

2011
Catholic Youth Organization,
Cadet, 56 and 34 Boys Football Leagues - Rules, Regulations & Information

Section I - Purpose & Conduct

- A. The purpose of the leagues is to provide supervised competitive recreation for boys in the CYO grade school age group, thereby giving them an opportunity to learn the fundamentals of football and to develop spiritually, mentally and physically.
- B. Any team member or coach conducting himself in an unsportsmanlike manner shall be liable to suspension from the league. The CYO Athletic Code of Ethics must be followed at all times and it is the responsibility of the coaches to adhere to and enforce these standards.
- C. It is expected that the head coach will not tolerate inappropriate language or behavior from the players, assistant coaches, or himself. Anyone engaging in this type of behavior shall be subject to being ejected from a game. Anyone ejected cannot return to participate in that game.
- D. All offenders will be subject to actions outlined in the CYO Athletic Disciplinary Policy.

Section II - Special Scheduling Notes

- A. No team may take it upon themselves to postpone a game. The schedule is to be strictly followed, except in extremely inclement weather.
- B. Games are expected to begin at times designated on the official schedule, except when the start is delayed by an incomplete game. A 15 minute grace period is allowed if a team has not arrived at a game site at the designated start time of a game before a forfeit can be claimed, unless prior arrangements have been made.
- C. Official football practice may **only** be started on the date assigned by the CYO Office. However, summer conditioning programs designed and limited to activities which promote physical fitness are an excellent way to prepare athletes for the rigors of early season practices in football. Examples of permissible activities are weight lifting (under a knowledgeable supervisor, only), running and aerobic exercising. Students may participate in a conditioning program during the summer and parishes may conduct such programs. Because of the age group that the CYO leagues deal with, adult supervision must always be present for these programs. Coaches must be responsible for the health and safety of these children at all times.

The conditioning programs must be open to all male students of the parish and participation in all summer activities shall be voluntary. A student will not be required to participate in the summer conditioning to be considered for membership on the team. During the summer conditioning program, helmets may be worn but no other protective equipment such as shoulder pads and football pants will be allowed. Footballs may be used but no other specific equipment related to performing football drills such as blocking pads, tackling dummies, etc. will be allowed.

- D. Practice sessions must be conducted with the idea in mind that we are dealing with young boys. Therefore, no single practice session may exceed **two hours** in length, and no team may conduct supervised practice more than once a day. It is also suggested that you limit the number of practice sessions to no more than four per week. **Also, provide plenty of water for all the participants, especially on extremely hot and humid days.**

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Section II - Special Scheduling Notes (Continued)

- E. The CYO Office will keep league standings. Scores must be reported to the CYO website at www.cyoarchindy.org by the coaches immediately following each game.
- F. The CYO will conduct a postseason tournament in each league following the completion of the regular season. Every CYO team will automatically participate in the postseason tournament. The winner of the postseason tournament in each CYO football league will be recognized as the league champion for that league.
- G. Our greatest concern is always the physical safety of the players. Therefore, no CYO football team is permitted to play any team outside the league, unless weight and age rules are the same. We expect coaches to make sure no difference in weight and age rules exists before agreeing to any such game. If in doubt, call the CYO Office for clarification.
- H. No team is allowed to participate in a football game following the conclusion of the CYO football season.

Section III - Eligibility

The following general eligibility rules are taken from the CYO General Eligibility Standards.

A. Cadet Level

- 1. **Age & Grade** - 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade boys who have not reached the age of 16 before the completion of the athletic season in which they are competing. Any male student over this stated age limit who wishes to participate must submit a written request to the CYO Office for review at least three weeks prior to the start of an athletic season.
- 2. **Parish & School Affiliation** - All full-time male students of the parish school and all registered male parishioners of the participating parish.

