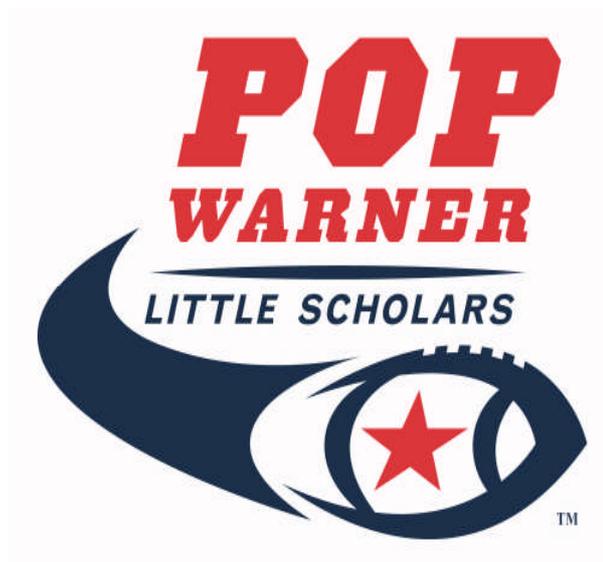


2017 CFF Football Manual



CONSOLIDATED FOOTBALL FEDERATION

Football • Cheerleading • Dance • Scholastics

www.cff-popwarner.com

I. Introduction

Welcome to the Consolidated Football Federation. The Consolidated Football Federation (CFF) is the local NC triangle area Pop Warner Little Scholars League. We are members of the Mid-South Region. The CFF is made up of 16 individual Member Associations representing 5 local counties. Member Associations include Apex, Capital City, Cary, Cleveland, Durham, Garner, North Raleigh, Orange County, Sanford, South Johnston, Tri County, Wake County, Wake Forest, Wilders Grove, Knightdale and South Wake PW.

The CFF is run by an Executive Board which includes the Commissioner, Cheer & Dance Coordinator, Treasurer, Secretary, Assistant Football Commissioners, Assistant Cheer & Dance Coordinator, Scholastics Coordinator, Challenger Division Coordinator, and support staff. The Executive Board along with the Football Commissioner and Cheer & Dance Coordinator for each Member Association make up the CFF Board. It is the responsibility of the CFF Board to enforce the rules and policies of the Pop Warner National office, the Mid South Region, and the CFF Constitution, By Laws, and Operating Procedures.

The purpose of the CFF Football Manual is to provide a summary of rules and procedures to highlight for Association Football Commissioners and Coaches. **It is not intended to be a replacement of the established rules and procedures.**

For more information please visit the following websites:

Consolidated Football Federation	www.cff-popwarner.com
Mid South Region	www.midsouthpopwarner.net
Pop Warner	www.popwarner.com

Email addresses:

Commissioner	commissioner@cff-popwarner.com
Assistant FB Commissioner – Developmental	fbdevelopment@cff-popwarner.com
Assistant FB Commissioner – Competitive	fbcompetitive@cff-popwarner.com
Cheer & Dance Coordinator	cheer@cff-popwarner.com
Scholastics Coordinator	scholastics@cff-popwarner.com
Treasurer	treasurer@cff-popwarner.com

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II. Purpose of CFF

The purpose of Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. is to enable children to benefit from participation in team sports and activities in a safe and structured environment. Through this active participation, Pop Warner programs teach fundamental values, skills and knowledge that children will use throughout their lives.

The purpose of the Consolidated Football Federation football program is to provide the opportunity to teach young participants the fundamentals of football. These fundamentals include sportsmanship. It must be remembered that we are all involved for the sake of our kids. The teaching of football fundamentals is a building process. Players are able to learn additional skills and techniques at each level of play. A portion of your responsibilities is to prepare the players for the next level whether that may be within Pop Warner or eventually High School football. While winning makes the game enjoyable and should be one of the goals of a team, learning and improving the player's fundamental skills and knowledge of the game should be the primary goal of all involved.

As mentioned above, sportsmanship is to be included in the football fundamentals taught. Each year our young players are exposed to more and more acts of unsportsmanlike conduct on television. These include cheating, trash talking, taunting, late hits, as well as the lack of willingness to shake hands and help an opponent up. This trend must not be allowed to continue and will not be allowed with the CFF. It is expected that every coach and administrator involved commit to do what they can to teach our players the importance of sportsmanship.

