

Holly Division  
Coaches Guide



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## Mission Statement

The mission of the BYFL is to provide and promote the youth with safe and supervised growth of football development throughout Bismarck and the surrounding area. The development of sportsmanship, teamwork, honesty, respect, fair play and physical fitness are the BYFL values and priorities.

## Purpose

The Bismarck Youth Football League (BYFL) shall be a non-profit youth football organization promoting supervised, instructional football for youth in grades third through sixth, age eight through twelve residing within the city of Bismarck and surrounding communities.

To provide youth the opportunity to learn, participate, and establish friendships in the great game of football under proper supervision and safety precautions while nurturing moral, emotional and academic growth.

Provide qualified coaches who promote coaching the whole child in four key areas: Physical, Mental, Technical, and Tactical.

## Philosophy

Coaches play a pivotal role in the development of athletes at all levels. As a coach, you may take on a variety of roles throughout the season such as a: Mentor, Innovator, Supporter, Educator, Trainer, Leader, Counselor, Role Model, and Friend to your players. Be a teacher first and a coach second. Effectively teach the fundamentals of football in a positive safe environment. Challenge and teach players how to play the game right, and what good sportsmanship means. Motivate and stimulate confidence in your players. Value each player's effort and persistence and support their development on and off the field.

The number one reason children participate in youth sports is to have fun. Remember that you have a team of 10 to 12-year-old children and the game of football is just a game. Learning about winning and losing, playing by the rules, and respecting an opponent are just as important as learning football skills.

*"A good coach will make his players see what they can be rather than what they are." – Ara Parashoghian*

## Contact

[BismarckYouthFootball@gmail.com](mailto:BismarckYouthFootball@gmail.com)

<https://bismarckfootball.com>

## Behavior

All coaches, parents/guardians, players, fans, league representatives are prohibited from physically pushing/shoving, punching, or in any way physically assaulting others. If any of these actions should occur, the individual(s) may/will be removed from the league. All parties involved are expected to control their emotions.

All coaches, parents/guardians, players, fans, and league representatives are prohibited from using obscene or abusive language during practice, games, or other league activities. Such behavior is subject to disciplinary action by the coach and/or Executive Members. Disciplinary action will be determined by the coach and/or Executive Members and may include suspension from a scheduled game or expulsion from the league.

Coaches, Referees, and/or League Officials have the right to remove any parent, player, or volunteer, from any BYFL event (including practice), who is creating a disturbance, or creating an unhealthy environment for children, without a refund, pending review by the League's 'Grievance Committee'.

You will find it easy to get caught up in the excitement of the game. However, we ask that you remember that this is not the NFL, college, or even high school football. Please keep your comments positive and encouraging. We ask that you set a positive example for the children. At this age keep football a game, not a sport.

As a player, if you believe that you are being treated unfairly, please talk to your coach first. If that fails to adequately address your issues, you may contact the respective division Coaching Directors or Commissioners and/or submit a league grievance form. The League's 'Grievance Committee' will review and follow the procedures outlined on the form. Please remember that BYFL grievance decisions are FINAL. Involving the 'Grievance Committee' may cause a coach, parent/guardian, and/or the player to be dismissed from the league without refund of deposit. It is always best to try to settle issues with coaches. Any parent/guardian that does not follow this procedure will be in jeopardy of losing their child's privilege to participate in the League without a refund. The BYFL grievance form is available in this document and online.

## Facilities and Equipment

BYFL will provide practice and game facilities within the community. Be aware that teams may be required to relocate practice locations during the season.

BYFL will provide the following equipment: Helmet, Shoulder Pads, Pants, Game Jersey. At the conclusion of the year, all BYFL equipment items are to be returned in good condition at a time and location announced by the league. Failure to return the borrowed equipment will result in the League charging the responsible parent/guardian \$400 (cost of the equipment) and any collection costs (including attorney fees, if required). Parents are responsible for: Practice Jerseys, Mouth Guard, Socks, shoes (no metal cleats). Game jerseys are to be worn for games only, not practice.

Parents/guardians are responsible for inspecting their player's football equipment prior to practices and games. All players must have all their protective equipment in order to practice or play in games. If your

child is not properly equipped for football, they will be declared ineligible to participate. Ask coaches for help.

