



Everybody Plays

Suburban Amateur Football League

Bylaws, Constitution and Rules of Play

June 2008

www.suburbanfootball.com

Introduction

The following Constitution and Bylaws describe the league organization and the rules and regulations by which it operates.

Article 1 – Name

This organization was formed at the Ludlow Boys Club in 1966 and is as the Suburban Amateur Football League (SAFL).

Article 2 – Purpose

It is the purpose of the Suburban Amateur Football League to provide wholesome and healthy recreation for youths in the 8-14 year old age bracket. It is the intention of this organization to lay down fair rules of play, and strictly adhere to these rules for the benefit of all the teams entered in this league.

It is the responsibility of member organizations of the League to provide a supervised activity that will stress sportsmanship, skill development, enhance physiological and psychological development, and most of all, be FUN. Each organization shall be responsible for the conduct of their teams and support staff, and instruct and enforce the principles stated in the SAFL Code of Ethics, especially in attitude and intent.

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Article 3 - Governing Body

The SAFL is governed by a body of member representatives, a Commissioner and an Executive Committee consisting of three Vice Commissioners, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Commissioner. One member representative also called League Representative represents each participating organization. All League Representatives must be NYSCA certified.

A simple majority of members of the league in good standing and present at any meeting shall constitute a quorum to conduct the business of the league at a regular or special meeting. The Commissioner may conduct a telephone vote when the need arises. The organizations representative's vote should reflect the desires of their organization. League representatives have the dual responsibility of representing the Leagues rules and regulations to their respective organization.

Article 4 – Membership

Membership in the Suburban Amateur Football League shall be open to teams representing any community, sub-division or organization in the Greater Springfield area where the population of the represented area does not exceed 50,000. Exceptions to these limits are listed in **Addendum 2 -Territorial Boundaries**.

Section A: Membership shall be contingent on:

1. providing an entry consisting of a Senior, Junior, and a Pee Wee football team
2. adherence to the League constitution and Bylaws, and such other Rules and Policies as established by the voting membership
3. meeting all financial obligations and assessments set by the League by the due date
4. completing and filing with the League an organizational application, no later than May 1st.

The League shall have the right to impose territorial limitations on any entrant as a means of equalizing the population base from which entrants draw their players.

Acceptance for membership for an organization shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of League membership. Each organization is a separate entity, privately organized, sponsored and directed by the various members of that organization.

Section B: New membership - Application shall be made in writing, at a regularly scheduled meeting, to the Recording Secretary prior to May 1 of any given year and shall be accompanied by a \$100.00 bond. Such bond is to be held in escrow and applied to team entry fee if the team is voted into the League. The bond will be refunded to the team if entry into League is not approved. In the event a new member, after being accepted into the League, fails to provide a

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team(s) for play, it will forfeit all bond money, unless written notice of withdrawal from the League is received by the Recording Secretary no later than July 31 of the year of entry. An organization that voluntarily drops out of the League for any valid reason that is accepted by the League membership has a one (1) season grace period in which to re-enter the League. After one (1) season the organization must re-apply for entry into the League.

Section C: Suspension of membership: Any individual, team, or organization may be suspended from membership for:

1. violation of League Bylaws rules, the Code of Ethics, or National Youth Sports Coaches Alliance precepts
2. conduct that is detrimental to the League and its stated purposes
3. failure to meet its financial obligations
4. exhibiting or condoning behavior that could jeopardize the welfare or safety of any participant, official or spectator.

Suspension shall be by act of the Commissioner or a two-third vote of the League membership. An individual, team or organization suspended from the League that seeks reinstatement must follow the procedure for redress of suspension detailed in Addendum 6.

Article 5 - Officers and Committees

The officers of the League shall be a Commissioner, three Vice-Commissioners, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer.

Commissioner - The Commissioner of the League will chair all meetings, call special meetings, and make rulings on all disputed questions regarding the rules and regulations of the League not specifically delegated pursuant to these bylaws. The Commissioner will assess penalties and perform other duties associated with this office including recruiting of new league members and arranging such meetings as may be beneficial to the overall interests of the SAFL.

The Commissioner shall appoint at minimum, the following committees:

A. Nominating Committee - A committee consisting of at least three members to select and place in nomination a slate of officers for the upcoming season. The committee shall be appointed in November.

B. Conduct and Violations Committee - The committee will be appointed by the Commissioner of the League, to review and recommend actions regarding: a) protests, b) violations of rules, c) violations of the Code of Ethics, or d) violations of the bylaws. In addition, the committee shall coordinate NYSCA certification for league members.

C. Bylaws Committee - A committee of at least three members which reviews, updates and publishes the League's Constitution and Bylaws as necessary, or at least once every three years.

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D. League Alignment and Scheduling Committee - A committee consisting of at least three members which reviews conference alignment annually to assure safe and equitable competition and is responsible for scheduling league contests. The committee should be comprised of at least one representative from each current conference.

E. Other committees shall be appointed as necessary to assist in the operation of the league.

First Vice-Commissioner - In the event that the Commissioner is unable to perform the duties of the office, the First Vice Commissioner will assume the duties of the Commissioner. The First Vice Commissioner will organize and co-ordinate the annual league picnic. The First Vice Commissioner may organize a committee to assist with the annual event. (rev 2000)

Vice Commissioner: Players - He or She will assist the league in processing all player registration forms and team rosters.; He or She will assist the league in conducting the player's weigh-ins in accordance with the league bylaws. He or She may establish a weigh-in committee and serve as chairperson of said committee. (rev 2000)

Vice Commissioner: Coaches - He or She will process all coach's applications. He or She will assist the league in conducting the NYCSA Certification courses. He or She will verify NYSCA Certification for all coaches and insure that all NYSCA Certification is current. After the completion of the NYCSA verification, He or She will issue official league identification badges to all coaches and sideline personnel, who qualify. (rev 2000)

Treasurer - The Treasurer is charged with the responsibility of collecting all dues and assessments, paying all appropriate bills, depositing such moneys as are collected in a reputable banking institution and making reports of the conditions of the League at each regular meeting. The Treasurer serves as a resource for the assistance of the Treasurers of the member teams and is responsible for the acquisition, maintenance, and administration of all league insurance policies.

