

Youth Flag Football Coaches Handbook

Dedication

This handbook is dedicated to the hardworking volunteer coaches who make our flag football program possible. We appreciate the time, effort, and dedication you give to the children of Town of Ayden. The staff of Ayden Arts and Recreation Department offers many thanks for helping us provide this opportunity to the youth of our Town. We hope that you find this handbook helpful in your coaching endeavors.

Many Thanks!

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Mission Statement

The mission of Ayden Arts and Recreation Department is to provide high quality, diverse and accessible programs, services and facilities that enhance the quality of life for all ages, cultures, and abilities.

Philosophy

The game of flag football is just a game. The number one reason (well documented in a number of studies) children participate in youth sports is to have fun. If you take the fun out of sports, you take the child out of sports. It is detrimental to the player if there is too much pressure placed on them too early to achieve a result rather than simply experiencing the sheer joy of a youth game. As a coach you want to create a stress free relaxed environment for your team. Let your kids know that it is okay to make mistakes. Get to know your kids individually and determine what they need to be successful. For some kids it might be a specific skill. For others it might be encouragement or even something as simple as acknowledgment.

Ayden Arts and Recreation youth flag football is not about how many wins or losses are accumulated! Proper Flag Football development is achieved by children participating in age appropriate activities so that they are able to experience, comprehend, and execute the game as it relates to where they are in their cognitive development. It is achieved by all of the team members receiving equal playing time. It is achieved by teaching the skills, rules and vocabulary of the game. Finally, it is achieved by teaching sportsmanship. Learning about winning and losing, playing by the rules, and respecting an opponent are just as important as learning flag football skills.

The Ayden Arts and Recreation wants you to respect the game of flag football, respect the players, the opponents, the referee, and the parents. Go about your teachings in a thorough, positive, yet humble manner. Players should come out of their experience with the coach as better people and better citizens, not just better flag football players.

Role of the Coach

As a coach in youth sports, one must assume the responsibility of ensuring that each participant has an enjoyable and safe experience learning flag football. To fulfill these responsibilities, a coach must wear many different hats. Listed below are some prominent roles a coach may take on.

Facilitator

- Set up the conditions and environment for learning.
- Give only positive feedback (sarcasm and negativity should never occur).
- Encourage players to give each other positive feedback.
- Coaches should be enthusiastic, organized, patient, sincere, and fair.
- Practices should be conducted in the spirit of enjoyment and learning.
- De-emphasize winning and losing and emphasize sportsmanship and fun.
- Invite parents to help and participate.

Positive Role Model

- Work with all players equally.
- Treat each team member with equal regard and respect.
- Demonstrate respect for opponents, referees, parents, spectators, opposing coaches, and opposing players.
- Show respect and responsibility for the game of flag football.

Understand who you are coaching

- Children are not defined by chronological age only.
- Each child matures and develops at a different pace.
- Treat each child as a unique individual.
- All activities should be age appropriate.
- Recognize that kids participate for different reasons. Some may be there because their older siblings play and it is expected in their family that they play. Some may play because they have a parent that is a frustrated athlete and wants to live through their child. Some may play because all their friends do, and they want to be with them. Others may play because they love flag football.

“THERE IS NO GREATER GIFT THAN THAT OF A GOOD COACH”

Bruce Brown (Former college coach)

Coaches' Responsibilities and Guidelines

Coaches are role models for teaching the fundamentals of the sport, sport skills, tactics and sportsmanship. Coaches are responsible for their personal conduct and behavior, as well as, the conduct and behavior of players. Coaches are required to follow the Ayden Arts and Recreation Department guidelines at all times. A coach who does not follow the guidelines provided by the Ayden Arts and Recreation Department will need to meet with the Arts and Recreation Department Recreation Director in order to continue to coach. All volunteer coaches shall be “at will coaches,” and may be discharged by the Ayden Arts and Recreation Department with or without cause. Only coaches who have been approved by the Ayden Arts and Recreation Department will be allowed to go on the field of play or court during practices and games.

