

LARAMIE YOUTH FOOTBALL RULES

Grades 4th, 5th and 6th
2021 (last updated 8/26/20)

PURPOSE:

To provide a safe, enjoyable, fun, recreational experience and to expose kids to Football **FUN**damentals through proper coaching techniques, keeping in mind that the game is for the kids, not coaches or parents.

LARAMIE YOUTH FOOTBALL PHILOSOPHY

1. Develop an understanding of the game of football.
2. Establish and recognize the importance of team effort and fair play.
3. Encourage good fellowship generated by a community program.
4. Provide an enjoyable and educational experience for participants.
5. Provide a **YOUTH** program but encourage adult participation and guidance.

FIELD DIMENSIONS:

1. 80 yards long by 160 feet wide. Each end zone is 10 yards deep.
2. Center yard line and end zones lines will be marked by yardage pylons.
3. The junior size football will be used for 5th and 6th grade games and a PeeWee size ball for 4th grade.

PRACTICES/GAMES:

1. For the first two weeks, practices are Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday at times and locations approved by the Board.
2. After the first two weeks, the routine schedule kicks in and consists of three days of practices/games per week at designated locations.
3. Games will typically be scheduled for throughout the week at 5:30 p.m. at the Laramie Athletic Field and Laramie Middle School.
4. Practices have 1.5 hour time limit.
5. All players must participate in at least 4 practices before playing in a game.

GAME RULES

1. Unless otherwise stated herein, all games shall be officiated pursuant to National Federation of State High School Associations contest rules and regulations for football as approved by the WHSAA.
2. A coin toss determines first possession.
3. Teams will change sides at the beginning of the 2nd and 4th quarters.

PLAYERS:

1. Teams must field a minimum of 11 players at all times.
2. **Minimum Play Rule:** Coaches must focus on letting all players play. The requirement for the league is to get each player a minimum of 10 plays per game, not including kick-offs and kick returns. This includes all players in good standing (attending practices and games).
3. **Weight limit 100 for 4th Grade and 120 lbs. for 5th and 6th Grade.** No player in excess of the weight limit will be allowed to advance the ball by means of a set play. They will also not

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be allowed to line up or play in the backfield or any end/receiver position except in a position as a blocking end. On kickoffs, players over the weight limit must be in the front line and cannot advance the ball if it is kicked to them.

4. Players will be weighed-in during the first two weeks of practice, if they are below weight limit at this initial weigh-in they are cleared for the entire season, no other weigh-ins will be conducted. Players **exceeding the weight limit** will have helmets marked with black tape.
5. Players over the weight limit will only be allowed to advance the ball in any interception or fumble recovery situation.

TIMING:

1. Four 15-minute quarters will be played with a running clock and a 10-minute half time.
2. The clock will stop:
 - a. during timeouts (unless the margin is greater than 16 points in the 2nd half)
 - b. after scoring;
 - c. during the last two minutes (per WHSAA rules) if the two teams are within 16 points of each other.
3. Each team receives three 60-second timeouts per half (these do not carry-over). Each team is allotted one 60-second timeout per overtime.
4. The offensive team has 30 seconds to start a play after the ball is spotted. The intent of this rule is to keep the game moving and prevent intentional delays by the offensive team. The officials should work with the offensive team to keep the game moving.

LIGHTNING DETECTION:

Laramie Youth Football has adopted the Albany County School District policy regarding lightning during practice or games. A handheld lightning detector is anticipated to be used or a mobile phone app. The guidance below accounts for Flash-to-Bang procedures as well as distance detected on a hand held device. A 30 second flash to bang count corresponds to a distance of six miles, which should provide ample opportunity to remove any athletes from the playing field and get them to a safe shelter.

1. Count of Flash-to-Bang outside of 30 seconds: lightning at greater than 8-20 miles and 20 - 40 miles - NO ACTION IS REQUIRED but should be monitored.
2. Count of Flash-to-Bang under 30 seconds: lightning at 3-8 miles: ACTIVITIES SUSPENDED. Coaches must move students to safety.
3. Count of Flash-to-Bang inside 10 seconds: Lightning 0-3 miles: ACTIVITIES SUSPENDED.
4. If high school teams suspend activities due to lightning, LYF teams practicing at the high school must also clear fields.