BYFL shall have the responsibility for supplying teams with a minimal First Aid kit to be used at all games and practice sessions.

Obey ALL parking signs at the facilities. City officials will enforce the parking regulations. DO NOT climb on or over the fences, please use the gates.

No Dogs allowed at facilities.

It is everyone's responsibility to inspect practice/game fields and any other BYFL event for safety. If you see something, say something.

## Practices and Games

During games, only players, coaches and league officials may be near the team's sideline. ONLY authorized coaches and players are allowed the team sideline. ALL parents & spectators will be in the dedicated fan areas.

All players should attempt to make it to every practice, provided that all forms and dues are recognized by BYFL, or unless medical, family or coach's decision. Attendance to all events on time is expected.

The Holly Division (5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade) will play their playoff format after the regular season. Playoff positions will be determined by each team standing within their respective conference.

Student trainers are expected to attend all league games and will provide limited treatment for minor injuries.

BYFL will provide referees for all games.

In the event we expect or have inclement weather in the area that may impact schedule practices or game, please watch for updates through the various BYFL communication channels.

## Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms

The use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs during practices, scrimmages, or games is prohibited. All firearms and weapons are prohibited at all BYFL events.

## Holly Division Rules

North Dakota High School Athletic Association (NDHSAA) playing rules shall apply except as specifically revised in this handbook.

### Gameday Fields, Officials, Time, and Scoring

The games will be played on condensed fields with officials.

Games will consist of four 12-minute quarters with a continuous clock, except:

- The final two minutes of each half the clock will stop in accordance with high school football rules.
- The clock will stop after touchdowns, injuries, and timeouts.

- The clock will not run during extra points.

Kickoffs are from the kicking teams 35-yard line.

Major penalties are 10 yards.

Offensive holding penalty is 5 yards.

There are two minutes between quarters and eight minutes between halves.

Teams have 25 seconds to put the ball in play after the referee has signaled “ready.” This will be enforced with a five yard “delay of game” penalty.

Each team has three timeouts per half.

One coach on the field during offense. No defensive coach is allowed on the field during play.

A touchdown is six points. Point after Touchdown shall be as follows:

- Ball will be placed at the two-yard line
- A run that crosses the goal line is worth one (1) point.
- A forward pass is worth two (2) points.

Overtime: There will be two total overtime series during the regular season. Each team will get a chance to score from the 10-yard line. A coin flip will determine first overtime offense and defense. If a second overtime is required, the team that played offense first will play defense. In the playoffs, the overtime series will continue until a winner is determined. Each team is allowed one timeout per overtime series.

### Offense Philosophy

Players weighing above the determined ball-carrying weight are identified as a “red-dot” or “blue-dot.”