Responsibilities and Guidelines

Coaches participating in Ayden Arts and Recreation Department youth sports shall:

- Be reliable, and on time. (The first to arrive and the last to leave...)
- Be responsible for distributing a game/practice schedule to parents/guardians prior to the beginning of the season.
- Have with you, at all practices and games, the Emergency Contact Information forms for each child on the team.
- Be responsible for making sure first aid kits are on-site at every practice and game. Ayden Arts and Recreation Department will supply these kits.
- Be responsible for ensuring players’ parents/guardians are informed of changes to the game or practice schedule. This includes cancellations the day of the game or practice.
- Ensure that each player receives playing time in games according to Ayden Arts and Recreation Department policy on playing time. Equal participation in the program as a whole is the desired goal.
- Be responsible for communicating Ayden Arts and Recreation Department playing time policy as well as their own philosophy regarding playing time to parents/guardians & athletes prior to the start of the season.
- Have all players and team coaches shake hands after the completion of the game.
- Never play an injured or bleeding player. Think of the player first and not the team's final outcome.

- Conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, and shall refrain from directing abusive or sarcastic language or gestures toward officials, other coaches or players.
- Serve as a role model for players and spectators.
- Ensure that Ayden Arts and Recreation Department equipment is accounted for, and maintained in usable condition and returned promptly at the end of the season.
- Leave facilities in the same or better condition than they were when the team arrived.

Coaches' Code of Conduct & Code of Ethics

I will honor the fact that youth sports exist for youth, not adults.

Expected Behavior:

- Maintaining a positive, helpful and supportive attitude.
- Exercising your authority/influence to control behavior of fans and spectators.
- Exhibiting gracious acceptance of defeat or victory.
- Accepting and adhering to all league rules and policies related to participation of adults and youth. Playing all players according to the equal participation rules established by the league and the follow the spirit of those rules.
- Fulfilling the expected role of a youth coach to adopt a "children first" philosophy.
- Allowing and encouraging the players to listen, learn and play hard within the rules.
- Placing emphasis on fun, participation and team.

I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child and other children involved.

Expected Behavior:

- Recognizing the differences of each child and treating each player as an individual while demonstrating concern for their individual needs and well-being.
- Encouraging all players, regardless of skill level, to be included as a member of the team.
- Recognizing that some physical tasks, drills and demands are not appropriate for all youth.
- Recognizing that youth may vary greatly in physical, social and emotional maturation and considering these factors when setting up competitions and when interacting with youth.

I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.

Expected Behavior:

- Establishing practice plans that are interesting, varied, productive and aimed at improving all players skills and individual abilities.
- Devoting appropriate time to the individual improvement of each player.
- Conducting practices of reasonable length and intensity appropriate for the age and conditioning of the players.

I will exercise good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players & officials at every game, practice or other sports event.

Expected Behavior:

- Adopting the position, teaching and demonstrating that it is our basic moral code to treat others as we would like to be treated.
- Abiding by and supporting the rules of the game as well as the spirit of the rules.
- Providing an environment conducive to fair and equitable competition.
- Using the influential position of youth coach as an opportunity to promote, teach and expect fair sportsmanship and fair play.

I will make sure all children play in a safe, healthy environment.

Expected Behavior:

- Maintaining a high level of awareness of potentially unsafe conditions.
- Protecting players from sexual molestations, assault, physical abuse and emotional abuse.
- Correcting or avoiding unsafe practice or playing conditions.
- Using appropriate safety equipment necessary to protect all players.
- Seeing that the players are provided with adequate adult supervision while under the coach's care.

I will insist that my team exercise good sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, fans, and other players.

Expected Behavior:

- Becoming knowledgeable, understanding and supportive of all applicable game rules, league rules, regulations and policies.
- Teaching and requiring compliance of these rules among players, so that with this understanding good sportsmanship can be maintained.
- Teaching techniques that reduce risk of injury to both the coach's own players and their opponents.
- Discouraging illegal contact or intentional dangerous play and administering swift and equitable discipline to players involved in such activity.

I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol. I will refrain from their use at all Ayden Arts and Recreation Department youth sports events.

Expected Behavior:

- Being alcohol and drug free at all team activities or in the presence of players.
- Refraining from the use of any type of tobacco products at all team activities or in the presence of your players
- Refraining from providing any type of alcohol, drug or tobacco products to any of your players
- Encouraging parents to refrain from the public use of tobacco products or alcohol at team activities.

I will place the safety and physical development of my players ahead of my personal desire to win.

Expected Behavior:

- Using appropriate language in appropriate tones when interacting with league officials, players, game officials, parents and spectators. *At no time is profanity acceptable.*
- Including all players in team activities without regard to race, religion, sex, body type, national origin, ancestry, disability, ability or any other legally protected classification.

- Treating all players, league officials, game officials, parents, and spectators with dignity and respect.
- Playing all players according to the equal participation rules established by the league and the playing by the spirit of those rules.
- Encouraging youth to participate in other sports and activities to promote all aspects of their development.
- Allowing reasonable absences from practices.

