

Mid-Michigan Pony Football League, Inc.

Bob Grounds, President
7404 Francis Road
St. Johns, MI 48913
Home Phone: 989-224-4675

RULES

Revised March, 2008

This Corporation is governed under the Articles of Incorporation in conformity with ACT 327, Public Acts of 1931, as amended by the Michigan Department of Commerce, the State of Michigan.

MISSION

To provide and establish a wholesome youth tackle football league that promotes sportsmanship and fair play. Where all players get an opportunity to play each game and the emphasis is on teaching character, athletic and social skills, and a healthy attitude. That winning is not the most important objective. Where coaches teach and lead through example.

PHILOSOPHY

The Mid-Michigan Pony Football League, Inc., hereafter referred to as MMPFL, founded for promoting a healthy, typical American contact sport for the youth in our area. If young people will play football with or without proper equipment or supervision, the Corporation feels that by providing proper protective equipment, playing fields, and supervisory personnel, injuries will be at a minimum.

The MMPFL recognizes the valid criticism leveled at programs of this nature. We feel the good done by the program, as a whole, outweighs the harm derived from the undue mental pressures placed upon the youths by the need to win. For this reason, the MMPFL has no championships or playoffs, no individual player awards or recognitions. This is not to say that the MMPFL de-emphasizes winning instead, the program places emphasis on good sportsmanship, teamwork, and team discipline. The unwavering desire to win at all costs is what is de-emphasized in our program. The youth play a good hard game and, of course, one team will lose each time, as it must be. The MMPFL wants the half that loses to be proud players and parents who can take pride in the program that they have developed in their community.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

Mid-Michigan Pony Football League, Inc. (MMPFL) does not discriminate based on religion, race, sex, creed, color, disability, citizenship, and national origin. Membership in the MMPFL and member cities is at-will.

COACHES

The MMPFL recognizes the coaches are the most important part of it succeeding at its mission. Therefore, we have developed some procedures to screen and evaluate coaches. All coaches who wish to coach in the MMPFL must be dedicated to our mission and philosophy and must work hard at accomplishing them.

Coaches with a criminal record, depending on the violation, could be ineligible to coach. MMPFL requires all coaches to have a criminal history check through the Michigan State Police. Districts are to make sure the coach satisfies the minimum criteria as set by the Michigan Public Schools. Coaches must sign a MMPFL creed and submit it to their city's representative.

The MMPFL reserves the rights to discipline, suspend, or ban a coach from coaching for any violation of un-sportsmanlike conduct, misbehavior, or any violation of the rules in the Coaches Creed. Any coach that is a member of the MMPFL cannot attempt to remove any team or teams from the MMPFL without Board approval.

Banned from coaching in the MMPFL will be the result of any violation of this rule. By Board decision, infractions of any rules could result in the suspension of the coach for one or more games or, depending on the infraction, indefinitely.

Negative coaching (swearing, striking, grabbing facemasks) is not acceptable behavior for practice or games. At practice, coaches will not make contact with players during drills except to hold arm shields or dummies.

CONCERNS

The MMPFL desires the officials to feel that they are an integral part of our instructional staff, both in technical and sportsmanship aspects of the game. The MMPFL also wants the parents of players to feel comfortable that the MMPFL will listen to any ideas or concerns that they may have, as well as any suggestions for improvement in the operation of the MMPFL. Officials and parents may direct their concerns to the MMPFL President at:

Mid-Michigan Pony Football League, Inc.
Bob Grounds, President
7404 Francis Road
St. Johns, MI 48913
Home Phone: 989-224-4675

CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

PRESIDENT

Bob Grounds – St. Johns
7404 Francis Road
St. Johns, MI 48913
Home: 989-224-4675

1st VICE PRESIDENT

Sandy Baldwin - Mason
349 Rogers
Mason, MI 48854
Home: 517-676-6096

2nd VICE PRESIDENT

*Paula Lonsberry
4844 Sycamore
Holt, MI 48842
Home: 517-694-5669*

SECRETARY

*Elizabeth Reason – Waverly
220 Winifred Ave.
Lansing, MI 48917
(517) 321-3324
(517) 749-5724*

TREASURER

Carl Ballard – Lansing
6145 Lerner Way
Lansing, MI 48911
Home Phone (517) 882-7004
League Phone (517) 290-0169

GENERAL RULES

1A. The MMPFL games may begin the weekend prior to Labor Day for the 7th and 8th grade. The 4th/5th and 6th grades begin the weekend after Labor Day. No games scheduled after November 1.

