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# Alamance Parks – Youth Football Rules – 2023

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## I. **NAME:**

The name of the league shall be the Alamance Parks Youth Football League. Some age divisions will consist of teams from the following local community clubs and recreation departments: Mebane, Gibsonville, Green Level, Siler City, Hawfields Civitan Club, Northern Alamance Athletic Club, and Alamance Civitan Club.

## II. **ELIGIBILITY:**

- A. Each player's age will be approved by the Alamance Parks Department. This will be done only through the use of birth certificates and the birth certificate file in the office of the Athletic Director.
  - i. 8 & under (must be age 6 before August 1<sup>st</sup>, but cannot be 9 years old before August 1<sup>st</sup>.)
  - ii. 10 & under (cannot be 11 years old before August 1<sup>st</sup>.)
  - iii. 12 & under (cannot be 13 years old before August 1<sup>st</sup>.)
- B. Any child who resides in Alamance County or within three (3) miles of the Alamance County boundary line or whose parents pay Alamance County taxes has the option to play for any team he/she so desires within the league.
  - i. Proven pressure recruiting will not be tolerated by the Alamance Parks Department. Coaches found in violation may be suspended from the program.
- C. A new player must be on the team roster and present his/her birth certificate to Alamance Parks before he/she is eligible to play in a league game. Only new players who have not participated in the league may be added to a team's roster no later than September 16th of the playing year.
  - i. Any participant found to be ineligible due to clerical error on behalf of Alamance Parks will be ineligible to participate for the remainder of that season, unless corrective measures are implemented. No disciplinary action will be taken against the team involved.
- D. Each player must sign a contract. Then, he/she must play on the team with which he/she signs for the entire season unless released by the coach and the AD on the contract form. A player may **NOT** be released to another team after September 17th of the playing year. Failure to obtain a release will result in suspension of the player for the remainder of the regular season.
- E. A player may move up and play in an older League if he/she so desires, but after he/she has participated in one (1) League game with that team, he/she must play in that age group for the remainder of the season.
- F. If a player is on a school football roster on and after September 4<sup>th</sup>, he/she is ineligible to participate in the 12 & Under Football League.
- G. There is no limit to the number of players on a team's roster during the season.
- H. 12 & Under teams must conform to the 35 player limit for the SWAC Tournament.

## III. **PRINCIPLES OF YOUTH ATHLETICS:**

- A. It is the aim of the Alamance Parks Department to provide organized games and activities, recreation facilities, supervision and leadership to its citizens in their ideals and interests in the area of leisure time activities and/or its organization.
- B. To promote the ideals of good sportsmanship, teach basic skills, develop individual talents, and provide an opportunity to enjoy the best possible recreation advantages and atmospheres.
- C. To recognize the youth participant as an individual with particular abilities and limitations. A great deal of consideration must be given to his physical, mental, emotional, and social development with every precaution taken to ensure that each is developed to its highest potential.

**IV. DISCIPLINARY ACTION:** (Including: parents, spectators, coaches, and players)

- A. Ejection from Game.....Minimum 1 Game Suspension
  - B. Unsportsmanlike Conduct.....Minimum 10 Day Suspension
  - C. Profanity.....Minimum 10 Day Suspension
  - D. Threatening an Official/Anyone.....Minimum Suspension for Remainder of Season
  - E. Hitting an Official.....Minimum 2 Year Suspension
  - F. Drinking.....Suspended For Season
  - G. Fighting.....Suspended For Season
1. Any coach, parent or spectator ejected must leave the playing facility immediately upon ejection; however, a player may remain at the playing facility.
  2. All suspensions will be reviewed by the Recreation Staff in order to determine if further disciplinary action need be taken. All decisions concerning disciplinary actions by the Recreation and Parks Department are FINAL.
  3. Individuals can be suspended after the game for unsportsmanlike conduct by a game official or recreation staff member.

