

# SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND YOUTH FOOTBALL CONFERENCE



FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES

April 2021

# SNEYFC 2021 FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES



## **I. ADMINISTRATION RULES**

### **A. Playing of Games**

#### **1. Rescheduling of Games**

All games will be scheduled for Saturday afternoons/nights or Sundays during the day. A game may be rescheduled if the two teams involved agree. The home team must contact the Conference President for his/her approval. Once rescheduled and accepted by the Conference President, it becomes binding on both parties.

#### **2. Calling off Games**

The home team is responsible for calling off a game due to weather or field conditions only. This should be done no later than 9:00 AM for Saturday night games and 7:00 AM for Sunday day games. If a field is unusable, the game may be moved to the visiting team's field or a neighboring league's field as long as both (or all three) leagues agree. The home league President shall notify the visiting League President via direct communication (face to face, or phone) or shall ensure an acknowledgement is received if notification is via mail (postal, email, text, or other). Head Coaches should contact their opposing Head Coaches as a courtesy. Once a game starts, it is up to the Officials to call a game off. If the Officials call off the first game, no game shall be played at that site, on that day. If a game is suspended prior to completion, the time and score and other pertinent data shall be recorded by the home team and agreed to by the visiting team. The League presidents or in their absence, the Head Coaches, shall confer with the officials to determine a day or time for the game to resume. If the officials cannot make the day/time agreed to the Conference President and Conference Vice President of Football shall be notified so they can coordinate the assignment of officials. If necessary due to the availability of officials, the Conference President or his designee shall have to authority to reschedule the game as necessary including changing the day, time, and or location.

#### **3. Game Times**

All games are to be played in accordance with the current season's approved schedule, either regular season or playoffs. When due to extenuating circumstances a team cannot comply with the approved scheduling of games, their schedule may be altered by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. The only reason to start late would be tardiness by the referee(s). If either team fails to show up for a regular scheduled game within one half hour of the starting time, as scheduled by the Conference, the game may be suspended and rescheduled, or forfeiture of the game will be determined by the Conference Executive Board within 24 hours after being notified of the instance.



## SNEYFC 2021 FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES

### 4. Postponed Games

- a. All postponed games will be played at the earliest date available following a postponement. Once the games are rescheduled and accepted by the Conference President, it becomes binding on both parties. If games are not played, this will result in a forfeit by the offending team or teams.
- b. Games are to be played in order of postponement.
- c. All scheduling disputes concerning postponed games will be arbitrated by the Conference President. The Conference President's decision will be final.

### 5. Game Officials

- a. At least three (3) certified football officials shall be ordered for all Senior, Junior, Micro and Pee Wee division games. Pee Wee division games may be played with two (2) certified football officials if the ECFO can only provide two (2) certified football officials.
- b. At least four (4) certified football officials shall be ordered for all playoff and Super Bowl and/or Championship games.
- c. At least one (1) certified football official shall be ordered as a timer for any playoff or Super Bowl/Championship games.

### B. Protests

Only violation or interpretation of playing rules, either NFHS or Conference By-Laws, will be allowed. Protests of judgment calls on the part of game Officials will not be accepted. The game Officials must be informed by the Head Coach of the protesting team that a protest is being lodged as soon as possible after the play in question. The protest shall be filed with the Conference President within 72 hours following the completion of the game in question. The Head Coach of the team lodging the protest will be responsible for a detailed, but brief report of the infraction. It should be signed by the Head Coach, the league's official representative to the Conference, and contain the names and phone numbers of the opposing Head Coach and Game Officials. A decision by the Executive Board of the SNEYFC must be made prior to the next regular scheduled game of the team or teams involved. Game Officials need not attend protest hearings. The Conference President must inform all affected parties of the Executive Board of the SNEYFC's decision as soon as possible.



## SNEYFC 2021 FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES

### C. Security

It shall be the home team's responsibility to provide ample protection before, during and after completion of a game. Officials shall be paid at half time of the last game they will be working. Once the game is complete, the Game Administrator shall provide escort for game officials from the field to their vehicle(s) unless the official declines such escort. If there are any undue delays, or the Game Administrator and Officials are unable to control the game participants or spectators after a reasonable amount of time, the game Referee may forfeit the game. The Executive Board of the SNEYFC shall determine any wins/losses that result from a game forfeited by a game Official. Any incidents that in any way cause adverse publicity to the Conference shall become a matter for the Executive Board of the SNEYFC. The Executive Board of the SNEYFC's decision, when made, shall be in the best interest of the Conference.