2A. Each district must submit their final number of teams, by division, in writing for the upcoming season to the Scheduling Committee by **JULY 15TH**. The cut off date for adding new players is up to each city keeping in mind conditioning requirements (**Rule 7B - page 6**) and team sizes (**Rule 3B - page 6**).

3A. Requests to add teams after the cut off date are not accepted. The MMPFL will impose a penalty for a city dropping a team after the **JULY 15TH** deadline. The penalty may be a reduction of home games and no refund shall be given for teams dropped after the cut off date. **Exception** – If team numbers are not sufficient to support at least one team in a division, the city must contact the MMPFL President and an executive board meeting will be held.

4A. The MMPFL Scheduling Committee will not accept any requests for game scheduling preferences other than those of field availability.

5A. MMPFL Fees – Each city must pay a fee to the MMPFL. The Board of Directors determines the amount of the fees at the beginning of the season. The fees pay for liability insurance, MMPFL President's costs, and any other expenses incurred by the MMPFL. The **fees must be paid** by check or money order made payable to the MMPFL **no later than JULY 15th**. Each city must have an organization account (doing business as). No individuals receive MMPFL checks for referee fees. Mail MMPFL fees to:

MID-MICHIGAN PONY FOOTBALL LEAGUE, INC.
6145 Lerner Way
Lansing, MI 48911
Phone: (517) 882-7004

6A. Rosters – a city Board Representative, other than the coach, must sign a roster completed on the form issued by the MMPFL. Each roster must list the players' criteria: name, address, grade, date of birth, school and a statement verifying that the players, to the best of your

knowledge, attend that school and are in the grades listed, and that all other information is accurate. All the information on the roster must be written or typed in ink and cannot be changed in any manner. New roster submission is required if mistakes are made. The city representative is to retain the rosters.

7A. Member City Statement – Two members from each city must sign a statement agreeing to comply with the terms and conditions of the MMPFL and that they have received and read a copy of the MMPFL rules.

8A. Parent statement – All coaches must have a signed statement by the players’ parent or legal guardian stating they give their consent for the player to participate in the MMPFL. Such a statement will acknowledge that the parent or guardian is aware of the possibility that injury could occur to the child when participating. Include a statement that the parent authorizes emergency medical treatment if the child requires it and the parent is unreachable. The statement will give names and phone numbers of two persons to be contacted in case of emergency. Each coach must also have a signed statement from the players’ parents or guardian stating they are aware of the MMPFL mandated number of plays per half. The League recommends that all parents sign a “Code of Conduct” and a statement that they know the rules and agree to them. The Board of Directors of the MMPFL designates the city representatives responsible for this rule.

9A. Mandatory coaches meeting – There will be a mandatory meeting for all coaches (head and assistant, new and returning). Coaches who do not attend one of the meeting dates cannot coach in the MMPFL unless approved by the MMPFL President. A training committee forms in June (chaired by the MMPFL President) and provides dates and locations for the meetings. Communities must ensure that their coaches attend a rules meeting. **A list of all coaches must be submitted to the MMPFL prior to games starting and verification will be made to ensure that all coaches have attended the mandatory meetings. Failure to meet the above criteria can be subject to game suspension by the MMPFL.**

10A. No children permitted to attend a MMPFL Board of Directors meeting unless invited.

11A. Any changes in these Articles of Association and their approved amendments require a 51% majority vote of the Board of Directors.

12A. Rule Changes – Rule changes are made only at the ****FEBRUARY*** Rules Meeting. After ****FEBRUARY***, rule changes require a 100% vote of the Board of Directors (all member cities).

13A. There shall be a three-member audit committee to review the financial records. The MMPFL President will appoint this committee for a 1-year term (excluded are the MMPFL President and MMPFL Treasurer).