Recording Secretary - The Recording Secretary will perform such duties as necessary to keep all written records of the operation of the League and record and mail minutes of all regular and special meetings to league members.

Corresponding Secretary - The Corresponding Secretary will collect the results of all Game Summary Reports, and record all statistics and standings. Further, the Corresponding Secretary shall write publicity, and report scores to the local newspapers and other media as appropriate. He or She will maintain the league web site.

All officers of the League will serve a term of one (1) year, such term to be from March 1st of the current year to March 1st of the year following. Any officer may be removed for cause by a two-thirds vote of League members: Any vacancy may be filled by a majority vote at any regular or special meeting of the League.

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Article 6 - Rule Development and Enforcement

The league representatives and officers of the league are responsible for the development and enforcement of league rules and regulations.

Article 7 - Meetings and Voting

Meetings of the Suburban Amateur Football League shall be called at the discretion of the Commissioner. A one week notice of such meetings shall be given. All meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. A simple majority of members of the league in good standing and present at any meeting shall be required to carry any motion, except for an amendment, or change to this Constitution and Bylaws which shall require a two thirds vote by membership and notice at the previous meeting.

Unless they are the designated representatives of their sponsoring organizations, the officers of the league will have no vote with the exception of the Commissioner, who in the event of a tie will cast a vote to break the tie.

There will be no voting on the interpretation of the rules, this being the duty of the Commissioner.

Article 8 - Financial and League Liability

Assessments are computed annually with bills being mailed prior to the j start of the season. A partial payment of the annual assessment, In the amount of one half of the estimated annual assessment, must be paid prior to July 1.

The annual assessment is to be used for liability insurance coverage, cost of game officiating, and league administration and operating expenses.

The league will provide liability insurance for participating organizations and their members. The insurance premium must be paid in full prior to the due date. (The current available policy requires full payment by July 1st.) The balance of the annual assessment is to be paid by September 1st of the current season. Failure to pay, in full, the annual assessment by September 1st will result in any games scheduled for that entrant to be canceled.

The league assumes no financial obligation of the teams or organizations entered and cannot be held liable for the actions of the coaches, managers, or any other persons beyond the normal course of league operations as governed by these rules.

Registration

Article 9 - Organization and Team Registration

All organizations must register with the league no later than May 1st. At the time of registration, the organization must:

- A. Submit an Organization Application containing:
 - 1. The team - name of each team being enter into the league.
 - 2. The name, telephone number and address of the organization's League Rep. and Officers in the organization.
 - 3. The field name and location, at which home games will be played and the person and/or organization responsible for your home field.
- B. Submit any date and time restrictions concerning the use of the home field. Late submission of scheduling information may cause home game conflicts that your organization must resolve.
- C. Each organization must submit an Emergency Plan (i.e.; medical, crowd control, weather cancellations) to the League, for each field used, by August 1.

Article 10 - Coaches Registration

- A. The coaches for each registered team must register by completing and filing with the league a Coach's Application.
- B. All coaches must be certified by NYSCA prior to their team's weigh-in. Certification provides the coach with additional liability insurance.
- C. Head Coaches must be at least 25 years of age at their registration. Waiver of this section is at the discretion of the Commissioner.
- D. All coaches will be provided with a photo ID badge, which must be worn at all games to enable others (i.e.; referees, medical personnel, and opposing coaches) to identify those authorized to be in the player's bench area and immediate sideline areas. Only coaches with ID badges are allowed on the sidelines or in the player's bench area.
- E. If the league determines that an uncertified coach or individual participates in league play, or is on the sidelines, all games in which the person has participated in will be declared forfeit. (rev 2001)

Article 11 - Player Registration

Player registration includes the completion of the League registration form, proof of age, weigh-in at league assigned weigh-in site and listing on the official team roster.

Registration

Section A: Registration Form - The registration period for SAFL players will end at the weigh-in. The sponsoring organization is to:

1. Provide the pink copy of the form to the player's parent.
2. Retain the yellow copy of the registration form, which must be available for inspection at all league events.
3. Provide the white copy along with a completed roster form for each competing team to the League Commissioner or his designate at the league registrar meeting. A clean clear copy of the player's birth certificate is required for all new players in the league.

It is the responsibility of each organization to verify the accuracy of the data entered on the SAFL Player's registration form.

The league may use official school records to determine a player's eligibility, if a school fails to provide the league with a copy of that player's official record, the league may declare that player as ineligible.

If the league determines that an ineligible player has participated in league play, all games in which the player participated in will be declared a forfeit.

Section B: Eligibility - Eligibility to play in the SAFL is based on the following three conditions:

1. **Geographic** - The player must be a resident of the Town, City, or Territory of the sponsoring organization. Any METCO student who has been a METCO student for at least two (2) years will be granted an automatic waiver to play in the town in which the player attends school.
2. **Age - Pee Wee Division** - The player must be 8 years of age, or turn 8 years of age, by September 1st. and cannot turn 11 years of age on or before December 31st of the current football season.
Junior Division - The player must be 10 years of age, or turn 10 years of age, during the player registration period, and cannot turn 13 years of age on or before December 31st of the current football season.
Senior Division - The player may not turn 15 years of age on or before December 31st of the current football season.
3. **Grade - Pee Wee Division** - The player must be registered in the 3rd or 4th grade of any school.
Junior Division - The player must be registered in the 5th or 6th grade of any school.
Senior Division - The player must be registered in the 7th or 8th grade of any school.

