



Tewksbury Boys' Basketball League

Official In-town Program Rules Handbook

2023-2024

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Questions or concerns pertaining to anything in this handbook should be directed to any member of the TBBL Board of Directors. They can be reached via email at tbbl@tewksburyboysbasketball.org

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Rule 1 PRACTICE

- Article 1-1:** A League Approved Head or Assistant Coach must be present at the gym at all times during practice sessions.
- Article 1-2:** The Head Coach shall be responsible for the players' actions and behavior during practice sessions.
- Article 1-3:** The Head Coach shall remain at the gym until the last player leaves.
- Article 1-4:** The Head Coach shall check for damages and report any to their Division Representative. The Representative shall report the findings to the League President and Administrator.
- Article 1-5:** The Coaching Staff shall insure that no school-owned equipment in the gym is used.
- Article 1-6:** The Head Coach is responsible for attendance at their league-scheduled practice. It is the Coaches responsibility for use of that appointed gym time.

Rule 2 RULES OF COMPETITION

- Article 2-1:** Each game will be conducted according to the rules and regulations of the National Federation of State High Schools Association (NFHS), with exceptions provided within this document.
- Article 2-2:** Equipment: The Junior and Intermediate Division will use a 28.5" basketball, while higher divisions will use a standard 29.5" ball.
- Article 2-3:** The **Home Team** shall be responsible for keeping the game clock/scoreboard. The **Away Team** shall put their players on the court first each quarter.
- Article 2-4:** Each game shall consist of four (4) eight (8)-minute quarters.
- Article 2-5:** Junior & Intermediate Divisions must play man-to-man defense at all times:
- i. Players are required to "match-up" prior to each play period to ensure that players are appropriately paired up
 - ii. Defenders may pick up their man at a point half-way between the 3-point line and the half court line (marked by a grey line on the HS courts) in the Junior Division, or half court in the Intermediate Division.
 - iii. Defenders may help a teammate who is beat by the man they are guarding, but no double teaming is allowed.
 - iv. Defenders may not have more than one foot in the lane unless they are defending a player directly in and around the lane.
- Article 2-6:** Full Court Press is allowed in the **Senior Division** only. The **Intermediate Division** will be allowed a full court press for the last two (2) minutes of each half, and for the last minute of any overtime period. There will no press allowed in the **Junior Division** at any time.

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Article 2-7: Each player will be allowed five (5) fouls per game in all divisions. A player shall be disqualified and barred from further participation upon committing his fifth (5th) foul (personal, personal and technical), two (2) technical fouls, or a single flagrant foul.

Article 2-8: Each team will be allowed seven (7) team fouls per quarter. Bonus one and one free throws will occur on the seventh (7th) team foul.

Article 2-9: In accordance with NFHS Rules, a minimum of five (5) players shall be required on each team for a legal game. A team must begin the game with five players but if it has no substitutes to replace disqualified or injured players, it must continue with fewer than five. When there is only one (1) player left participating for a team the game shall be forfeited, unless the official believes that the team has an opportunity to win the game.

- i. Any team's inability to field a team shall be determined immediately prior to the start of the game.
- ii. Any team causing a game not to be played for any reason other than inability to field a team shall forfeit said game.
- iii. **FORFEIT RULE:** If a team cannot field a team within ten (10) minutes of the games' regularly scheduled start time, the game may be declared a forfeit after league review.

Article 2-10: Each game will begin with a jump ball at half court.

Article 2-11: While the scoreboard arrow may be used to indicate next possession and shall be pointing in the direction the ball will go on the next jump ball situation, the officials will keep track of the possession arrow on the court.

Article 2-12: Each subsequent jump ball shall be determined by awarding alternate possession for the duration of the game.

Article 2-13: Each quarter of play will begin with an alternating possession throw-in at the division line.

Article 2-14: Each team is allowed three (3) time-outs during a game. The time-outs may be taken at any time during the contest, in accordance with the NFHS rulings on time-outs. Consecutive time-outs are not allowed. All time-outs are full time-outs, which consist of sixty (60) seconds.

Article 2-15: The three-point shot is allowed in the **Senior Division** and only in the **last two (2) minutes of each half in the Intermediate Division, as well as the last minute of any overtime period.**

Article 2-16: In the Cadet & Junior Divisions, players may cross the foul line during a free throw as long as they start from behind the line and it is not deliberate. A shooter who crosses the foul line may not be the first player to touch the ball on a rebound.

Rule 3 OVERTIME

- Article 3-1:** If the score is tied at the end of the fourth (4th) quarter, the game will go into overtime to decide the winner. The length of each extra period shall be three (3) minutes. As many such periods as are necessary to break the tie shall be played. Overtime periods are an extension of the fourth quarter.
- Article 3-2:** In the event of an overtime period, the equal playing time rule shall be waived and any combination of players may be used along with free substitution, provided that the rules were properly adhered to during regular play.
- Article 3-3:** Each overtime period shall start with a jump ball at center court. Each subsequent jump ball possession shall be determined by alternate possessions to be kept by the scoreboard possession arrow or on the court by the officials.
- Article 3-4:** Each team will be given one (1) time-out per overtime period. However, any unused time-outs not used during the regular game may be carried over and used in the overtime.