14A. The exploitation of the MMPFL as a whole, team or as an individual player with benefit or otherwise to an individual or business will not be condoned. The sole aim of any contributor, both in time and/or in financial assistance, should be to assist all youth and to make their community a better place in which to live. Individuals who persist in any type of exploitation of the youth run the risk of losing their right to participate by action of the Board of Directors. All persons affiliated with this organization, whether they are active or not, must abide by these rules.

15A. No team or individual players' trophies, awards or statistics will be given out at the year end banquet or at any time will any statistics or individual player recognition be posted in the newspaper or in any other way by individuals associated with the MMPFL or the parents. The Board of Directors must approve all certificates of participation. A city, as recognition of participation, can give identical trophies to all players. The Board has approved posting of scores, video replay on public access channels and all teams are to receive equal representation within each city. Keep in mind Rule 14A, page 4.

16A. MMPFL does not allow its members to ride in the back of a pickup truck or in any other manner deemed unsafe by the MMPFL. Breaking this rule can result in the expulsion of player(s) and/or coaches/parents from participating in the MMPFL.

17A. No admission fees to MMPFL games.

18A. MMPFL prohibits the use of radios, headphones, or cell phones for communication between the press box and the benches.

19A. No MMPFL team can participate in another league during the MMPFL season. No MMPFL coach can coach a team outside of the MMPFL that has any members on it from his/her MMPFL team.

20A. Communities who do not attend at least 3 out of 5 required meetings for the MMPFL are subject to paying additional fees above the \$65 registration fee for each team registered in the MMPFL. A \$20 fee will be added per team and will go up \$20 each consecutive year the community is in non-compliance of said rule.

GENERAL TEAM RULES

1B. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY - The program is open to all students in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. Divisions will consist of 4th/5th combined, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.

Each member city will submit their district boundaries to the League. **Players must attend a school in the district for which they play. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.** If no team exists in a district, students must play on a team in the school district in which they reside. Players must play in the division for the grade they are in unless the city or League determines, for safety reasons; the player should be moved up one division. Players may not be moved down a division.

Players who are **9 years old** on or before September 1st or in 4th grade of the current year will play in the 4th/5th grade division. Players who are **12 years old** before September 1st must play in the 6th grade division. Players who are **13 years old** must play in the 7th grade division. Players who are **14** must play in the 8th grade division. No player who reaches the age of **15 before September 1st** shall play.

If a city has more than one team in a combined division, the ratio of upper grade players to lower grade players must be close to the ratio of upper grade to lower grade on each team for that division. Any violation should be reported to the League President immediately. If a community is found in violation, they will be required to re-split their teams with an equal number of upper to lower grade ratio for each team. Continued violation will result of disciplinary action determined by the Executive Board.

- 2B.** The MMPFL Board reserves the right to move a player up one grade level for the safety of all the players.
- 3B.** Recommended team size is 25 players. Team size is up to each member city. Each member city should attempt to divide teams equally by ability. Registration of players will be as each member city sets up. Denying the opportunity to a qualified player who desires to play is allowed only with the majority vote of the Board of Directors. **Rule 4D, page 8** – Playing time – should be considered when determining team size.
- 4B.** All team activities must be within the guidelines of these rules and approved by the Board of Directors. This especially holds true to outside scrimmages.
- 5B.** Any scrimmage outside the MMPFL must have prior Board approval. If granted approval, you must follow all rules incorporated here within at all times during scrimmages.
- 6B.** There shall be no conditioning or player participation in the program until there is a recent physical examination by a licensed physician who will sign a statement that the player is fit to participate. All physical cards must be on file with each city's Board of Directors ****and be dated no earlier than April 15th of the current year.***
- 7B. Conditioning** – Players in the 4/5th and the 6th grades must have a minimum of **8 hours** before they can start progressive live contact. **7th and 8th grade** must have **6 hours** of conditioning. The **maximum** conditioning time any player can participate in a 24-hour period is 2 hours with a **total** of 8 hours in any calendar week. **When adding players late, they must complete their conditioning hours plus an equal number of hours of progressive contact prior to participating in games.**
- 8B. Player Injury** – Players returning to practice from an injury must have a doctor's statement and a coach's evaluation stating they are game ready.
- 9B. Practice** - The starting date shall be the date set by the MHSAA for High School football. No practice of any kind may take place before the set start date without the approval from the MMPFL Board. Violation of the practice start date will result in the violating coaches' suspension or banning. Summer camps permitted must be open to all MMPFL participants. A two-week notification of dates and times are to be mailed to all city representatives by the hosting cities.
- 10B. After Labor Day, no more than 2 hours** of practice in a 24-hour period with a **total of 6 hours** per calendar week. For **8th grade**, this rule **does not** apply. The MMPFL recommends 8th grade practices not exceed that of the High School schedule (game and practice).
- 11B.** Adverse weather conditions prohibit practice. Adverse weather conditions is defined as a weather warning by the local or national weather service, heavy rain, or any time when lightening or thunder is present, or when the weather is of danger to the participants.