Section C: Eligibility Waivers - Eligibility waivers may be submitted using the following procedure:

- A. The Commissioner will screen all requests with the authority to approve the waiver immediately.

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- B. The Commissioner will provide a brief update to the League membership of all waiver requests and their disposition.
- C. Unusual requests will be submitted to the League membership, by the Commissioner. Requests of this nature will require a 2/3 vote of the membership.
- D. Any waiver denied by the Commissioner may be submitted to the membership and requires a 2/3 vote of the membership to override the commissioner's ruling.
- E. Waivers must be submitted prior to the player's first practice.
- F. Waivers are restricted to geographic eligibility requirements only. Age and grade waivers that exceed the maximum limits are not allowed. Request for geographical waivers may not exceed 10% of the team's roster. (rev 2003)
- G. One meeting will be designated for waiver review.
- H. A waiver must be submitted to the league for any 2nd grader to participate in the Pee Wee Division. A written letter from parent and/or guardian is also required. (rev 1999)
- I. Pee Wee Division players that are over 100 pounds at the initial weigh-in, and in 4th grade or 9 years of age may move up to the Junior Division without waiver application.

Equality of Competition and Participation

Article 12 -Equality of Competition

Section A: Divisions - In the interest of competitive play and safety, the players are divided into grade and age categories called divisions. There are three divisions within the League: Pee Wee for 3rd, and 4th grade youths; Junior for 5th and 6th grade youths; and Senior for 7th and 8th grade youths.

Section B: Conferencing - Once all league applications are received the organizations will be grouped into conferences. The conference sizes and placement of the organization will be determined by the League Alignment and Scheduling Committee. The decision will be made prior to the schedule deadline and will be final and binding. The primary consideration will be to insure equality of competition and avoid mismatched teams as far as that is possible. Only after that has been accomplished, will a consideration be given to geographical factors. The assessment of a team's potential may be influenced by town population.

Section C: Scheduling - The schedule will be developed by the League Alignment and Scheduling Committee. The committee will take into account the number of teams and home field dates and/or time restrictions. The schedule will be submitted at the earliest regular meeting possible. Conflicts that are identified should be communicated to the League Alignment and Scheduling Committee by the organizations involved to seek an equitable solution prior to August 1st. The playing season will begin the weekend after Labor Day.

Article 13 - Participation:

Section 1: Mission Statement - The SAFL endorses the concept of maximum athlete participation at all levels of play in the league. Each player should receive a fair and equal amount of playing time. The player participation practices of each franchise will be monitored by the league. Appropriate action will be taken if the spirit of this mission statement is violated. (rev 1999)

Section 2: Pee Wee Division - Every player shall play at least one quarter. All teams are required to have 22 starters or as many starters as players available. (rev 1999)

Section 3: Junior and Senior Division - All teams in the Senior and I Junior division will be allowed to play only four (4) 2-way players at any time during the game. Teams with less than 21 players listed on their roster must start 80% of the roster. (rev 2000)

Section 4: JV Participation - Only 50% of team's roster can participate in the JV program. Teams must have a minimum of 36 players on their roster in order to participate in the JV program. (rev 2003)

Weight Policy

Article 14-Weight

Section A: Weigh-In Policy - All players will be weighed by the league prior to the end of the registration period. A player is permitted to be weighed only once, at the official weigh-in. Players will be weighed in shorts, game shirts, sock, and athletics shoes only. (rev 2008) Any player exceeding the initial limit will be designated as "overweight" and be limited to playing positions of down linemen on either offense or defense. Game shirt #50-79 are to be used for overweight players only. Numbers 90-99 can be used as either underweight or overweight numbers for players. Exception: At the weigh-in a team may designate a limited number of underweight players as overweight players, assigning them overweight numbers for the season. (rev 2008)

Section B: Weigh-In Procedure

Section 1: Team Roster: Rosters must be typed or legibly written. Team rosters must be in numerical order. The official league roster for each team will be authorized by the signature of the League Commissioner or his designate. The following statement appears on the official SAFL roster: NOTE: The organization, coordinator, and coaching staff are responsible for the accuracy of all information on this roster sheet. Registrations are accepted only upon the willingness of the team administration to have its games and/or schedule forfeited should fraudulent registration later be determined." Players may be added to the official roster with the authorization of the League Commissioner or his designate. Any and all changes to the roster must be approved by the league commissioner or his designate.

Section 2: Organizations will be assigned a date, time, and location of their organization's weigh-in

Section 3: Team Registrars will escort their team into the designated weigh-in area. No coaches are allowed in weigh-in area.

Section 4: Players will only be weighed once and cannot be re-weighed once they leave the scale area.

Section 5: Players can only be weighed on the day of their team's weigh-in. Players who are not weighed with their team will not be allowed to be weighed until the make-up weigh-in.

Section C: Weight Limits - The following weight limits determine the positions a player is allowed to play: The weight limitation applies to punters and kick-off kickers.

	Pee Wee	Junior	Senior
Initial Weight	80#	115#	135#
In-Season Weight	82#	120#	140#

Weight Policy

Section D: Late Weigh-In - There will be one late weigh-in date which will be scheduled the week after the start of the season.

Section E: Random Weigh-In - At any time during the season, the Commissioner or a designate may randomly weigh any player to assure compliance with the weight limit promulgated above. Any player who exceeds the maximum weight will no longer be allowed to play an underweight position for the remainder of the season. The player's jersey number must be changed and the team's roster updated by the appropriate league official.

Article 15 - Game Starting Time

Pee Wee division games are played first. Junior division games are played next with Senior division games immediately following the completion of the Junior game.

Game Day	Before Daylight Savings	After Daylight Savings
Sunday	12:15pm	noon
Saturday	4:45pm	4:45pm

Article 16 - Procedure for Cancellation

Failure of a team to show up for a scheduled League Game will result in a forfeiture. Any team arriving later than one half hour after the scheduled start will forfeit the game. If a team arrives within the one half hour grace period, a one half hour warm up period will be allowed. Exceptions to this rule include the following: severe weather conditions; an accident; an emergency that, in the judgment of the Commissioner is valid; or when the authority of the field declares the site unplayable.

