

**GOLD COAST YOUTH
FOOTBALL LEAGUE
[GCYFL]**

***CAMARILLO
CROWN VALLEY
FILLMORE
HARVARD-WESTLAKE
MOORPARK
OXNARD
SANTA CLARITA
SAUGUS
SANTA PAULA
SIMI VALLEY
VALLEY
VENTURA
WESTLAKE***

**OFFICIAL RULES
2009**

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GCYFL Rule Book Overview

The rules found in this document are only meant to cover areas where the GCYFL has decided to follow rules that are not currently found in the NFHS or CIF Blue Book rules. The order we will abide by in terms of rule priority will be:

1. GCYFL Rule Book
2. CIF Blue Book
3. NFHS Rule Book

This means that if a rule is stated in this GCYFL Rule Book, it will be followed as stated – even if it differs from what’s stated in the CIF Blue Book or NFHS Rule Book. If a rule is NOT stated in this GCYFL Rule Book, we will follow first what is stated in the CIF Blue Book and then what is stated in the NFHS Rule Book.

Key Definitions/Terminology

1. GCYFL refers exclusively to the Gold Coast Youth Football League.
2. Chapter refers to a Chapter franchised by the GCYFL.
3. Franchised team is one which has met the requirements of its Chapter and the GCYFL.
4. Associate chapter is one which has applied for membership in the GCYFL.
5. Action Play is defined as any play in which the ball is legally in play as defined by Rule 4, Section 1 of the CIF Rules.

Article I Mission Statement

The Gold Coast Youth Football League’s mission is to:

1. Provide the opportunity to learn the rules and fundamentals of the game.
2. Teach and foster sportsmanship and a love of the game.
3. Build character through mental, physical and emotional discipline.

Article II Chapter Duties

It will be the duty of each Chapter to establish the necessary procedures to assure compliance with the rules contained in this book, bearing in mind that no Chapter may establish rules which contradict the rules and regulations contained herein. In order to remain a Chapter in good standing with the GCYFL, all organizations must accept and meet the following standards:

1. Obey all Rules, Regulations, and Bylaws.
2. Pay all fees, fines and bills immediately upon notification.
3. Fine/Discipline coaches as appropriate for coaching violations.
4. Require coaches to follow rules/regulations in the Coaches Handbook.
5. Attend all league meetings.
6. Maintain an active board capable of managing their own internal affairs, and satisfying all GCYFL administrative requirements.
7. Record the date and time each player registered with the Chapter in order to verify the priority of players in a Conference when a team is overbooked.

Article III Player Eligibility

1. Player Conduct - If a player is ejected from a game for any reason, the Athletic Director must be notified within 48 hours. The player in question will not be allowed to participate in the next game. If he is ejected from another game he will be suspended from the GCYFL for the rest of the season. The same rule applies to coaches.

2. Scholastic Requirements - Every player will be encouraged to maintain a sound scholastic record and must be a full time student in good standing (no dropouts). A Chapter may be stricter than the GCYFL, but not more lenient.
3. Ages and Weights - December 2 will determine the playing age of a player for the current season. A player must be at least age 6 to be eligible for participation. A 10 pound weight gain is allowed for the playoffs based on the top weight for each age based on the Chart below.

The Division make-up for the League will be constituted as follows:

MIGHTY MITE	BANTAM	JUNIOR I	JUNIOR II	SENIOR
Age/Max Weight	Age /Max Weight	Age /Max Weight	Age /Max Weight	Age / Max Weight
06/Unlimited	08/105	09/125	10/160	12/200
07/Unlimited	09/100	10/120	11/150	13/190
08/70	10/85	11/115	12/140	14/185
		12/110	13/120*	Xplayer/Unlimited

High school students, 9TH grade or higher, will be allowed to play if within the above age/weight guidelines.

*A Chapter which does not have a Senior Team may allow a 14 year old player to play on a Junior II Team, provided the player does not weigh more than 120 pounds at Certification.