B. 56 Level

- 1. **Age and Grade** - 5th and 6th grade boys who have not reached the age of 14 before the completion of the athletic season in which they are competing. Any male student over this stated age limit who wishes to participate must submit a written request to the CYO Office for review at least three weeks prior to the start of an athletic season.
- 2. **Parish & School Affiliation** - All full-time male students of the parish school and all registered male parishioners of the participating parish.

C. 34 Level

- 1. **Age and Grade** - 3rd and 4th grade male students who have not reached the age of 12 before the completion of the athletic season in which they are competing. Any student over this stated age limit who wishes to participate must submit a written request to the CYO Office for review at least three weeks prior to the start of an athletic season.
- 2. **Parish and School Affiliation** - All full-time male students of the parish school and all registered male parishioners of the participating parish.

- A.. There may be individual cases involving youth affiliated with another parish or school who want to participate because their own parish or school does not sponsor that particular activity. These individuals may participate for a bordering parish when that parish is willing to grant permission.
- B. The CYO will charge a fee to each parish for each team entered into the league and a fee for each participant on the roster

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Section IV - General Information

- C. CYO participants and coaches are required to register for CYO athletic programs through the CYO website, www.cyoarchindy.org, once each school year to be eligible for participation. After logging on to the website parents click on the Register Child link and coaches click on the Coach Registration link to register. If coaches and participants do not register through the website they cannot be add to a team as a coach or to a roster as a participant.
- After a parent has registered the child through the website they must download and print a physician's examination form from the site. These mandatory physical forms, once completed by the physician, will then be turned into the parish athletic director and are to be kept on file at the parish or school and are valid for the entire school year.
- D. A player may not begin the regular season with the Cadet team and move down to the 56 team after participating in a Cadet game. He may move up to the Cadet team after the opening of the season, but may not return to the 56 team. This rule takes effect on the opening day of the regular season.
- E. In both leagues, players eligible to participate may be added to a roster any time **prior to October 1 of the current season**, as long as a properly completed CYO Athletic Eligibility Form is submitted and the player's weight is recorded officially by the CYO Office in each case.
- F. At no time may a player hold dual eligibility. A player is forbidden to be a participant in a football league sponsored by another organization. Such participation automatically makes the player ineligible to play CYO Football for the balance of the current season.
- G. In addition to the general eligibility standards for participation in CYO sports and the specific eligibility rule for each sport, all student athletes are subject to the academic policies of the sponsoring parish. Scholastic eligibility is always the prerogative of the Catholic school administrator.
- H. In all leagues no protest other than those concerning player's eligibility violations will be accepted by the CYO Athletics Policy Committee. Protests must be filed with the CYO Office in writing not more than 48 hours after the eligibility violation is discovered.
- I. In all leagues a team involved in a violation of any of these eligibility rules may be penalized as follows: the player is removed from the squad; the team forfeits all games in which this player has participated; the school is put on probation for six months; and the head coach is subject to suspension. All such violations shall be subject to review by the Athletics Policy Committee of the CYO Board of Directors.

Section V - Special Playing Rules

- A. Play in the leagues shall be governed by the rule book issued by the National Federation of High Schools, with certain specific exceptions, which shall be listed in these rules. Quarters in the CYO Football Leagues will be 8 minutes in length. The responsibility of keeping the official time for a game belongs to the officials. The official time will be kept on a scoreboard clock whenever one is available.
- B. Before each game, the coaches, and game officials should hold a conference in order that all concerned are in agreement on rules, time, or anything else that should be decided before the games start. Coaches and officials should always take a copy of these rules with them to games in the event a situation arises which needs to be clarified

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Section V - Special Playing Rules (Continued)