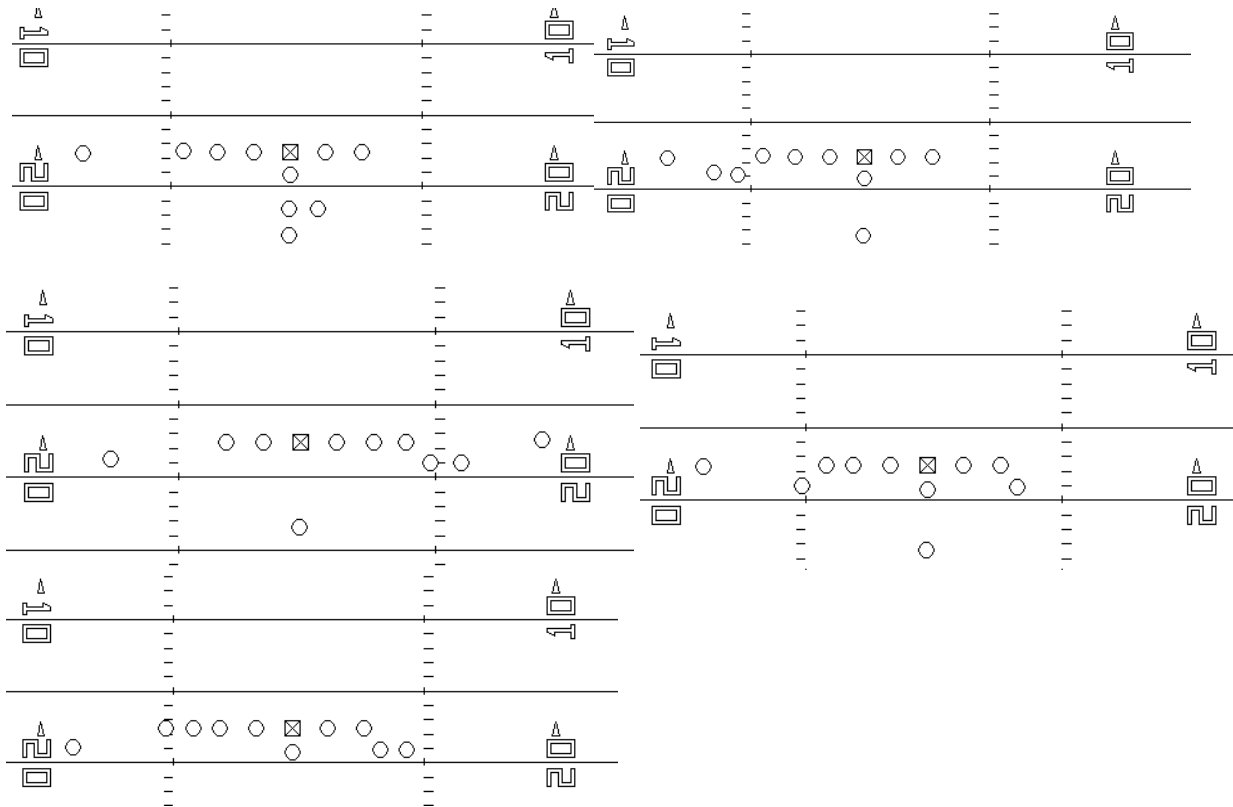
Red-dot - Players weighing above the league determined ball-carry weight and up to 145 pounds are identified with a red-dot sticker on their helmet. On offense, these players are restricted to positions on the offensive line (Tackle, Guard, Center) or Tight End, and must be on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. Red-dot players are ineligible to catch, rush, or advance the ball on offense. On defense, red-dot players can play any position. If a red-dot player on defense intercepts a pass or recovers a fumble, the play is whistled dead and change of possession ensues. Red-dot players are eligible to play special teams, however they cannot advance the ball.

Blue-dot - Players weighing 146 pounds and higher are identified with a blue-dot sticker on their helmet. On offense, these players are restricted to positions on the offensive line (Tackle, Guard, Center) and must be on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. On defense, “blue dot” players are limited to the three interior defensive line positions (Nose Guard and Defensive Tackles.) Blue-dot players are ineligible to catch, rush, or advance the ball on offense. If a “blue-dot” player on defense intercepts a pass or recovers a fumble, the play is whistled dead and change of possession ensues. Blue-dot players are ineligible to play special teams.

**League forbids use of:**

- No huddle / Hurry up. Offense must huddle after each play (unless within final two minutes of each half.)
- Unbalanced offensive line formations. There must be 7 players on the line of scrimmage, three on the line of scrimmage on each side of the center.

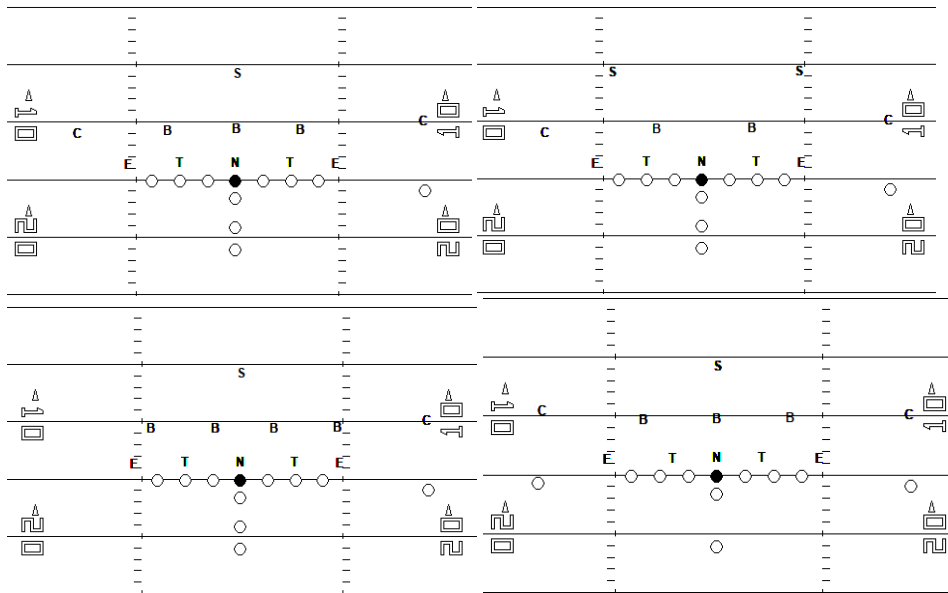
Examples of **forbidden offense** formations include but not limited to:



In the event a team is executing forbidden formations, the Executive Board may review and determine a course of action, which may include disciplinary action on the coaching staff or potentially forfeiting games.

## Defense Philosophy

All defensive alignments must consist of a five-player front: three defensive linemen and two defensive ends.



Except for the five defensive linemen, all other defensive players must position themselves and remain at least three (3) yards from the line of scrimmage until the ball is put into play.

Inside the defense's own 5-yard line, all non-defensive line players may position themselves and remain within one (1) yard from the line of scrimmage until the ball is put into play.

Only the five defensive line players may cross the line of scrimmage before the ball carrier has reached the line of scrimmage or a point to the outside where the tight ends initially lined-up. Once the ball has reached these points, the defensive backs and linebackers are free to pursue the ball carrier at their discretion. This rule is one of judgment on the part of the defensive backs and linebackers.

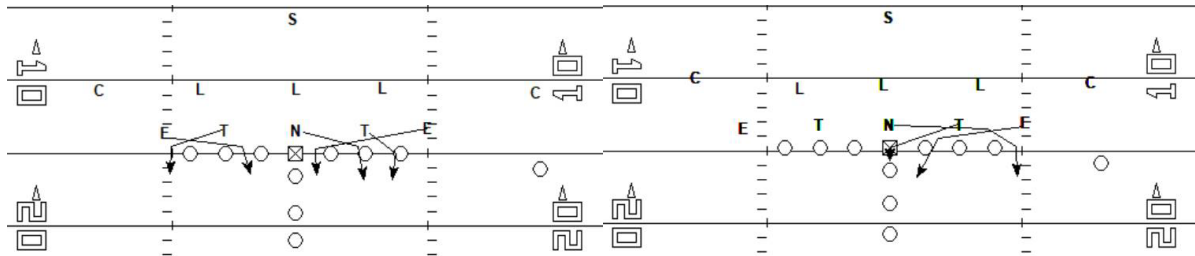
Players identified as "red-dot" can play any position on defense.

Players identified as "blue-dot" are required to play from tackle to tackle.

League forbids:

- **Blitzing** – Any player other than a defensive lineman and defensive end who rush the backfield
- **Stunting** - Predetermined, predesigned maneuver by two or more defensive players in which they alter or exchange their roles and responsibilities in order to confuse the offense

Examples of Stunting include but not limited to:



If it is recognized a player(s) is blitzing or stunting, it is recommended the coaching staffs make it aware to each other on the sidelines in an adult manner. If it is recognized a second time, the league recommends removing that player(s) for a minimum of one play to discuss the rules. The officials are not regulating blitzing or stunting.

### Punts

All punts are announced. On fourth down situations, the offensive team will be asked if they will punt or attempt to gain a first down. Once a team declares their intention to punt, fake punts are not permitted.

Both punting and punt receiving teams must position seven (7) players on the line of scrimmage from tight-end to tight-end in a "Down Position" (three- or four-point stance) until the punt is made.

Punt receiving team may not rush until ball is kicked. Once the ball is kicked the punting team can go downfield and cover.

The punt will be re-attempted if the punter misses or drops the ball.

If the punt hits an offensive lineman, the punt is playable.

"Fair Catches" are permitted.

If the punt hits a defensive lineman while they are in the "Down Position", the punt is playable.

However, if the punt hits a defensive player who prematurely stands up, it will be considered an attempt to block the kick and is an infraction. The defense will be penalized 5 yards and play is resumed either with another punt or a play from scrimmage. This penalty is not an automatic first down. The offense must again declare its intentions to either punt or attempt to gain a first down.