4. Player/Coach Ranking – Each team will be required to fill out the player and coach ranking form with accurate ratings for each player/coach. (See Ranking worksheet)
5. Conference Makeup – the Player/Coach Ranking will be used to determine the conference structure for each division. Depending on the # of teams in the division, there will be an appropriate # of conferences to divide the talent and provide a setup where teams are competing against like competition. It is critical that timely and accurate Player/Coach Rankings are provided to the league in order to allow for the best distribution of teams among conferences.
6. Physicals - No player is permitted to enter into any type of physical training without first obtaining a physical from a certified physician.
7. Exceptions to Age & Weight - **NO** exceptions will be allowed.
8. Drafting Guidelines - Each chapter must conduct an official draft. The intent of the draft is to assist in the even distribution of talent across teams thus leveling the talent and preventing “stacking”. The following general guidelines may be enhanced by a more specific draft procedure to be administered by each chapter individually.
 - a. Teams may stay together (with or without coaches).
 - b. Each Chapter must publish their official draft procedure.
 - c. Players must be placed on a team in accordance with age and weight specifications outlined above.
 - d. Each Chapter must sign up kids on a first come, first served basis.
 - e. Each Division’s (within the Chapter) Draft must be held at the same time/place with all teams being represented.
9. Certification Process
 - a. The GCYFL will conduct certification of all players. Procedure, time and place will be given to the Chapters no later than two weeks prior to that Chapter's Certification Day. The GCYFL will be responsible for defining the Certification

- Procedure. (See Certification Procedure)
- b. Only certified players may continue to participate in contact football after the certification date.
 - c. The GCYFL will prepare a master list of all players that are ineligible (due to overweight, age, out of boundary, etc.) to play, to be given to all Chapters.
10. A player requiring the services of a doctor (illness or injury) cannot return to practice or game play until he has a written release from the doctor.

Article IV AD's, Coaches and Team Officials - Eligibility

1. Athletic Director must be 21 years of age or over.
2. Head Coach must be 21 years of age or over.
3. A 21 year old or older head coach or assistant must be present at all practices/games.
4. All personnel must not have been convicted of any crime, which would cause them to register under Section 290 of the California Penal Code. They may be found ineligible by their Chapter or by the General Membership of GCYFL for conviction of any crime. The Chapters will collect verifiable information necessary to check all coaches, 18 years and older with the Megan's Law files.
5. All Coaches must abide by the rules/regulations outlined in the Coaches Handbook. All Head Coaches are required to sign the Head Coaches Contract included in the Handbook. (See Coaches Handbook)
6. The Head Coach of each team in a Chapter may be required to take a test on the CIF Rule Book and the GCYFL Rule Book.

Article V Playing Fields and Equipment

Section A--Field Requirements

The fields will have the following:

1. All divisions will play on regulation field, 120 x 53-1/3 yards. Exceptions must be approved by GCYFL.
2. All fields will be properly marked to include yard markers and end zone pylons.
3. The home team will furnish a down marker with numbers and a ten-yard chain.
4. A visible clock, which is readable from both benches, will be required for all games. If official time must be kept on the field, a 2 minute warning will be given in all 4 quarters.
5. A first aid kit must be available at all games.

Section B—Official Ball

The official ball is:

Mighty Mite:

Pee Wee (i.e. Wilson K2 or Equivalent)

Bantam and Junior I Division:

Junior (i.e. Nike 1000J or Equivalent)

Junior II and Senior Divisions:

Youth (i.e. Nike 1000Y or Equivalent)

Section C—Minimum Equipment Requirements

All teams must be equipped during all contact practice sessions, scrimmages, and games with equipment meeting the minimum protective standards found to exist in the following equipment:

1. Helmet

2. Shoulder Pads
3. Hip Pads and Tail Pad
4. Thigh Guards
5. Knee Pads
6. Mouthpiece

Article VI Conditioning, Practices & Scheduling of Games

Section A--Conditioning and Practices

No individual team activity may start before the official start date set by the GCYFL.

Instructional or Conditioning non-contact/non-team clinics may be conducted at the discretion of the individual Chapters.

Until Labor Day there will be no more than 6 practice sessions per week – each of these sessions will not exceed 2 hours. After Labor Day, practice sessions will be limited to 8 hours per week – these sessions will not exceed 3 hours (designed for chapters that might be limited to two practice sessions a week due to field availability). There will be no contact for the first 10 hours of practice (Helmets may be worn at this time – no other pads). Full football equipment may be worn starting the second 10 hours of practice, and used for bag contact only – it is mandatory that a player complete the first 10 hours of conditioning before suiting up in full pads. The second 10 hours can't start any earlier than the official start date mentioned above. There will be no man-on-man contact until after 20 hours of practice. Practices occurring 24 hours or less before a scheduled game will be conducted without contact.