**V. DUTIES:**

- A. It is the duty of the participating organization to see that the roster and records for their team(s) are delivered to the Recreation Athletic Director prior to the first game, so that he may signify that all players are eligible. The official Recreation and Parks Department roster must be used. It is mandatory that this roster be completed in full, and typed: showing the player's name exactly how it appears on his/her birth certificate with no use of nicknames or other. The player's birth date and complete mailing address must be filled in. Also at this time, birth certificates must be presented to the Athletic Director. If the player's birth certificate is on file from the previous year, his full name, complete address, and birth date must appear on the roster typed. Asterisk (\*) these individuals for last year's season's identifications.
- B. Parents shall be responsible for seeing that their child is examined by his family doctor before he/she is allowed to play.
- C. The participating organization shall see that every child has a signed release form from their parents for the child to participate in the Alamance Parks Youth Football Program.

**VI. EQUIPMENT:**

- A. All teams must furnish their own numbered uniforms and equipment, which will consist of helmet, shoulder pads, hip pads, socks, regulation shoes (molded rubber cleats) or tennis shoes. No street shoes or boots allowed. ALL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT MUST BE NOC-SAE APPROVED.
- B. Face guards and mouth pieces are mandatory. Knee pads must be worn and cover knees.
- C. The Alamance Parks Department will furnish the footballs for all scheduled games.
- D. If possible, the playing field will be a regulation size high school field for all age groups.
- E. All teams must furnish their own individual first aid kits. At a minimum these kits should contain: 1 1/2 inch adhesive tape, elastic ace bandages, disposable latex gloves, regular and large band aids, Tylenol, hydrogen peroxide, betadine, Neosporin, gauze rolls and pads, cotton, and cold packs.

**VII. WEIGH-IN PERIODS:**

- A. All players will weigh in before the season. If a player does not weigh in before the season, that player must be weighed in by an Alamance Parks Department employee before he/she is eligible to play.
- B. (12 & Under Only) the minimum playing weight is 75 pounds for the SWAC Tournament.
- C. If a weight restricted player loses weight during the season, that player is eligible to be re-weighed by an Alamance Parks Department employee and have his/her restriction changed or removed. This is by appointment only. Parents must call the Alamance Parks Department at 336-570-6761 to make an appointment.
- D. Players will be weighed in again at mid-season. Our mid-season weigh-ins will only be for players that are within 15 pounds of the weight restriction threshold.
  - a. For example, we will only be weighing players who last weighed in at (8u: 85 lbs. and above, 10u: 110 lbs. and above, & 12u: 135 lbs. and above)
- E. There will be no weigh-ins at the ballfield on game day.

**VIII. PROTESTS:**

- A. Protests can only be made concerning the eligibility of players (age and residence). Any player being found ineligible due to age or residence will result in forfeiture of all games in which this individual has participated.
- B. Protests concerning the eligibility of players whether it be age or residence may simply be called to the attention of the Alamance Parks Department. NO FORMAL PROTEST REQUIRED.

**IX. AWARDS:**

- A. A Team plaque and individual medallions will be awarded to the County Champion.
- B. In the event of a tie for the Conference Championship (determined by win-loss records), both teams will be declared co-champions, but head to head play will determine how the teams are seeded for the tournament.)
- C. A team plaque will be awarded to the Conference Champions.
- D. A Finalist plaque will be awarded to the County Runner-up

**X. OFFICIALS:**

- A. All officials will be furnished and assigned by the Football Booking Agent.
- B. Officials will have complete control of all games.
- C. After the game has begun, the assigned officials or recreation staff will be responsible for discontinuing the game for any reason.
- D. The officials' decision on all calls will be final.

**XI. PRACTICES:**

- A. No-contact practices must not begin prior to week of July 31<sup>st</sup>. (Helmets Only)
- B. Practices in full equipment must not begin prior to week of August 7<sup>th</sup>.
- C. Limitations on the number of practices:
  - 1. Pre-Season - Each team will be allowed a maximum of three 2-hour practices per week in the pre-season.
  - 2. During Season - Each team will be allowed a maximum of two 2-hour practices per week if they have a game scheduled. If a team has a "bye", they will be allowed three 2-hour practices that week.

