



Oregon School Activities Association

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August 19, 2019

To: Athletic Directors and Head Football Coaches
From: Brad Garrett, Assistant Executive Director
Subject: Football Reminders for the 2019 Season

Included within this memo are several items specific to football that I would like you to review with your staff as we begin a new fall season and other reminders to share with coaches and administrators.

1. Practice Model

The Practice Model, in effect beginning today, will require most schools to change their practice structure. Please familiarize yourself with this policy. Notable requirements contained in the policy include:

- Prohibition on consecutive days of multiple practice sessions
- A teaching session as one of the practice sessions on the first two multiple practice days (the intensity, duration and pace of all practice components in a teaching session shall be modified from a normal practice session)
- Maximum of one hour of weight training before and/or after practice on a single practice session day. Players may only attend one weight training session on a single practice day.
- Helmets only on Days 1 and 2. Helmets and shoulder pads only on Day 3. Full protective equipment on Day 4.
- Beginning Week 3 teams are restricted to a maximum of 90 minutes of full contact in any week, excluding games. Full contact is defined using the USA Football definitions of levels of contact. Thud, and Live Action are considered "full contact" - a video showing these levels has been posted to the OSAA website at <http://www.osaa.org/activities/fbl/information/video>.
- On multiple session practice days, only one of those sessions can include "full contact" as defined above.

2. Quarter Rule.

- 1) **Daily.** A student shall not compete in more than four quarters each day. Participation in any play in a quarter shall constitute participation in that quarter. If a student appears in more than four quarters in a day, the game in which the student exceeds the limit shall be forfeited.
 - a) **NOTE:** A student may be allowed a fifth quarter of participation if the student plays 12 plays or less in any two of the student's first four quarters that day.
- 2) **Weekly.** A student shall not compete in more than five quarters for the 6A, 5A and six quarters for the 4A, 3A, 2A and 1A each week. To be eligible for six quarters (4A, 3A, 2A, 1A) there has to be a minimum of 48 hours between contests. All players (6A – 1A) are limited to 45 total quarters per year during the regular season. The week is defined as running from Tuesday through Monday. Participation in any play in a quarter shall constitute participation in that quarter, no exceptions. If a student appears in more than five quarters in one week, the game in which the student exceeds the limit shall be forfeited. If a student appears in more than 45 total quarters during the regular season, the game in which the student exceeds the limit shall be forfeited.
 - a) **NOTE:** 6A and 5A students may be allowed a sixth quarter of participation if the student plays 12 plays or less in any two of the student's first five quarters that week.
- 3) **Adding a Fifth Quarter.** A fifth quarter may be played at the freshman level, or at the junior varsity level if there is no freshman team, providing both schools agree and the officials agree. The extra quarter is intended to provide an opportunity for those students whose play was limited in the regular contest. In no case shall a student exceed the quarter **limits outlined above.**

1. **Q.** May a student participate in two quarters at the varsity level during one week and three quarters at the JV level during another week and count the participation as one game?
 - A. No. At all classifications, in order for quarters at multiple levels to be counted as one game under the individual participation limitation, the participation must occur during the same week running from Tuesday through Monday.

2. Q. May a student play 12 plays or less in his fifth quarter of a day (or sixth quarter in a week) and count that as one of the two quarters of 12 plays or less?
A. No. The allowance of a fifth quarter in a day (or sixth quarter in a week) can only be triggered by two quarters of 12 plays or less during the student's first four quarters in a day (or first five quarters in a week).

3. Q. May a student be allowed a sixth quarter in a day (or seventh quarter in a week) by playing four quarters of 12 plays or less?
A. No. A maximum of one additional quarter may be allowed in a day (or a week). Even with the allowance of an additional quarter, there is no scenario under which a student may play more than five quarters in a day (or six quarters in a week).

3. Heat Index - Athletic Directors and coaches should subscribe to heat alerts through the OSAA website at <http://www.osaa.org/heat-index>. Alerts are sent about 11am daily when the forecasted heat index in your area is high. If an alert is received, the policy requires that schools check the actual heat index within one hour prior to the start of practice to determine if modifications must be made. If no alert is received, no action is required by the school.