III. Before the Season Begins

A coach's responsibilities begin long before practice begins on August 1st. The Head Football Coach is the one individual who is ultimately responsible for making sure all Pop Warner rules, regulations, and operating procedures are followed. The Association Football Commissioner is available to assist you, but it is the responsibility of the head coach and they will be held accountable. Pre-Season responsibilities include:

- a. Rule Book – It is the Head Coaches responsibility to read and become familiar with the Pop Warner Rule Book. Do not depend on others to tell you what it says. Read it for yourself and become familiar with it. Ask questions of

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anything not understood. Your Football Commissioner will supply you with a copy.

- b. High School Rule Book – Get a copy of and become familiar with the High School Rule Book. Copies can be ordered from www.nfhs.org. As you are aware, there are many differences between high school, college, and professional rules. Do not let your understanding of high school rules be based on what you see and hear on television.
- c. Risk Management Handbook – Head Coach need to read and refresh their knowledge of the Pop Warner Risk Management Handbook every year. A copy of the Handbook is available on the national Pop Warner web site.
- d. Players Paperwork – It is the Head Coaches responsibility to assure that all players are properly registered and all required paperwork has been submitted and is placed in the official team book prior to allowing any players to begin practice. Paperwork includes a copy of their birth certificate, the Pop Warner participant contract and parental consent forms, the Pop Warner physical fitness and medical history forms, and the most recent and complete report card or Pop Warner eligibility form.
- e. Team Book – As mentioned above each team must have a team book that has copies of all of the above listed paperwork. Because of the confidential information contained in this book, it is to remain in the possession of the Head Football coach at all times. For insurance reasons this book must be present at all practices and games. Once the Team Book has been reviewed and approved by the league, the birth certificates and report cards / eligibility forms may be removed and kept in a separate location. If your team continues to participate in the regional playoffs, the original birth certificate will be required.
- f. Initial Weigh In – Prior to the initial practice, each tackle football player must be weighed in. Please see Pop Warner Rule Book Part V, Rule 2 and Rule 6. A player weighing 6 or more pounds above the maximum weight or 3 or more pounds less than the minimum weight for the selected division of play as listed in Part V, Rule 1, S4 are NOT allowed to practice in that selected division. The player must be moved to a selected division where they meet the age and weight requirements for the initial practice.
- g. Coaching Requirements – Coaching requirements for all Coaches who wish to participate in Pop Warner can be found in the Pop Warner Rule Book, Part III, Article 5. These include but are not limited to:
 - i. The Head Coach and all the Assistant Coaches must take and pass the USA Head Up Certification. This certification is valid for one year..
 - ii. All Coaches must attend the annual CFF Football Coaches Meeting.

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- iii. In the absence of a specialized, trained person affiliated with the team in the medical area (physician, paramedic, specially trained volunteer, certified athletic trainer), one of the coaches must be the holder of a current Red Cross certificate in Community CPR and first aid, or the P.R.E.P.A.R.E. course by the National Center for Sports Safety (www.sportssafety.org) or their equivalent. All practices must be attended by someone with the above listed training.
- iv. The Head Football Coach has final responsibility for his/her actions, as well as those of his/her assistant coaches, players, staff and parents.

The CFF has established lines of communication for all involved to make sure all questions and concerns are addressed at the proper layer. Players, parents, and assistant coaches should address any questions and concerns to the head coach. The head coach should address any questions and concerns to the association football commissioner. The association football commissioner is the link between the CFF Executive Board and the Association and will therefore address any questions or concerns to the CFF.

IV. Pre-Season

Pre-season practice may not begin until August 1st of each year. No team may schedule more than 10 hours of practice per week before Labor Day or 6 hours of practice per week following Labor Day. A week is defined as Monday - Sunday. For more information see Part III, Article 15, S9.

Coaching a Pop Warner team offers great opportunities to be a positive influence in a child's life, teach meaningful lessons through sports and have fun. At the same time, coaching comes with significant responsibility. Coaches must develop programs to minimize risk of injury to athletes. The Pop Warner Risk Management Handbook provides materials and information that can be easily and directly incorporated into your coaching program to increase success and safety.

The first 10 hours (minimum) of practice shall be devoted entirely and exclusively to conditioning, not wearing pads other than a helmet. Person-to-person or person-to-dummy contact is not allowed until after the first week of conditioning when each player must be dressed in the full complement of protective equipment. The second 10 hours (minimum) of practice shall be devoted to conditioning while wearing pads. Inter-squad scrimmages are not allowed until this second week of conditioning has been completed. The coaching staff must make sure that any players that join the team after practices

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begin must complete the 20 hours of conditioning as well before they are allowed to join the progress of the remainder of the team.

During the first week of practice, the Head Coach should hold a meeting with the parents. This parent meeting will allow you the opportunity to let the parents know your expectations and goals. You should also inform them of your coaching style and open up the channel of communication. Weekly parent meetings are recommended.