### Participation

The intention of the Holly Division is to provide each player with a minimum of 8-10 plays in each game. Holly Division incorporates minimum play time rule, equal playing time is not guaranteed.

Variables such as available possessions, player positions and time on the clock are key issues coaches must face in playing kids the minimum of 8-10 plays.

The league would like to see all kids play as much as possible, but it must be realized that some players will play more than others due to individual reasons. An exception to this rule is permitted at the discretion of the head coach for disciplinary reasons, player readiness or illness, or safety concerns for the player.

#### 12-18 Rule

If at any time during the first half, a team is leading by 12 or more points, the leading team must replace the offensive backfield. This backfield (quarterback and both running backs) is defined as the normal first team backfield, not necessarily the backfield that is on the field at that time. The replacement offensive backfield must continue to play until the difference is reduced to 7 points or less or until the 1st half ends.

The “First team” backfield may begin the 2nd half and play until the lead is 18 points or more. The replacement backfield must play until the lead is 12 points or less.

In the event of an injury to a replacement back, an attempt to replace the injured player with another non-starting player will be made, if possible.

Any player can play defense at any time.

The intent of the 12-18 Rule is to provide additional kids the opportunity to play quarterback and running back. The intent is not to replace the starters and place them at other skill positions and continue to feed them the ball. No player from the starting offensive backfield may handle the ball while the 12-18 Rule is in effect, including catching a pass.

#### Practice

A football practice shall be defined as any coordinated scheduled mandatory football related activity during the season involving at least two designated coaches and player(s).

Player physicals are not required, however encouraged if there are concerns about child participating in tackle football.

Teams are allowed up to 12 practices (including scrimmage) before the first game and after the first game each team is allowed two practices each week.

The team’s coaches will set practice times. Each practice will be no longer than 120 minutes.

#### Game Cancellations

Things such as rain, snow or cold temperatures will NOT be grounds to cancel games. Extreme weather, such as lightning may be cause for canceling a game if it is considered a safety problem. After the game starts, the game's referee has the authority to cancel the game.

Every attempt will be made to reschedule any games that are canceled because of weather. However, certain situations such as field availability, etc. may not allow for canceled games to be rescheduled.

#### Holly Division Weight Limits

All players will be weighed in on the League scale on the day of equipment issue. This will be the ONLY weigh-in.

Players weighing above the determined ball-carrying weight are identified as a “red-dot” or “blue-dot.”

Red-dot - Players weighing above the league determined ball-carry weight and up to 145 pounds are identified with a red-dot sticker on their helmet. On offense, these players are restricted to positions on the offensive line (Tackle, Guard, Center) or Tight End, and must be on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. Red-dot players are ineligible to catch, rush, or advance the ball on offense. On defense, red-dot players can play any position. If a red-dot player on defense intercepts a pass or recovers a fumble, the play is whistled dead and change of possession ensues. Red-dot players are eligible to play special teams, however they cannot advance the ball.

Blue-dot - Players weighing 146 pounds and higher are identified with a blue-dot sticker on their helmet. On offense, these players are restricted to positions on the offensive line (Tackle, Guard, Center) and must be on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. On defense, "blue dot" players are limited to the three interior defensive line positions (Nose Guard and Defensive Tackles.) Blue-dot players are ineligible to catch, rush, or advance the ball on offense. If a "blue-dot" player on defense intercepts a pass or recovers a fumble, the play is whistled dead and change of possession ensues. Blue-dot players are ineligible to play special teams.

## Equipment

A player cannot receive equipment until the player is registered and has paid all fees. Equipment condition is very important to the safety and enjoyment of the game – please take special care of it.

Every player must wear equipment provided by BYFL. Safe fitting of helmets is a primary safety concern. All helmets will be issued and fitted by league officials.

Every player must use a protective mouth guard in all contact practices and games. Mouth guards are not provided by the BYFL.

Every player must provide his/her own shoes and athletic socks. No player may wear shoes with metal cleats.

Game jerseys are to be worn for games ONLY, not practice.

Game rosters will be printed after equipment and jerseys are handed out, therefore a player must retain this number throughout the season.

If equipment is damaged through abuse or misuse, the player will reimburse the League the replacement cost of the damaged equipment.

Athletic supporters (cups) are not required but the decision is up to the parents/guardians.