4. Lightning Safety Guidelines – The OSAA has made a concerted effort to educate member schools and officials associations regarding the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. Once thunder is heard within 30 seconds of a visible lightning strike or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, all personnel, athletes and spectators should evacuate to available safe structures or shelters.

5. Proactive Planning:

- 1) Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
- 2) Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safer areas and determine the amount of time needed to get everyone to a designated safer area:
 - a) A designated safer place is a substantial building with plumbing and wiring where people live or work, such as a school, gymnasium or library. An alternate safer place from the threat of lightning is a fully enclosed (not convertible or soft top) metal car or school bus.
- 3) Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - a) When thunder is heard or lightning is seen*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safer location immediately.
 - b) 30-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is witnessed* prior to resuming play.
 - c) Any subsequent thunder or lightning* after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
 - d) When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in making a decision to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices and, thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning* should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning-detection device.

*- At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.

- 4) Review the lightning safety policy annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel and train all personnel.
- 5) Inform student-athletes and their parents of the lightning policy at start of the season.

6. While **Jamborees** do not need approval from the OSAA, there are specific rules regarding the format of Jamborees in Football. You can find this information in the OSAA Handbook under the Participation Limitations section and on the OSAA website within the OSAA Football Plan at <http://www.osaa.org/activities/fbl>.

7. **State Rule Interpreter Updates** will be distributed to all coaches beginning this year. These updates are provided to all officials each week and contain information regarding rule interpretations, enforcement procedures, and general comments on a variety of issues that occurred the week prior. Questions regarding the SRI Updates should be directed to Mike Bezner (OSAA Football State Rules Interpreter) at mikebezner@comcast.net.

8. **Any person (paid or volunteer)** who is located within the team box or press box and has the potential to provide instruction to players or coaches is required to meet the coaching certification requirements outlined in Executive Board Policy #8 – Certification of Athletic Directors and Coaches. This includes individuals who are acting in any type of support role. This interpretation would exclude any individuals providing medical support during a contest.

Highlighted 2019 NFHS Football Rule Changes:

(See <http://nfhs.org/sports-resource-content/football-rules-changes-2019/> for complete list of changes)

RULE 3 – SECTION 6 – PLAY CLOCK, BALL READY FOR PLAY AND DELAY

ART. 1 . . . Play clock and ready-for-play:

a. Play clock:

1. 25 seconds will be on the play clock and start on the ready-for-play signal:
 - (a) Prior to a try following a score;
 - (b) To start a period or overtime series;
 - (c) Following administration of an inadvertent whistle;
 - (d) Following a charged time-out;
 - (e) Following an official's time-out as in 3-5-7 or 3-5-10, except for 3-5-7b; and
 - (f) Following the stoppage of the play clock by the referee for any other reason.

PLAY CLOCK
RULES 2-35, 3-6-1, 3-6-2a, 7-2-1



Referee gives ready-for-play signal and 25-second play clock begins before a try following a score; to start a period or overtime series; following administration of an inadvertent whistle; following a charged timeout and following an officials timeout.

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2. 40 seconds will be on the play clock after a down other than specified in 3-6-1a(1), and start when the ball is declared dead by a game official

PLAY CLOCK
RULES 2-35, 3-6-1, 3-6-2a, 7-2-1



The play clock is set to 40 and is started immediately when a running play ends, team A gains a first down or after an incomplete pass.

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RULE 9 – SECTION 4 – ILLEGAL PERSONAL CONTACT

ART. 3 . . . No player or nonplayer shall: ...

k. Grab the inside back or side collar, or the name plate area (directly below the back collar), of either the shoulder pads or the jersey of the runner and subsequently pull (backward or sideward) that opponent to the ground (Horse-collar), even if possession is lost. The horse-collar foul is enforced as a live-ball foul.

ILLEGAL HORSE-COLLAR TACKLE RULES 9-4-3k



The name plate area (directly below the back collar) has been added to the criteria for an illegal horse-collar tackle. It is a foul to grab the inside back, name plate area or side collar of either the shoulder pads or the jersey of the runner and subsequently pull (backwards or sideward) that opponent to the ground, even if possession is lost. The horse-collar is enforced as a live-ball foul.

