

Provincial Championship Rules

Newly Updated

Unless otherwise specified, games will be conducted in accordance with the Canadian Rulebook for Amateur Tackle Football.

These rules and regulations apply to U14 and U16 provincial playoff games between teams from two difference conferences.

Conferences:

- (1) Capital Area Minor Football Association (CAMFA)
- (2) Fundy Minor Football Association (FMFA)
- (3) Greater Moncton Football Association (GMFA)

Playoff Structure: Three conference champions will advance to the provincial semi-finals. The seedings will rotate on a three year cycle in the following order:

Year A = Host Semi Finals

Year B = Host Provincial Finals

Year C = No Hosting

The conference champion hosting the provincial finals gets a bye to the finals, while the other two conference champions play in the semi finals.

Age Eligibility:

- (1) U14 – players cannot be older than 13 on December 31 in the year of play.
- (2) U16 – players cannot be older than 15 on December 31 in the year of play.

Player Weight Limits: There will be no weight limits.

Uniform Colors: Once the participating teams have been determined a comparison of uniform colours will be made. If they are too similar the hosting team must change jerseys to accommodate the visiting team.

Official Football:

- (1) The official game ball for U14 play will be the Wilson TDY 1714 composite leather football. It is required that a new ball be used for each playoff game.
- (2) The official game ball for U16 play will be the Wilson TDS 1715 "official size" composite leather football. It is required that a new ball be used for each playoff game.

Converts: A kicked convert is worth 2 points and will be kicked from the 5-yard line; a pass or run convert is worth 1 point and will be scrimmaged from the 5-yard line.

Number of Downs: Teams will play 4-down football with a 1-yard neutral zone.

Overhand Forward Pass requirement: The offence must throw a legal OVERHAND forward pass on at least 1 of the first 3 downs in each series of downs. Failure to do so will result in an "Illegal Procedure" penalty. Officials will not stop play until the ball is dead. A five (5) yard penalty will be applied and the down repeated. The offensive team will still be obligated to pass the ball again after the penalty has been applied.

- (1) Attempting to pass and getting sacked or being forced to run will not satisfy this rule. The ball must be thrown as a legal forward pass and must cross the line of scrimmage.
 - a. This does not apply to a screen pass.

- (2) A lateral pass will not satisfy this rule. Officials should point this out to a team that has just thrown a lateral pass.

The defensive team has the option to decline the penalty, let the play stand and bring up fourth down. The offensive team can run the ball on fourth down. To avoid this penalty teams are strongly advised to pass on either first or second down. ***The offence is not required to pass the ball in any set of downs that starts inside their own 15-yard line.***

High Tackle: Definition: Any tackle by a player that is initiated above the shoulder pads - specifically the neck area. *It is important to recognize that there will be situations when a tackle is initiated around the shoulder pad area, and because of player size differentials, or the ball carrier going down, the tackle could end up being around the neck area. In that case, it would be a judgment call by the Official. It will be important for Coaches to understand that this is separate from the "Facemask" penalty, and the new "Horse collar" rule."

Penalty: Unnecessary Roughness - 15 yards applied as per the rulebook.

Head Out of the Game /Unnecessary Roughness Rule: For the purpose of this rule, INTENT is NOT a factor when considering if it is a foul or not. The responsibility lies solely with the player initiating the hit or tackle to avoid the contact to the head and neck area.

- (1) Any SIGNIFICANT contact delivered TO THE HEAD OR NECK AREA of an opponent with the helmet, facemask, forearm, shoulder, or hands shall be ruled as unnecessary roughness.
- (2) Any SIGNIFICANT contact by a player with their HELMET to an opponent either in attempting a tackle or a block shall be ruled as unnecessary roughness.

Penalties:

1st Offence: Team A 15 yards DR; Team B 15 yards, automatic first down for team A.

2nd Offence by SAME PLAYER: Team A 15 yards DR; Team B 15 yards, automatic first down for team A *Referee will tell head coach that next infraction by that player will result in a disqualification.

3rd Offence by SAME PLAYER: Team A 25 yards DR, player ejected from game; Team B 25 yards DR, automatic first down, player ejected from game.

Exceptions:

- (1) Straight arm by ball carrier; A ball carrier is permitted to make contact to the helmet, facemask, or neck area of an opponent attempting to make a tackle with their hand provided there is no thrusting motion of the arm involved in making the contact to the head or neck area. After the hand is in contact with the potential tackler a pushing action is permitted to ward of the tackler. The hand may be on the facemask but must not grasp the facemask.
- (2) Short yardage plunge; A ball carrier may plunge headfirst toward a gap when attempting to gain a first down or a play at the goal line, either attempting to score or get out of the end zone. An opponent attempting to stop the runner may make unavoidable contact to the head or neck area of the runner due to the position the runner has assumed to gain the required distance, this contact shall not be considered a foul unless it involves SIGNIFICANT helmet to helmet contact. A short yardage play of this nature does not permit the ball carrier to lower their helmet and target a potential tackler with their helmet.

Blocking Restrictions: Initiating blocks below the waist is not permitted. Illegal blocks below the waist are a 15-yard penalty. Any player penalized twice for this infraction in the same game will not be permitted to play the remainder of the game.

Length and Timing of Games: Games will consist of 4 quarters of 12 minutes each for a total of 48 minutes of playing time. Except for the last 3 minutes of each half, the timing of games will be "straight time". The time clock will run continuously and only stop in the following situations:

- (1) A team time out. Each team will have 2 timeouts per half.
- (2) An officials' timeout.
- (3) A prolonged injury where a player is on the ground for more than 15 seconds.
- (4) A prolonged officials' conference or delay of more than 15 seconds.

During the last 3 minutes of each half the clock will stop after each play. It will start again in accordance with Rule 1 Section 5 Article 1 of the Canadian Rulebook for Amateur Tackle Football.

Half during regular season will be 5 minutes. During playoffs, halftime will be 10 minutes.

Mercy Rule: When a team has taken and maintained a lead of at least 30 points, the remainder of the game will be timed "straight time".

Taking a Knee: When a team advises the Referee that they are going to take a knee for the purpose of ending the half or a game, the Referee will advise both teams of what is going to take place so that there is no misunderstanding with either team on the field. After the Referee declares this, if during the next play a member of either team crosses the neutral zone in a threatening manner, even without physical contact being made, that player will be ejected from the game.

If the offense needs to take the knee more than once they are to declare that before each play and the Referee will advise both teams before each play. Score and field position are not factors, there is no play when the offense declares they are taking the knee.

Postponed Playoff Games: All playoff games cancelled due to inclement weather must be replayed at the earliest reasonable opportunity. If the hosting team does not have a lighted field satisfactory for the rescheduled game, it will lose home field advantage and therefore must travel to the other team's home field to complete the game.

Recommended setup for Championship Games: It is strongly recommended that the host team have a public address system in place at these games to introduce the team lineups and to do a play-by-play announcement. Game programs (typed team lineups will suffice) are also encouraged; as well as a visible scoreboard and a visible time clock. Coloured goal line pylons and yard line markers will also help present the professional image that we want to convey to the players and fans who attend the game.

Recommended Awards Presentation Procedure for Championship Games: At the end of the game, the two teams will shake hands and then line up on their respective 45-yard lines. Any player of the game awards will be presented first. Next the silver medals will be presented individually. Each player should have their name called out and have their "moment of glory" when they are given their medal. Then the gold medals will be presented in the same manner. Finally, the captains of the winning team will be called to midfield to receive the championship trophy and banner.

Fair Play Award: Selecting this award is a very "subjective" and difficult process. Consequently, the association hosting the provincial championship game will award this banner to one of its teams and it will be presented during halftime of the championship game. This procedure will guarantee that each association gets a banner every three years. It should also ensure good attendance at the ceremony by the team winning the award. Criteria for selection is the Football New Brunswick Fair Play Code.

Appeals: Any appeals must be submitted, in writing, to the Executive Director of FNB within 48 hours of the end of a game. The Executive of FNB will rule on any appeals. Appeals cannot be made based on alleged errors by game officials.