

## **2024 MANDAN YOUTH TACKLE FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES FOR 3<sup>RD</sup> AND 4<sup>TH</sup>/5<sup>TH</sup> AND 6<sup>TH</sup>**

- 1) All games will be played under the current Football Rule Book of the National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS), the North Dakota High School Activities Association (NDHSAA) and are subject to the following Modifications by the Mandan Touchdown Club.
  
- 2) Coaches Code of Conduct:
  - a) Mandan Touchdown Club main mission, as it relates to the game of football, is to provide a *safe* and *fun* learning environment for the youth of our community. Coaches are expected to abide by the ***CODE of CONDUCT*** as set forth.
  - b) The Purpose of the Code of Conduct is to elevate the standards of ***Good Sportsmanship*** and to encourage the growth of responsible citizenship among the student athletes of the Mandan Touchdown Club.
  - c) As Coaches, we know our role is to contribute to the overall physical, mental, and athletic growth, and success of each of our players. With regards to our players, we must take our role as a positive influencer seriously.
    - i) Coaches will work to be good instructors and a positive role model for their players.
    - ii) Coaches will put winning in its proper perspective. The focus will be on the welfare and safety of all their players. Game scores and outcomes will be secondary.
    - iii) Coaches are responsible for knowing, understanding, and competing within the letter and the spirit of the rules of the Game. Coaches will teach their players to understand and play within the letter and spirit of the rules, as well.
  - d) Concerning opposing teams:
    - i) The way a team conducts itself, for better or worse, can be influenced by its Coaches.
    - ii) Coaches will ensure to make their team a positive role model.
    - iii) Coaches will not coach, nor allow their players to play, with intent to cause injury or harm to the opposing players.
    - iv) Neither Coaches nor their players and/or spectators will display hostile behavior towards opposing players, teams, coaches, and/or referees.
    - v) Neither Coaches, nor their players, and/or spectators will speak in a negative manner toward any member or spectator from the opposing team or referees.
    - vi) Coaches will emphasize winning without boasting and losing without bitterness.
  - e) Regarding Referees:
    - i) ***Reminder*** Referees are High School Athletes. Coaches will believe that Referees, just as coaches and players, are attempting to do their best.
    - ii) Coaches will instill in their players and spectators a respect for that fact.
    - iii) Coaches understand that their attitude can influence their players and spectators.
    - iv) Coaches will always display a controlled and undemonstrative attitude toward Referees.

- v) Neither the Coaches, nor their players, and/or spectators will address any of Referees before, during, or after the game in a demeaning fashion.
  - f) Coaches will be responsible for the conduct and actions of their players and their spectators, specifically as it relates to the referees, coaches, players, and spectators on the other team. Verbal and/or physical abuse will not be tolerated. Any coach showing this type of behavior may be suspended for a minimum of one (1) game.
  - g) If Coaches and/or players conduct does not fall within the spirit of the game, the referee or an MTC Board Member can have the player and/or coach leave the game for a cooling off period. The same conduct rule applies to spectators. If the cooling off period does not resolve the problem, the person(s) may be asked to leave the field and/or grounds.
  - h) Coaches should avoid approaching a referee or stepping on to the field to challenge a call in a demeaning way. They may be asked to leave the game and the incident will be presented to the board to be reviewed.
  - i) Coaches further understand that their failure to abide by this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action by the MTC Board, which may include but is not limited to game suspension and/or rights to participate as a coach removed.
  - j) Swearing/Adult Language, Smoking, Chewing Tobacco, Vaping, use of any other Tobacco Products, Physical or Verbal Abuse is strictly prohibited. Be a role model.
    - i) Remember all school grounds are tobacco-free zones and are not allowed on the grounds. This includes Starion Sports Complex
  - k) Be aware of the physical and emotional limitations of these youth players. Exercise patience and understanding.
  - l) Watch for dehydration and just physical exhaustion. Allow breaks and time to recoup.
  - m) Remember our job (Coaches and MTC Board) is to teach football and make it fun. We want all athletes to return, as one day they will all be Mandan Braves!!
  - n) All Coaches will be MTC SafeSport Certified every year. This training will be conducted by the MTC Coaches Coordinator during the coaches' clinic.
    - i) Coaches will be reimbursed for the training
    - ii) Coaches will not be allowed on the sideline without this certificate on file.
- 3) Practice:
- a) A practice session is defined as a gathering of any number of participants/athletes and a Coach(s) with the express intent of conducting practice, where the following activities take place:
    - i) Chalk talk
    - ii) Skull session
    - iii) Viewing film
    - iv) Group conditioning
    - v) Individual skill sessions
    - vi) And/or scrimmage with another team
  - b) Practice days will be Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday

- c) Practice times will be at 6:00pm to 8:00pm for the first two weeks and 6:00pm to 7:30pm for the remainder of the season.
  - i) Practice session will be with “Brother Team” at assigned practice field.
    - (1) Middle School for the first two weeks and Starion Sports Complex for the rest of the season.
  - ii) Brother Teams and Practice fields will be assigned during the coaches’ meeting by the Coaches’ Coordinator.
  - iii) Brother Team is defined as the partner team that you practice with during the season.
  - iv) The reason for Brother Teams is to allow for full practices, drills, and have the ability to run a full offense against a full defense so players can truly understand blocking assignments, gaps, and recognize plays and responsibilities.
  - v) Brother Teams also allow for more coaches to work positions players and teach the basic skills like blocking and tackling. For example,
    - (1) Running Back/Line Backer Coach
    - (2) Quarter Back/Defensive Back Coach
    - (3) Receivers Coach/Defensive Back Coach
    - (4) O-Line/D-Line Coach
  - vi) Brother Teams also allow for more drills and stations giving players the opportunity to learn more with less standing around.

**The ultimate goal is to build Mandan Football. Remember one day we will all be ‘Braves’**

- d) Prohibited days of practices:
  - i) Practices will not be allowed on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and/or Sundays
- e) During practices and games, Coaches must ensure all players are wearing the proper equipment
  - i) Players cannot practice in full contact drills if they do not have all of their equipment, including mouth guards.

#### 4) Equipment:

- a) MTC will provide all paid members with the following equipment:
  - i) Helmet
  - ii) Shoulder pads
  - iii) Pants that have knee pads, thigh pads, hip pads, tailbone pad
  - iv) Game Day Jersey
- b) Parents/players are required to provide:
  - i) Athlete’s mouth guard
    - (1) Mouth guards cannot be clear or white and must attach to the helmet
  - ii) Cleats are allowed, but not mandatory.
    - (1) Cleats must be molded rubber only!
    - (2) No metal tips or screw in (Replaceable tips).
  - iii) Practice shirt/jersey (Athletes will not be allowed to use their game jersey for practice)
- c) Any extra equipment will be provided by parents/players:
  - i) Gloves
  - ii) Rib pads

iii) Neck rolls/cowboy collars

5) Playbook:

- a) All MTC Teams will run the same plays, formations, as well as use the same terms.
- b) The goal is to have consistency throughout the programs and build Mandan Football, so when players make it to Middle School and High School they already understand what is going on and their assignments.
- c) Please reference your MTC Playbook for all plays and formation.

6) Games:

- a) All players must play at least 4 consecutive plays per half.
  - i) Plays can be either on offense or defense in each series.
  - ii) This does not mean a couple of plays. The goal is to try to get equal playing time for all MTC players.
    - (1) Exception is if coach is disciplining player or injury.
  - iii) Mouth pieces must be in to play.
  - iv) On the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade level, Special Teams do not count as plays per half.
- b) Blocking on all levels will be taught with hands inside and above the waist.
  - i) No cut blocking.
  - ii) No slapping or elbows above the shoulders.
  - iii) Player will be warned and then penalized for the next offense, 15 yards.
  - iv) Continued unnecessary roughness will get removal from game.
- c) Game Clock:
  - i) All 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade games will consist of 4-10-minute quarters.
    - (1) 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade will play with a continuously running clock except for timeouts, PAT, and injuries
  - ii) All 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade games will consist of 4-12-minute quarters.
    - (1) 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade will play with a continuously running clock except for timeouts, PAT, and injuries
  - iii) Clock will restart at next snap.
  - iv) Injured players must be removed from play for at least 1 play, no exceptions.
    - (1) Players must come out for equipment repairs.
  - v) There will be 2-minutes between quarters, and 5-minute halftimes.

7) Game Day Rules:

- a) On game day Teams and chain crew will share the east sideline (sideline closes to the school).
- b) The team box will go from the 50-yard line to the 15-yard line.
- c) The team that is listed first will have the north side and the second team will have the south side.
  - i) For example, Team 1 vs. Team 2. Team 1 will have the north side of the field and Team 2 will have the south side.
  - ii) Coaches will respect the team box and stay on their side of the field.
    - (1) Failure to stay in your team box could result in a non-sportsmanlike penalty (10-yards for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> and 15-yards for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>)