DO NOT wear your equipment except to practice and games. Do NOT alter or attempt to repair your equipment. DO NOT ever put any markings, tape or decals of any kind on any of the equipment. Only the Coaches are allowed to alter any equipment.

Clean your equipment weekly.

Make sure you try all of your equipment on and become familiar with it before the first practice. Please attend practices with gear on so coaches can ensure gear fits properly.

Equipment return will be at Super Saturday/Sunday after players play their last game of the season. Please remember to bring a change of clothes on that day. It is very important that we get your equipment on the scheduled day. A player who does not return equipment on time MAY NOT be allowed to play the next season and will be charged a replacement cost for any equipment not turned in.

## Coaches

Prior to the first practice, ALL coaches must pass a background check.

All new coaches are required to be USA Football certified and every other year for returners.

The coaching staff may have difficulties at times. Not all plays will work and be patient as they learn the identity of their team. We ask that stay positive and cooperate with the coaches. Please keep negative comments to yourself. Coaching youth can be challenging but very rewarding. Please support your coaches, as they are volunteers.

To the best of their knowledge, coaches will try their best to position your child appropriately on the team according to the rules and safety of each division.

Coaches may exercise discretion to not allow a player to play in a game if they miss too much practice. Additionally, the coach may discipline a player by not allowing the player to play in the game if the player is not following the team rules, directions of the coach or league rules.

All coaches are prohibited from physically pushing/shoving, punching, or any in way physically assaulting another coach, a parent or a player. If any of these actions should occur, the coach may/will be removed from the league. Each coach will conduct himself/herself appropriately during games and practices.

If a coach receives an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty during a game, the coach will be removed from the game and will not be allowed to coach the next game. Second offense will result in an Executive Board review and possible loss of coaching privileges.

Assure that ineligible players are not allowed to practice or play.

Each coach is responsible for maintaining an attendance roster throughout the season for his/her team. The attendance roster will track player attendance at practices and games.

Lead and participate in the "end of the game handshake" with the opposing team in a sportsmanlike manner in keeping with the spirit of the game of football.

Each coach shall meet with the parents of team to discuss player safety, BYFL rules, and other matters of interest to the parents.

Each coach agrees to abide by the guidelines and rules in the BYFL coach's handbooks. If a coach violates the rules, disciplinary action may occur at the discretion of the Executive Members.

## Players

BYFL does NOT carry medical insurance for players. This is the responsibility of each participant's parent/guardian to include ambulance or emergency medical treatment.

Parents or legal guardians have the right to remove their child from participation at any time.

Player physicals are not required, however encouraged if there are concerns about child participating in tackle football.

Players should attempt to make it to every practice, health permitting.

Players are prohibited from using obscene or abusive language during practice, games, or other league activities. Such behavior is subject to disciplinary action by the coach and/or league directors. Disciplinary action will be determined by the coach and/or league director and may include suspension from a scheduled game or expulsion from the league.

Any player ejected from the contest by game officials for unsportsmanlike conduct, including but not limited to flagrant, violent, or verbal misconduct will be ineligible to participate the remainder of the day.

Players will participate in the "end of the game handshake" with the opposing team in a sportsmanlike manner in keeping with the spirit of the game of football.

## Parents

If a parent has concerns or issues with other parents' conduct, that issue/concern should be brought to the attention of a league director.

Parents are required to attend a mandatory parent meeting at the beginning of the football season. This meeting is held to inform parents of rules, schedules, and opportunities to volunteer. **BYFL appreciates parent volunteers.**

No parent may use abusive, threatening, or inappropriate language directed toward a BYFL director, coach, player, or game official.

Inappropriate conduct by an offending parent will result in the suspension of the parent from the games and practices for the remainder of the football season, except to drop off and pick up his/her player. Repeated violations by an offending parent could result in the expulsion of his/her child from the BYFL program.

## Miscellaneous

BYFL has a "No Refund" policy after the first practice. Refunds will be available before the first practice, less \$20 for administrative costs. This means, no refunds for any reason, to include injury, sickness, medical excuse, moving out of town, desire to play a different sport, school issues, fighting, not liking the coach or teammates, practice field is too far away, etc.

If a team has ineligible players, or cheating occurs of any kind, the team will be investigated and, if needed, suspended. Ineligible players will be removed from the team and, if necessary, at the discretion of the BYFL, games may be forfeited, and an entire team may be disqualified from postseason play. Reporting ineligible players is everyone's responsibility. Parents and coaches should always work together to demonstrate good sportsmanship.