The entire coaching staff should keep an eye out for injuries. You should remove from a game or practice any participant when even slightly in doubt about his / her health, whether or not as a result of injury, until competent medical advice is available. Do not take any chances, it is not worth it.

An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the activity until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to competition.

Each Association should have an established policy on practicing in extreme weather conditions. All coaches should be familiar with the policy. Extra care must be taken during periods of high heat and humidity to assure that your players remain properly hydrated. Extra water breaks should be given during extreme weather conditions. In some cases the CFF will step in and cancel practice for all Associations. More information is available in the Pop Warner Risk Management Handbook.

When thunder is heard, or a cloud-to-ground lightening bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightening. Suspend play and take shelter immediately. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightening is witnessed prior to resuming play. Any subsequent thunder or lightening after the beginning of the 30-minute count, reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.

As required in Rule 7 of the Pop Warner Rule Book, all players must be certified that they meet the requirements of applicable age / weight schematic. This weight certification process usually takes place during the third week of August. Officials of the CFF will come to your practice fields and weigh each player listed on the current roster. Weights are taken in shorts and tee shirts. If a player's weight does not fall within the requirements, but are within the initial weigh in requirements, the player may continue to

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practice with the team but must attend the make up weight certification usually held the Wednesday or Thursday before the first scheduled game.

If a player fails to meet the requirements of his / her division but meets the schematic requirements of another division he / she may either:

1. Be moved to the team in the division for which he / she meets the age / weight requirements or
2. Be dropped from the roster, continue to lose / gain weigh on their own until they meet the requirements of the division desired and then can be added back to the roster.

The team book is usually checked a week before the first regular season game by CFF Officials. All required paperwork must be in the team book. If any required document is not in the book at the time the books are checked the player must be removed from the roster and not allowed to practice until all required documentation has been submitted and the player has been approved to practice by CFF Officials.

On the Saturday before the first scheduled regular season game, the CFF sponsors a Jamboree. Jamborees are controlled scrimmages for teams to participate in against other Associations. The format consists of playing 45 minutes of defense and 45 minutes of offense against different teams. The Jamboree is open to all divisions but is not mandatory.

During the pre-season period in the older divisions there may be players who decide to try out for their school football teams. Dual participation in Pop Warner and school or other football organizations is prohibited. If a player tries out for his / her school team, he / she must be dropped from the roster and may not continue to practice with the Pop Warner team. If they are cut or decide to quit the school team and want to rejoin the Pop Warner team, they must have a signed letter on school letterhead from the coach stating that the player is no longer practicing with the school team.

V. Season

Rules – Except as specifically modified for Pop Warner Football, all games are to be played under the rules as defined by the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations. It is recommended that each coach be familiar with these rules.

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They are different from NCAA and NFL rules. Rule books may be ordered at www.nfhs.org.

NFHS Rules apply with the following exceptions:

1. 10 minute Quarters
2. Half time – 8 minutes with a 3 minute warm up period. The length of the half time can be adjusted by game officials.
3. When a 28 point differential is reached between teams the National Lopsided Rule takes effect.
4. Point After Touchdown – run or pass 1 point: kick through goal post 2 points
5. Teams can use their own ball if it meets the requirements of Part V, Rule 11.
6. Clock Management by JV rules – On a change of possession if the clock did not stop for any other reason other than the change of possession, the clock will start when the chains are reset and the ball is ready for play.

For non-competitive divisions (flag, tiny mite, and mitey mite) additional rules apply.

Flag Football

1. The CFF provides one official for all flag games. It is the home teams responsibility to provide a volunteer to assist the official during each game.
2. To start each half the ball is placed on the 30 yard line. There are no kickoffs, punts, scrimmage kicks, or PAT'S in Flag football.
3. Eight players on the field, offense & defense
4. Each player must wear 3 flags of a contrasting color to jerseys & pants.
5. Flags must be 14" to 20" long. Minimum 2" width. Secured to a belt worn tightly enough not to turn when attempts are made to de-flag. (Velcro or similar attachment)
6. Each team is only allowed 2 timeouts per half. Coach on the field calls timeout. Timeouts not to exceed 40 seconds. (Clock Stops)
7. No score is kept (NO OVERTIME)
8. Two – 15 minute halves – continuous running clock. Clock stops for timeouts. Clock stops for injuries. Clock starts as soon as timeouts, injuries are resolved, and when the ball is set for each half. There are only 30 seconds allowed between plays.
9. Ten minute halftime

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10. One coach only on the field with each team (Coach shall not interfere with play in progress.)
11. 80-yard field divided into four 20 –yard “zones”. Offensive team has four downs to advance into another zone for a first down. Failure to advance into another zone in four downs results in turnover.
12. Fumbles are blown dead at the spot. Fumbling teams retain possession unless it is fourth down and team has not advanced into the next zone.
13. Defensive team takes possession at spot of offense 4th down. (This means the new offensive may have less than 20 yards to advance for a new first down.
14. On fourth down the offensive team may choose to run the play from scrimmage or have the ball placed at the defensive teams 30 yard line (simulated punt) and the defensive team takes over possession of the ball.