- C. Coaches are permitted to talk with the players between quarters for one minute. Half-time intermission should not exceed 8 minutes. One or more players on a team may come to the team box area within 5 yards of the sideline to confer with any number of coaches or one coach may go on the field to the team huddle between the inbounds mark during a time out. Only one type of conference may be used by a team during any one authorized time out.
- D. According to the rule book, players, managers, coaches, etc. must remain two yards outside all side-lines and between the 25 yard lines. Game officials are asked to enforce this rule.
- E. When a team scores a touchdown, it has the option of trying the extra point from the three-yard line for one point, or from the five-yard line for two points. The attempt may be a kick, pass or run from either spot, but it counts for two points (provided it is successful) from the five yard line; one point from the three yard line. The officials are to clearly signal the opposing team and both coaches whether the try is for *one* point or *two*.
- F. Procedures to be used to break ties in all CYO League Football games during the regular season and playoffs:

During the CYO regular season, a maximum of two overtimes will be played to determine a winner. If a regular season game remains tied after the second overtime, the game will officially end as a tied game.

During the postseason tournaments, no game may end in a tie, therefore, there is no limit to the number of overtimes played. Overtime continues until a winner is determined.

1. Immediately following the conclusion of the fourth quarter, a coin toss is to be held similar to the toss at the start of the contest. The captain of the team which lost the toss at the beginning of the game is to call heads or tails while the coin is in the air.
2. The winner of the toss shall be given his choice of offense or defense or designating the end of the field at which to play.
3. After a two-minute rest period, during which both teams may confer with their coaches on the sidelines, Team A shall place the ball in play, 1st and goal, on B's 10-yard line in the Cadet League and 56 leagues and on B's 5-yard line in the 34 League.
4. Team A shall have four downs in which to score unless there is a loss of possession. If a touchdown is scored, Team A will try for an extra point or points according to the regular CYO rule. Field goal attempts are permitted during any down. **Play** - If Team A scores on the second down of its four-down overtime series, are they entitled to use the other two downs to score again? **Ruling - No.** When a team scores either a field goal or touchdown, they give up possession of the ball following the field goal or they try for a point following the touchdown. **Illustration** - Team A scores six points on the second play and the extra point to make their score seven, during the overtime period. If Team B scores six points during their four-down series and two points on the conversion, Team B would be considered the winner since they scored one more point than Team A during the overtime series.
5. Rules pertaining to offensive and defensive pass interference remain the same in the overtime period. **Play** - On third down for Team A on Team B's four-yard line, defensive pass interference is called on Team B. **Ruling** - Team A accepts the penalty, it will be first down for A on the two-yard line.
6. If the defensive team gains possession of the football by recovering a fumble or intercepting a pass, the ball is dead, and no advance is allowed according to CYO rules. Anytime the defensive team gains possession of the football the ball becomes dead immediately and A's series is ended. When a touchdown score determines the game winner, no try for an extra point (PAT) shall be made.
7. After loss of possession, Team B shall become the offensive team with the ball in its possession on its opponent's 10-yard line in the Cadet and 56 Leagues or on the opponent's 5-yard line in the 34 League. The same end of the field is to be used for both teams' possessions. This will insure equal game conditions (wind, moisture, etc.) for both teams.

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Section V - Special Playing Rules (Continued)

8. Each team shall be allowed one time-out for each extra period. Unused time-outs from the second half do not carry over to the overtime periods.
9. The team scoring the greater number of points in the overtime shall be declared the winner. The final score shall be determined by totaling all points scored by each team during regulation and overtime play.
10. If the score remains tied at the end of the first overtime, the team choice (of offense or defense) shall alternate in each successive overtime. The ball-in-play direction shall not be changed. No postseason game ends in a tie. There is no limit to the number of overtimes played during the football tournaments. Overtime continues until a winner is determined.

G. Kickoffs are eliminated in all 56 and 34 League Play.

1. At the beginning of the first and third quarters, and after any touchdown or field goal, the ball will be put in play on the offensive team's 40-yard line.
2. Following a safety, the ball will be put in play on the defensive team's 40-yard line.