Rule 4 SUBSTITUTIONS & PLAYING TIME

- Article 4-1:** Each game will be comprised of four (4), eight (8)-minute quarters. Each quarter will be made up of two (2), four (4) minute “play periods” whereby at the four (4) minute mark of each quarter, incoming players will check in with the official scorekeeper to enter into the game.
- Article 4-2:** All players must appear in each half of the game. No player shall play more than 1 “play period” more than any other teammate. Before the start of the 3rd quarter both coaches and the official scorekeeper must review the score sheet to determine if there are discrepancies in play periods.
- Article 4-3:** Substitutions will be made at the end of each “play period” and at the end of the quarter. Other than for injury or disqualification, this is the only time substitutions are allowed. As long as an injured player returns to the game on the next stoppage of play, then their substitute will not be charged a full play period if two (2) minutes or more remain.
- Article 4-4:** Any entry of a player into a “play period” with two (2) minutes or more remaining in said play period, shall constitute a full “play period” for that player.
- Article 4-5:** No player may be played for the minimum playing time, of three (3) “play periods”, two (2) games in a row. Minimum playing time must be alternated between players on the team so that it varies from game to game. This rule does not apply to the playoffs.
- Article 4-6:** Suspected violations of the Substitution & Playing Time Rules will be dealt with through the following process:

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- i. The opposing Head Coach will bring the violation to the attention of the offending Head Coach during the game.
- ii. If the infraction is not corrected during the course of the game after the opposing head coach has requested so by bringing it to the opposition's attention, then he/she shall notify the League Representative, who will investigate the complaint and determine its merit.
- iii. The League Representative shall report any Abuse of the Substitution & Playing Time Rules to the TBBL Disciplinary Committee (DC). Each infraction will be acted upon accordingly by the DC and could result in penalties to a coach/team that is found in violation.
- iv. Any team found to be in violation of the minimum playing time standards during a game, as outlined above in Article 5-2, may forfeit said game, following a ruling on the infraction by the DC.

Rule 5 PLAYOFFS

Article 5-1: All teams make the playoffs.

Article 5-2: Playoff format will depend on the final standings of the current season and the number of teams in the division.

Article 5-3: If teams are tied, the first tiebreaker will be HEAD to HEAD. Then, if still not resolved, a COIN TOSS (by way of envelopes) will be conducted.

Rule 6 COACHES GAME GUIDELINES

These guidelines are a tool to help promote an understanding across all divisions of how a game should be conducted in the Tewksbury Boys Basketball In-Town Leagues. Coaches cannot waive these guidelines. They must be strictly adhered to. Any questions or concerns regarding these guidelines should be addressed to your league representative who will handle them accordingly. We recommend the head coach keep a copy of these rules with their scorebook.

Article 6-1: Coaches and team players should arrive no later than fifteen (15) minutes prior to the games scheduled start time. The head coaches should provide their scoresheets to the official scorer at least ten (10) minutes before the game time. The emphasis is that the games start on time with scorers, timekeepers, and players ready to begin promptly.

Article 6-2: When substituting at the four (4)-minute mark in a quarter (the end of a "play period"), coaches should have their subs at the scorer's table, ready to enter the game prior to the four (4)-minute. When substituting at this time, players will be beckoned onto the court by the officials and enter into the game. No team huddles will be allowed as this is only a substitution opportunity, and play will immediately resume. In between quarters, players should be sent out onto the court to begin the next quarter immediately after the prior quarter finishes. Any instructions from the coach to be given to the whole team in a huddle and should be done before the game, on the bench, during time-outs, and during the half-time interval. Team huddles at the end of each "play period" or in between quarters,

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other than at the specific times outline above, are not acceptable. These are times when it is necessary for the game to be stopped to allow substitution, but are not meant to hinder the course of the game. Any situations where the game is unnecessarily delayed will be dealt with by the officials in accordance with the NFHS rulings on delaying the resumption of play.

Article 6-3: In the Junior and Intermediate Division, the team controlling the ball must move the ball into the attacking zone to allow the defensive team to challenge the ball. Unnecessary delays bringing the ball up the court may result in disciplinary action against the offending coach.