If a scheduled game is canceled:

1. The team requesting the postponement must contact the other team and the League Commissioner or designee at least four (4) hours prior to the scheduled starting time.
2. The home team must contact the League Commissioner or designee.
3. A delayed game will be any game which is held up one hour from the original starting time. No game may be delayed for more than one hour.
4. All postponed games must be rescheduled within 10 days of the original date. Games not affecting standings may be canceled with the approval of the Commissioner.

Article 17 - Pre-game Roster Inspection

One half hour before the game offensive and defensive starting lineups must be exchanged between opposing head coaches or designates. Prior to the start of the game, a coach may weigh an opposing player to determine his approximate weight.

A player's weight may be challenged through a protest. The protest must be lodged by notifying the opposing head coach prior to the start of the second quarter. A twenty five (25) dollar bond is required, and must accompany the formal protest with the Commissioner. A weigh-in will be held the following Monday, for the player in question. Each team is required to be represented at the weigh-in. The time and location of the weigh-in will be determined by the Commissioner, or

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his designate. If the protest is upheld, the protest bond will be refunded. If the protest is denied or dropped the bond will be forfeited to the League treasury.

Article 18 - Emergency Medical Personnel

A. The league requires that the home team provide for on-field emergency medical personnel (at a minimum medical proficiency of Certified EMT) at each regularly scheduled varsity, junior varsity, and Pee Wee game. The visiting team may provide their own EMT to attend to their own players on field medical emergencies. The visiting team must introduce the EMT to the referee and home team coach prior to the start of the game.

B. Some form of communication must be established between the emergency medical personnel and local authorities to provide ambulance service as quickly as possible.

C. The league recommends that the home team provide for on-field emergency medical personnel (at a minimum medical proficiency of Certified EMT) at each scrimmage.

Failure to comply with A and B will result in cancellation of the game and the home team forfeiting. A second offense will result in the organization being suspended from the league until the requirements are met.

Playing Field

Article 19 - Field Preparation

It will be the obligation of the home team to furnish all necessary equipment to run a ball game, ten yard chains, down markers and suitable playing field of regulation size and markings for high school play.

Pre-game field preparation must include:

- A. The field be lined so all boundaries can be clearly discerned.
- B. Each 10 yard stripe, the goal line and the back corners of the end zone must be indicated by a marker. Numbered markers are recommended for the 10 yard stripes.
- C. Pee Wee Division: The playing field will be a total of 80 yards long. The 10 yard lines will serve as the end zone and the goal lines will serve as the back of the end zone. Two (2) cones must be set-up at both 10 yard lines to indicate the end zone. (rev 2000)
- D. All goal post uprights must be padded.
- E. The game field must be outlined by either a rope or other suitable markings to prohibit the spectators from encroaching upon the playing field or the area near the team benches. Each team will be responsible for policing this barrier on its side of the field subject to forfeiture of the game.
- F. If the visiting team determines the field conditions are not in compliance with this Article, the home team will have one half hour to correct the situation, then the game official can declare the field unplayable. The League will declare that the home team has forfeited the game.
- G. Two Certified Officials are required to preside over every Pee Wee game. (rev 1999) A minimum of two Certified Officials is required to conduct Junior and Senior games. The league strongly recommends that a certified official be present at every JV game. The home team is responsible for payment of all officials.

Article 20 - Field Facilities

The following facilities are required for games and practices, as applicable:

- A. A coach must have a signed copy of the player's League Registration Form available at all games and practices. This form includes a Medical Release and if the player's parent(s) or legal guardian does not accompany the player to the hospital, the form must accompany the player to the hospital. The head coach is subject to expulsion from the League for violation of this requirement.
- B. Each organization will be responsible for providing each head coach with an appropriately equipped first-aid box, which is to be maintained and available for inspection at all games and practices.
- C. Ten yard chains and down marker must be handled by responsible persons.

Playing Field

D. If possible, a source of drinking water and toilet facilities should be available. The home team must notify the opposing team if they are not available.

Player Equipment

Article 21 - Player Equipment

The following equipment requirements must be met for all Divisions:

- A. NOCSAE certified helmet.
- B. Shoulder pads.
- C. Football pants with hip, spine, thigh, and knee pads.
- D. Athletic supporter and cup, where applicable,
- E. Chest protector, where applicable.
- F. Colored mouth pieces must be worn by all players. Clear mouth pieces are NOT allowed.
- G. Sneakers or shoes with molded non-removable cleat soles are required. The cleats may not exceed 3/4".
- H. Jerseys - Uniform colors must be of such contrast to allow normal play without confusion. Colors will be determined at a league meeting.

If two teams scheduled to play each other have the same color jersey. It will be the responsibility of the home team to supply a neutral color jersey for use in that game. NCAA numbering system for interior lineman is recommended and numbers must be on the front and back of ALL jerseys. All players' uniforms must be alike.

Any player who is found to be in violation of this article during a League game will be removed from the field by the referees. The player may return to the game when the equipment deficiency has been rectified.

Article 22 - Football Specifications

The following table specifies League approved footballs. Any exceptions may be brought to the Commissioner for review. The lower divisions are allowed to use a larger size, higher division football.

APPROVED FOOTBALLS

Manufacturer	Senior	Junior	Pee Wee
Spalding	J5J	J5J	J5J
Wilson	TDY	TDJ	K2
Rawlings	R5Y	Pro5JR	Pro5JR
Nike	1000 Y	1000 J	1000 K
Baden	500Y	500J	500pw

Rules of Play

Article 23 - Playing Rules

Games of the Suburban Amateur Football League will be played under amateur rules, specifically those of the National Collegiate Athletic Association and those rules modifications made by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, in addition to any special rules included in these Bylaws or passed by the League governing body.