H. **The following six special playing rules apply only to the 34 league:**

1. One coach from each team may be on the field to call offensive plays or defensive formations. Coaches on the field will not be permitted to issue verbal instructions once the offense and defense have taken their positions at the line of scrimmage and the offense has begun to call its cadence.
2. A defensive alignment with a lineman positioned directly over the offensive center shall never be permitted in any defensive scheme, including a goal line defense. Interior defensive lineman must line up within the frame of the offensive lineman across from them. Defensive ends are exempt from this restriction.
3. A 34 team must play a six man defensive line except when the team is inside their own 5 yard line when a goal line defense may be used. Again, no lineman may be positioned directly over the center. A defensive lineman is any player positioned on the line of scrimmage within one yard of the neutral zone. Interior defensive linemen must line up with some part of their body within the frame of the offensive lineman. Non defensive lineman (linebackers and defensive backs) must line up at least 3 yards behind the neutral zone and this restriction applies until the ball is snapped. The purpose of these rules is to help coaches teach good blocking techniques and avoid unnecessary confusion on the part of the offensive linemen.
4. Non-defensive linemen (linebackers and defensive backs) shall not be allowed any forward movement that would penetrate the 3 yard no blitz zone (at the snap of the ball, indiscriminately shoot through gap or across the line of scrimmage). As long as linebackers and defensive backs are positioned at least three yards off the ball at the time of the snap they can pursue a running back at any point on the field. This rule helps teach young and inexperienced offensive linemen the proper technique of blocking only the player across from him.
5. Punts and kicks must be declared by the offense. The offense may not release to go downfield until the ball has been kicked. The defense may not rush the kicker but are allowed to raise their hands as a distraction.
6. The CYO strongly emphasizes fair playing time for all players. The CYO mandatory playing time rule provides a minimum experience for all players. It is recommended, however, that coaches, particularly in the 34 league, play everyone throughout the game. Substitute frequently so everyone feels an equal part of the team. Upon getting a three touchdown lead, a team should insert all substitutes in the game on either offense, defense or a combination of both. This will help keep games from becoming lopsided and provides another way of getting everyone playing time. Another option may be to play players out of their normal position and let several players carry the ball.

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Section V- Special Playing Rules (Continued)

The following rule is intended to insure that all participants, regardless of their skill level, are given the opportunity to play a minimum of time in every game. When a young person signs up to play in the CYO program they expect, and have the right, to participate in all the games. Coaches need to respect all the young athletes if they are to have a rewarding experience in sports. These guidelines were developed in order to maximize the potential benefits of sports participation. **ATHLETES FIRST - WINNING SECOND!**

1. This rule is in effect for all CYO Football regular season and playoff games.
2. The CYO does not permit the cutting of players from team rosters.
3. All players listed on the official team roster must play a minimum of 24 quarters during the season. Participation in a quarter is defined as participating for one offensive or defensive snap in that quarter. Special teams plays do not count toward player participation in a quarter.
4. An assistant coach or team parent should be assigned to monitor the participation of players at each game.
5. Coaches do have the prerogative to exclude a child from being in uniform and included on the game roster because of a disciplinary situation, absenteeism, personal, etc. In these cases, it is strongly recommended that the reasons for exclusion be discussed with the parents.
6. Any coach who knowingly violates this rule is subject to probation or suspension for a portion or all of the season. In addition, flagrant violations may be referred to the CYO Athletics Policy Committee for appropriate action. Depending upon the circumstances, rule violations can also result in a game being forfeited.