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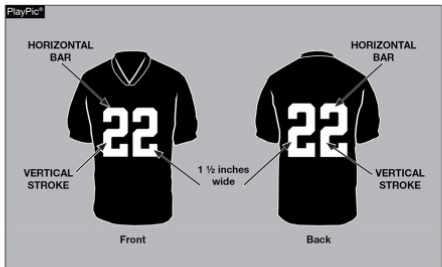
RULE 1 – SECTION 5 – PLAYER EQUIPMENT

ART. 1 . . . Mandatory equipment. Each player shall participate while wearing the following pieces of properly fitted equipment, which shall be professionally manufactured and not altered to decrease protection: ...

c. Numbers

1. The numbers shall be clearly visible and legible using Arabic numbers 1-99 inclusive and shall be on the front and back of the jersey.
2. The numbers, inclusive of any border(s), shall be centered horizontally at least 8 inches and 10 inches high on front and back, respectively.
3. The entire body of the number (the continuous horizontal bars and vertical strokes) exclusive of any border(s) shall be approximately 1½-inches wide.
4. The color and style of the number shall be the same on the front and back.
5. Through the 2023 season, the body of the number (the continuous horizontal bars and vertical strokes) shall be either:
 - (a) a continuous color(s) contrasting with the jersey color; or
 - (b) the same solid color(s) as the jersey with a minimum of one border that is at least ¼-inch in width of a single solid contrasting color.
6. **Effective with the 2024 season, the entire body of the number (the continuous horizontal bars and vertical strokes) shall be a single solid color that clearly contrasts with the body color of the jersey.**

FOOTBALL JERSEY NUMBERS RULE 1-5-1c



The entire body of the number (the continuous horizontal bars and vertical strokes) exclusive of any border(s) shall be approximately 1½ – inches wide.

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Reminders for 2019 Football

1. Home game jersey specifications have been revised to provide schools and manufacturers additional clarification regarding the current trend of utilizing lighter gray shades. All home jerseys must be at least 70% grayscale on the chart below. The implementation date of 2021 affords schools and manufacturers the opportunity to ensure that newer dark-colored jerseys will clearly contrast with white jerseys. The requirement for contrasting colors to white is not a new rule, and this new clarification will allow changes to be made during normal replacement cycles.

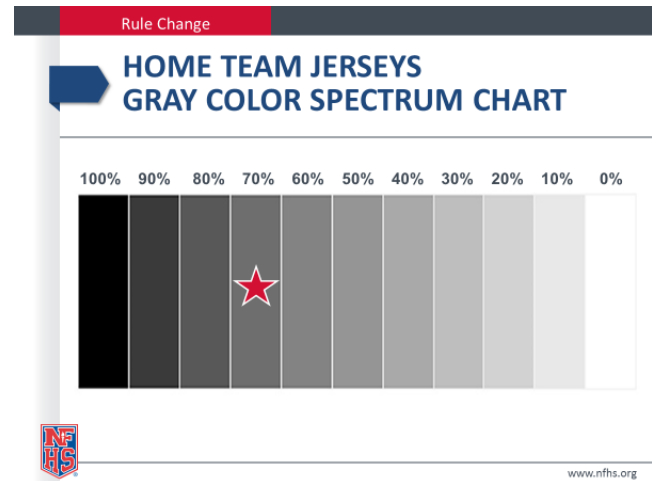
Rule Change

HOME TEAM JERSEYS RULE 1-5-1(b)3

- The home jersey is to be a dark color that clearly contrasts with white. The home jersey on the left (A) is currently legal. The home jersey on the right (B) will be illegal when the rule takes effect in 2021.



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2. The jerseys shown in the slides below are illegal under 1-5-1b (1). The sleeve design shown in both photos clearly allows the shoulder pad to remain uncovered with little to no hope of conforming to the rule. Teams attempting to participate in this style of jersey are not properly equipped and shall be required to comply with the rule prior to continued participation.

If illegal equipment is found after verification by the head coach that all players are properly equipped an unsportsmanlike conduct foul shall be assessed against the head coach and the corresponding 15-yard penalty assessed prior to the start of the game. All players in the illegal jerseys will be required to comply with 1-5-1b (1) prior to participating.

The NFHS Football Rules Committee continues to see examples of auxiliary equipment not limited to back pads, rib-belts and other types of equipment containing hard surfaces that go uncovered during play. Coaches and game officials are reminded that if illegal equipment is observed prior to the snap the play will not be allowed to start and a 5-yard penalty assessed for failure to properly wear mandatory equipment prior to the snap against the offending team.

Equipment that is otherwise legal and becomes illegal during play shall be corrected prior to the next down. Game officials are expected to be diligent in helping players identify and correct issues with equipment as necessary between downs. Any player unable to correct the illegal equipment shall be removed from play until the issue can be resolved.

ILLEGAL FOOTBALL JERSEY
(SHOULDER PAD NOT COVERED)



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ILLEGAL FOOTBALL JERSEY
(BACK PAD NOT COVERED)



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ILLEGAL FOOTBALL JERSEY
(SHOULDER PAD NOT COVERED)



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- Recent trends have produced a variety of slogans, sayings, and mottos being placed on football jerseys. Jerseys that contain anything other than school's nickname, school logo, school name and/or player name within the body and/or on the shoulders are not legal.

If discovered prior to the game, after verification by the head coach that all players are properly equipped, an unsportsmanlike foul shall be assessed to the head coach and a 15-yard penalty assessed prior to the start of the game.

Editorial Change

FOOTBALL JERSEYS RULES 1-5-1b(2)a, (3)a

- The front and back of the football jersey may contain the school name, school logo, school nickname or player name (PlayPic A). Team nicknames such as seen on the jersey in PlayPic B are illegal.

PlayPic A

LEGAL



PlayPic B

ILLEGAL



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Directives for 2019 Football

- Required Heads Up Football Certification.** OSAA rules require that any football coach (not attending a Player Safety Coach clinic) complete the USA Football Heads Up Certification prior to assuming coaching duties and to recertify annually prior to the beginning of each Association year. To recertify coaches must complete four courses Shoulder Tackling, Blocking and Defeating Blocks, and Equipment Fitting along with Concussion, Preventing Heat Illness, and Sudden Cardiac.

Additionally, each member school sponsoring football is required to identify a Player Safety Coach. Each Player Safety Coach is required to attend an in-person clinic annually prior to the start of the Association year that is conducted by a USA Football Master Trainer in preparation for implementing and overseeing the primary components of Heads Up Football at their school.

Coaches attending a Player Safety Coach Workshop are required to complete the Concussion and Preventing Heat Illness courses only starting this year. Shoulder Tackling, Blocking and Defeating Blocks, and Equipment Fitting along with Sudden Cardiac will be covered during the in-person clinic.

A current list of schools who have met the Players Safety Coach requirement will be posted to <http://www.osaa.org/activities/fbl> once finalized.

2. **Coin Flip Mechanic** – The pre-game coin flip will be conducted 3-min prior to scheduled game time. A recommended timeline is listed below: (*Adjust as necessary for various start times*). Failure by a team to have captains present and ready for the coin flip 3-min prior to scheduled kickoff will result in an Unsportsmanlike penalty charged to the Head Coach.

5:30pm -	Field open for pre-game warm-up
6:30pm -	Officials should meet the head coaches to cover any issues before the game, provide a list of the officials for the game, cover any unusual plays, ensure all players are legally equipped, discuss halftime length, etc. The game clock should be set at 30 minutes.
6:50pm -	National Anthem and teams should be introduced
6:57 pm-	With 3-min on the game clock the field must be cleared, and no more than four team members in uniform meet with officials for the coin toss and sportsmanship message.
7:00 pm-	Kickoff

3. **Enforcement of Required Equipment Rules**

- a. Officials choosing not to enforce the following interpretation are subject to individual and/or association sanctions including reduction or elimination of playoff games.
- b. Coaches shall consider this a directive from the OSAA office and therefore are requested to work with the officials in accomplishing these tasks. Cooperation makes life better for all involved.

The OSAA is working pro-actively with coaches, athletic directors and officials to prevent and resolve illegal equipment issues before they surface. By rule, each player shall wear mandatory equipment prior to participating. A full description of mandatory equipment can be found in NFHS Rule 1-5. Coaches are required to verify their players are properly equipped and in accordance with the rules in the pre-game meeting. While football officials will observe players in their pre-game warm-ups and verbally notify the Head Coach of equipment violations, the onus for insuring that players are properly equipped has always belonged to the coaching staff. The provisions of NFHS Rule 1-5 were written with the safety of the player's as an indisputable goal. Knowing and practicing the provisions of NFHS Rule 1-5 will help us all achieve the OSAA's goal of preventing and resolving any issues before they surface.

OSAA Medical Aspects of Sports Committee Statement on Football Helmets and Concussion Risk

The recognition and proper management of concussions in all sports continues to receive a great deal of attention. With this attention has come a focus on preventing these injuries. In football, much of the discussion about prevention in the media has centered upon the helmet. Despite limited evidence to support such beliefs, parents, athletes and even coaches place much faith in the ability of the helmet to prevent a concussion. **It is this committee's concern, and the concern of other medical experts, that the primary focus on the helmet to prevent concussion is misguided.** Though it sounds counter-intuitive, there is no evidence that helmets actually prevent concussions from occurring. It must be remembered that helmets were introduced to football decades ago to eliminate skull fractures, not concussions.

The heightened concern for concussion and the increasing variety of football helmets available has led parents and coaches to seek out the helmet that they believe will best protect a player from concussion. While a number of new football helmets have incorporated new materials and designs, there is no reliable evidence that any single brand or style of football helmet is protective against concussion. Based upon the current available medical evidence, **the OSAA MASC believes that no current football helmet brand or style offers superior protection from concussion in comparison to other helmets.**

The OSAA MASC endorses the proper fitting and maintenance of all NOCSAE-certified football helmets. Coaches should be trained in proper helmet fitting and helmets should be inspected regularly for proper inflation, cracks, or damage to the chinstrap and its attachments. The OSAA MASC believes that the most important step in preventing concussions in football is the elimination of helmet to helmet contact and strongly supports the enforcement of the current rules to limit the initiation of contact with the helmet and to eliminate helmet to helmet contact.

In 2009, 65% of all concussion in high school football resulted from helmet to helmet contact. Much like cervical spine injuries diminished greatly with the adoption of the rule banning spearing in the 1970's, we believe that a reduction in helmet to helmet contact will result in a reduced number of concussions in high school football. This principle must apply to practices, as well as games.



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2019 Oregon Sub-Varsity Rules Modifications

Mutual agreement to use the following NFHS kicking rules deviations at the sub-varsity level is required of the participating schools prior to the coin flip. Failure to have mutual agreement prior to the coin flip results in the game being played by NFHS rules. If modifications are agreed upon the kicking game modifications outlined below apply to both kickoffs and punts. Once an option is selected it can't be modified during the game for any reason. It is recommended that these modifications be discussed and agreed upon by Athletic Directors and coaches well before game time, preferably in the week leading up to the game.

Kickoff Modifications

- Options for the team that wins the coin toss will be to defer choices **OR** choose to go on either offense or defense **OR** choose the goal that team will defend. The team on offense will start 1st and 10 at their 35-yard line anywhere between the hash marks. The game clock will start on the snap.
- Following a score, the non-scoring team will put the ball in play 1st and 10 at their 35-yard line after their opponents PAT. The ball will be placed on the 35-yard line anywhere between the hash marks. The game clock will start on the snap.
- Following a safety, the ball will be placed on the Team B 45-yard line, 35 yards from the Team A 20-yard line, anywhere between the hash marks. The game clock will start on the snap.
- Following a touchback, the ball will be placed on the Team B 20-yard line anywhere between the hash marks. The game clock will start on the snap.

Punt Modifications

- The receiving team will put the ball in play 1st and 10 at the succeeding spot 35-yards from the previous spot anywhere between the hash marks. If the previous spot is on or inside the Team B 45-yard line, the ball will be placed at the Team B 20-yard line. The game clock will start on the snap

Note: Field goal attempts and PAT's by placekick will be conducted under NFHS Football Rules in all situations.