

# Central Maine Football League 2024 Final Rules and League Format

## **Eligibility by Grade**

Flag Team – K, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders (see separate rules for Flag)

Pee Wee Team – 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Graders

Youth Team – All 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Graders

Middle School – 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Graders (Players must be 14 years and younger to play. Cut-off date will be September 1<sup>st</sup> and each school is on the honor system. Board approval needed for players older.)

All Teams – Minimum players – 11 (except 8-man in Middle School)  
(Excluding 2<sup>nd</sup> graders for Pee Wee Teams)

For 2024, **\$150 entry fee** required for Middle School, Youth, and Pee Wee team to cover cost of QuickScores and championship games officials and trainers, and trophies.

Youth and Pee Wee team rosters must be provided by **noontime Friday 8/30/24**. **There will be no pre-season Jamboree**. Failure to provide roster will result in forfeit of all wins until one is submitted. Weights are to be recorded on rosters for Youth and Pee Wee and must be **verified and certified by the team Coordinator/CMFL Representative**. Player's weight for ball carrier status will be effective as of the date of submittal.

## **Footballs**

The home team will be responsible for providing the game ball but this does not preclude the visiting team from using their own ball during their possessions.

Pee Wee Teams will use the “TDJ” or “K2” ball and the Youth Teams will use the “TDY” or “TDJ” ball.

Middle School will use the “TDY” ball.

## **Practice**

Practices should not begin before the start of football practices as designated by the Maine Principles Association for high schools. This year the date is Monday, August 19, 2024. No Jamboree scheduled for this year and instead teams are encouraged to set-up their own scrimmages prior to the beginning of the regular season. All Pee Wee and Youth teams are expected to participate. Youth, Pee Wee and Flag regular season games will start on Saturday, September 7. Middle School games will start the week on Thursday, September 5.

## **Coaches**

Pee Wee Teams – Each Team may place not more than two coaches on the field at one time. The coach may assist his players until the quarterback begins his cadence. Once the QB begins cadence, the coach must remain quiet and still. At no time will the coach be allowed to talk or move (unless movement is to prevent interfering with the play). The first assisting violation will result in a warning from the official and every assisting violation after that will result in a 15 yard penalty. The league encourages restraint on coach assisting during plays and reinforces the importance that opposing Coaches that are on the field do not display poor sportsmanship to the players. Coaches will **NOT** argue with each other or officials and show disrespect to their team.

All Youth and Pee Wee level head coaches must be certified by USA Football's Heads-Up program as a pre-qualification for coaching in the CMFL. Middle School coaches should have the Maine Principals Association required medical training before being allowed to coach.

Middle School and Youth Teams – Coaches will not be allowed on the field, except during time-outs.

- All Teams
- A maximum of 5 coaches per team will be allowed on the sidelines during the games.
  - At no time will electronic (2-way radios) devices be allowed to be used between any coaches or player.
  - No 'in-game' video review. Teams are allowed to video games for future review with teams but not during the game.
  - Coaches are responsible to assign jersey numbers to players that best fit the position that they will be playing.

CMFL Players, Coaches, and Parents all must sign the Code of Conduct agreement of behavior, character, and good sportsmanship from those involved with the League.

## **Officials and Sports Trainers**

At least two board officials will be assigned to each Youth/Pee Wee division game by the head of officials (Paul McCarty – Assignor for the MAFO Augusta pm3257@gmail.com). Pee Wee division games are only required to have one board official. Middle School is required to have three board officials.

The host program will be responsible for paying any/all officials. If an official is absent due to unplanned or unforeseen circumstances, the head coaches will determine if there is a suitable replacement. In the event a suitable replacement cannot be agreed upon, the game will be rescheduled during the next week (prior to the next game).

All HOME teams are REQUIRED to have a licensed medical professional that can assess injuries (such as a doctor, nurse, EMT, or sports trainer (preferred)) in concussions and other sports-related bodily injuries present at all games. The designated licensed medical professional is not allowed to be a coach during the game. A sports trainer will be hired specifically for the Championship games and paid for by the league.