Section VI - Weight Class Information

A. There are **four** distinct weight categories in the **34 League**:

1. Up to and including 85 pounds
2. Above 85 pounds up to and including 110 pounds
3. Above 110 pounds and up to and including 130 pounds
4. Above 130 pounds

B. For categories 2, 3 and 4 listed above, the following special helmet identification rules apply:

1. On the helmet of any player above 85 pounds, but not exceeding 110 pounds at the first weigh-in, one strip of adhesive tape at least 10 inches in length is to be taped to the top of the helmet. The strip is to run from the front of the helmet to the back of the helmet, directly down the center. For easy visibility, use black tape on white or light-colored helmets, white tape on helmets of a darker shade. All such players are hereafter designated as one-strippers.
2. On the helmet of any player above 110 pounds, at the first weigh-in, two strips of adhesive tape, each strip at least 10 inches in length, are to be taped to the helmet in the form of a cross. The two strips should cross each other as near as possible to the top center of the helmet. For easy visibility, use black tape on white or light-colored helmets, white tape on helmets of a darker helmet. All such players are hereafter designated as two-strippers.
3. On the helmet of any player above 130 pounds at the first weigh-in, two strips of adhesive tape are to be applied as in 2 above. Then, a third strip is to be taped at about the forehead level all the way around the helmet. This will enable game officials to quickly identify players in those special category. All such players are hereafter designated as three-strippers.

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Section VI - Weight Class Information

- C. There are **three** distinct weight categories in the **56 League**:
1. Up to and including 105 pounds;
 2. Above 105 pounds up to and including 140 pounds; and,
 3. Above 140 pounds;
- D. For categories 2 and 3 listed above, the following special helmet identification rules apply:
1. On the helmet of any player above 105 pounds, but not exceeding 140 pounds at the first weigh-in, two strips of adhesive tape, each strip at least 10 inches in length, are to be taped to the helmet in the form of a cross. The two strips should cross each other as near as possible to the top center of the helmet. For easy visibility, use black tape on white or light-colored helmets, white tape on helmets of a darker shade. All such players are hereafter designated as two-striper.
 2. On the helmet of any player above 140 pounds, at the first weigh-in, two strips of adhesive tape are to be applied as in 1 above. Then, a third strip is to be taped at about forehead level all the way around the helmet. This will enable game officials to quickly identify players in this special category. All such players are hereafter designated as three-striper.
- E. There are **three** distinctive weight categories in the **Cadet League**:
1. Up to and including 140 pounds;
 2. Above 140 pounds and up to 165 pounds; and,
 3. Above 165 pounds.
- F. For categories 2 and 3 listed above, the following special helmet identification rules apply:
1. On the helmet of any player above 140 pounds, but not exceeding 165 pounds at the first weigh-in, two strips of adhesive tape, each strip at least 10 inches in length, are to be taped to the helmet in the form of a cross. The two strips should cross each other as near as possible to the top center of the helmet. For easy visibility, use black tape on white or light-colored helmets, white tape on helmets of a darker shade. All such players are hereafter designated as two-striper.
 2. On the helmet of any player above 165 pounds at the first weigh-in, two strips of adhesive tape are to be applied as in 1 above. Then, a third strip is to be taped at about forehead level all the way around the helmet. This will enable game officials to quickly identify players in this special category. All such players are hereafter designated as three striper.

Section VII - General Restrictions Involving Striped Players In The CYO Leagues

- A. A striped player may never line up in the offensive backfield or at an offensive end position. No trick offensive formations which have a striped player lining up at the end of the scrimmage line are to be used. **Only a player who is not striped is eligible to line up at one of the backfield positions, or at end on offense.** (Exception, see F below)
- B. A player who is ineligible to carry the ball must play in the front line on the receiving team for all kickoffs. A striped player of the receiving team may receive the kickoff, however, the ball becomes dead as soon as a striped receiving team member secures possession of the ball.
- C. A striped player may not receive a lateral pass from another player at any time. If a lateral is attempted to a striped player, the ball shall be declared dead by the officials at the point where the striper first touched the ball, provided he gains and retains possession of the ball. If the striped player fails to gain possession of or fumbles the lateral, the ball shall not be declared dead by the officials until either team has possession.