Tiny Mites (TM)

Below is a list of some of the rules listed in Rule 33 that apply to the Tiny Mite Division. It is the coach’s responsibility to become familiar with all of the rules listed in Rule 33.

RULE 33: TINY MITES

The following are specific rules that must be followed for the Tiny Mite Division.

S1: Players: Maximum 28, Minimum 16

S4: Coaches: Two coaches from each team are permitted to be on the field with the team. Once the team breaks from huddle, coaches must stay back 10 yards from the line of scrimmage.

S6: No kick offs, at the start of the game, the ball will be placed on the 30 yard line.

S7: No punting. On 4th down, a team has the option of (a) running or passing the ball from scrimmage (b) move the ball back to opponents 30 yard line and start offensive play from there.

S8: Penalties: Major penalty 10 yards. Minor penalty 5 yards.

S9: Game Time and Time Outs: Each half is 22 minutes. Game will consist of two (2) halves. Half time will be 10 minutes. All games will have a running clock except for clock stoppages on timeouts, change of possession and injuries. Each team is allowed two (2) time outs per half.

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S10: No score will be displayed on scoreboard. No tie breakers.

S11: No try for point after touchdown.

S12: Ball will be blown dead if fumbled behind the line of scrimmage. However, ball will be live if fumbled beyond the line of scrimmage.

S13: Playing Time: All players must play a minimum of 15 plays per game. It is recommended that a 2 platoon system (offense/defense) be utilized to help teach the game.

S14: Offense: All offensive backs must be lined up behind the offensive line in some type of formation. You will be allowed, however, to split one offensive back no more than five (5) yards outside the tight end.

S15: Defense: No defensive player can be placed directly over the center. Player must be three (3) yards off the center. Defensive line must be one (1) yard back from the offensive line. Defense must run 6,4,1 set. No more than six (6) defensive players can rush the ball. No blitzing.

Mitey Mites (MM)

Below is a copy of Rule 1 – S3 of the Pop Warner Rule Book concerning Mitey Mites:

S3-SPECIAL NOTE FOR MITEY-MITES

Although the game is serious to the kids, from the adult viewpoint, Mitey-Mite is strictly a training division, completely free of any pressure to win, with a total emphasis on learning. While scores are kept, no local championship may be declared, but post-season play is permitted. Coaches may remain on the field, at the option of the League. A maximum of one (1) coach per team is permitted on the field except during kick-offs and punts.

There shall be:

- 1.) No blitzing*
- 2.) No rushing of punts, field goals or point after touchdown (while attempting a kick) in Mitey-Mite play.*
- 3.) No more than six (6) defensive players can be on the line of scrimmage or rush the ball.*
- 4.) Defensive players on the line of scrimmage must be in either a three or four point stance and may not line up over center. Penalty for violation of the above: First violation: Warning Additional violations: 15 yards unsportsmanlike conduct*

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Additional Rules that apply to Mitey Mites Include:

1. No Overtime (Tie Breaker)
2. The CFF allows one Coach on field except for kickoffs & punts. Coach must be 10 yds from line of scrimmage on snap. It is a penalty if the coach gives instruction during live ball. Penalty: First infraction – a warning to the team. Second infraction – five yard illegal procedure. Third or more infraction – 15 yard unsportsmanlike on the coach.
3. To assist in defining a blitz the following guidance is offered: Defense must have at least five (5) defensive backs 3 or more yards from the line of scrimmage. These defensive backs cannot cross the line of scrimmage during the down except to recover a loose ball or if the ball carrier is outside of the offensive tackles.
4. Referees will meet with head coach of each Mitey Mite team before the start of contest and review the rules.
5. Receiving team cannot rush the kicker in a scrimmage kick situation (punt, PAT, field goal). The Receiving team can return the punt or missed field goal (not going into endzone).

Lopsided Scores

The CFF Slaughter Rule that has been used for many years is no longer allowed. Rule 22, S-1 shall be used.