Section B—Practices, Scrimmages/Jamborees and Passing Events

1. Under no circumstances may a team play or scrimmage a team, which is not in the same age and weight classification. This includes High School teams.
2. Only certified players can participate in scrimmages.
3. Jamborees (single-day scrimmage sessions) may be conducted with no more than 3 opponents per team.
4. Passing Events may be conducted as sanctioned by the GCYFL.
5. Two teams in the same Chapter/Division can practice together during the season.
6. Teams will not practice, scrimmage, play or otherwise compete against a non-franchised team, unless permission is granted by the GCYFL.

Section C—Scheduling of Games

The GCYFL will establish the schedule for all league games. Anything outside normal league play will require GCYFL approval.

Article VII Game Regulations

Section A--Home Team Requirements

All member Chapters must provide/arrange for the following:

1. An official set of GCYFL Rules and Bylaws must be available at the playing field.
2. Each Chapter will provide a Game Field Commissioner for all home games. They must be familiar with the GCYFL rules and regulations. That Commissioner will be the GCYFL host at that field for that day, and the point of contact for all visiting teams. It is imperative that these Commissioners feel as keen a responsibility for the needs of the visiting teams, as they undoubtedly feel for their own home teams! Commissioner

responsibilities will include but not be limited to:

- a. pre-game briefings of officials/coaches
- b. GCYFL rule interpretations
- c. audit sheet collection
- d. crowd control

Note: *Game field commissioners should remain outside the coach's box unless needed. Although Game Field Commissioners are appointed by their individual Chapters, they are responsible for their actions to Athletic Director and the GCYFL President.*

3. Each team is required to provide an official auditor that is responsible for keeping the player audit for each game – using the official GCYFL Form – no exceptions.

- a. A member of the opposing team may NOT observe the auditing process.
- b. All players will be checked for the minimum of twelve action plays per game.
- c. The audit will be conducted from each team's bench area or immediately behind the bench. No official audits can be accepted from the press box or top of the grandstand.
- d. At the conclusion of the game, audit sheets will be collected by the Field Commissioner.

Section B—Playing Rules

1. Mighty Mite & Bantam only. Free punts are allowed. (No encroachment) All free punts must be made directly behind the Center. If there is an errant snap the punter must return to his position behind the Center to punt the ball. Failing to follow this rule will result in a personal foul. If the kicked ball hits a defensive lineman, the ball is considered dead and down on contact (First down for the receiving team).

2. Mighty Mite only. Two coaches are allowed on the field at all times, for the entire season and post-season. Coaches may not direct or coach the players either by words or motions during the execution of a play (between the start of the cadence and the end of the play). The penalty for violation of this rule is illegal procedure. If excessive violations of this rule occur, it may result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. Coaches must be ten yards behind the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.

3. Bantam only. Two coaches from each team are allowed on the field at all times, for the first 4 games. If one team had a bye, both teams are allowed on the field for the 5th week. After the 4th/5th game, if the 24 point rule is in effect, coaches are allowed to return to the playing field under the same rules allowed for the first 4 games. All other guidelines mentioned above for Mighty Mites apply to coaches on the field.

4. Mighty Mite & Bantam only. Penalties will be 5 yards for minor and 10 yards for major infractions.

5. Senior only. After the official certification, any player that exceeds the official weight limit per age group, will be required to play as described below for all X players. The rules are for Offense, Defense, and Special Teams. All X players will be required to wear a 4 inch X contrasting the color of the helmet, on front and back side easily visible. On Offense, no more than 3 X players may be on the field at the same time.

- a. All X players must play tackle to tackle. They must be interior lineman.
- b. The X players must be set, but not necessarily in a three or four point stance, at the snap of the ball.
- c. The furthest outside X player must be covered by a non X player.
- d. No plays may be designed to have an X player carry the ball.

e. X player may advance a true fumble or tipped/batted pass.

On Defense, no more than 3 X players may be on the field at the same time.

a. X players must line up as interior lineman no wider than the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle. This means the X players inside shoulder has to line up with the offensive tackles outside shoulder at the widest point prior to the snap.

b. The X player must be in a three or four point stance at the snap at the ball.

c. The X player must be on the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball.

d. The X player may advance a fumble or interception as long as they are the original player with the ball. No laterals or hand offs to an X player are allowed.