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Section VII – General Restrictions Involving Striped Players In The CYO Leagues (Continued)

- D. **A striper is never permitted to carry the ball. The ball always shall be declared dead when secured by a striped player, whether on offense, defense, kicking or receiving.**
- E. A striped player may not return a punt. A striped player may line up to receive a punt but may only make a fair catch.
- F. A striped player may be in the backfield on offense only if he attempts to kick an extra point; if he attempts to kick a field goal; or if he punts. In any of these cases, if the kick is not attempted by this striper, the ball is dead. In the case of a punt or field goal attempt, if the ball is not kicked due to an errant or fumbled snap, the ball always is blown dead at the point of first touching by the kicker or holder, or at the conclusion of a loose ball scramble as long as the ball is not ahead of the point of first touching by the kicker or holder.
 - 1. A two or three-striper attempting the punt may receive the ball either from the quarterback (who is under the center) or on a direct snap from the center.
 - 2. Remember that only one striper is allowed in the backfield, and he must be the punter or kicker.
- G. If a fumble or backward pass is caught or recovered by any player, he may advance unless he is a striped player. An intercepted pass may be advanced by a non-striped player only. No striped player may ever advance a ball.

Section VIII - General Weigh-In Information

- A. All players must be weighed in by CYO officials before they are eligible to participate.
- B. A player's weight at the official weigh-in will determine the weight class in which that player will participate for the entire season. There will be no re-weighs.
- C. Any player not weighed by CYO officials at the official weigh-in is subject to being ineligible for the first regular season game following his official weigh-in.

Section IX - Specific Alignment Restrictions Involving Striped Players

- A. **34 League striper** alignment restrictions are as follows:
 - 1. One striper may not line up in the offensive backfield or at an offensive end position.
 - 2. Two stripers may not line up in the offensive backfield, offensive end, defensive secondary, linebacker or at a defensive position on the line of scrimmage wider than the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle. In the absence of an offensive tackle the player may not line up wider than where the offensive tackle would normally line up.
 - 3. Three stripers may not line up in the offensive backfield, offensive end, linebacker, defensive secondary positions or at a defensive position on the line of scrimmage wider than the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle. In the absence of an offensive tackle the player may not line up wider than where the offensive tackle would normally line up.
- B. **56 and Cadet Leagues** striper alignment restrictions are as follows:
 - 1. Two stripers may not line up in the offensive backfield or at an offensive end position.
 - 2. Three stripers may not line up in the offensive backfield, offensive end, linebacker, defensive secondary positions or at a defensive position on the line of scrimmage wider than the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle. In the absence of an offensive tackle the player may not line up wider than where the offensive tackle would normally line up.

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Section IX –Specific Alignment Restrictions Involving Striped Players (Continued)

Section X - Equipment

- A. The CYO reserves the right to inspect the protective equipment of any team, and to ask for improvements in this area before the parish participates in the football season.
- B. It is especially important that parishes make sure they protect player's heads with good helmets. Naturally, we hope you will be as concerned as we are about the importance of protection for the head. Also, remember that the fit of the helmet is important. All helmets and face masks must carry a NOCSAE stamp of approval.
- C. Good quality football pants, plus sound shoulder, hip, thigh and knee pads must be worn by every player who takes part in a game. An athletic supporter also is to be worn. Rib pads are not required, but are recommended.
1. **Mouthpieces** - Mouthpieces are mandatory for the obvious reason that the safety of the players is our most important consideration. Due to increased competition in this field many reputable manufacturers offer an excellent mouthpiece for a reasonable price. However, we urge you to make sure of the indemnity coverage offered by each mouthpiece.
 2. **Pants** - Good football pants must be worn with the proper fitting pads.
 3. **Shoulder Pads** - Proper fitting, quality shoulder pads must always be worn by CYO football players.
 4. **Shoes** - Any shoe which conforms to Federation Football Rules. If removable cleats are used, an effective locking device which prevents the exposure of metal posts must be incorporated.
- D. The official football for the CYO 56 and Cadet leagues shall be a junior or intermediate competition ball and meet the following specifications: Inflation pressure - 12 1/2 to 13 1/2 lbs; Long Axis - 10" to 11"; Short Circumference - 19" to 20"; Long Circumference - 26" to 27"; Weight - 12 -14 ounces.
- The official football for the CYO 34 league is the K2 Pee Wee football. Each team is to take a regulation football to all games. Officials will select one of the balls to be used for the game. However, a team may use its own ball when on offense or kicking if able to get the ball on and off the field without delay.
- E. Each player in the league must wear a "CYO Emblem" on his jersey or helmet. The emblem is to be displayed on the left arm of the jersey, two inches below the shoulder seam. All jerseys are to carry this emblem on the day of the first regular season game.
- F. Each team should consider having two sets of jerseys of contrasting colors to avoid confusion on the field. If this is not possible, it is suggested that each team have a contrasting colored scrimmage vest for use in the event both teams have the same colored game jersey.
- G. A down-marker and yardage chains must be taken to every game. We suggest that the opposing coaches contact each other the week of the game to make sure all game equipment will be available for the game.