GENERAL RULES

- 1C. Rosters** – Each head coach must turn in a game roster to the press box and the opposing coach at least 15 minutes prior to the start of their game. The roster must include players' names,

weight, position (either ball handler or non ball handler), and playing status, (absent, injured, or disciplinary action) and **will be in numerical order**. Failure to do so is a major infraction, unsportsmanlike conduct and is to be reported to the host city's rep. The host city's rep is responsible for reporting the violation to the League's President. Game rosters shall not include player nicknames that are either derogatory or inflammatory. If the player's weight is found to be 4lbs or greater than indicated on the roster, the violation must be reported to the League President immediately. The League will make arrangements for the player to be weighed prior to his/her next contest. If the player's weight is found to be over the 4lb minimum, the head coach will be cited for unsportsmanlike conduct. Please see **Rule 31 – Page 12** for penalties.

2C. Football Size – The **4th/5th grade – junior**. The **6th and 7th grade – intermediate**. The **8th grade - intermediate or regulation size**. Each home team is required to have a designated game ball. On change of possession, each team may use own game ball.

3C. First Aid - All teams must provide and bring to each game a minor 1st aid kit (supplies to include ice packet, bandages, smelling salts, latex gloves, and any other necessary minor 1st aid products).

4C. All home field member cities must supply a telephone or an ambulance for use in case of an emergency at their playing site.

5C. Playing Shoes – 1/2” screw in plastic or rubber cleats are acceptable. No metal tip cleats are to be used in the 4th-7th grade divisions.

6C. Game Officials – Four MHSAA registered officials are required for each game. The officials are responsible for enforcing the playing rules of the MHSAA and the MMPFL. **No games will be played with less than 3 MHSAA registered officials**. If only 2 registered officials are present at the game start time, there will be a 15-minute delay. If during that 15-minute delay the official fails to show, result is the game(s) postponement and the Board of Directors will re-schedule. The MMPFL contract all officials. Officials are paid by each member city. If games are played with only 3 officials, *only three officials are paid, and the League President is to be notified immediately. Officials are paid for any games as defined under the MSHAA Rules.

7C. Adverse weather – When adverse weather conditions prevail, the game officials make the decision to continue or suspend play. The game official's decision will be final. The site director will make an announcement over the PA to all spectators. Under no circumstances will play continue if a weather warning has been issued or lightning or thunder is present. Game Suspension – First quarter suspension cannot exceed 40 minutes. After a delay, the game clock is continuous and half time is shortened to the 3-minute minimum. Second quarter and later, the game is suspended and will be rescheduled if possible. The last game of the day will have no more than two thirty minute delays, daylight permitting. If any team has more than one game to make up at the end of the season, only the first cancelled game of the scheduled season is available for make up. The Board will schedule any make up games.

8C. Injury delays – Injury delays of more than **20 minutes may suspend** the game unless it is the last game of the day. The shortening of half times, running of clocks, etc. to make up time can occur. The shortening of games can occur so they do not interfere with the scheduled start time

for the next game. The intent of this rule is to stay on schedule and prevent game suspensions/cancellations. The Board will schedule any make up games.

9C. Spectators – Each city is requested to provide a designated spectator area. When this is not possible, spectators are to remain 30 feet or as far back as possible from the designated team area. It is the coaches' responsibility to ensure spectators remain in the designated area.

10C. Team Introductions – Team introductions must be started at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled game and 10 minutes if the national anthem is played.