### **Length of Game**

All games will consist of four, **10-minute quarters** with overtime, if needed. (OT same as High School rules with 4 plays for each team from the 10 yard line until the tie is broken). **No games should end in a tie.**

The League also encourages additional playing time during a 5<sup>th</sup> quarter for players who need experience in game-like conditions or participating in three mid-week scrimmages for teams with more than 22 players. The 5<sup>th</sup> quarter will consist of 10 offensive plays in succession for both teams. This will have no bearing on the outcome of the normal game. 5<sup>th</sup> quarters should be the norm and not the exception. Coaches need to find ways to play 5<sup>th</sup> quarters even if partial squads are used to increase player participation.

### **Substitution**

All teams- All players who are not injured or withheld for disciplinary or safety reasons must enter the game for at least three plays.

### **Ball Carrier Weight Limit**

Each division (Youth and Pee Wee) will have a weight limit for ball carriers in the backfield (**this includes blocking backs**) and line (tight end) including quarterback, running backs, receivers and ends. The Youth division will have a 130 pound limit and the Pee Wee division will have a 110 pound limit for ball carriers.

Middle school has no weight limit for ball carriers.

### **Defensive Alignments**

For the Pee Wee division, only 5 defensive linemen are allowed in the line of scrimmage area which extends 3 yds in each direction between the ends. This restriction is not in effect when the offensive team is within the defensive team's red zone ( 20 yards from endzone). **Also in Pee Wee division only and in all situations regardless of field position, defensive lineman must be lined up directly over an offensive lineman (helmet to helmet) and not in gap or shade position.**

### **Time Outs**

During very hot weather conditions (and both coaches agree), an uncharged time-out will be allowed half-way through each quarter for a water break.

All Teams- Three time outs will be allowed during each half. Any team with a 17 point lead, will not be allowed any time outs unless one of the two apply: (1) Injury timeouts and (2) a substitution time out can be called to align and position new players.

### **Play Clock**

Pee Wee Team- 40 seconds from the spot of the ball

Middle School and Youth Teams- 30 seconds from the spot of the ball

### **Point After Touchdown (PAT)**

All Teams- Have the option to kick or try to score by any other means.

Youth and Pee Wee - Coaches will make the official and opposing coach aware of their decisions prior to the snap of the ball whether they elect to kick the PAT. If a team wishes to kick, the defense must wait 5 seconds after the ball is snapped before they can make any attempt to cross the line of scrimmage (as counted down by the official). After the 5 seconds has expired, the defensive team will be allowed to try and prevent the point by any means allowed by the rules of football. Once the ball is kicked, the defensive delay ends.

A team that elects to kick, must kick, and a PAT by any other means will not be allowed (no advancing of the ball by running or throwing).

Youth Teams- Each team must attempt a kicking PAT after the first touchdown. When up by 17 points, the team on the favorable side, must kick a point after attempt.

### **Field Goals**

All Teams- Same as extra point rule.

### **Kicking**

Pee Wee - Kickoffs will be treated like punts and considered a dead ball after ten yards. Receiving team player must pick up ball and attempt return in order for fumble to occur. This rule does not apply to the last four minutes of the game.

## **Punting**

Youth and Pee Wee - Offensive team must announce to the official and the opposing coach that they have decided to punt. The ball must be snapped at least 5 yards to the punter. The defense and offense must wait the full 5 seconds before they are allowed to rush or release from the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is punted, the defensive and offensive delay ends. The punting team may run the ball if the snap is not clean, however they may not advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. If the ball is advanced beyond the line of scrimmage, the ball will be returned to line of scrimmage and the receiving team will take possession from there.

## **“17” Point Rule**

For Youth and Pee Wee games - If a team has just scored, and still trails by 17 points or more, that team will be entitled to receive the kick-off. However, they can also decline to receive. If a team trails by 17 points or more at the half, you will be entitled to receive the 2<sup>nd</sup> half kick-off but they can also decline.

## **“24” Point Rule**

In all divisions, when a team leads by 24 or more points, they must replace the entire starting backfield with 4 different players, if they have not done so already. This excludes any point-after attempts following the score to increase the lead above the 24-point margin.