Section A: Overweight Players - It is the intention of the League that overweight players play against overweight players. Any team devising offensive and defensive schemes in order to create mismatches is in violation of the intentions of the League. At no time can an overweight player ever advance, carry, or run with the ball. The offense is allowed a maximum of five overweight players and they must occupy interior positions on the line of scrimmage at the snap. The ends of the line must be occupied by an unrestricted player. (rev 1999)

The defense is allowed a maximum of five overweight players and they must also occupy interior positions on the line of scrimmage at the snap. Overweight players on defense cannot line up any further outside than head to head with the offensive tackles and must make first contact with the tackle. (rev 1999). NOTE!! Playing less than a seven-man front on defense at the snap will reduce the overweight player allowance because the ends on the line at time of the snap must be unrestricted players.

Overweight defensive players may not retreat at anytime to take up positions as linebackers or defensive backs: All overweight defensive players must be in a down position, three or four point stance on the line of scrimmage at the snap.

Should an overweight player be inserted into the line-up in an underweight position during the game, the opposing head coach can call a time out to bring this to the referee's attention, and inform him that the game is being played under protest. The game will then be continued. The incident will be reported to the Commissioner by the protesting coach, after the completion of the game, independent of the outcome of the game. The team and/or the coach may be subject to suspension.

The weight limitation also applies to punters and kick-off kickers. The weight limitation does not apply to extra point and field goal kickers.

Section B. Kicking plays

1. Kickoffs:

A: Senior Division - As followed by NCAA rules. Neither the kicking nor receiving teams are allowed overweight players. If a team has less than 11 underweight players, but has at least 9 underweight players, the opposing team must field the equal number players on their special teams. If the number of underweight players is under 9 for either team, the kick-off will be excluded and the ball will instead be placed on the receiving team's own 35 yard line to begin an offensive series. (rev 1999)

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B: Junior Division - As followed by NCAA rules. (rev 2001) Neither the kicking nor receiving teams are allowed overweight players. If a team has less than 11 underweight players, but has at least 9 underweight players, the opposing team must field the equal number of players on their special teams. If the number of underweight players is under 9 for either team, the kick-off will be excluded and the ball will instead be placed on the receiving team's own 35 yard line to begin an offensive series. (rev 1999)

C: Pee Wee Division - There will be no kickoffs in the Pee Wee Division. The ball will be placed in play at the offensive team's forty yard line.

2. Punting:

A: Senior Division - Follow NCAA rules

B: Junior Division - Follow NCAA rules (rev 1999)

C: Pee Wee Division - options of:

1. To be played as a free kick. No rushing offensively or defensively. The ball would be put in play where it comes to rest.
2. The team electing to turn the ball over on fourth down would be awarded a 15 yard advancement in place of the punt.

3. Extra Points and Field Goals:

A: Senior Division - Follow NCAA rules

B: Junior Division - The kick will be played as a free kick. Both the offense and defense must hold their positions until the ball is kicked. The ball may not be advanced by the kicking team. Fakes are not allowed. If the snap is muffed, the play is dead. After a failed field goal try, the receiving team will be awarded the ball at the original line of scrimmage.

C: Pee Wee Division - The kick will be played as a free kick. Both the offense and defense must hold their positions until the ball is kicked. The ball may not be advanced by the kicking team. Fakes are not allowed. If the snap is muffed, the play is dead. After a failed field goal try, the receiving team will be awarded the ball at the original line of scrimmage. For a declared field goal try and for a declared one point PAT, the line of scrimmage will be advanced ten yards for the try. After a failed try the receiving team will be awarded the ball at the original line of scrimmage prior to it being advanced. (rev 2008)

Section C: Safety

1. **Pee Wee & Junior Division** - If a safety occurs, two points will be awarded to the defensive team and that team will be awarded the ball at their opponent's forty yard line.
2. **Senior Division** - If a safety occurs, regular NCAA rules apply.

Rules of Play

Section D: Playing Time

1. Peewee Division - The game shall be played in four 12 minute running quarters. The clock does not stop for player injuries. There will be a two minute break between quarters and a 5 minute break between halves. Each team will be allowed one (1) time out per half of one minute in length. The time out will actually stop the clock. Time out cannot be carried over to the 2nd half. (rev 1999) The first minute of a player injury will be running time; continued stoppage of play lasting longer than a minute will stop the game clock. EXCEPTION: during the last two minutes of play for each half, a player injury will stop the game clock. (rev 2008)
2. Junior Division - The game shall be thirty two minutes divided into four quarters of eight minutes stopped time each.
3. Senior Division - The game shall be forty minutes divided into four quarters of ten minutes stopped time each.

Section E: Any injured player requiring medical attention, will not be allowed to participate at practices or games until the head coach has received a written medical clearance from a physician that sufficient healing has taken place to resume participation in playing football. The head coach will include this clearance with the player's records. The medical clearance must be available for verification.

Section F: Any player with a splint, cast, or brace will not be allowed to participate at practices or games without proper protective padding. All protective padding must be inspected by the attending EMT and the game officials.

Section G: Player Substitution - the free substitution rule is always in effect in all divisions.

Section H: Practice Sessions - there will be no organized, supervised coaching, games or practice sessions or physical exercise during the calendar year prior to August 1st. A maximum of five (5) practice sessions per week are allowed prior to the start of school. After school starts, a maximum of four (4) practice sessions per week are allowed.

Section I: There will be no blocking below the waist.

Section J: All players, whether designated JV or Varsity players shall be encouraged to suit up for all varsity contests.