### D. Unauthorized Persons on the Side Lines

No person shall be permitted to be on the sidelines except members of the coaching staff (limit of 5 total coaches, including the Head Coach), the game administrator of the game being played, one (1) water carrier, medical personnel (qualified EMT), any SNEYFC Official, cheerleaders and ambulance personnel of the teams in the contest. The league's Football Director and President may also be permitted on the sidelines during games (but not as an extra coach) and must remain outside the coaching area unless it is to address a disciplinary or safety issue. The league's Football Director and President will be required to wear a sideline pass identifying them as such. All fields should be roped off if there is not a permanent fence in place.

### E. Vantage Points during Contests

No home team shall be allowed to utilize the score booth or other high point for the purpose of spotting or photographing (filming) during a game, unless the same or similar type of facility (vantage point) is made available to the visiting team.

### F. Scouting

Teams may scout other town's games and scrimmages but not practices. If an individual that is affiliated (member, parent/relative, or player) with another league in the conference is caught attending practices and / or videotaping practices of other teams, the offending league shall be ineligible for post season play at the level in which the occurrence took place.



## SNEYFC 2021 FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES

### II. FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES

#### A. NFHS/CIAC Rules

Play shall be governed by the current NFHS/CIAC rules of play except as amended by the SNEYFC By-Laws and these Playing Rules. Free substitution shall be used in all divisions of play. The following NFHS rules are amended to accommodate the level of play and age groups supported by the SNEYFC. All penalties noted in the NFHS rule book as 15-yard penalties shall be assessed at 10 yards if playing on a shortened field.

#### B. DISQUALIFICATION/EJECTION RULE – ATHLETE/COACH

As stated, the SNEYFC shall be governed by the NFHS and CIAC rules of play (except those that are amended by the SNEYFC by-laws and playing rules). The CIAC establishes guidelines and tone for acceptable and appropriate behavior at all CIAC contests including league tournaments and playoffs. Given this charge, it is the CIAC's responsibility to be pro-active and responsive to the growing issues of sportsmanship and violence in sports. A strong consistent statement reflecting zero tolerance for violence in sports must become standard operating procedure for all schools and the SNEYFC. This is to be considered a minimum standard. The CIAC Disqualification / Ejection Rule is in effect for all CIAC contests, including league playoffs and tournaments that engage officials who have been assigned by Board commissioners from CIAC registered officials organizations, or directly by the town or by the CIAC. The SNEYFC will also be adhering to this CIAC policy when it comes to guidelines and tone for acceptable and appropriate behavior.

There is NO appeal procedure that a town may use relative to disqualifications. Disqualification is a judgment call by an official and as such is not appealable. Until the official(s) leaves the site the game official(s) is in charge and may take any action deemed to be appropriate, even to the extent of reversing an earlier decision to eject a player or coach. Both towns (coaches on site) must be made fully aware of all final decisions on game disqualifications. **Once the game official(s) leaves the site of the contest all decisions on game disqualifications are final.**

The following policies for disqualification by an official shall apply in all sports:

- 1) Any student-athlete who physically assaults an official, coach, opposing player, spectator or other person in attendance at the event will be immediately ineligible for the remainder of the season.
- 2) When an athlete or coach is ejected from any contest the athlete or coach is ineligible to participate in the next contest at the same level of play (even if the next contest does not occur until league playoffs or next year). If one or more different level contests are scheduled prior to the next contest at the same level of play, the athlete or coach shall be ineligible to participate in the next (but no more than one) contest at each level of play. **The ejected coach or player cannot be in attendance at the game(s) for which they are serving their suspension and may not participate in any pre-game warm-up activities at the site of the game unless approved by the SNEYFC Executive Committee.**
- 3) Upon receiving a second disqualification for initiating a fight or retaliating in a fight (as determined by the game official), that student-athlete will be declared ineligible for the remainder of the season.



## SNEYFC 2021 FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES

4) If the SNEYFC, CIAC or National Federation Playing Rules for football specify an additional penalty, the additional penalty will apply.