## **Un-sportsmanlike Conduct**

**Any time a player or coach is given a penalty for un-sportsmanlike conduct, that player or coach will be ejected for the remainder of the game.**

**Any un-sportsmanlike penalty for a physical act will result in a mandatory 1 game suspension.**

**The official has the right to call an un-sportsmanlike conduct on fans.**

**First offense- Warning from the official or a 15 yard penalty**

**Second offense- 15 yard penalty of forfeiture of the game**

**Third offense- forfeiture of the game**

**Any coaches whose actions are detrimental to the league are subject to disciplinary action by the board (up to, and including permanent dismissal from the CMFL).**

## **CMFL Tournament –**

Championship Playoffs for Youth and Pee Wee will be between the top two seeds in the North and South division. All games played within the division will count in the standings. Tiebreakers between two teams will be based on their head-to-head competition. If the two teams did not play then a mid-week playoff game will be played.

IF a tie breaker is between three teams, then all three teams will play each other according to the High School OT rules at a single venue. Team A will play Team B, Team B will play Team C, and Team C will play Team A. The team with the most victories will win the Tiebreaker. More than one round may be needed to break the tie.

Week 7 –October 21 Crossover games between North and South

1. North #1 (host) vs South #2 (Championship eligible)
2. South #1 (host) vs North #2 (Championship eligible)
3. North #3 vs South #3
4. North #4 vs South #4
5. North #5 vs South #5
6. North #6 vs South #6
7. North #7 vs South #7

Week 8 – Championship – November 2

1. Winner of North#1 vs. South #2 AND South #1 vs. North #2

Middle School Playoffs – Middle school playoffs will be based on the final season record including crossover games.

### **Area Representation**

Maranacook

Oak Hill

Winthrop-Monmouth

Lisbon

Tri-Town (Poland, Minot, Mechanic Falls)

Jay-Livermore-Livermore Falls (Spruce Mountain)

Telstar

Gray-New Gloucester

Mountain Valley (AYF – Rumford, Mexico, Roxbury)

Dixfield (AYF – Dixfield, Peru, Carthage, Canton)

Mt. Blue (MBAYF)

No area may actively recruit players from other areas.

If a player wishes to participate in a program that is different from the one he/she is living in, that player must get permission from each area involved.

2024 Area Youth Football Coordinators – it is encouraged that League and team coordinators/representatives are not coaches.

### **Code of Conduct**

CMFL requires all players and parents to sign the League Code of Conduct form provided. All coaches will be required to sign the League Coach Agreement and forward an electronic copy to the League President. Each football program is responsible to distribute and collect forms by first game of the season. CMFL will trust these are

complete and has the right to ask for them at any time during the season. Failure to complete forms by the first game, will mean an automatic loss for your team.

**Spectators at CMFL Fields**

All spectators are required to follow site rules and procedures when attending games at the fields regardless of team affiliation or reason for attendance. This includes acknowledging that dogs are generally not allowed on school grounds and that service dogs (or pets of any kind) need prior approval before game time from a site administrator. Coaches and Coordinators are requested to inform their fans and spectators of this requirement ahead of game day. Not adhering to this policy will mean removing the right to stay and watch the play on the field.

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CMFL Youth (5&6<sup>th</sup>) Football Rules

No coaches on field during game  
Two board officials or as agreed by coaches.  
4 – 10 minute quarters, 30 second play clock  
5<sup>th</sup> quarter if coaches agree (no impact on game)  
All players must play.  
Ball carrier weight limit of 130 lbs.  
Hot weather, uncharged time-out allowed in each period for hydration of players.  
No timeouts allowed if team ahead by 17 pts or unless for substitution or injury.  
30 second play clock.  
PAT – must be kicked (no fakes allowed) on first TD. 5 sec no rush rule by official. If up by 17, must kick PAT.  
Punt must be declared with no fake. Def. and Off. 5 sec delay on all kicks  
After score or start of second half, if one team is behind by 17 or more points then they receive the kickoff.  
UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT – immediate ejection of player or coach for remainder of game. On fans, officials have right to following  
#1 – Warning or 15 yd pen  
#2 – 15 yd pen or forfeit  
#3 – Forfeit game  
NO GAME SHOULD END IN A TIE

CMFL Pee Wee (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>) Football Rules

Two coaches on field during game.  
No assisting after QB starts cadence. (15 yd penalty for assisting)  
One board official or as agreed by coaches.  
4 – 10 minute quarters, 40 second play clock  
5<sup>th</sup> quarter if coaches agree (no impact on game)  
All players must play.  
Ball carrier weight limit of 110 lbs.  
Hot weather, uncharged time-out allowed in each period for hydration of players.  
No timeouts allowed if team ahead by 17 points unless for substitution or injury.  
40 second play clock  
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