Section XI - Miscellaneous

- A. Each team will be billed a team entry fee and a fee per each participant. Statements will be sent to the parishes at the beginning of the season.
- B. A minimum of two game officials must be present to start an official CYO football game. If only one official is present at a game site, the coaches should attempt to contact a member of the CYO staff at a predetermined telephone number. If it is clear that it is impossible to secure a second official for the game, the game should be postponed. The CYO Office will reschedule the game at the earliest date possible.

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Section XI – Miscellaneous (Continued)

- C. Important Rule Changes - May be noted on the CYO website or in a later mailing to coaches should they occur.
- D. Filming, telecasting or video taping of CYO football games for scouting purposes by any party other than the two participating schools is prohibited. Coaches may not trade game film with other teams. Additionally, coaches should not film their own team's games with the intent to show the film to their players for game preparation. Weekly practices take up enough of the players time and watching film keeps them away from home and their school studies unnecessarily.

Section XII - CYO Concussion Policy

CYO Concussion Policy

There has been no issue more important in athletics in recent years than concussions and head injuries. The CYO has adopted a concussion policy that will be in effect for all CYO sports. This policy was formulated in conjunction with the physicians, athletic trainers and administrators of St. Vincent Sports Performance. The CYO wishes to thank everyone at St. Vincent Sports Performance who helped to develop this important concussion policy.

Concussions or mild traumatic head injuries are common injuries in sports resulting from a blow or bump to the head. Early recognition and appropriate treatment of concussions are vital for recovery, prevention of future concussions and the safe return to playing athletics.

With this in mind, the following policy pertaining to concussions will be followed in all CYO sports:

Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be removed from the game or team practice until he or she has passed a sideline concussion evaluation and test. Some of the warning signs of a concussion are loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems.

Each team will be given a sideline concussion evaluation card that has been prepared by St. Vincent Sports Performance so that all coaches will be able to recognize a possible player concussion. This sideline concussion card will list the many symptoms of a concussion and will include several tests to administer to the player with a possible concussion. These include a memory function test, a concentration test and a balance test all designed to help coaches recognize the signs of a concussion.

After the sideline concussion evaluation and tests have been completed, the person conducting the evaluation and tests, the head coach and the player's parents or legal guardians must sign the evaluation and test form attesting to the fact the concussion evaluation has been completed and whether the player has passed or failed the evaluation. A copy of the signed form must be mailed, faxed or emailed to the CYO Office with an additional copy given to the parish athletic director.

The safety of the athlete is of paramount concern and coaches and parents must make every effort to make sure an athlete with a possible concussion does not continue to participate in a game or team practice. If a player passes the concussion evaluation and test, he or she may return to the game or practice. If a player does not pass the concussion evaluation and test, he or she is done participating in that days practice or game and should not return to future team practices and games until cleared by a medical doctor.