- d) Coin toss. Team Captains and One Coach from each team will meet in the middle of the field prior to the start of the game.
    - i) Officials will remind players of basic ground rules and sportsmanship.
    - ii) The team that wins the coin toss will have choice of ball in the first half or second half.
  - e) Each team is allowed two timeouts per half. Two minutes long.
  - f) Only legitimate coaches (no more than 3 per team), players, chain crews, timers, league staff and board members are allowed on the East side of the playing field.
  - g) If the game is tied at the end of regulation, then the following Overtime rules will apply:
    - i) A coin toss will be done to determine who gets the ball first in overtime
    - ii) Ball will be placed on the 10-yard line and each team will be allowed 4 downs to score
    - iii) If the score is still tied after the first overtime, the ball will be moved to the 5-yard line and each team will be allowed 4 downs to score. The opposite team will get the ball first in this overtime.
    - iv) If the score is still tied after the second overtime, the ball will be placed on the 5-yard.
    - v) The team that won the coin toss at the start of overtime will have the choice of being on offense or defense.
      - (1) The offense will be given 4 downs to score.
      - (2) If the defense is able to stop the offense the game is over and that team wins.
- 8) Offensively:
- a) No backfield player may weigh over the split weight that will be determined during the combine after weigh-ins. \*\* lbs. The split is 50/50. Players over the designated \*\* lbs. will wear designated linemen # jerseys.
  - b) No one over \*\* lbs. can advance the ball but may intercept or field the kick offs. Ball would be dead at the point of recovery.
  - c) All MTC teams will use the MTC playbook and verbiage when teaching and calling plays.
  - d) If turnover is inside of the 15, ball is placed on the 15 for offensive room.
  - e) No player in motion before snap.
  - f) If a team is up by 18points or more, we require that team to use a second team backfield (3 new (different) players if available otherwise shuffle players) for sportsmanship and experience.
  - g) Point After Touchdown (PAT) Extra Points
    - i) 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade teams can either kick for a PAT or they can run/pass for a PAT.
      - (1) The ball will be spotted on the 3-yard line.
      - (2) If the team makes a PAT by kicking, then the points are worth 1 point.
      - (3) If the team elects to run or pass for a PAT then the points will be worth 2 points.
    - ii) Because 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade cannot kick PAT's teams will have the option to either run or pass for their PAT.
      - (1) The ball will be placed on the 3-yard line.

- (2) If the team converts on the extra point attempt they will be award 2 points.
- h) 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade lineman **will** be allowed to pull to lead block.
  - i) 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade lineman **will not** be allowed pull to lead block. Injuries!
    - i) Trap blocking will not be allowed at any level.
  - j) Please review the MTC playbook for all plays calls, formations, and proper verbiage.
  - k) There will be 30 seconds to get plays off. After placement and referees whistle it live. 5-yard penalty after 2 warnings.
- 9) Defensively:
- a) 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade teams will only be allowed to play in a 4-4 defense.
    - i) That means the Center will be left open or uncovered.
      - (1) The goal is to allow for a good Center/QB exchange so teams can run plays.
  - b) 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade teams will have the options to either run a 4-4 defense or a 5-2/5-3 defenses. Please reference MTC Playbook for formations.
  - c) All linemen must line up directly across from the offensive player if there is one there.
  - d) No gap jumps, if so 5-yard penalty and replays down.
    - i) This means that D-lineman must make two hand contacts with O-lineman across from them before they can react to the ball.
      - (1) The goal is to teach blocking, moves, and for players to learn how to read and react to the ball.
  - e) Linebackers must be 2-yards back at snap.
  - f) Safeties should be 5-yards from line at ball snap.
  - g) There is **no blitzing** or **shooting gaps**.
    - i) Def. Corners, linebackers, and safeties can make tackles in backfield once ball carrier is outside of Off. Tight ends.
    - ii) Penalty is replay of Down replay and 5-yard.
  - h) Offside on defense is any time the ball plane is crossed before snap. 5-yard penalty.
  - i) Unsportsmanlike conduct (cursing, taunting, unnecessary roughness, et.)
    - i) 15-yards and loss of down if on offense.
    - ii) 15-yard penalty and automatic first down on defense.
    - iii) If repeat can result in removal of game and possibly for entire season.
- 10) Special Teams:
- a) 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade teams will be allowed to do kick-off/kick-off return and punt.
  - b) 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade instead of kick-offs to start the half or after each score, the ball will automatically be spotted on the 15-yard line
  - c) There will be no punting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade level.
    - i) Coaches will let the official know they intend to punt, and the ball will be moved 20 yards from the line of scrimmage.
    - ii) If inside the 15-yard line, then the ball goes to the 15-yard line.

11) Other rules:

- a) Stiff arm cannot be above the shoulders, 5 yards from previous spot.
- b) No piling on allowed. Stop at whistle.
- c) No arguing with refs. No ref. conversations except by coaches.
- d) No one on the field but one field coach, players and referees.
- e) Only positive constructive instruction is needed.
- f) No equipment abuse allowed (throwing, sitting on helmet etc.)
  - i) Players be penalized for a non-sportsmanlike conduct 15-yard penalty and will be ejected from the game.
  - ii) Repeat offenses can result in suspension or removal from the MTC. Respect and Protect your equipment.
- g) End of game line handshakes are required.
- h) In general, high school rules will apply otherwise.
- i) Games are again played at Mandan Middle School:
  - i) 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade games will be on the bottom field.
  - ii) 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade games will be on the upper field.
- j) Parents are required to show good sportsmanship and without it can be removed from the school grounds.
- k) Protest – Formal protest must be made to the president of the MTC or their representative on the day of the game with a follow-up request submitted to the board in writing by Monday after the game in question. If the protest is not made after the game and/or is not submitted in writing, then the protest will not be processed, and the results will stand.
- l) MTC board reserves the right to adjust rules as needed.