11C. Earlier Start in Bad Weather – The last game of the day could start 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time if agreed to by both head coaches. This would allow for an earlier start in bad weather conditions out of consideration for the participants and spectators.

GAME RULES

1D. All playing rules will be the current year MHSAA approved rules and the rules listed here within. Also, see individual divisions for exceptions.

2D. Games - Games will consist of four quarters using a stop clock. Teams shall be allowed three, one minute, time outs per half. Half time is 10 minutes unless shortened due to injury and/or weather delays or to get the days schedule back on time. Half time must be at least 3 minutes regardless of the above. Cities may choose to put the whole 10 minutes on the clock (this will include the 3 minute warm up) or 7 minutes and then 3 minutes for the warm up. **THE CLOCK WILL START AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 1ST & 3RD QUARTER WHEN THE BALL IS TOUCHED BY THE RECEIVING TEAM AND AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 2ND AND 4TH QUARTER ON THE SNAP OF THE BALL.**

3D. Weight restriction – **Any requested weigh-in is to take place 15 minutes prior to the start of the game.** Each player is permitted only one weigh-in per game. The site director/**Designee* or MMPFL **Executive Board member* will perform the weighing of players. Weighing is with helmet, shoulder pads, game pants, complete with hip pad, tail pad, kneepads, thigh pads, belt and shoes. The MMPFL President and/or an executive board member may perform random weight checks at any given time. Each city must provide a set of reputable scales at their game site. **If a player is not available for weigh-in or no scales are available, the officials should be notified immediately that the game is being played under protest. The MMPFL President is also to be notified.** Any player exceeding the weight limit participating in live play while their team has possession of the ball must play tackle to tackle. Tackle eligible plays are not legal, as they would violate the weight limit rule. **Punt and kick off receiving teams will use conventional kicking and receiving formations, i.e. punt receiving - two deepest players will not exceed the weight limit for kick receiving - 4 deepest players will not exceed the weight limit.**

4D. Playing time – All players (4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th grade) must receive a **minimum of 7 plays per half** unless being disciplined or injured. **Live kicking plays count as plays in all divisions.* 8th grade players must receive a **minimum of 6 plays per half** unless being disciplined or injured.

5D. Mercy rule – ****SEE INDIVIDUAL GRADE LEVELS FOR ADDITIONAL MERCY RULE INFORMATION. 4TH/5TH – RULE 6E-PAGE 10, 6TH GRADE – RULE 6F-PAGE 11,***

7TH GRADE – RULE 4G–PAGE 11 AND 8TH GRADE – RULE 3H–PAGE 12. FOR ALL GRADES, IF A TEAM IS 35 OR MORE POINTS BEHIND, THERE WILL BE A RUNNING CLOCK. Any coaches running up scores are subject to review by the Board of Directors for questionable sportsmanship.

8D. Safeties – When a safety occurs, 2 points are scored and a free kick is given. The kick is from the **20-yard line**.

9D. Extra Points – successful kicks are worth 2 points and successful running/passing plays are worth 1 point. 4/5th grade snaps the ball from the **goal line when kicking and from the 3 yard line when running/passing.** All other grades snap the ball from the 3-yard line. **If a dead ball kick, the defense may move. If they cross the line of scrimmage, a penalty is called and the kicking team is awarded 2 points.**

10D. Facemask penalty – Incidental facemask is a 5-yard penalty. If determined by officials to be a flagrant facemask, there will be a 15-yard penalty. If determined by officials to be a flagrant facemask with intent to injure, there will be a 15-yard penalty and ejection of the player from the game.

11D. Unsportsmanlike conduct – If a player is ejected from a game, they may not participate in the following game and this ban carries over to the following year if the infraction occurs in the final game of a season. If two unsportsmanlike flags occur on the same player/game, that player is ejected/suspended for the next game and this carries over to the following year.

12D. Tie Game – Tie games at the end of regulation time remain a tie. There is no overtime.

13D. Defensive formations should be teaching conventional alignments. (Not 11 man blitzes).

14D. When a team clearly indicates an intention to run out the clock by taking a knee, the opposing defense shall not rush the .