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**Definition of ASSAULT** – An assault is defined as an attack which attempts to injure one physically.

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**Definition of TAUNTING** – Taunting includes, but is not limited to any actions or comments by coaches or players which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean other players, coaches, or game officials. Included in this is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates or threatens based on gender, ethnic origin or background and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal matters. Examples of taunting that would lead to ejection include, but are not limited to, physical and verbal intimidation outside the spirit of the game (“trash talk”), reference to sexual orientation, “in-the-face confrontation” by one player to another, standing over, straddling a tackled or fallen player, etc.

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**PENALTY** – In all sports, game officials are to consider taunting a flagrant, unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or athlete from that contest/day of competition and the player or coach from the following contest/day of competition, i.e. the CIAC player/coach ejection rule will be invoked. A warning may be given, but is not required before ejection.

1

### **Rule *The Game, Field, Players and Equipment***

#### SECTION 1 THE GAME...

**ART. 2 . . .** The field size shall be 300 by 135 feet (100 by 45 yards) inclusive of end zones. For leagues that play on High School Fields the acceptable field size shall be 300 by 160 feet. The revised goal lines and end lines shall be clearly indicated.

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Adopted starting with the 2020 season, all football divisions will be played on a 100-yard field, not the 80-yard field, whenever possible. In these cases, kickoffs will be from the 40-yard line on a 100-yard field and 15-yard penalties per CIAC will become applicable during games held on a 100-yard football field.

**ART. 3 . . .** Each team shall begin the game with a minimum of 14 players.

**ART. 11 . . .** However, protests of the application of SNEYFC rules may be protested subject to the conditions outline section I.B of these playing rules

#### SECTION 2 THE FIELD AND MARKINGS...

**ART. 3 . . .** Lines and other markings:

**NOTE 1:** It is permissible for both team boxes to be on the same side of the field, provided each team box is marked between the respective 20 and 40 yard lines



## SNEYFC 2021 FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES

### SECTION 3 GAME EQUIPMENT...

**ART. 1 . . .** The official ball of the SNEYFC shall meet the following specifications:

d.e.f.&g. - For Senior games a youth size football defined in the NFHS rule book table 1-3-1 for 8th grade and below. Any brand football may be used as long as it is clearly specified with a Y in the model number.

The official ball of the SNEYFC for Junior and Micro games shall be a Junior (JR) size football defined as follows:

Weight: 11-13 oz Long Circumference: 25" to 26"

Long Axis: 9.5" to 10.5" Short Circumference: 18" to 19"

Inflation Pressure 12.5 to 13.5 psi

Any brand football may be used as long as it is clearly specified with a (J or JR) in the model number. Pee Wee sized balls or balls with the PW designation or strictly prohibited.

The official ball of the SNEYFC for Pee Wee games shall be a pee wee size ball.

### SECTION 5 PLAYER EQUIPMENT...

**ART. 1 . . .** Mandatory equipment.....

d. 4. Jerseys shall be as approved in Appendix B of the SNEYFC by-laws with the exceptions noted for New London while playing Griswold.

3

### ***Rule Periods, Time Factors and Substitutions***

#### SECTION 1 LENGTH OF PERIODS...

**ART. 1 . . .** The clock running time for a game shall be 40 minutes with periods as indicated in table 3-1

**ART. 2 . . .** The SNEYFC shall adopt a running clock once the score differential reaches 30 points at any point of the game (including the 1<sup>st</sup> half) for so long as it exceeds 30 points, but will be stopped when one of the following occurs:

- an injury (clock will re-start as dictated by NFHS Rule)
- a penalty (clock will re-start as dictated by NFHS Rule)
- a score (the clock will start after the kickoff on a legal touch by R)
- an authorized time out
- official's discretion



**Table 3-1  
TABLE OF CLOCK TIMES**

PERIOD OF TIMING CLOCK TIME	
<u>First Half:</u>	
First Period	10 minutes
Intermission for changing goals	1 minute
Second Period	10 minutes
<u>Intermission:</u>	
When Teams Leave the Field	10 minutes
Mandatory Warm-up Activity Following	3 minutes
Intermission: (The head coach is responsible for his team being on the field for mandatory warm-up time at the end of the halftime intermission.)	10 minutes
<u>Second Half:</u>	
Third Period	1 minute
Intermission for changing goals	10 minutes
Fourth Period	
Charged Time-outs	1 minute

**40 SECOND PLAY CLOCK**

Starting with the 2019 season, when a play has completed, the NFHS has adopted a 40 second clock and will no longer recognize the 25 second clock when the ball is placed as ready for play. After discussion with the ECFO, the SNEYFC will continue to adhere to the 25 second clock when the ball is placed as ready for play and will not adhere to, or implement the 40 second clock.