**XII. "MERCY RULE" (ALL AGE GROUPS)**

- A. With a lead of 24 or more points in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, the clock will become a running clock for everyone. The clock will only stop for time-outs. If the lead gets back below 24 points, the clock will resume to normal rules.
- B. Instead of setting up for a kickoff return, the team that is trailing 24 or more points in the 4<sup>th</sup> will get the ball at their own 35-yard line when they are within this Mercy Rule status.

**The Alamance Parks Department does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services.**

# 8 & Under - Rules

## Game Time & 5<sup>th</sup> Quarter

- A. North Carolina High School Federation Rules and Regulations will be adopted with the following exception of quarters which will be eight (8) minutes. Four, eight-minute quarters will constitute a game.
- B. The clock will only stop for touchdowns, time outs and penalties with an exception of the last two (2) minutes of each half, in which the clock will be regulation (see 12u regulation clock exceptions). Halftime is four (4) minutes long. The clock starts on the ready for play signal from the Referee after a kickoff or change of possession.
- C. There will be a 5<sup>th</sup> Quarter that will begin right before the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter. The Visiting Team will start on offense and will start from the defensive team's 10 yard line and have 4 downs to score. Any turnover (interception or fumble) will be blown dead when the defense gains possession of the ball. Any scoring in this 5<sup>th</sup> quarter period will not be counted for that game. The offensive team will reset at the 10 yard line after a touch down or failed 4<sup>th</sup> down attempt. This will continue until the teams switch up on offense and defense after 4 minutes. (It is encouraged to allow the players who don't play as much in the regular game minutes to get their mandatory playing time). Each team may have one (1) Coach on the field for offense and defense.
- D. Mandatory Playing Rule – For teams with 24 or fewer dressed players, each player must play a minimum of 9 plays per game. For teams with 25-33 dressed players, each player must play a minimum of 7 plays per game. For teams with 34 or more dressed players, each player must play a minimum of 5 plays per game. (Fifth Quarter plays do count as plays per game). **Two (2) time-outs per half.**

## Scoring

- A. If a team establishes a 24-point lead or more in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter, they must run the football between the tackles when having possession on offense. Failure to do so will result in a loss of down. The clock will continue to run throughout the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter except for time-outs.
- B. On an extra point attempt the offensive team can run it in for one (1) point or pass it in for (2) two points. If the ball is turned over during the extra point attempt to the defensive team, the play will stop immediately.

## General Rules

- A. There are no kick-offs in 8u. The "receiving team" will gain possession of the ball on their own 35 yard line.
- B. Ten (10) yards will be assessed for a major penalty when playing on an 80 yard field.
- C. The Offensive Center will be allowed to snap the ball with no one directly lined up over him. The defensive player must line up one (1) yard away from the center. The only time the defense player is allowed to line up over center will be if the offense is inside their 10 yard line, otherwise the center is protected.

## Coaches

- A. There will only be seven (7) total Coaches per team allowed on the sidelines.
- B. All Coaches must have passed an Alamance Parks Background Check to be eligible to coach.
- C. Only the Head Coach is allowed to speak to the Football Officials.
- D. One coach is allowed to be on the field with the players to assist in lining them up for offense and defense.

## Punting

- A. On 4<sup>th</sup> down, the offensive team's coach will tell the referee what his/her team will do.
- a. If punting, the referee takes the ball and marks it 20 yards from the previous spot. Offensive and defensive teams switch.
- i. Note: If a team decides to punt inside their opponent's 25 yard line, the ball will be placed half the distance to the goal line.

## Weight Restrictions

A. Players exceeding 100 lbs. and in the range of (100.1-110.0 lbs.) will be eligible to play only the offensive and defensive lines (NO SPECIAL TEAMS). They will be assigned a (GREEN) helmet sticker for the back of their helmet and must line up with at least one hand on the ground. Each team can have only two weight restricted players on the offensive and defensive line during the play. They will be allowed to line up next to each other during the play. They will not be allowed to carry or advance the ball during the play. If this player gains possession of the ball by a fumble or interception, the play will be called dead on possession.