I will support other coaches and league officials.

Expected Behavior:

- I will back and support league officials and coaches when working with my players and parents. I will enforce league rules.
- If I have concerns or questions, I will direct them to recreation staff or coach at an appropriate time, not during a practice or game. I will not criticize another coach, an official, or a recreation staff in front of my players or parents.
- I will cooperate and offer assistance whenever I can.

I will remember that children play, referees call, fans cheer and coaches TEACH. Anytime someone steps out of their area of responsibility, a strain is created on every other areas involved.

Offense & Penalty

Coaches may not conduct themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner at any time and may be removed from the coaching staff if they do. Regardless of the situation, we expect our coaches to act with the upmost respect and integrity in any scenario.

- *Offense* ejected from a game
- *Penalty* Not necessarily preceded by a warning...immediate ejection, removal from the premises and a minimum One (1) game suspension.
- *Offense* Failure to follow established guidelines, rules, policies and procedures as applicable to related sport
- *Penalty* Not necessarily preceded by a warning...immediate ejection, removal from the premises and a minimum One (1) game suspension.
- *Offensive* malicious obscene/profane/vulgar verbal abuse directed towards another individual.
- *Penalty* Not necessarily preceded by a warning...immediate ejection, removal from the premises and a minimum two (2) day suspension. This includes regular and tournament games, practices, award ceremonies or any other Ayden Recreation Department function(s).
- *Offense* Physical aggression towards another; pushing, shoving, striking or touching another individual.
- *Penalty* Not necessarily preceded by a warning...immediate ejection, removal from the premises and a minimum five (5) years suspension. This includes regular and tournament games, practices, award ceremonies or any other Ayden Recreation Department function(s).
- *Offense* Any violation of North Carolina law; possession of firearms, knives, explosive devices weapons or under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, controlled substances, chemical or drug paraphernalia; assault with or without a weapon.
- *Penalty* Not necessarily preceded by a warning...immediate ejection, removal from the premises and a minimum five (5) years suspension. This includes regular and tournament games, practices, award ceremonies or any other Ayden Recreation Department function(s).

Youth Sports Players

A growing body of research literature finds that in addition to improved physical health, sport plays a primarily positive role in youth development, including improved academic achievement, higher self-esteem, fewer behavioral problems, and better psychosocial. Many studies focus on the effects of sport on the five “C’s” competence, confidence, connections, character, and caring, which are considered critical components of positive youth development. It has long been thought that the many facets of playing sport—the discipline of training, learning teamwork, following the leadership of coaches and captains, learning to lose, provide lifelong skills for athletes.

Four Truths about Children and Sports

- Fun is pivotal. If it isn’t fun, children will drop out of sports.
- Skill development is a crucial aspect of fun.
- Intrinsic rewards (self-knowledge that grows out of self-competition) are more important in creating lifetime athletes than are extrinsic rewards (victory or attention from others).
- The most rewarding challenges of sports are those that lead to increased self-knowledge, self-improvement, self-confidence, and self-esteem

Age Group Characteristics

Before you are able to effectively coach the children that have been entrusted to your care, you need to understand the characteristics of whom you are developing. It is imperative that you understand that when you are dealing with children that you take the time to comprehend where they are currently in their own development.

Ages 4 - 5

From a physical perspective (psychomotor), children in this age group perform activities at full speed. Then they need frequent rests and then they go again. Movements such as running, hopping, skipping and maintaining balance are not fully developed at this age.

From a mental perspective (cognitive), they have a short attention span, can only perform one task at a time and only if its given with basic instructions. They don’t have a clear understanding of the team concept and tactics are useless. Everything revolves around themselves and the ball.

From a social (psychosocial) standpoint the children need to feel secure in practice and in games. The coach needs to be sensitive in selecting activities that allow social interaction with the other players in their group. They are easily bruised psychologically. Elimination games are highly discouraged. They will also tend to exaggerate their accomplishments-let them.

Ages 7 - 8

This is the stage where players begin to understand the concept of passing to a teammate.

From a physical standpoint they still lack a sense of pace and tend to exert themselves hard and then drop. They are now starting to develop some physical confidence in themselves and they are still into running, climbing, rolling and jumping.

From a mental perspective they feel if they tried hard then they performed well (regardless of the activity's outcome). They are beginning to show a limited ability to tend to more than one task at a time.