15D. BLOCKING – All blocking rules shall be pursuant to MHSAA rules.

INDIVIDUAL DIVISION GAME RULES

4TH/5TH GRADE DIVISION

1E. Games – This division will play 6 games in a 9-week schedule. Games consist of four 8-minute quarters. 30 seconds between plays is given. There are no playoff games.

2E. Weight restriction – Players that are ball handlers cannot exceed **120 lbs.**

3E. Coaches on the field – One coach is allowed on the field except during time outs. Coaches are only at the team huddle and not at the line of scrimmage or at the site of the tackle. At the time of the snap, the coach must be at least 10 yards behind the deepest player on his team. During the play, the coach must make an honest attempt to stay out of the action. Violations of this rule are at the referees' discretion and considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

*4E. **Field Goals and Extra Points** - Field Goals and Extra Points are dead ball kicks, with no contact allowed. **Weight restrictions do not apply to kickers or holders in a dead ball situation.** Defensive players may jump up and down, and make non-offensive noise.

*5E. **Punts** - On fourth down, the offensive team may elect to punt the ball, elect to move the ball 20 yards down the field (not inside the opponent's 20 yard line), try a field goal, or try for a first down. If electing to punt, the officials must be notified that you are going to punt the ball. The clock will stop and the defensive team must be allowed time to set up to receive the kick. Punts shall be live plays, with live returns, strictly adhering to conventional punt formations as outlined in **3D - Page 8**. There shall be **NO** rush allowed, and no crossing the line of scrimmage, **until** the ball is punted. The receiving team will take possession of the ball where the punt returner ends up or where the ball goes out of bounds. The ball is a live ball and can be recovered upon contact by the opposing team. The receiving team must line up with at least 7 players on the line of scrimmage. **The clock will start when the ball is punted.** There shall be **NO** fake kicks. Deep returners shall be subject to weight restrictions as they are considered ball handlers.

*6E. **Kick off and return** – At the start of each half, the appropriate team shall kick off from their 45 yard line. Kick off and receive teams shall use conventional formations as outlined in **3D – page 8**. The ball is a live ball and can be recovered. The receiving team must line up with at least ***5** players on the line of scrimmage. **The clock will start when the ball is touched** by the receiving team. If an “on-side” kick occurs, the ball handler is considered a defensive player, and weight restrictions do not apply.

Weight restrictions do not apply to the kickoff kicker, punter, holder, field goal/extra point kicker in the 4th-6th grades.

*7E. **Mercy Rule** – When a team scores and is still 13 or more points behind, they will remain on offense. When 13-17 points behind, the ball will be kicked from the 35 yard line. When 18 or more points behind, the ball will be kicked from the 25 yard line. When 21 or more points behind, there may be a running clock in the 2nd half. The decision is made by the coach of the trailing team at any time during the 2nd half. Any coaches running up scores (unsportsmanlike) are subject to review by the Board of Directors. (**Also, see rule 5D – page 8**).

6TH GRADE DIVISION

1F. Games - This division will play 6 games in a 9-week schedule. Games consist of four 8-minute quarters. 30 seconds between plays is given. There are no playoff games.

2F. Weight restriction – Players that are ball handlers cannot exceed **140 lbs**.

3F. Coaches on the field - One coach allowed on the field except during time outs. Coaches are only at the team huddle and not at the line of scrimmage or at the site of the tackle. At the time of the snap, the coach must be at least 10 yards behind the deepest player on his team. During the play, the coach must make an honest attempt to stay out of the action. Violations of this rule are at the referees' discretion and considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

*4F. **Field Goals and Extra Points** - Field Goals and Extra Points are dead ball kicks, with no contact allowed. **Weight restrictions do not apply to kickers or holders in a dead ball situation.** Defensive players may jump up and down, and make non-offensive noise.

