

Modified Football Rules Interpretations  
August 23, 2007

Freshman Football

Freshman football-teams that consist entirely of 9<sup>th</sup> Graders will play NOT by modified but rather by Federation rules as do JV teams. They will play 12 minute periods with no overtime. They will incorporate the entire high school kicking game into freshman football games. There will be no limitations on formations as in the modified rules. The 50-79 numbering rule for lineman is waived; however the pass eligibility numbering rule is in effect. Freshman may not use the small ball.

Active officials will voucher the JV game fee of \$ 55. Non-actives voucher the same \$ 47.50 fee for games at all levels. Freshman teams may not opt to play a 5<sup>th</sup> period.

The “**Modified Rules**” will be used by teams that consist of 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Graders.

The “**Modified Rules**” are as follows:

1. No kickoffs: Start play with a scrimmage down @ the offensive team’s 35 yard line.
2. Offensive formations
  - Maximum 1 yard splits between linemen.
  - Maximum 1 yard splits between linemen and slot back.

***NEW THIS YEAR:***

*2 wide outs are allowed, but not more than 10 yard split from tackle or end. The wide outs may be either, or both, split ends and/or flankers, but the formation is limited to only one wide out on a side.*

**AS IN THE PAST:**

No shifts or motion allowed BUT, NEW THIS YEAR, motion is allowed only by a set back to create a second wide out formation. To be legally in motion, the set back must start from a set position, in the backfield, either directly behind the snapper, or on the side of the snapper that is the direction of his motion. That is, the man in motion cannot cross an imaginary line through the snapper and parallel to the sidelines.

Refer to the diagrams of formations now legal under this rule change. This rule change is being tried statewide and we look for feedback from coaches and officials.

Unbalanced formations are permitted.

No more than 2 players outside of the inside tackle at the snap.

Refer to diagrams page 8 of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) Modified Program book.

3. Defensive formations:

Please see diagrams on the page 10 of NYSPHSAA Modified Program book.

- 6 linemen within 2 yards of ball.
- 2 linebacker's minimum of 1 yard deeper than deepest lineman.
- 3 defensive backs must be at least 3 yards behind deepest linebacker.
- Scrimmage plays where the ball will be snapped inside 10 yard line, the 3 deep backs (only) may move up 1 yard.

**“Walk-a-way”** position allowed in response to offense wide out where one lineman can become a linebacker (5-3 vs. usual 6-2) but that linebacker can be no more than one-half the distance between tackle and wide out.

***NEW THIS YEAR**, in response to the two wide out rule, the defense can have two players in “walk-a-way” positions, but only in response to a two wide out offensive formation, thus a “4-4” vs. a 5-3 or the usual 6-2.*

R is not permitted “walk-a-way” position in response to Kickers (K's) scrimmage kick formation involving 2 wide outs.

No “movement” at the snap, i.e. no shifts or stunts to confuse offense.

Defense does not have to balance offense laterally.

4. All blocking is above the waist, except in the free blocking zone, which, in modified football, is only 4 yards by 8 yards.

5. Scrimmage kicks, as in punting, are “dead”.

- Kickers must declare that “we are punting.”
- Don't allow players to get lazy in this dead ball kicking down. Talk to them. Keep them accountable to be in legal formation, “set” at the snap. Do not let K abuse the timing rule, for example, by running time off the clock late in the game; K with the lead and R needs the ball and time to score.
- In spotting the ball after the dead ball punt, do not allow R to gain an advantage by muffing or batting the kick back toward K's goal line. R is responsible to catch or recover the kick and that would be the dead ball spot.

6. All try for point after TD (kick, pass or run) are live. All field goal attempts are live. Successful try by:

- Kick = 2 points
- Pass or Run = 1 point.

7. Four or five period games, all scores count.

8. Following a safety, the team scoring the safety gets the ball at the 50.

9. Regulation or small size ball (10 pounds pressure) permitted.

10. Jersey numbering rules waived.
11. Metal cleats are not allowed.
12. Length of game is: Four 10 minute periods or Five 8 minute periods or Five 10 minute periods. Officials will be compensated with an additional one-fourth game fee for any Five by ten minute period games. ( $\$47.50 + \$11.88 = \$59.33$  game fee)
13. Halftime (10 minutes minimum) after period 2.
14. Fast whistle.
15. Officials are to help these kids, for example, by talking with the captains at the toss of the coin ceremony and prior to toss and talking with the players at appropriate dead ball times. Show them what is expected of them.
16. Coaches are responsible for “A” skilled players and “B” skilled players, when they play etc. This is not the concern of officials. Please see “GAME FORMAT” information reprinted from the Section III Modified Sports Handbook at the end of this summary.
17. Three man mechanics on the web:  
[http://www.nfhs.org/web/2004/02/officials\\_corner\\_football.aspx](http://www.nfhs.org/web/2004/02/officials_corner_football.aspx)