

2019 THUNDER FOOTBALL BASICS
(5TH – 8TH grade tackle football)

1. Thunder Background and Philosophy – “The most important thing in our program”

The Thunder program was created to develop players for the Lake Country Lutheran High School football program and is sponsored and directed by the high school and its football coaching staff. Our goal is to provide a quality tackle football experience inside of a distinctly Christian environment. We are very much a family-first organization and we will function as an extension of your family values, training up your boys to be exemplary Christian young men and solid football players. Every player will gain instruction in both an offensive and a defensive position, as well as on special teams. We believe the only way to grow in football skill is through actual participation, and not through watching, and therefore our players fully participate in every drill, and are instructed and participate equally in practice. We are also proud to participate in a league which forces participation of all players and is especially player-friendly at the 5th & 6th grade level. Every player will also participate in daily team prayer and occasional devotion time.

A paragraph from our coach’s handbook:

Today’s sports culture has created a “win at all cost” mentality. However, in Thunder, success is **not** based on wins and losses. Coaches are trained that success is determined by how they convey salvation, character, and self-esteem to each child. Thunder defines **winning** as learning and teaching lessons in the game of life. There is a fine line between being competitive and belittling others. We **must** make sure we are on the proper side of that line. God requires us to give our **ALL** for Him, because He gave His all for us in the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. God also requires us to act with the utmost character in every situation, under every circumstance. The Thunder program will cease to exist if we fail to meet this philosophy. There are plenty of public football programs available that meet the opposing philosophy and it is our intention to be **distinctly** different from them.

2. Our league plays 5th & 6th graders together and 7th & 8th graders together (2 levels of play, not 4)
3. Last year we had 34 athletes at the 5th & 6th grade level and 1 team and 23 athletes at the 7th & 8th grade level and 1 team. We will cap at 90 players for 5th & 6th grade (4 teams) and 58 players for 7th & 8th grade (2 teams).
4. Our first priority is to our current families and then capping will occur according to the date that the registration forms and payment are received.
5. We make sure that we keep family members in the same age groupings together on the same team and we make every attempt to make sure that there are at least two players from the same school on each team, but our first priority is to have competitive balance and to fill all positions on the field.
6. Practices start August 12th and will run from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm Monday – Friday that week.
7. When DR school starts (August 19th), practice will move to its normal time which is 4:00 – 6:00 pm.
8. Once games start after Labor Day, practices are on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.
9. All practices are held at Divine Redeemer
10. Games: Both levels play on Saturday mornings. 7th & 8th grade sometimes also play on Wednesdays and Thursdays.
11. Home games are played at Lake Country Lutheran High School, 401 Campus Drive, Hartland.

12. Our league has also included University School of Milwaukee, Kettle Moraine Lutheran, Brookfield Academy, Martin Luther HS, Milwaukee Lutheran High School, St. Charles Borromeo, Shorewood/Messmer, Heritage Christian/Home School, and St. Francis. Living Word Lutheran HS is also considering joining our league.
13. The game schedule runs from just after Labor Day until late-October. The 5th & 6th grade plays one scrimmage and 6 or 7 league games. The 7th & 8th grade plays one scrimmage with 7 or 8 league games. Scrimmages are generally held the last week of August.
14. All equipment is supplied except football cleats.
15. Cleats and spirit wear are available for purchase through the Thunder program in the summer.
16. There is a Football Camp at LCL (in June or July) that is highly recommended to Thunder players. (There are also camps in basketball, baseball, soccer, volleyball, and a summer speed, strength, and conditioning program. See the LCL website below for more information starting in March.)
17. Coaches in the Thunder program are all volunteer! We need coaches! Please email League Director David Bahr (email below) if you are willing to be a coach. Coaches are encouraged to attend at least one day of football camp and are required to participate in a coaches' meeting in late July or early August. If you don't want to coach, we also ask parents to volunteer with the chains, with announcing home games, and with serving in the concession stand.
18. Cost is \$300 for Registrations completed by February 15th. Registration after February 15th is \$325. Refunds if needed: \$300 – 30(# of weeks past August 5th)
19. The Thunder program produces a weekly e-newsletter throughout the season and will also send out a couple of informative newsletters via email in late spring and mid-summer. E-mail is our preferred mode of major communication.
20. A parent meeting (most likely: Sunday, August 11th or Monday, August 12th) and equipment hand-out sessions are held in early August before the first practice. The final game and practice schedule and all other details of the program are provided then. You can check the LCL website (address below) starting in late June for schedule information as we usually have them up online by then.
21. The league has a website also (see address below) which has the schedules for the whole league posted starting in mid-August and also has directions to all away sites.

THUNDER FOOTBALL CONTACT INFORMATION:

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LCL website: www.lakecountryhs.org

League website: www.gmmyfl.org