Rules of Play

Section K: Additional rules for the Pee Wee Division

1. No more than two coaches from each team will be allowed on the playing field. Coaches are required at the snap of the ball to be at least 10 yards behind the last player in their team's formation. (rev 1999)
2. Every player shall play at least one quarter, All teams are required to have 22 starters or as many starters as players available. (rev 1999)
3. No defensive player to line-up directly over the offensive snapper (one defensive lineman may line up on his shoulder.) No defensive lineman can line up in the gaps. Defensive linemen must line up heads up on an offensive lineman, pursue the play in a generally forward direction, making initial contact with an opposing offensive lineman, or through the space immediately vacated by an opposing offensive lineman. Defensive linemen must be in a 3 or 4 point stand. Defensive ends, although underweight players, can cross the line of scrimmage and only defensive players on the line of scrimmage are allowed to cross the line of scrimmage at the snap. When the football is moved out of the tackle box all defensive players are eligible to cross the line of scrimmage to make the tackle. The tackle box is defined as a rectangular area at the beginning of the play centered on the middle lineman of the offensive formation and extending three (3) yards laterally in each direction (generally the outside shoulder of the left offensive tackle to the outside shoulder of the right offensive tackle) and four yards longitudinally into the offensive backfield. (rev 2008)
4. No blitzing; linebackers and defensive backs to line-up at least 2 yards off the line of scrimmage.
5. Punting - option of:
 - a - To be played as a free kick. No rushing offensively or defensively the ball would be put in play where it comes to rest.
 - b - The team electing to turn the ball over on fourth down would be awarded a 15 yard advancement in place of the punt.
6. Time In Huddle - Time in huddle is limited to 45 seconds from the time of the previous plays completion. First offense is a warning, second offense and after is a delay of game penalty. (rev 1998)
7. The playing field will be a total of 80 yards long. The 10 yard lines will serve as the end zone and the goal lines will serve as the back of the end zone. Two (2) cones must be set-up at both 10 yard lines to indicate the end zone. (rev 2000)

Violation of League Rules

Article 24 - Violations

All violations of league rules and ethics will be reviewed by the Conduct and Violations Committee.

Any violation of the SAFL rules, regulations, and ethics as stated herein may result in an immediate suspension of the head coach, assistant coach, or organization.

In the event that the Conduct and Violations Committee determines that a player or coach has acted in a manner detrimental to the League's stated purpose, the Commissioner may bar that player or coach from any further participation In League activities.

Repeated or flagrant violations by assistant coaches or players may result in the suspension of the head coach or organization.

The Commissioner will send a registered letter to the penalized individual and organization with a full explanation of the infraction and penalty

Article 25 - Score Differential Review

In the event of a winning point spread of greater than 24 points, the winning coach shall be prepared to explain to the Commissioner or the Commissioner's designate, the reasons for such a score differential and the rationale of effort to attempt to dissuade such a winning margin. If it is determined that substantial effort was not attempted to hold down the winning margin, the League will take disciplinary action. (rev 2001)

Article 26 - Protest

During a game, any head coach may lodge a protest when the coach notes an infraction of League rules has occurred. The coach should request a time-out, notify the game officials and walk over to the opposing head coach and lodge the protest at the time the infraction is noticed.

This will not be a charged time-out to the protesting team. Additionally, the head coach must submit a written protest to the Commissioner of the League, this protest may be hand delivered or sent by certified mail, postmarked within forty eight (48) hours of the completion of the game, accompanied by a ten (10) dollar protest bond. If the protest is up-held, the protest bond will be refunded, if the protest is denied or dropped the bond will be forfeited to the League treasury. The Commissioner, if necessary, will then as soon as practical, call a meeting of the Conduct and Violations Committee, and shall conduct a hearing with both sides present and any other persons necessary to fairly adjudicate said protest. Decisions of the Conduct and Violations Committee are FINAL.

Violation of League Rules

Article 27 - Game Summary Report

It is the responsibility of both teams to complete a Game Summary Report. The format of the report is included in Addendum 5. The form will be properly completed, executed, and mailed to the League's official address within 48 hours of the completion of every game.

Coaches that do not submit weekly Game Summary Reports will receive one written warning, on the next offense the Head Coach will be suspended for one game and will be unable to be on the sidelines. Continued Game Summary violations will result in the suspension of the Head Coach in future games until all reports are submitted to the league. No appeals will be accepted.

Awards

Article 28 - Awards

The league will provide team trophies in all divisions to the regular season Champions. There will be no League championship games.

The Charles "Chick" Patillo Award will be awarded to an Individual who has retired from active duty in the league after one year.

The Mack Donnelly award will be awarded to an individual who is currently active in the league.

Awards will be presented at the meeting held in November.

Addendum 1 - Ethics

Coach's Code of Ethics

The Suburban Amateur Football League has adopted the following Code of Ethics that coaches are obligated to follow. We feel that the conduct and responsibilities of the coaches involved in the League must be clearly defined.

This Code of Ethics along with the League's bylaws gives the League the general guidelines it will use to determine any disciplinary action that it deems necessary in the event of a complaint brought before the League.

Philosophy Statement

The purpose of the Suburban Amateur Football League is to provide wholesome and healthy recreation for youths in the 8 -14 year old bracket. It is the intention of this organization to lay down fair rules of play, and strictly adhere to these for the benefit of all the teams entered in this League. It is the responsibility of member organizations of the League to provide a supervised activity that will stress sportsmanship, skill development, enhance physiological development, and most of all be FUN. Each organization shall be responsible for the conduct of their teams and support staff, and instruct and enforce the principles stated here, especially in attitude and intent.