**GAME/SCORE CONTROL**

Adopted starting with the 2018 season, once the score differential reaches 40 points at any point of the game (including the 1<sup>st</sup> half), if a passing play is attempted by any player the following penalty will be assessed by the SNEYFC Executive Board:



1<sup>st</sup> offense: 1 game suspension of the Head Coach



2<sup>nd</sup> offense: 2 game suspension of the Head Coach and \$100 fine imposed on the offending league.



3<sup>rd</sup> offense: 1-year suspension of the Head Coach and another \$100 fine imposed on the offending league.



SNEYFC 2021 FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES

6

**Rule Kicking the Ball and Fair Catch**

SECTION 1 THE KICKOFF AND OTHER FREE KICKS...

**ART. 1 . . .** For any free kick, a free-kick line, corresponding to a scrimmage line, is established for each team. These lines are always 10 yards apart. Unless moved by penalty, K's free kick line is:

- a. It's the 35-yard line for a kick-off (40-yard line when a 100-yard field is used at the 14u level)
- b. It's the 15-yard line after a safety (20-yard line when a 100-yard field is used at the 14u level).

**ART. 8 . . .** A free kick shall not be kicked out of bounds between the goal lines untouched by R. If it is, R has the following choices:

- b. Put the ball in play at the inbounds spot 15 yards beyond the previous spot.

**PUNTS FOR Pee Wee Division**

The Pee Wee Division will not punt the ball. The offense will declare on 4<sup>th</sup> down that they wish to punt, and the official will move the ball 25 yards from the original line of scrimmage. However, once the offense acquires the opponents 30-yard line, the walk off will be half the distance to the goal, meaning that the team receiving the walk off will never start the possession inside their own 15-yard line.

**COACHES ON THE FIELD FOR THE PEE WEE DIVISION**

The Pee Wee shall allow a coach to be present on the field to assist the offense or defense. Coaches on field to be limited to 2 weeks and only 1 coach on field.

7

**Rule Snapping, Handing and Passing the Ball**

SECTION 2 POSITION, NUMBERING AND ACTION AT THE SNAP...

**ART. 5 . . .** Player number requirements include:

- d. All players restricted to the Offensive or Defensive line by weight shall, if applicable, shall be numbered between 50 and 79 and will be assigned a colored dot to be placed on the front and back of their helmet.
- i. Players on Offense who are restricted to the line of scrimmage by weight cannot be a player who is able to catch, carry or advance the ball by design. He/she can advance a fumble or interception as allowed by NFHS rules.

8



### SNEYFC 2021 FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES

- ii. No defensive line player will be allowed to start a play in the defensive backfield (defined as any player who assumes a position more than one (1) yard off the line of scrimmage). He/she must remain within one (1) yard of the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped. (Note: The Line of Scrimmage extends from sideline to sideline and within 1 yard of the end of the football in each direction).
- iii. No player whose number is between 50 and 79 shall be allowed to punt or hold for extra point attempts. Any player, regardless of weight, is permitted to kickoff at the beginning of a game, after a touchdown, after a field goal, or after a safety and can at any time advance a fumble or interception as allowed by NFHS rules. Adopted starting with the 2020 season, any player, regardless of weight, is permitted to kick extra points and field goals. However, a missed snap or fumbled snap would result in a dead ball and the ball can never be advanced; it would strictly be a snap and kick scenario only.