Any time a team goes up by 28 points or more, the following will occur:

- a) The official clock will become a running clock and once started can only be stopped for injury of a player or at the discretion of a referee. It cannot revert to a game clock operation for the remainder of the game.
- b) Once 28-point difference is obtained between the two opponents, the winning team cannot pass the ball or run sweeps outside the tackle. If the winning team fails to abide by this rule, each violation will be a loss of down and a 5-yard penalty. This is at the discretion

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of the game referee. If at any point during the remainder of the game the point difference drops below 28 the clock will continue running; however regular rules would apply; i.e. teams would not be required to run between the tackles etc. If a 28 point difference is reached again running between the tackles would take effect.

- c) There will be no blitzing by either team once the clock becomes a running clock and the lopsided rule is in effect.
- d) There will be no onside kicks at kickoff.
- e) The winning defense team cannot advance a fumble or pass interception. The ball is blown dead immediately. The winning offense may start play action from this point.
- f) The winning team shall make every effort to replace starting players with reserves. Failure to do so will call for an immediate investigation and possible one game suspension if found guilty.
- g) The losing team's defense cannot have no more than 4 players on the line of scrimmage with linebackers set at least 5 yards off the line of scrimmage and defense backs must be at least 10 yards of the line of scrimmage
- h) Any coach who employs types of plays without the intent to maximize the action of play shall be in violation of the rule.
- i) The teams are still required to complete the mandatory play rule.
- j) An investigation will be conducted if a game ends with a score differential of 28 points or more.

Please be aware that the Pop Warner Rule states that any game ending in the Slaughter Rule is to be investigated and one of the questions to be asked is what was done when the differential reached 18 points to keep it from getting to 28 points. Therefore once the game reaches an 18 point differential you should:

1. Replace starters.
2. Not perform any onside kickoffs.
3. No passing, sweeps, reverses, or blitzing.

Coaches from opposing teams are not allowed to vary from these rules without prior approval from the CFF.

Contact in practice – S6-CONTACT

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A. No full-speed head-on blocking or tackling drills in which the players line up more than 3 yards apart are permitted. (You may have two linemen in stances immediately across the line of scrimmage from each other. You may have full-speed drills where the players approach each other at an angle, but not straight ahead into each other.) Intentional head-to-head contact is forbidden.

B. Coaches must limit the amount of contact at each practice prior to Labor day to a maximum of 30 minutes per day and 120 minutes total for the week. After Labor Day contact is limited to a maximum of 22 minutes per day and 65 minutes total for the week. In this context, “contact” means any drill or scrimmage in which players go full-speed with contact –e.g. one-on-one blocking and/or tackling drills; down line vs. down line full-speed drills; and/or scrimmages.

Schedule – The regular season consists of a nine week schedule. Teams play eight or nine regular season games during the season. The first regular season game is usually the last Saturday of August and the last regular season game is usually the last Saturday of October.

Because of the number of teams in each age division, teams are broken into brackets for scheduling purposes. For the competitive age divisions, brackets are further broken down for Division I, II, and III.

The football schedule is dependent on the number of teams that participate in each division. Because team counts can change due to registrations the first two weeks of August it is hard to finalize a schedule. Once final team counts are determined the schedule can be finalized and is released. The schedule is usually released to the Associations at the August CFF meeting held the third Tuesday of August.

Standings – Team standings are kept for the competitive divisions (Jr. Pee Wee, Pee Wee, Jr. Midget, and Midget) only. The standings can be found at the CFF web site. Standings are updated weekly depending on how soon game scores are reported.

Game Day Procedures

1. Field Personnel

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- a. Field Director – Each Home Association shall provide a field director for their home games. The field director shall be the on site person in charge of the games that day. The field director shall have a thorough knowledge of these procedures and the Pop Warner Rule Book.
- b. Weigh Master – Each Home Association shall provide a weigh master for their home games. The weigh master shall be the person in charge of the weigh in process. The weigh master shall have the authority to approve or disapprove a player to play based on weight.
- c. MPR Counters – Each Home Association shall provide two official play counters for each game. One counter will be assigned to each team. It is recommended that the visiting team provide two additional play counters to assist. The two official play counters are considered to be game officials. What they say goes as it relates to the minimum play requirement. They shall be 100% neutral and are not allowed to assist with coaching or relaying information that may give a team an unfair advantage. The play counters shall have a thorough knowledge of these procedures and Rule 9 – Mandatory Play Rule in the Pop Warner Rule Book.
- d. Chain Crew – Each Home Association shall provide three chain crew members for each game. The chain crew members will be informed of their responsibilities by a game official. The members shall work with and as an extension of the game officials. They shall be 100% neutral and are not allowed to assist with coaching or relaying information that may give a team an unfair advantage.
- e. Water Boys - There are no water boys allowed. There is no place on the roster for water boys. They are not a legal part of the team. Therefore, they are not insured. If there is an injured player, ineligible player, etc. that is listed on the roster they can serve as water boys.
- f. Sideline Observers - Only rostered players, coaches, and staff for the game being played are allowed on the sidelines. The only others allowed are the required volunteers such as MPR counters and chain crew. Photographers are only allowed if they have gone through the background check and an Association has issued them an ID badge. Players from other teams, former players, sons and daughters of coaches or Association representatives, etc. are not allowed inside the fence or along the sidelines.