From a social perspective they have a great need for approval from adults and like to show off individual skills. Negative comments carry great weight. Their playmates start to emerge and they will start to move towards small groups. They want everyone to like them at this age. You should be positive with everything that you do.

Players' Responsibilities and Expectations

Participation in youth sports programs can have a lasting and meaningful effect on children's lives. Therefore, it is the goal of the Ayden Arts and Recreation Department to provide the highest quality of athletic programs to ensure that a child's experience with sports is a positive one. It takes the cooperation of everyone involved, including the participant, to make this happen. The Ayden Arts and Recreation Department has established the following responsibilities for participants to adhere to:

- Players will listen to their coaches and be respectful of their elders.
- Players will take care of the facilities, equipment, and uniforms which they are given or participate in.
- Players will make sure to eat the right foods and drink plenty of water before and after practices and games.
- Players will avoid all types of taunting and belittling remarks to their teammates or opponents.
- Players will show good sportsmanship at all times, win or lose.
- Players will not make sports a priority over schoolwork or family.
- Players will participate for the love of the game and social interaction with peers.

Players Code of Ethics

Players are expected to conduct themselves in a positive manner regarding their youth sports experience and accept responsibility for their participation by following the Players Code of Ethics Pledge:

- I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials, and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship.
- I will attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach if I cannot.
- I will expect to receive a fair and just amount of playing time.
- I will do my very best to listen and learn from my coaches.
- I will treat my coaches, other players, officials and fans with respect regardless of race, gender, creed or abilities, and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
- I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert parents or coaches if it stops being fun!
- I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and expect adults to refrain from their use at all youth sporting events.
- I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it's important to me.
- I will do my very best in school.
- I will remember that sports are an opportunity to learn and have fun.

Offense & Penalty

Players may not conduct themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner at any time and may be removed from the league if they do. Regardless of the situation, we expect our players to act with the upmost respect and integrity in any scenario.

- *Offense* ejected from a game
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- *Offense* Any violation of North Carolina law; possession of firearms, knives, explosive devices weapons or under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, controlled substances, chemical or drug paraphernalia; assault with or without a weapon.
- *Penalty* Not necessarily preceded by a warning...immediate ejection, removal from the premises and a minimum five (5) years suspension. This includes regular and tournament games, practices, award ceremonies or any other Ayden Recreation Department function(s).

Player Safety

As a volunteer coach you will have the care, custody, and control of someone else's children. In this capacity you have the potential to create and to prevent accidents and injuries.

- You must provide adequate supervision to your players. The health and safety of your team members are entrusted to your care. You must provide adequate supervision to avoid foreseeable accidents and injuries. NEVER leave players unattended! NEVER leave after a game or practice until all parents or guardians have arrived!
- Evaluate your players and determine any limitations that they may have. Be sure players are physically and mentally capable of performing the e required skills. Evaluate injuries as they occur and determine if it is safe for the player to play.
- If any minor or major injuries occur, always fill out an accident report and give it to a recreation staff member.

Care and Prevention of Injuries

The first line of defense in the treatment of injuries is to prevent them. Factors that can prevent injuries are:

- The proper use of equipment
- No jewelry allowed
- Make sure there is ample water and rest periods
- Make sure players don't return too early from an injury

The care of an injured athlete should begin the moment an injury occurs. Immediate care will reduce the severity of the injury and possibility of long-term disability. Upon seeing an injured player on the court a coach should:

- Stay composed
- Determine if a player is conscious and coherent (if not, dial 911)
- Question the player in regards to the injury
- Avoid moving the player if it appears major in any way
- Inspire confidence and reassure the player
- Determine how the injury occurred

After determining that an injury is not life threatening, the nature of an injury can be further determined. Note the position of the injured part. Is it swollen or deformed? Compare the injury with the uninjured opposite body part. Do not move the injured part.

PLANNING FOR THE SEASON

Holding a pre-season parent meeting is beneficial for the parents, players and coach. Take this opportunity to inform parents of the goals and expectations as outlined in the Youth Flag Football Coaches' Manual.

Parent Orientation Meeting

All Coaches are encouraged to establish effective lines of communication with the team parents early in the season by holding a parent orientation meeting. This may take the form of a casual discussion at your first practice. The time you invest will pay dividends for all concerned throughout the season. If a meeting is impossible, then the following information could be put in a letter to parents/players. But, a face-to-face meeting is preferred.