No X players can play on Kickoff and Kickoff Return. Punt and Punt return will be considered offense and defense accordingly and thus follow the rules mentioned above. The penalty for the misuse of an X player will be unsportsmanlike conduct. The first certification will determine the player's status for the year. An X player for the regular season must remain an X player for the playoffs – regardless of weight.

X players will be placed at the front of the certification book. An X will be placed across the registration form from corner to corner and initialed by the person certifying the book. Prior to each game, X players will be reported to the referee by the head coach. Books will be reviewed by request only by the opposing head coach. The Senior Division Director will have a list of all X players prior to the first game. Jersey number of such players will be reported to the Division Director prior to the first game. Any changes in jersey number effecting X players must be reported to the Division Director 72 hours prior to the next game.

Any head coach found to do anything to have an X player participate in a fraudulent manner will forfeit all games the player has participated in whether or not the player played "illegally". The head coach will be immediately removed as a coach in any capacity in the GCYFL. The GCYFL executive board will determine whether the team will be allowed to participate in the playoffs.

6. Game Official's Assistants (Chain Gang). Will be positioned on the home sidelines.

7. All games will consist of 4, 10 minute quarters. Halftime is 15 minutes maximum.

8. In the event of a tie, a winner will be determined by the following:

a. Ball will be placed on the 10 yard line.

b. Each team will have 4 plays to attempt to score a touchdown.

c. One try by each team will constitute 1 overtime series.

d. If a touchdown is scored – the extra point try will follow.

e. If there is a turnover – this ends the scoring try for the offense.

During regular season play, if a tie has not been broken after two complete overtime series, then the game will be recorded as a tie.

9. All eligible players will play a minimum of 12 Action Plays per game of offense, defense or special teams, or a combination. Spiking the ball or taking a knee to get players their 12 plays will not count toward the minimum 12 play rule and may result in disciplinary action against the Head Coach. Failure to abide by the above rules will result in the player(s) affected playing 24 plays in the next game. A second violation by that team will result in a one game suspension for the Head Coach. If, in the judgment of the Athletic Director Committee, the abuse of the rule has affected the outcome of the game, said team will forfeit the game.

10. The “**pile it on**” / **sportsmanship rule** goes into effect anytime one team has a 24 point scoring differential over their opponent. It is not relevant how the points were accumulated. This rule shall be defined to include (but not limited to) attempting to run up the score or embarrass the opposing team in any fashion. This rule goes into effect immediately following the extra point conversion (following the differential reaching 24 points or more). Once the rule goes into effect, the following steps will be followed:

- a) The coach with the commanding lead will remove as many of his dominant offensive and defensive players as may be necessary to reduce the disparity between the teams. The other coach has the opportunity to remove up to 6 named players if desired. This rule will never require a team to play with less than 11 players at any given time.
- b) Upon the winning team kick-off the losing team shall maintain possession
- c) Should the losing team reduce the score differential to 16 points or less, the winning team *has the option* of putting the removed impact players back in the game, but *are not required* to do so.

In every scheduled game (including playoffs), where there is a final point differential of 32 points or more, the winning coach is deemed in violation of the sportsmanship rule. The violation mandates that the Head Coach must submit a letter to the Division Director and Athletic Director no later than Wednesday following the game. The letter will briefly outline the reasons behind the point differential and efforts the coach will employ to prevent violation in the future. The letter is mandatory and noncompliance will result in an automatic One Game Suspension for the Head Coach. Upon a second violation, the Head Coach will serve a one game suspension. For a third violation, the Head Coach will be suspended for the remainder of the season (including playoffs). If there is a violation by a team, while the Head Coach is serving a suspension, the Head Coach as well as the acting Head Coach, will serve an additional two game suspension.

The violation judgment can be appealed by:

- a) The losing Head Coach submitting a letter on behalf of winning Head Coach outlining that the winning Head Coach was not acting unsportsmanlike.
 - b) The winning Head Coach making an appeal with supporting evidence to a sportsmanship committee. The sportsmanship committee will be made up of five GCYFL Executive Board Members (as outlined in Article 2, Section B of the GCYFL bylaws). The appointed sportsmanship committee members must not be affiliated with the winning Head Coach chapter. A unanimous vote by the sportsmanship committee is required for a successful appeal.
11. The following is the official method for determining the seeding for playoffs.
- a. Overall Record
 - b. Head to Head Record
 - c. Coin Flip

Section C—Scouting Rules

1. Films and videotapes may be taken of games/scrimmages. Viewing of films or videotapes during the game, including half time, is not allowed.
2. Films or videotapes can be made available to other teams.