## Practice Plan

### 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.

Five intensity levels are used to introduce players to practice drills which position them to master the fundamentals and increase skill development.

Contact	Intensity	Description
Air	0	Players run a drill unopposed without contact.
Bags	1	Drill is run against a bag or another soft-contact surface.
Control	2	Drill is run at assigned speed 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.
Thud	3	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	4	Drill is run in game-like conditions and is the only time that players are taken to the ground.

### Practice Plan Example

Activity	Duration (min)	Contact
Coaches/Players Meeting	5	
Warmup	15	Air
Water Break	5	
Tackling Circuit Bags	20	Bags
Tackling Circuit drills	20	Thud
Water Break	5	
Positional Breakdown	25	Control
Water Break	5	
Team Period	15	Live
Coaches/Players Meeting	5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	

## Parents Meeting Example

### Introductions

Introduce coaching staff and football and/or coaching experience.

### Goals

- To have fun!
- Teach the fundamentals of football and basic skills to play the game (under the guidelines that the sport is to be taken seriously due its violent nature). Football is a collision sport, not a contact sport.
- Teaching and Coaching
  - Sportsmanship
  - Teamwork
  - Development
  - Responsibility
  - Perseverance
  - Perspective.
  - Confidence

### Philosophy

We operate in a positive, safe, and patient environment. We ask that the parents provide positive reinforcement for their child and coaches. We may call you about your child, this is only to gain a better understanding on how to motivate or improve our approach on an individual basis

### Parent Concerns

- If you have any concerns regarding your child, please feel free to talk to the coaching staff about your individual concerns. Please approach us in a positive manner about your concerns. If you feel something is not going well please do not approach us during a game or immediately after, wait until the next practice and discuss issue with the coaching staff.
- We know that we will have critics on how we do things, but we are dealing with 22 kids. Each year brings different challenges to the coaching staff so there will be mistakes. We will make hard decisions that not everyone will agree with. We are trying our best to accomplish the job.
- If your child is considering quitting the team, please talk with coaching staff before final decision. We don't like to see anyone quit and the coaching staff would like to talk with your child if he/she is considering quitting.

### Rules

- Attendance is required at ALL practices and games unless there are (noted exceptions). Make the team the main priority.
- Discipline is a large part of football, we cannot tolerant kids being disruptive during practice as our time is limited.
- Five Strike Rule
  - If a problem with discipline occurs, we will talk to the individual 3 times to change the behavior.
  - If we cannot gain control we will call the parents **one** time to change the behavior.
  - If we call a **second** time to change behavior, there is will be a one game suspension.

- If a **third** call is needed the individual will no longer be on the team. This has not been a problem in the past, but we need to maintain control of a positive environment of the team.
- We have zero tolerance of abusive teasing, bullying, picking on teammates or mocking opponents or game officials. We cannot control things outside the team for example: If a situation from the playground or school arises.
- Be on time for practice and the games if you cannot make it please notify myself or an assistant coach.
- Please supply your child with a water jug and label it and remind them to take it home.
- If your player will miss a game, please inform the coaches ASAP so we can plan accordingly.

### **Playing Time**

- Attendance, attitude, skill level, desire to play, all contribute to where the kids will play and the amount of time in the games. Some kids work hard at every practice and they will get the chance to play more so than a kid that only shows limited interest and desire to play. The intention of the Holly Division is to provide each player a minimum of the equivalent of one quarter of play in each game. Holly Division incorporates minimum play time rule, equal playing time is not guaranteed.
- NO ONE will be forced to go in a game and play.

### **Suggestions**

- Parents be PATIENT especially the first-year players. You don't know how they will react to contact and neither do we. Lower your expectations and let your child gain the experience at their speed.
- Get the kids to bed early before games and practices.
- Provide proper nutrition during season, especially nights before games and practices.
  - Stay away from soda and candy
- Dress child accordingly. We will play in all sorts of different weather.

### **Additional info**

Provide parents coaches contact list including phone number and email.

Provide practice schedule and game schedule.

Encourage parents to enroll in league provided mobile app.

Win or lose, have fun and cheer on these kids!

### **Questions?**