It is recommended to wait 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed if a hand-held detector is not used.

If a lightning delay occurs during the first half of the game during the regular season, the delay will be executed according to the details above. If a lightning delay occurs in the second half during a regular season game, the game will be called and the score will be posted as final. If the delay occurs during the second half of a playoff game, it will be postponed and rescheduled at a later date.

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OVERTIME:

1. If the score is tied at the end of the regulation game, play will continue through four (4) downs (or score) for each side.
2. Upon the toss of a coin, the winner of the toss may elect to go on the offense at the opponent's 10-yard line or defend on their own 10-yard line.
3. After the offensive side's four (4) down (or score), the opposition takes possession and has four (4) downs to score. If either side scores, it may attempt extra points.
4. During regular season, the game ends after each team has had its four downs, regardless of score or tie. In post-season games, play continues until one side has a winning score.

SCORING:

1. Touchdown: 6 points
2. Extra Point: Running the ball 1 points
Passing the ball 2 points
3. Kicking extra points and field goals: 1 point for extra points, 3 points for field goals
Teams can elect to kick extra points instead of trying for a 2-point conversion. Extra points and field goals will be kicked from 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage (10 yard line for extra points). There is no rush on extra points and field goals. The center can pass the ball to a holder and the line will be set and facing forward. Defense is allowed to stand with arms up and jump straight up but cannot cross the line of scrimmage.

OFFENSE:

1. There will be no quarterback sneaks allowed except within the 5-yard line. If a quarterback sneak occurs outside the 5-yard line the play shall be called dead and the ball returned to the previous spot and will result in a loss of down. (Whoever takes a direct snap from the center will be considered the quarterback and the no sneak rule will apply. A handoff must take place for any runner to run between the 1 and 2 holes.)
2. Unbalanced lines will not be allowed. Four linemen will not be allowed left or right of the center.

DEFENSE:

1. All teams will have no more than four linemen on the line of scrimmage.
 - a. The center must be uncovered.
 - b. Offensive guards must be covered head up by the defensive tackles. Defensive ends shall line head up on the furthest outside offensive lineman on their side. "Head up" means the defensive player's helmet is within the shoulders of the offensive player. Lining up in the gaps is not allowed. Defensive tackles and defensive ends must be in a 3-pt stance.
 - c. No blitzing is allowed. Linebackers and defensive backs must line up a minimum of 3 yards off the line of scrimmage. They must read the play first and then pursue. Blitzing is defined as linebackers or defensive backs moving forward at or prior to the snap of the ball. Once the play has begun all defenders may cross the line of scrimmage.
3. Inside the defensive 10-yard line, a 6-man defensive front is allowed and the linebackers may move to within 2 yards of the line of scrimmage.
 - a. Inside the defensive 5-yard line, the center may be covered by a defensive lineman.

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PUNTING SITUATIONS:

1. Any player may punt the ball (no weight limit). Once a punt is declared, the football must be punted (no fakes).
2. The receiving team must have 4 men on the line of scrimmage. The remaining 7 players may be back to receive the punt.
3. The punts are not live and the change of possession takes place where the punt is received. If the punt is mishandled and muffed, the receiving team receives the ball where the ball comes to a complete stop.
4. There is no rush on punts. The center may hand the ball to the punter. Offensive line must be facing forward and be set during punts. Punter must receive the ball and begin punting from at least 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage.

KICKOFF AND KICKOFF RETURN SITUATIONS:

1. The ball will be placed at the offensive 40-yard line for kickoffs. The kick must travel 15 yards in the air for it to be a live kickoff. If the ball travels more than 15 yards in the air, it is a live ball and will be given to the team that recovers it. If the ball does not travel 15 yards in the air, the receiving team will get the ball at the offensive 40-yard line.
2. A kicking tee will be used. This must be provided by the kicking team.
3. The kick off will commence once the official blows the whistle to start play.
4. The first line of players from the receiving team will be set 10 yards from the kicking tee.

FINAL STANDINGS TIE-BREAKERS

In the event of a tie, season standings will be determined as follows:

Head-to-Head Competition

If there is a tie between more than 2 teams, the two team's performances against each other are compared. The winning team is deemed to be the higher-ranked team.

Points Scored

If still tied or if only 2 teams are tied to start, the two teams total points scored for the season will be assessed. The team with the higher point total is deemed to be the higher-ranked team.

Coin Toss

If still tied, a coin toss determines the higher-ranked team.

PLAYOFFS – may need updated based on number of teams

Playoffs will be seeded based on the regular season record. For example, #1 seed will be given to the team with the best record in the regular season, and the #6 seed will be given to the team with the worst record in the regular season. The first round of the playoff schedule will be as follows: #1 and #2 seeds will get a bye in the first round of the playoffs. The #3 seeded team will play the #6 seeded team, and the #4 seeded team will play the #5 seeded team. For the second round of the playoffs, the #1 seeded team will play the lowest remaining seeded team and the #2 seeded team will play the highest remaining seeded team. The winners of the second round will play for the championship. The losers of the games will play for 3rd and 5th place.

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SPORTSMANSHIP/OTHER RULES:

1. No taunting the opposing team.
2. Use of profanity will not be tolerated.
3. Helmets are to be worn, not sat upon.
4. No watches or jewelry will be worn during practices or games.

PLAYERS:

1. All players must stay within the team box/coach's area during the game.
2. Jerseys must be tucked in at all times once the players start pregame warmups.

COACHES:

1. Please stress that the helmet is to be used only for head protection. The helmet cannot be used to make first contact during tackling. Initial contact must be made with the shoulders, head up.
2. A minimum **of two and a maximum of 4 coaches per team**. Only those coaches will be allowed in the coaching box during games. All coaching boxes and sidelines shall have a 2-yard gap between them. Any coach who intentionally leaves the coaching box during any live play shall be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct.
3. Only two coaches can pre-draft players that are related to them on one single team.
4. At the 4th Grade level, coaches will be allowed on the field during every game. For 5th and 6th Grades, coaches will only be allowed on the field during the first game. During the first game, only one coach on the field for defense and one coach for offense will be allowed on the field. After the first game, no coaches will be allowed on the field during the game.
5. Coaches are responsible for their conduct and the conduct of their fans. Unsportsmanlike comments from the coaches or fans will not be tolerated and will result in a 15-yard penalty.
6. Current W.H.S.A.A. rules will be in effect, unless specifically covered in the above rules.
7. Coaches are required to complete a concussion training course and provide a certificate of completion to the Board prior to beginning individual team practices.
8. Coaches are required to submit to a background check prior to the beginning of season.
9. Coach's contact with players should be limited to scheduled practice times. Coaches should avoid individual interaction with players. Team gatherings are acceptable (i.e., end of season celebration), but should be held at a public location and not at the coach's personal residence.

COACH/PLAYER SUSPENSION:

IF A COACH/PLAYER IS EJECTED FROM A GAME; HE (SHE) MAY BE SUSPENDED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE BOARD. A SECOND EJECTION DURING THE COURSE OF THE SEASON WILL RESULT IN A SUSPENSION FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON. IF THE SEASON IS OVER THEN THE PENALTY WILL BE CARRIED OVER TO THE NEXT YEAR.

LARAMIE YOUTH FOOTBALL WILL NOT TOLERATE IN ANY WAY, PHYSICAL ABUSE, VERBAL THREATS, OR DESTRUCTION OF LYF PROPERTY. PENALTIES WILL INCLUDE AUTOMATIC YEAR LONG SUSPENSIONS FROM PARTICIPATING IN ANY LARAMIE YOUTH FOOTBALL ACTIVITY AND CHARGES WILL BE FILED, IF NECESSARY.