2. Weigh In Procedures

- a. Each team is to weigh in at least 30 minutes prior to each game. Players can be weighed up until the kick-off of their game.

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- b. Only one coach from each team is allowed at the scales at the time of the weigh in. No other coaches, volunteers or parents are allowed.
- c. Each coach should bring their team book.
- d. Each coach should provide the weigh master a copy of their approved roster and a MPR sheet.
- e. The weigh master should check each player for the following:
 - i. Helmets
 - Four point chin strap
 - Mouth guard with a keeper strap.
 - If there is a visor, it must be clear.
 - ii. No metal tipped cleats.
 - iii. Pop Warner patch is visible
 - iv. No jewelry
 - v. Each players has all required equipment
- f. Each teams coach shall be given the opportunity to review their opponents ID cards during the weigh in process.
- g. Coaches are not allowed to look at or review the documentation in their opponent's team book. This information is private and confidential. If a coach questions the eligibility of an opposing player he should inform the field director that they wish to play the game under protest. The game will be played as usual and the CFF will investigate the allegation.
- h. If a player does not make weight at the scales he gets to reweigh once. He can remove his socks and t-shirt and switch out equipment such as getting smaller shoulder pads. If he makes weight the second time he can put the socks and t-shirt back on but he has to play in whatever equipment he is weighing in the second time. He can request that the second attempt be a strip weight (shorts and t-shirt) if a facility is available. If he fails to make weight at the second attempt he becomes ineligible for the day. He is not allowed a third attempt.
- i. A team must have the minimum number (16) of players in order to play. If a player is injured and the number of eligible players drops below the minimum during the game, they can continue with 15 players. Under no circumstances may a team play the game with less than 15 players or a controlled scrimmage with less than the minimum number of eligible players.

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Game Day Weights

	TM (+7)	MM (+7)	JPW (+8)	PW (+8)	JM (+9)	M (+9)
Certified	75	100	115 / 95	130 / 110	155 / 135	180 / 160
Week 1	82	107	123 / 103	138 / 118	164 / 144	189 / 169
Week 2	83	108	124 / 104	139 / 119	165 / 145	190 / 170
Week 3	83	108	124 / 104	139 / 119	165 / 145	190 / 170
Week 4	84	109	125 / 105	140 / 120	166 / 146	191 / 171
Week 5	84	109	125 / 105	140 / 120	166 / 146	191 / 171
Week 6	85	110	126 / 106	141 / 121	167 / 147	192 / 172
Week 7	85	110	126 / 106	141 / 121	167 / 147	192 / 172
Week 8	86	111	127 / 107	142 / 122	168 / 148	193 / 173
Week 9	86	111	127 / 107	142 / 122	168 / 148	193 / 173
Max.	86	111	127 / 107	142 / 122	168 / 148	193 / 173

3. Mandatory Play Rule (MPR)

RULE 9: MANDATORY PLAY RULE

The following shall be the Minimum Mandatory Play Rule (MPR) for all Pop Warner teams. Each league may set a higher number of Mandatory Plays, but never less than the minimum set by PWLS. All MPRs should be based on eligible players at the time of the game.

Jr. Pee Wee thru Bantam

16-25 players – 10 plays

26-30 players – 8 plays

31-35 players – 6 plays

Mitey Mites Only

16-25 players – 12 plays

26-30 players – 10 plays

31-35 players – 8 plays

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A. The plays must be from the line of scrimmage.

B. Kickoffs, extra points, QB intentionally spiking the ball and free kicks shall not be used in fulfilling the MPR requirement.

C. A play shall not count toward fulfillment of the MPR if the play results in a penalty which causes the down to be replayed.

D. All players shall be provided their mandatory plays by participation in "active" plays, without the intent to minimize the action or integrity of the plays. Plays such as, but not limited to, having the center snap the ball to the quarterback, and then the quarterback fall to the ground, while substitutes are playing the other positions, shall NOT be considered as active plays.

E. All players shall receive their mandatory plays by the end of the third quarter, or they shall enter the game at the start of the fourth quarter, and remain in the game until they have received their required number of plays.