B. Players exceeding the 110.0 lbs. weight threshold will still be allowed to play. This player will wear an (ORANGE) colored sticker on the back of their helmet to signify their restrictive positioning and still be required to line up with at least one hand on the ground. Each team can still only have two (2) weight restricted players on the offensive line during a play. Restrictions for this player: must be an offensive line (between the tackles), must use pass-blocking technique (open hands with extended arms), must stay inside the free blocking zone, cannot block downfield on long run or pass plays, and not allowed to (pancake, chop block, or pull). Violation of these restriction will result in a live ball foul, no loss of down, 10-yard penalty from the spot of the foul. On change of possession (fumble or interception), this player is allowed to tackle the ball carrier. To protect this player, an unnecessary roughness penalty will be called on a defensive player who engages this player while they are catching up from behind the play

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# 10 & Under - Rules

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## Game Time & 5<sup>th</sup> Quarter

- A. North Carolina High School Federation Rules and Regulations will be adopted with the following exception of quarters which will be eight (8) minutes. **Four (4) eight (8) minute quarters will constitute a game.**
- B. The clock will only stop for touchdowns, time outs and penalties with an exception of the last two (2) minutes of each half, in which the clock will be regulation (see 12u regulation clock exceptions). Halftime is four (4) minutes long. **Two (2) time-outs per half.** The clock starts on the ready for play signal from the Referee after a kickoff or change of possession.
- C. There will be a 5th Quarter that will begin right before the 1st Quarter. The Visiting Team will start on offense and will start from the defensive team's 10-yard line and have 4 downs to score. Any turnover (interception or fumble) will be blown dead when the defense gains possession of the ball. Any scoring in this 5th quarter period will not be counted for that game. The offensive team will reset at the 10-yard line after a touch down or failed 4th down attempt. This will continue until the teams switch up on offense and defense after 4 minutes. (It is encouraged to allow the players who don't play as much in the regular game minutes to get their mandatory playing time). Each team may have one (1) Coach on the field for offense and defense.
- D. Mandatory Playing Rule – For teams with 24 or fewer dressed players, each player must play a minimum of 9 plays per game. For teams with 25-33 dressed players, each player must play a minimum of 7 plays per game. For teams with 34 or more dressed players, each player must play a minimum of 5 plays per game. (Fifth Quarter plays do count as plays per game)

## Scoring

- A. If a team establishes a 24-point lead or more in the 4th Quarter, they must run the football between the tackles when having possession on offense. Failure to do so will result in a loss of down. The clock will continue to run throughout the 4th Quarter except for time-outs.
- B. On an extra point attempt the offensive team can run it in for one (1) point or pass it in for (2) two points. If the ball is turned over during the extra point attempt to the defensive team, the play will stop immediately.

## General Rules

- A. Ten (10) yards will be assessed for a major penalty when playing on an 80 yard field.

## Coaches

- A. There will only be seven (7) total Coaches per team allowed on the sidelines. All Coaches must have passed an Alamance Parks Background Check to be eligible to coach.
- B. Only the Head Coach is allowed to speak to the Football Officials.

## Punting

- A. On 4<sup>th</sup> down, the offense's Head Coach will tell the official what his/her team will do. The officials must then notify the defensive head coach of what the offense will do. If punting, the team that is punting has two (2) options:
- (A) The referee takes the ball and marks it 20 yards from the previous spot. Offensive and defensive teams switch. Note: If a team decides to punt inside their opponent's 25yard line, the ball will be placed half the distance to the goal line.
- (B) The team that is punting may snap it to their punter with no rush from the opposing team. The team that is punting cannot release off the line until the ball crosses the line of scrimmage. The receiving team is allowed to return the punt. The punting team is not allowed to fake the punt.