3. There will be no scouting of practices.

Section D—Spotting Rules

1. Auditors/Statisticians will not engage in spotting or any form of coaching during the course of a game.
2. Field phones may be used.

Article VIII. Rules and Violations

Section A--Authority

1. Chapters will be given first authority to deal with all violations, issues, etc. unless the GCYFL deems it necessary to get involved immediately.
2. The GCYFL has the right to get involved in any violation and at any point they deem necessary.
3. All decisions of the GCYFL are final and binding on all Chapters, teams and individuals. There is no appeal of a GCYFL decision.

Section B—Appeals

1. A team or individual may appeal a Chapter's decision to the GCYFL.
2. Appeals must specify the article/section of the GCYFL/CIF/NFHS Rule Book.
3. All Appeals to the GCYFL will be dealt with by a group of 3 individuals (made up of an Assistant Athletic Director, the appropriate Division Director, and 1 other board member (none of these individuals should be associated with the matter at hand or the chapters involved – where possible).

Section C--Protests

1. Protests on matters involving official's judgment will not be considered.
2. Protests must specify the article/section of the GCYFL/CIF/NFHS Rule Book.
3. All Protests to the GCYFL will be dealt with by a group of 3 individuals (made up of an Assistant Athletic Director, the appropriate Division Director, and 1 other board member (none of these individuals should be associated with the matter at hand or the chapters involved – where possible).

Section D--Penalties

A violation of any rule contained herein may subject a Chapter, team, or individuals to any one or more of the following penalties:

1. Forfeiture of game(s).
2. Disqualification from competing for, or taking part in, championships.
3. Disqualification from participating in bowl or post-season games.
4. Suspension, expulsion, ineligibility, disbarment, or probation.
5. Loss of franchise.
6. Subject to a fine of not less than \$25.00 and no more than \$200.00.

Section E—Game Officials

1. Officials will be scheduled by the referee associations the GCYFL works with.
2. If no officials show up, the Game Field Commissioner is responsible for arranging the

stand-in officials. The game will stand as played and there will be no protest accepted.

3. Game officials are to be paid in cash prior to the start of each game by the home team the amount which is agreed upon by the GCYFL and the officials association prior to the season. Failure to pay will result in a forfeit. Official assigner fees will be paid by the GCYFL separately.

Section F--Forfeits

In the event that a team must forfeit a game, no less than 72 hours advance notice must be given by the forfeiting Chapter to the Athletic Director. If less than 72 hours notice is given, the forfeiting Chapter will be responsible for paying any incurred Officials Fees. Forfeits will stand unless there were extenuating circumstances and the Athletic Director can reschedule the game. The Athletic Director's decision is FINAL. A game may be forfeited for the following reasons:

1. Coaches exhibiting un-sportsmanlike conduct toward any game official, player, director, or opposing Coach or player.
2. Parents and/or followers of a team using un-sportsmanlike conduct toward any official, player, Coach, director, or opposing Coach or player.

***NOTE:** Before the game is forfeited, one warning will be given by a game official & the Game Officials will consult with the Field Commissioner to agree a forfeit is necessary.*

Article IX GCYFL Playoffs

Section A--Location

All games must be played in a regulation high school, college, municipal, or other approved facility. The Athletic Director will approve all locations. The GCYFL will be responsible for defining the Playoff Procedure – before the start of the season. (see Playoff Procedure)

Section B—Playoff Hosts

Semifinal games will be played at a single location per division. The highest seed will be given the first opportunity to host. If teams from the same chapter in different divisions are the first seed, that chapter will have the choice of which division they will host or will have the option to host on an alternatively approved field associated with their chapter. All playoff games before the semifinals will be hosted by the higher seeded team.

Section C—Super Bowl Host Rules and Requirements

1. The Host Chapter must have an alternate plan in the event of any of the following:
 - a. Field condition is a safety hazard.
 - b. Field becomes unavailable that day. (CIF playoffs or other school events)
2. The game schedule will be set by the GCYFL.
3. Field should be properly marked for football.
4. There should be adequate space for warm-ups for teams playing in the next game.
5. A visible scoreboard and lights must be present.
6. Adequate restrooms must be available.