Article 6-4: If the margin of the games score exceeds **fifteen (15)** points in the Junior Division, **twenty (20)** points in the Intermediate or **twenty-five (25)** points in Senior Divisions, the head coach will implement the following to prevent unnecessary running up of the score:

- i. The winning team will maintain their man-to-man defense within the three-point arc. For courts with no three-point line, no pressure will be applied until the opponent has advanced the ball past the top of the key.
- ii. The winning team will not attempt three-point shots (Senior and Intermediate Divisions only).
- iii. The winning team will not press in any manner (Senior and Intermediate Divisions only).
- iv. The winning team shall not fast break unless the losing team is pressing.
- v. The winning team should have the least skilled players on the court and the head coach should encourage passes to the least skilled players.
- vi. The score keeper may stop putting points up on the board.

Article 6-5: Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a warning for the first offense, and then an indirect technical foul charged to the head coach for all subsequent offenses. The enforcement of the guidelines listed above will be at the discretion of the officials.

Rule 7 SCORING & TIMING GUIDELINES

This section outlines the proper procedures for scoring and timing the game. Coaches should read this section and review it with the people who will be keeping the scorebook and game clock for their team. This section is very important as it contains information that your team's scorer and timer will need to know in order to work the scorer's table properly.

Article 7-1: **All persons sitting at the scorer's table are part of the officiating team; they are game personnel and shall remain neutral.** While it is understandable that this is youth basketball and the occasional cheer for a child or team will be made by someone working at the table, it is strictly prohibited that anyone at the scorer's table make comments to the officials or engage in any type of coaching from the table. An official scorekeeper will be provided by the League at each game, while the Home team will supply 1 volunteer to serve as timekeeper.

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Article 7-2: The timer, official scorer, and individual team scorers (if any) will work together to ensure that an accurate record of the game is kept. It is important to remember that the official scorebook is the games first record, and the scoreboard is only a display feature and in no means is official. The correct score is that of the running score on the official score sheet. For this reason, the timer should not worry about score mistakes on the scoreboard until he/she has time to fix them. It is more important that the timer start and stop the clock as their primary job, and take care of the scoreboards score at a break in the games action as not to disrupt the timing sequence of the game clock.

Article 7-3: The scoresheet maintained by the official scorer will be the official score book for the contest, unless otherwise specified by the officials.

Article 7-4: The Official Scorer shall:

- i. Assure that all players are entered into the scorebook before the start of the game.
- ii. Check in all players as they enter the game by crossing off the “play period” they are entering into, in the appropriate space.
- iii. Keep the running score first, then the individual players’ scores.
- iv. Record all fouls to the player and the team. Team fouls are kept by the quarter.
- v. Notify the officials when a team has reached seven (7) fouls in a quarter. At that point, one and one bonus free throws should be awarded.
- vi. Notify the officials when a player commits his fifth (5th) personal foul, thus disqualifying him from play.
- vii. Record time-outs in the appropriate quarter, including who called the time-out and at what time it was called.
- viii. It is important that when a foul is called, the scorer makes eye contact with the official reporting the foul, and make sure they understand what he is communicating to them. **THIS SHOULD BE DONE FIRST, BEFORE YOU RECORD ANYTHING!** The official should not have to wait for the scorer to look up so they can report.

Article 7-5: The timer shall:

- i. Operate the game clock and the scoreboard accordingly.
- ii. Keep the official time of the game, using the scoreboard clock.
- iii. Display the team scores, team fouls, and quarter using the scoreboard.
- iv. Start the clock when the official lowers his arm from the “stop clock position” (arm is straight up) indicating that the game clock should be started.
- v. Stop the clock when an official’s whistle blows. **THIS IS THE ONLY TIME THAT THE CLOCK SHOULD EVER STOP!**
- vi. Use the horn during a “**dead ball**” situation to notify the officials that the table needs to communicate information to them such as: bonus free throws, player disqualification, substitutes, or a scoring/timing error. **THE HORN SHOULD ONLY BE USED FOR THESE REASONS, AND THE HORN SHOULD NEVER BE SOUNDED DURING ACTIVE PLAY!**
- vii. Important notes on timing:

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- a. Games are played back to back all day so it is extremely important that the clock be run properly. Forgetting to start or stop the clock can have a negative effect on the game you are timing as well creating a problem for those games to follow.
- b. It is important that the timer watches the official and starts the clock promptly on his signal as well as stop as soon as an official's whistle is sounded.
- c. The score that is displayed on the scoreboard is only a visual aid. The official score is kept in the book. If a mistake is made with the score displayed on the board, don't be concerned with fixing it until time permits you to do so. Far too many times the crowd's reaction to a mistake on the scoreboard display disrupts the timer and he/she focuses on fixing the score while missing important events in the game such as the proper starting or stopping of the clock. The correct score is always in the book; however the correct time is only in one place, so it is far more important to focus on that than a point being put up on the wrong side.
- d. When displaying the team fouls on the scoreboard they are kept by the quarter, requiring them to be reset to zero at the beginning of each new quarter. When a team reaches seven (7) team fouls they are in the bonus, therefore the foul display on the scoreboard for each team **must be stopped at seven (7)**.