## Weight Restrictions

- A. Players exceeding 125 lbs. and in the range of (125.1-135.0 lbs.) will be eligible to play only the offensive and defensive lines (NO SPECIAL TEAMS). They will be assigned a (GREEN) helmet sticker for the back of their helmet and must line up with at least one hand on the ground. Each team can have only two weight restricted players on the offensive and defensive line during the play. They will be allowed to line up next to each other during the play. They will not be allowed to carry or advance the ball during the play. If this player gains possession of the ball by a fumble or interception, the play will be called dead on possession.
- B. Players exceeding the 135.0 lbs. weight threshold will still be allowed to play. This player will wear an (ORANGE) colored sticker on the back of their helmet to signify their restrictive positioning and still be required to line up with at least one hand on the ground. Each team can still only have two (2) weight restricted players on the offensive line during a play. Restrictions for this player: must be an offensive line (between the tackles), must use pass-blocking technique (open hands with extended arms), must stay inside the free blocking zone, cannot block downfield on long run or pass plays, and not allowed to (pancake, chop block, or pull). Violation of these restriction will result in a live ball foul, no loss of down, 10-yard penalty from the spot of the foul. On change of possession (fumble or interception), this player is allowed to tackle the ball carrier. To protect this player, an unnecessary roughness penalty will be called on a defensive player who engages this player while they are catching up from behind the play

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# 12 & Under - Rules

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## **Game Time**

- A. North Carolina High School Federation Rules and Regulations will be adopted with the following exception of quarters which will be eight (8) minutes. Four (4) eight (8) minute quarters will constitute a game.
- B. The game clock will stop in accordance to a regulation clock with one exception.
  - a). In line with Junior Varsity and Middle School football games, the clock starts on the ready for play signal from the Referee after a kickoff or change of possession.
- C. Each team gets two (2) timeouts per half.
- D. Halftime is four (4) minutes long.
- E. Mandatory Playing Rule – For teams with 24 or fewer dressed players, each player must play a minimum of 9 plays per game. For teams with 25-33 dressed players, each player must play a minimum of 7 plays per game. For teams with 34 or more dressed players, each player must play a minimum of 5 plays per game.

## **Scoring**

- A. On an extra point attempt the offensive team can run it in for one (1) point or pass it in for (2) two points. If the ball is turned over during the extra point attempt to the defensive team, the play will stop immediately.

## **Coaches**

- A. There will only be seven (7) total Coaches per team allowed on the sidelines. All Coaches must have passed an Alamance Parks Background Check to be eligible to coach.
- B. Only the Head Coach is allowed to speak to the Football Officials.

## **Punting**

- A. On 4<sup>th</sup> down, the offensive team is allowed to punt or fake the punt.

## **Weight Restrictions**

A. Players exceeding 150 lbs. and in the range of (150.1-160.0 lbs.) will be eligible to play only the offensive and defensive lines (NO SPECIAL TEAMS). They will be assigned a (GREEN) helmet sticker for the back of their helmet and must line up with at least one hand on the ground. Each team can have only two weight restricted players on the offensive and defensive line during the play. They will be allowed to line up next to each other during the play. They will not be allowed to carry or advance the ball during the play. If this player gains possession of the ball by a fumble or interception, the play will be called dead on possession.

B. Players exceeding the 160.0 lbs. weight threshold will still be allowed to play. This player will wear an (ORANGE) colored sticker on the back of their helmet to signify their restrictive positioning and still be required to line up with at least one hand on the ground. Each team can still only have two (2) weight restricted players on the offensive line during a play. Restrictions for this player: must be an offensive line (between the tackles), must use pass-blocking technique (open hands with extended arms), must stay inside the free blocking zone, cannot block downfield on long run or pass plays, and not allowed to (pancake, chop block, or pull). Violation of these restriction will result in a live ball foul, no loss of down, 10-yard penalty from the spot of the foul. On change of possession (fumble or interception), this player is allowed to tackle the ball carrier. To protect this player, an unnecessary roughness penalty will be called on a defensive player who engages this player while they are catching up from behind the play