F. Failure to adhere to MPR requirements will result in forfeiture of game in addition to enforcement policies outlined in Part IV S1 of this book.

The enforcement of the MPR's at the end of the third quarter is the MPR counters responsibility. There should be two official counters provided by the home team, one on each side. It is recommended that the visiting team provide two additional play counters to assist. The field director should check with them at the end of the third quarter to make sure everything is going ok. Below is the process:

- a. At the end of the third quarter the officials should ask each head coach if all of his players have their plays in. If yes, then everything is ok. If no, they should allow a few minutes for the coach to get the players in the game.
- b. Also at the end of the third quarter the play counters should let the head coach know which players, if any, have not completed their minimum play requirement. It is the head coach's responsibility to get them in. If he does not, it is the play counters responsibility to continue to remind him. If he still does not cooperate then notify the field director. If it appears that the head is coach is hesitating in order to keep other players on the field in order to help win the game, please let

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the field director know. The field director should then notify the CFF to handle discipline action with the head coach. Under no circumstances should the play counter's or field director tell players they need to go in or they need to come out. It is the head coach's responsibility.

- c. If for some reason the two play counters do not agree on the number of plays a player has completed, the counters representing the home field will be the official count. The other counter should notify the field director and their Association Director which should then be brought to the CFF to investigate.
- d. The play counters should not revise the play count sheet just because a coach states that a player has played more than they have recorded. If the two counters do not see the player on the field the play does not count.
- e. Please make sure head coaches are aware it is their responsibility and they should not delegate to anyone else. They will be held responsible.
- f. Also please understand how important the role of play counting is. The field directors should make sure that the play counters are competent and understand their roles. It should not be left up to the team parents to recruit whoever they can find. If they are too timid to stand up against the head coach they should not be doing that assignment. If they are so bull headed that they could end up arguing with the head coach they should not be doing that assignment.
- g. If the head coach does not obey the rules concerning MPR's, it is not grounds for a protest. The only issue that can be protested is the eligibility of a player. However, if it is determined that a coach deliberately breaks the rules he will be disciplined. This may include suspension for a week or removal as head coach.

4. Post Game Reporting

- a. Scores – Game scores should be reported to the CFF Commissioner and/or Assistant Football Commissioners by 10am Monday morning following the Saturday games.
- b. Tiny Mite MPR sheets should be faxed to 747-4180 by 10 am Monday morning following the Saturday games. All other MPR sheets should be kept and made available to the CFF if requested.
- c. Any additional Issues that may arise, including ejections, should be emailed to the CFF (commissioner@cff-popwarner.com) to investigate.

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Sportsmanship – It is our responsibility to teach our participants sportsmanship.

“Good sportsmanship is when teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials treat each other with respect. Kids learn the basics of sportsmanship from the adults in their lives, especially their parents and their coaches. Kids who see adults behaving in a sportsmanlike way gradually come to understand that the real winners in sports are those who know how to persevere and to behave with dignity — whether they win or lose a game.

Parents can help their kids understand that good sportsmanship includes both small gestures and heroic efforts. It starts with something as simple as shaking hands with opponents before a game and includes acknowledging good plays made by others and accepting bad calls gracefully.

Displaying good sportsmanship isn't always easy: It can be tough to congratulate the opposing team after losing a close or important game. But the kids who learn how to do it will benefit in many ways.

Kids who bully or taunt others on the playing field aren't likely to change their behavior when in the classroom or in social situations. In the same way, a child who practices good sportsmanship is likely to carry the respect and appreciation of other people into every other aspect of life.” (Courtesy of www.kidshealth.org)

In addition to teaching our participants sportsmanship, we must remember that it is imperative that our adult volunteers practice sportsmanship as well. In the front of the Pop Warner rule book there is a Members Code of Conduct that all coaches must be familiar with, practice and enforce. Some of the obvious actions that we seem to have issues with every year include:

- Arguing with officials
- Running up the score
- Teaching deception like the “wrong ball” play
- Criticizing players in front of spectators
- Use of abusive or profane language

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Head Coaches are responsible for their assistant coaches as well as their players' parents. There is a list of Adult Code of Conduct on the player registration form that all parents must sign.

Penalties for offenses will be based on Part IV – Enforcement Policy of the Pop Warner rule book. Please make a special note that any player or coach who is ejected from a game is automatically suspended from practice for one week and includes the next game.

It is acknowledged that our game officials are not perfect. Most are very experienced officials and officiate games at the high school level. There may be penalties that are missed or not called correctly. No matter how frustrating this may be, it is the responsibility of the coaching staff to accept these decisions as being fair and to the best ability of the officials. In most cases, games are officiated fairly even though it may not seem that way.