## SECTION 1 POINT VALUES...

<b>POINT VALUES</b>	
SUCCESSFUL TRY	1 point
a. After a Touchdown – Run or Pass from the 3-yard line	
b. After a Touchdown – Point After Touchdown Kick (PAT) from the 3-yard line	2 points



### **TIE BREAKER RULES**

TIE GAMES -- If a regular season or Playoff game ends in a tie, the following tie-breaker system will be used:

1. Immediately following the conclusion of the fourth quarter, a coin toss is to be held with the visiting team captain calling heads or tails. The winner of the toss shall be given the choice of the ball or playing defense. The loser shall be given the choice of direction to put the ball in play.
2. After a three minute rest period, during which both teams may confer with their coaches, the offensive team shall put the ball in play, first and goal, on the ten (10) yard line.
3. The rules for loss of possession are the same as during the regulation game. If a touchdown is scored the try for an extra point(s) will follow. Field goal attempts are permitted during any down. When a team scores via either a field goal or the try for point following a touchdown it gives up possession of the ball.
4. After loss of possession, the defensive team shall become the offensive team with the ball, first and goal from the ten (10) yard line at the same end of the field.
5. Each team will be allowed one additional time out for each extra period, and any unused regulation game time-outs.
6. Rules pertaining to offensive and defensive pass interference remain the same in the overtime period.
7. If the defensive team gains possession of the football by recovering a fumble or intercepting a pass, the ball immediately becomes dead. The defensive team may not score points.
8. The team scoring the greater number of points in the overtime shall be declared the winner. Regular season games shall be declared a tie if a winner cannot be determined in 3 overtime periods. Playoff game(s) will continue using the above tie-breaker procedures until a winner is declared. Beginning with the 3rd overtime period, teams must go for a 2 point kick on the try after a touchdown. In the Super bowl and Championship games, if the score is tied after 3 overtime periods the Co-Champions will be declared.
9. Between overtime periods, the team that lost the previous coin toss will be given the choice of the ball or playing defense. The other team shall be given the choice of direction to put the ball in play.



# USA Football Contact Allowances

## Achieving Heat Acclimatization

	1	Days 1-2	Days 3-4	Days 5-6
# of Practices Per Day				
Equipment	Helmets Only	Helmets & Shoulders Only	Full Pads (optional)	Maximum Duration of Single
Practice Session	90 Minutes		2 hours (120 minutes)	
Contact	Full contact drills, maximum of 30			
		<b>Preseason:</b>		
		No Contact		
		minutes per day (optional)		

## Full Contact Allowances

Following the acclimatization period, teams shall not conduct more than four practices per week

Total full-contact time is limited to 30 minutes per day and 120 minutes per week

**Rationale:** USA Football recognizes that preseason practices may require more full-contact time than the regular season practice to sufficiently prepare for the season.

### **Regular Season:**

USA Football recommends youth teams practice no more than three days per week. Beginning with the 2019 season, the SNEYFC has adopted the rule of no more than 3 practices per week based upon USA Football's recommendation.

Total full-contact time is limited to 30 minutes per day and 90 minutes per week

**Rationale:** The number of practices and amount of contact has decreased to account for the full-contact exposure and playing time occurring during games.

During the built-in BYE WEEK (if applicable), no contact will be permitted until the Sunday at the end of the BYE WEEK.

### **Explaining Levels of Contact:**

Levels of Contact focuses on varying intensity levels throughout practices to build player confidence ensure their safety and prevent both physical and mental exhaustion.

## SNEYFC 2021 FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES



- **Air:** Players run a drill unopposed without contact
- **Bags:** Drill is run against a bag or another soft-contact surface
- **Control:** Drill is run at assigned speed until the moment of contact; one player is the pre-determined the 'winner' by the coach. Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet
- **Thud:** Drill is run at assigned speed to competitive speed through the moment of contact; no pre-determined 'winner.' Contact remains above the waist; players stay on their feet and a quick whistle ends the drill
- **Live Action:** Drill is run in game-like conditions and is the only time that players are taken to the ground

### Definition of Contact:

1. **Full Contact** – Football drills or live game simulations where live action occurs (11 on 11 or 7 on 7)
2. **Live Contact** – Contact at game speed where players execute full tackles at a competitive pace taking players to the ground.
3. **Thud** – Initiation of contact at or up to full speed with no pre-determined winner and no take down to the ground.

### Definition of No-Contact:

1. **Air** – Players run unopposed without bags or any competition.
2. **Bags** – Activity is executed against a bag, shield or pad to allow for a soft contact-surface with or without the resistance of a teammate or coach standing behind the bag.
3. **Control** – Drill is run at an assigned speed (not full) until the moment of contact, one player is pre-determined the winner by the coach. Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet.