

# **Mt. Juliet** *Bears* Youth Football & Cheer



## **MT JULIET FLAG FOOTBALL RULE BOOK**



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## GAME CLOCK:

1. Each game is played in two 20-minute halves with a running clock.
2. Time outs will only consist of Officials time out, injury time out and team time out.
3. 5 Minute Half Time.
4. Each team receives two 60-second time outs per half. (No carry over)

## EQUIPMENT:

1. All players are required to use mouthpieces.
2. Players must remove all jewelry.
3. Flag Belts cannot be the same color as shorts or pants.
4. Jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants if they hang below the belt line.
5. Shorts and pants should not have pockets.
6. Players must wear shoes. Cleats with exposed metal are prohibited.

## SCORING:

1. Touchdowns = 6 points
2. Extra Points = 6-yard line = 1 point; 12-yard line = 2 points
3. Safety = 2 points
4. If one team gains a 35-point advantage, the game is immediately final and the remaining time may be played as a scrimmage.

## PULLING FLAGS:

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends. The ball is spotted where the player took possession of the ball.

## DRIVES:

1. There are no kickoffs.
2. Drives begin on the 5 -yard line at the beginning of each half. Turnovers via interceptions and downs will be spotted where the ball is down.
3. Drives consist of 4 plays to make a first down and 4 plays to score a touchdown once a team passes mid-field.
4. Extra points CAN be returned and will count for 2 points regardless if the offensive team was going for a 1 or 2-point conversion.

## SNAPPING THE BALL/FORMATIONS:

1. The Center must snap the ball through his/her legs to a player in the backfield.
2. Each time the ball is spotted the offense has 30 seconds to snap the ball. A 5-yard penalty will be assessed for delay of game.
3. Only one player can be in motion at a time. Arena motion is NOT allowed.
4. Offense must have a minimum of 1 player on the line of scrimmage (Center) and a maximum of 4 players on the line of scrimmage.

## RUNNING PLAYS:

1. The Quarterback cannot advance the ball (the player receiving the snap), unless the ball is handed off to another player and then handed back to the Quarterback.
2. There is no limit to the number of handoffs behind the line of scrimmage.
3. Players must be lined up behind the line of scrimmage.
4. The Quarterback is not allowed to hand the ball off to the Center on the first handoff of the play.
5. Laterals and pitches are only acceptable behind the line of scrimmage.
6. The "No Run Zone" is designated to avoid short yardage power running. They are located 5 yards on either side of the first down line (Midfield) and 5 yards before each end zone. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones. (Note: Each offensive team approaches only TWO "No Run Zones" in each drive. One 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down and one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD.)
7. Any player receiving a handoff can throw the ball as long as they do not cross the line of scrimmage.
8. **Once the ball is handed off or leaves the Quarterback's hand, all players are eligible to rush.**
9. There is no jumping or diving when running the ball to avoid a flag pull or advance the ball. The player may jump step or jump back to avoid a flag pull. Spinning is allowed as

long as one foot remains on the ground. **Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.**

10. **No blocking or screening is allowed at any time.**

## RECEIVING:

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the QB if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
2. Players must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.
3. If a player tips the ball and then catches the pass, having their flag pulled before the catch but after the ball was tipped, they are down at the spot of the catch.
4. Bump and Run coverage is NOT ALLOWED, no contact of any kind.
5. All defenders must be a minimum of 2 yards off the line of scrimmage.

## PASSING:

1. The Quarterback has a 7 second "pass clock". If a pass is not thrown within the 7 seconds, the play is dead, the down consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. If the Quarterback is standing in the end zone when the 7 second clock expires, the ball will be returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7 second rule is no longer in effect.
2. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage. Passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage are not considered forward passes in regards to the no-run zone rule.
3. **Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage to be considered a forward pass in the no-run zone.**
4. The Quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack but the ball must go beyond the line of scrimmage.

## RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK:

1. All players that rush the Quarterback must be a minimum of **7 yards** from the line of scrimmage. The "rushing cone" will be placed 7 yards off the line of scrimmage by the officials. All rushers must be behind the cone at the snap of the ball. Any number of players can rush the Quarterback. Players not rushing the Quarterback may line up no closer than 2 yards off the line of scrimmage.

2. Rushers must go for the Quarterbacks flags. Rushers may attempt to block a pass but it is a penalty to initiate contact with the passers arm or body even if the ball is deflected.
3. Any rusher initiating contact with the ball while it is still in the hand of the passer will be penalized for illegal contact.
4. Once the ball is handed off, the 7 second rule is no longer in effect and all defensive players may cross the line of scrimmage.
5. Teams do not have to specify the rusher(s).
6. The offense cannot impede the rushers by screening or blocking. If the offensive player does not move on the snap, the rushers must go around the player.
7. A sack occurs if the passer's flag is pulled before the pass is thrown and before the 7 second clock expires. The ball will be placed at the spot of the flag pull.

## FLAG GUARDING:

1. Obstructing the defender in any way to prevent the pulling of the flag. Examples include: Covering the flag with the ball or elbow, stiff arming, swatting at the defenders' hands or blocking the defenders access to the flag.
2. Jerseys must be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the players hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

## BLOCKING/SCREENING:

1. The offense cannot impede the rushers by screening or blocking. If the offensive player does not move on the snap, the rushers must go around the player.
2. Downfield blocking is NOT allowed. Offensive players without the ball must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.

## DEAD BALLS:

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The ball is dead when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground. Including bad snaps, the ball will be placed where it touches the ground. There are no fumbles.
  - b. The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
  - c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.

- d. A touchdown or extra point is scored.
  - e. The ball carrier's knee or arm touches the ground (not hand).
  - f. The ball carrier's flag falls out.
  - g. The receiver catches the ball with one or no flags (no one hand touch in the case of a lost flag or flags)
  - h. The 7 second clock expires.
  - i. Inadvertent whistle.
3. In the case of an inadvertent whistle the offense has two options. Either take the ball where it was when the whistle blew or replay the down.

## ADDRESSING OFFICIALS:

1. Only the head coach is allowed to address the officials.
2. All interactions between coaches and officials will be made in a sportsmanlike manner.
3. Unsportsmanlike penalties will result in the player to sit out the remainder of the half.
4. Ejections will result in a 1 game suspension following the game the player/coach was ejected from.
5. Fighting will result in a lifetime ban.
6. A team is allowed to use a timeout to question an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct the team will be charged a time out. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the time out will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.

## UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:

1. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered.
2. Offensive or confrontational language is not allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the coach, player or players will be ejected from the game.
3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
4. **Continual harassment, bullying or questioning officials will not be tolerated and may result in suspension.**
5. **Players and coaches may not confront officials after a game on or off the field. Doing so may result in suspension.**

6. Ball-carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
7. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
8. Head coaches are responsible for their fans.
9. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well:
  - a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
  - b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
10. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:
  - a. Defense + 10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
  - b. Offense - 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

## OVERTIME:

1. A coin flip will determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first. If a second round of overtime must be played, the team that lost the coin toss will get to choose offense or defense to start the second round of overtime. This process continues with teams alternating who gets to choose to be on offense or defense to start out during every round of overtime.
2. The referee will determine which end of the field the overtime will take place.
3. Each team will take turns getting 3 plays to score from the defense's 12-yard line. If the team on offense scores, they may choose to go for one or two on the extra point. On the third overtime, both teams must go for the 2-point conversion.
4. Only the points earned by the winning team in the final overtime will be added to the winning team's final score. The losing team will not receive any additional points.  
Example: End of regulation score is 14-14. After one overtime, both teams scored 7 points. During the second overtime, Team A scores 7 and Team B scores 8. The final score would be Team B winning 14-22.
5. There are no timeouts in overtime.

## PENALTIES:

1. The referees will call all penalties.
2. Referees will determine incidental contact that may result from the normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot Fouls)
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. **Players cannot question calls.**
5. Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before the play is considered complete.

7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

## SPOT FOULS

Penalty	Assessment
Defensive Pass Interference	Automatic First Down
Holding	+5 Yards & Automatic First Down
Stripping	+10 Yards & Automatic First Down
Defensive Unnecessary Roughness	+10 Yards & Automatic First Down
Charging	-10 Yards & Loss of Down
Flag Guarding	-10 Yards & Loss of Down
Screening, Running with the Ball Carrier	-10 Yards & Loss of Down
Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	-10 Yards & Loss of Down

## DEFENSIVE PENALTIES

Penalty	Assessment
Offsides	+ 5 Yards from LOS & Automatic First Down
Illegal Rush (Rushing from inside the 7-yard marker)	+ 5 Yards from LOS & Automatic First Down
Illegal Flag Pull (Before the receiver has the ball)	+ 5 Yards from LOS & Automatic First Down
Defensive Unnecessary Roughness	+10 Yards & Automatic First Down (Spot Foul)
Defensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct	+10 Yards & Automatic First Down
Roughing the Passer	+10 Yards from LOS & Automatic First Down
Taunting	+10 Yards from LOS & Automatic First Down
Defensive Pass Interference	Automatic First Down (Spot Foul)
Holding	+5 Yards & Automatic First Down (Spot Foul)
Stripping	+10 Yards & Automatic First Down (Spot Foul)

## OFFENSIVE PENALTIES

Penalty	Assessment
Offsides/False Start	-5 Yards from LOS & Loss of Down
Illegal Forward Pass	-5 Yards from LOS & Loss of Down
Offensive Pass Interference	-5 Yards from LOS & Loss of Down
Illegal Motion	-5 Yards from LOS & Loss of Down
Delay of Game	-5 Yards from LOS & Loss of Down
Impeding the Rusher	-5 Yards from LOS & Loss of Down
Illegal Procedure	-5 Yards from LOS & Loss of Down

Charging	-10 Yards & Loss of Down (Spot Foul)
Flag Guarding	-10 Yards & Loss of Down (Spot Foul)
Screening, Running with the Ball Carrier	-10 Yards & Loss of Down (Spot Foul)
Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	-10 Yards from LOS & Loss of Down (Spot Foul)
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	-10 Yards from LOS & Loss of Down

## OTHER NOTES:

1. **Last Man Rule:** In the event that the defensive player commits a flagrant holding penalty and there are no other defensive players between the offensive player and the end zone, the referee has the discretion to credit the offensive player with a touchdown (or extra point conversion).
2. In the event that the defensive team intercepts an extra point conversion attempt, and the defensive player is flagrantly held by the original offensive player, 2 points shall be credited to the intercepting team.

## PUNTING:

1. On 4<sup>th</sup> down, teams have the option to attempt a first down or touchdown and risk a turnover on downs at the spot of the failed attempt. If the offensive team chooses to punt on 4<sup>th</sup> down, the receiving team will receive the ball on its own 5-yard line. There are no actual punts.

## PLAYOFFS:

1. Tie breakers will be determined by: 1) Head to Head Record 2) Fewest points allowed during the regular season 3) Coin flip
2. Playoffs will be played in a single elimination tournament. Consolation games may be played if all teams in a division do not make the playoffs.

## NUMBER OF PLAYERS TO START THE GAME:

1. A minimum of 4 players are required to start the game.

## PLAYING FIELD:

1. 5 vs. 5 Playing Field

2. Length: 50 Yards and 2 x 10 Yard end zones
3. Width: 30 Yards
4. First Down Marker: Mid-field, 25 Yard line