Games can only be protested for one reason – player eligibility. If a coach suspects that an ineligible player is about to participate in a game, he may play the game under protest. He must let the game officials and the field director know he is playing under protest prior to the game. It is the responsibility of the CFF to investigate any protest. Because of the sensitive personal information involved, only the CFF may investigate. If a player is found to be ineligible, all games in which they have participated will be forfeited.

Scholastics – If a player submits a Scholastic Eligibility Form instead of a report card, additional efforts are required. Progress Reports are required from the school in October showing that the athlete is making adequate progress in school. If the progress report is not submitted on time then the player will be dropped from the roster. The Association Scholastics Coordinator will help in this effort but the responsibility belongs to the head coach.

Cheerleaders – If you have a cheer squad assigned to your team please realize that they are considered part of your team by the CFF. They must travel with the football team to all games, including post season games. Please make sure to keep your cheer coach informed of all schedule changes and include them in any post season planning.

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Rained Out Games – There are approximately 50 football games played every Saturday during the season. If games are rained out, it is very difficult to reschedule them. The CFF must reschedule games. Associations do not have the authority to reschedule games. Any game having an impact on a Division championship will be made up. These games may be played during the week on a Tuesday or Wednesday night. Other games are not usually made up unless there are special circumstances involved.

VI. Post Season

Bowl Games – The Flag, Tiny Mite, Mitey Mite Bowls are sponsored by the CFF and held the first Saturday following the last game of the season. It is usually the first Saturday in November. Participation in the Bowl games is not required. An attempt is made to evenly match up teams based on their skills and strength. Mitey Mite teams may travel to other leagues to participate in a bowl game if it is approved by the CFF.

Jr. Pee Wee, Pee Wee, Jr. Midget, and Midget teams who complete the regular season with a 50% winning record or better are eligible to participate in post season bowl games. Bowl games are sponsored and held throughout the Mid South region. A list of bowl games approved by the region is released in early October. Teams may choose which Bowl game they would like to participate in. The Head Coach will communicate with the Bowl contact person directly. Permission to Participate forms must be submitted and approved by the CFF in order to participate. Bowl games are scheduled on various Saturdays in November.

CFF Playoffs – The CFF declares league champions for Jr. Pee Wee, Pee Wee, Jr. Midget, and Midget for Divisions I and II. Teams that complete the season with the highest winning percentage are declared champions. In the case of a tie, a play off game is held the first Saturday of November. In some cases there are enough teams that two brackets are required. In such case, the top teams from both brackets play the first Saturday of November for the CFF league championship. All league championship teams must commit to continue to play in all regional and national playoff games until they are defeated.

A meeting is held with Head Coaches of the CFF Championship teams soon after the completion of the CFF championship games. Regional and National forms that are required to be submitted prior to the first regional playoff game are reviewed. Also, the CFF staff will check the team book to make sure all documentation is in order. Original

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birth certificates are required for all regional and national play off games. It is recommended that if there are any chances that a team may play in the regional playoffs they should begin to gather original birth certificates in early October. Any players who do not have an original birth certificate or any of the other required documents will not be allowed to play.

Mid South Regional Playoffs – The CFF league champions go on to represent the CFF in the Mid South Regional playoffs. Regional playoff games are held through out the Mid South region which includes North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama. Depending on the number of teams, it is possible to have a bye for one round of the playoffs.

Two sets of game jerseys are required for all DI and DII teams participating in the Regional and National Playoffs.

Regional Playoff games may be scheduled any where within the region. The regional staff will hold mandatory head coaches meetings on Friday night prior to a team playing on Saturday to check the team book and review rules. The meeting is held close to the fields where the games are played. All players are weighed in on Saturday prior to each regional playoff game. Weights are taken as strip weights in shorts and game jerseys.

Regional football championship games are played the Saturday following Thanksgiving. The location of the championship games vary from year to year. Any team participating in a regional championship game is **required** to stay Friday night at the hotel designated by the region unless the team is located within a 50 mile radius of the host hotel. A mandatory head coaches meeting will be held Thanksgiving night at the host hotel. Teams are weighed in on Friday during the regional cheer competition at the cheer competition location.

National Playoffs – Regional champions in Divisions I and II continue on to represent the Mid South Region at the National Pop Warner Super Bowl held at ESPN's Wide World of Sports at Disney World in Orlando. All teams are required to stay on Disney property and purchase Disney theme park tickets as a part of the accommodations package. Super Bowl games usually begin on the first Saturday in December. Each team will under go a team book check by National representatives and have their weigh

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in prior to their first game. Each team will play at least two games while at Disney but will only go through the book check and weigh in process once.