Ethics for Coaching

Along with abiding by the philosophy statement previously mentioned, adhering to the League adopted Coaching Certification program Code of Ethics Pledge provided by the National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA,) and to the League bylaws, the following are more specific codes pertaining to League Coaches:

1. Never place the value of a win above the instilling the highest desirable ideals and character traits in your players. The emotional and physical well being of all players should always be uppermost in your mind. Their safety and welfare must never be sacrificed for any personal prestige or selfish glory.
2. Abide by a doctor's, parent's or medical person-on-duty's decision in all matters of the player's health, injuries, and ability to play. It is the coach's duty to see that an injured player is given prompt and competent medical attention.
3. Under no circumstances should a coach authorize the use of drugs, prescription or illegal or other stimulants.
4. Under no circumstances should a coach endorse or prescribe weight loss or gain techniques.
5. Never make demands on players that will interfere with the player's opportunities for achieving academic success. There should be no more than four (4) practice sessions per

Addendum 1 - Ethics

week when school is in session.

6. Stress sportsmanship, participation, fun and the basic development of skills. At the end of the game, all coaches are required to meet at the center of the field and shake hands.
7. Become familiar with the objectives, philosophy, and rules of the game, especially those outlined in the SAFL bylaws. You will strive to achieve these objectives and communicate them to your players and their parents.
8. Never use any physical means against players, spectators, parents, officials, or other coaches.
9. Do not unduly criticize players in front of spectators, parents, or peers. Criticism is only good in a constructive form.
10. Do not use profanity or harsh words of any nature while conducting any affiliated activity of the League.
11. Do not criticize the opposing team, coaches, fans, or officials by word of mouth or gesture. Also realize that the opposing coaches are cohorts in providing instruction to children and the opportunity for them to have fun, just like you. Treat them with the same respect as you would want them to treat you.
12. It is the head coach's responsibility to report all violations of the SAFL Constitution and Bylaws and Coaches Code of Ethics to the Commissioner within forty eight hours.
13. Never appear in public under the influence of alcoholic beverages at any time while conducting the activities and duties of coaching. Coaches must refrain from use of all tobacco products during all league functions where players may be present.
14. Remember, you are a youth coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.

Ethics for Game Play

1. Never attempt to beat the rules of the game or take advantage of an opponent. You should set the example for winning without boasting, and losing without bitterness.
2. Uphold the authority of the officials who are assigned to the contests that you are involved with. You will assist them in every way to conduct fair and impartial competitive contests. Verbal argument or chastising will not be tolerated. Any concerns regarding officiating should be forwarded through the appropriate channels of the League.
3. Be familiar with the rules, objectives and philosophy of the game of football. You are responsible for understanding and having read the SAFL bylaws, especially understanding the League's following of NCAA and MIAA rules, weight limitations and procedures, and proper protest avenues and procedures.
4. There will be no use of two-way electronic communication in the league. (rev 2002)

Addendum 1 - Ethics

Ethics for League Interaction

1. Scouting - Although open interaction and League involvement is encouraged, the documentation of opposing teams, via written, video and/or other media, is strictly prohibited. Remember, the game is to develop the skills, sportsmanship and FUN amongst the players without total emphasis on winning or taking unfair advantage of the rules or opposing team. Time and energies should be concentrated on the teaching aspect of the game and not the scouting aspect.

Administration

1. The Head Coach and/or the League Representative of the organization will be directly responsible that all league administrative paperwork and duties that involve the players are executed accurately and promptly to the best of their ability.
2. The Head Coach is also responsible to have all League administrative paperwork pertaining to eligibility and medical waivers present at all SAFL functions involving the players.

Team Decorum

The coach is the ultimate supervising and teaching role for the players and the team. The coach has the ability to shape and control the attitude and actions of the players and team.

Thus the coach is responsible for the actions of his team and/or players unless circumstances warrant the actions uncontrollable and/or unforeseeable by the coach. This determination will be made through the appropriate channels of the League.

Addendum 2 – Territorial Boundaries

It is within the scope of the Alignment and Scheduling Committee to determine the appropriate conference alignments year to year to promote safety and equitable competition. The following chart is provided for information only as it may have some influence in determining appropriate conference alignment and scheduling.

Agawam - The Town of Agawam. Population: 28,144.

Amherst – The Towns of Amherst (34,874), Leverett (1,816), Shutesbury (1,695), and Pelham (1,338). Population: 39, 723,

Belchertown - The Towns of Belchertown (12,968) and Granby (6,132). Population: 19,100.

Chicopee - The City of Chicopee. Population: 54,653.

East Longmeadow - The Town of East Longmeadow. Population: 14,100.

Easthampton - The towns of Southampton (15,994) and Easthampton (5,387). Population: 21,381.

Frontier – The towns of Deerfield (6,618), Sunderland (3,777), Conway (1,809) and Whately (1,573). Population: 13,777.

Greenfield – The towns of Bernardston (2,048), Erving (1,372), Gill (1,583), Greenfield (18,168), Leyden (662), Montague (8,316), Northfield (2,838) and Warwick (740). Population: 35,727.

Holyoke - The City of Holyoke. Population: 39,838.

Ludlow - The Towns of Ludlow (21,209) and *Indian Orchard* (4,500). Population: 25,709.

Longmeadow - The Town of Longmeadow. Population: 15,633.

Mohawk – The towns of Ashfield (1,800), Buckland (1,991), Charlemont (1,358), Colrain (1,813), Hawley (317), Heath (716), Plainfield (571), and Shelburne (4,009). Population: 12,575.

Northampton - The City of Northampton. Population: 28,978.

Palmer - The Towns of Palmer (12,497) and Monson (8,359). Population: 20,856.

Quabbin - The Towns of Barre (5,113), Hubbardston (3,909), Hardwick (2,622), Oakham (1,673) and New Braintree (927). Population: 14,244.

Quaboag - The Towns of Warren and West Warren (4,776), Brookfield (3,051), North Brookfield (4,683), West Brookfield (3,804), East Brookfield (2,097). Population: 18,411.

South Hadley - The Town of South Hadley. Population: 17,196.

Springfield CYO - *See map. Population: 30,474*

Springfield, North - *See map. Population: 48,813*

Springfield, South - *See map. Population: 44,694*

Ware - The Town of Ware. Population: 9,707.