***5F. Punts** - On fourth down, the offensive team may elect to punt the ball, elect to move the ball 20 yards down the field (not inside the opponent's 20 yard line), try a field goal, or try for a first down. If electing to punt, the officials must be notified that you are going to punt the ball. The clock will stop and the defensive team must be allowed time to set up to receive the kick. Punts shall be live plays, with live returns, strictly adhering to conventional punt formations as outlined in (3D - Page 8). There shall be **NO** rush allowed, and no crossing the line of scrimmage, **until** the ball is punted. The receiving team will take possession of the ball where the punt returner ends up or where the ball goes out of bounds. The ball is a live ball and can be recovered upon contact by the opposing team. The receiving team must line up with at least 7 players on the line of scrimmage. **The clock will start when the ball is punted.** There shall be **NO** fake kicks. Deep returners shall be subject to weight restrictions as they are considered ball handlers.

***6F. Kick off and return** – At the start of each half, the appropriate team shall kick off from their 45 yard line. Kick off and receive teams shall use conventional formations as outlined in (3D – page 8). The ball is a live ball and can be recovered. The receiving team must line up with at least ***5** players on the line of scrimmage. **The clock will start when the ball is touched** by the receiving team. If an “on-side” kick occurs, the ball handler is considered a defensive player, and weight restrictions do not apply.

Weight restrictions do not apply to the kickoff kicker, punter, holder, field goal/extra point kicker in the 4th-6th grades.

***7F. Mercy Rule** – When a team scores and is still 13 or more points behind, they will remain on offense. When 13-17 points behind, the ball will be kicked from the 35 yard line. When 18 or more points behind, the ball will be kicked from the 25 yard line. When 21 or more points behind, there may be a running clock in the 2nd half. The decision is made by the coach of the trailing team at any time during the 2nd half. Any coaches running up scores (unsportsmanlike) are subject to review by the Board of Directors. (**Also, see rule 5D – page 8**).

7TH GRADE DIVISION

1G. Games - This division will play 7 games in a 9-week schedule. Games consist of four 8-minute quarters. 30 seconds between plays is given. There are no playoff games.

2G. Weight restriction – Players that are ball handlers cannot exceed 150 lbs. **The kickoff kicker is not limited by any weight restriction. The punter, the holder, and the field goal/extra point kicker must not exceed the 150 pound weight restriction.**

3G. Coaches are not permitted on the field.

***4G. Mercy Rule** – When a team scores and remains 18 or more point behind, that team receives the kickoff. When 21 or more points behind, there may be a running clock in the 2nd half. The decision is made by the coach of the trailing team at any time during the 2nd half. Any coaches running up scores (unsportsmanlike) are subject to review by the Board of Directors. (**Also, see rule 5D – page 8**).

8TH GRADE DIVISION

1H. Games – This division will play 8 games in a 9-week schedule. Games consist of four 10-minute quarters. 30 seconds between plays is given. There are no playoff games.

***2H. Weight restriction** – Players that are ball handlers cannot exceed 200 lbs. **The kickoff kicker is not limited by any weight restriction. The punter, the holder, and the field goal/extra point kicker must not exceed the 200 pound weight restriction.**

***3H. Mercy Rule** – When a team scores and remains 18 or more point behind, that team receives the kickoff. When 21 or more points behind, there may be a running clock in the 2nd half. The decision is made by the coach of the trailing team at any time during the 2nd half. Any coaches running up scores (unsportsmanlike) are subject to review by the Board of Directors. **(Also, see rule 5D – page 8).**

4H. Playing time – All players must receive a minimum of 6 plays per half unless being disciplined or injured.

PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS

1I. Cities documented of failing to comply with the MMPFL rules may see a reduction in home games the following season (probation) by action of the Board.

2I. Coaches documented of not complying with the MMPFL rules, if not disciplined by their local board, may cause a reduction in home games in the following season by action of the Board.

3I. Major infractions – Major infractions: Rules 9B. (Practice) – page 6, 1C. (Rosters) - page 7, 3D. (Weight restrictions)- page 8 and 4D. (Playing time) - page 8.

1st Violation – One-week suspension

2nd Violation – Season suspension

3rd Violation – Life suspension

4I. Minor infraction – Minor infractions are all other rules not listed above.

1st Violation – Written warning

2nd Violation – One-week suspension

3rd Violation – Season suspension

4th Violation – Life suspension

5I. Penalties may differ from above at the discretion of the MMPFL Board of Directors.

6I. Any coach who is ejected from a game will be suspended the following **two (2) games**. The suspension will carry over into the next season, if need be.