Field Supervisor and/or Head Official may suspect or terminate a game due to inappropriate conduct.
- F. Only GSL first aid officials are permitted on the field to attend to a player when any injury occurs. The Field Supervisor may confer with first aid officials regarding injuries and events as required. A Doctor may be summoned from the spectators by the Field Supervisor or first aid officials. Under no circumstances are coaches permitted to interfere with first aid officials nor are they permitted to question or override the instructions or directions of the first aid officials. Failure to comply may result in ejection of the coach from the game by the Field Supervisor. Partner leagues will provide first aid officials for each away game.

## **Section 13 – Game Scoring**

Touchdown 6 points

Kicked Convert 2 points

Run or Pass Convert 1 point

Field Goal 3 points

Safety Touchdown 2 points

### **Section 14-League Scoring**

- A. The winning team of each league game will receive 2 points for a win and 1 point for a tie. The losing team will not receive any points.
- B. When a game is forfeited, the team that forfeits the game receives no points and the team that the game forfeited to will receive 2 points and is recorded as a win. The team will also receive 10 game points for and 0 points against.
- C. Final standings in league play will be determined as follows:

If two teams are tied:

- A. Record versus each other
- B. Combined winning % of opponents (not including games against them)
- C. Points for/against-Maximum of +10 per game

If three or more teams are tied:

- A. Record versus each other
- B. Winning teams of tied group get placed on top first
- C. Points for/against: maximum of +30 per game

### **Section 15 - Discipline**

- A. Objectionable conduct includes:
  - Foul language
  - rough play
  - fighting
  - flagrant attempt to injure
  - objectionable conduct towards game officials, Field Supervisor and any GSL Executives
  - verbally threatening or unnecessary contact with an official, Field Supervisor or any GSL Executive.

Any objectionable conduct may result sanctions including ejection from the game. Any player or coach ejected from a game will also receive a minimum one game suspension for the next game following the ejection.

- B. Any individual (player or coach) ejected from a game or suspended for a game is not permitted to remain or to be present at the field and must remove pads and helmet immediately. Failure to comply may result in further suspensions or a game forfeit.
- C. All ejections will be referred to the GSL disciplinary sub-committee for review.
- D. In the case of more serious or multiple offences as well as offences away from a game situation referred to the sub-committee, the sub-committee has the power to determine the appropriate disciplinary sanctions and may or may not request additional information from the individuals involved or alleged to be involved prior to making such decisions.
- E. The decisions of the disciplinary sub-committee will be final and binding.