West Springfield - The Town of West Springfield. Population: 27,899.

Westfield - The City of Westfield. Population: 40,072.

Wilbraham - The Towns of Wilbraham (13,473) and Hampden (5,171). Population: 18,644.

Addendum 3 – Junior Varsity Play Guidelines

The purpose of the Junior Varsity (JV) program is to provide an instructional venue for beginning and less skilled players. The emphasis is on teaching the fundamentals of the sport, not on winning. The League feels that this program should not be used to exclude any child from play in a varsity game. Each child participating in the JV program should feel like a member of the overall team and if conditions are right should be included in varsity games.

All rules applying to the regulation of divisional contests are applicable to a JV game. This includes all ethical considerations, including the "blowout" rule.

The following additional rules apply to both the Senior and Junior Divisions:

1. All JV games will be played under regular game conditions.
2. All JV games should be played on a regulation field
3. Each game will have four fifteen minute running time quarters. The clock will be stopped for time outs called by either team or referees, and injuries. Each team will be allowed two time outs per half.
4. Each team may place one coach, who is on the official roster, on the field. (rev 2002)
5. The league will provide 2 NAYS Certified Officials. (rev 2001) Each referee will be instructed to look for the most flagrant fouls and any special concerns of the coaching staffs. All teams participating in the JV program will use NAYS Certified Officials.
6. The home team is required to provide ten yard markers and a chain gang.
7. The home team is required to provide an emergency medical person.
8. Varsity team starters are not eligible for the JV team.
9. Each player will play a minimum of fifteen minutes in each game.
10. Kickoffs - follow standard SAFL rules.
11. Punts - rushing is not allowed, returns are allowed.
12. Recorded standings will not be kept.
13. The cut-off date to enter a JV team is two weeks prior to the start of the playing season.
14. Coaches of teams scheduled to play JV contests on Saturday must contact each other by Wednesday evening of the week of the scheduled game.

Addendum 4 – Game Summary Report Format

As provided by the league.

Addendum 5 – Procedure for Suspension and Reinstatement

Section A: Suspension Procedure - When the Commissioner suspends an individual, team, or organization he or she must notify the League Representative of the effected organization within 48 hours of the decision to suspend. If the League representative is not available, the Head Coaches of the individual, team, or organization suspended must be notified within 48 hours.

Section B: Appeal of Suspension - If the Commissioner suspends an individual, team, or organization, the suspended party must file a Petition of Appeal of Suspension within 48 hours in order to be considered for reinstatement. The content of this petition is outlined below. The Executive Committee, acting as an Appeals Committee, will, within 72 hours of receipt of a petition of redress by certified mail to the league office, convene a special appeals committee meeting to consider any redress action. If possible, the meeting will be scheduled so as to take place prior to the next game.

At the special meeting, the Appeals Committee will conduct an inquiry in which the Commissioner and the suspended party will each have up to 1/2 hour to present all pertinent evidence in support of reinstatement or continuance of the suspension. After both parties state their case, the Committee may ask questions as appropriate. When the Committee is satisfied that all facts have been presented, a vote of the Appeals Committee will be taken. A simple majority of the Appeals Committee will determine whether to overturn the suspension. The decision is final and may not be further appealed except as outlined in paragraph C.

Section C: Application for Reinstatement - Individuals, teams or organizations that wish to:

1. Pursue a full league vote to present a compromise of a suspension during the season
2. Wish to seek reinstatement for the next season after a permanent suspension may petition, in writing, the Commissioner. The petition will be included as an agenda item at a regularly scheduled league meeting. The league representatives will vote to accept a compromise or reinstate for the next season at that regularly scheduled league meeting. A 2/3 majority of organizations present is required.

Section D: Violation of MIAA Rules and rule with prior notice - Violation of MIAA cannot be appealed. Violation of rules with prior knowledge of penalty cannot be appealed.

Addendum 5 – Procedure for Suspension and Reinstatement

PETITION FOR APPEAL OF SUSPENSION

Date:

Organization Name:

Suspended Party:

League Representative:

Appeal Submitted by:

Telephone #:

Explain the Reason for Appeal:

(attach additional
documentation if necessary)

Signature:

Send by Certified mail, return receipt requested to:

SAFL
P.O. Box 482
South Hadley, MA 01075

National Standards for Youth Sports

1. Proper Sports Environment

Parents must consider and carefully choose the proper sports environment for their child, including the appropriate age and development for participation, the type of sport, the rules of the sport, the age range of the participants, and the proper level of physical and emotional stress.

2. Programs Based on the Well-Being of Children

Parents must select youth sports programs that are developed and organized to enhance the emotional, physical, social and educational well-being of children.

3. Drug, Tobacco & Alcohol-Free Environment

Parents must encourage a drug, tobacco and alcohol-free environment for their children.

4. Part of a Child's Life

Parents must recognize that youth sports are only a part of a child's life.

5. Training

Parents must insist that coaches are trained and certified.

6. Parent's Active Role

Parents must make a serious effort to take an active role in the youth sports experience of their child providing positive support as a spectator, coach, league administrator and/or caring parent.

7. Positive Role Models

Parents must provide positive role models, exhibiting sportsmanlike behavior at games, practices and home, while also giving positive reinforcement to their child and support to their child's coaches.

8. Parental Commitment

Parents must demonstrate their commitment to their child's youth sports experience by annually signing the Parent's Code of Ethics Pledge.

9. Safe Playing Situations

Parents must insist on safe playing facilities, healthful playing situations, and proper first aid applications, should the need arise.

10. Equal Play Opportunity

Parents, coaches, and league administrators must provide equal sports play opportunity for all youth regardless of race, creed, sex, economic status or ability.

11. Drug, Tobacco & Alcohol-Free Adults

Parents must be drug, tobacco and alcohol-free at youth league sporting events.