Purpose of a Parent Orientation Meeting

- Enables parents to understand the objectives of the team.
- Allows parents to become acquainted with you, the coach.
- Inform parents about the nature (and inherent risks) of the sport.
- Articulate your expectations of them and of their children.
- Enables you to address any parents' concerns.
- Establishes clear lines of communication between you, parents, and players.
- Allows you to obtain parental support (assistant coaches, team parents, etc.).
- Designate a "Team Mom" to arrange a schedule for snacks and refreshments for each game.

Important Points to Cover

- Introduce yourself and assistant coaches (or ask for volunteers at this time).
- Give background information about yourself (why you are coaching, experience)
- Coaching philosophy
- Discuss the value of the sport and the health benefits to the children.
- Discuss the philosophy of age appropriate activities.
- State the importance you assign to having fun and developing technique.
- State how you evaluate player development through skills and not winning.
- Discuss any team rules and guidelines.
- Let them know that all players will receive equal playing time.
- Discuss how players must respect opponents, coaches, officials, and the game itself.
- Briefly discuss rules of the game.

Winterville/Ayden Parks & Recreation
Flag Football Rules

Age Requirements:

Players must be between the ages of 5-8 years old. A player cannot turn 9 before the September 1st of the current year.

League: ages 5-6

League: ages 7-8

General Rules

Players will be allowed to wear tennis shoes or soccer type shoes with molded rubber cleats.

Teams will be allowed to play 8 players at a time.

Two time outs will be allowed per half.

There will be 5 minutes between halves (half-time).

There will be no overtime procedure to resolve tie games.

Only one coach will be allowed on the field with the offensive and defensive teams.

A coach on the field will not be allowed to give instructions to players once a play is underway.

A coach on the field must be ten yards behind the line of scrimmage or behind his deepest back at the beginning of the play. At no time can a coach impede play in any way.

Shirts must be tucked in pants at all times.

Extra points will be attempted at the two yard line. Extra points will be one point if run and two points if passed.

No player will be allowed to score more than two offensive touchdowns per game. Distribute the ball evenly throughout the team. Don't rely on one player only. If a player does score a third offensive touchdown, there will be no penalty, but the ball will go back to the line of scrimmage and there will be a replay of the down.

Each player must play a minimum of five (5) plays from scrimmage each half per game. Does not include kick offs.

If a player does not get in the required five (5) plays, he will start the next game and play every play in the first half of the game. He will then play a minimum of five (5) plays per quarter in the remainder of the game.

If a player does not attend half of the practices of his team, the coach is not required to play hi the minimum number of plays. However, the coach must first notify the league director before he/she is allowed to hold the player out of the minimum number of plays.

Division Rules

5-6 yrs. League

5-6 years old: This non-competitive league to teach this age group the fundamentals of Football.

Game Rules:

The playing field will be divided into Six (6) 10 yard zones.

The offensive team has four downs to advance the ball from one zone to the next.

The game will consist of Two(2) Fifteen (15) minute halves.

A team is allowed 25 seconds to put the ball in play after the ready for play signal. A team will be warned once about taking too much time. Next warning will result in a penalty.

The ball is placed on the 10 yard line to begin each half and after each score.

If a player inadvertently loses his belt, re-do play in result will be a loss of down.

Offense

5 players must be on the line of scrimmage.

All offensive players are eligible receivers.

A ball handed forward behind the line of scrimmage is a forward pass. Only one forward pass may be attempted per down.

Motion-only one offensive player can be in motion at the snap. This player must be at least 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage.

A back who receives a snap must be at least 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage.

All snaps must be made between the center's legs.

Teammates cannot assist or help the ball carrier.

Offensive Screen Blocking - The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his hands and arms at his side or behind his back. Any use of the arms, elbows or legs to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his hand or arms to break a fall or retain his balance. A player must be on his feet before, during and after screen blocking.

- Penalty: Personal foul - 5 yards.

Screen Blocking Fundamentals - A player who screens shall not:

- When he is behind a stationary opponent, take a position closer than a normal step from him.
- When he assumes a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent make contact with him.
- Take a position so close to a moving opponent that his opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing directions. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take his stationary position. This position will vary and may be 1 to 2 normal steps or strides from the opponent.
- After assuming his legal screening position move and maintain it, unless he moves in the same direction and path of his opponent. If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results, he has committed a personal foul.

A team must declare its intention to punt. Each team must put 5 players on the line of scrimmage. The punter can come up to the center to take the snap. No player can move until the ball is kicked.

Offensive Fumble: An offensive fumble belongs to the offensive team unless lost by rule. Fumbled kicks that hit the ground belong to the receiving team.

Runner

Guarding the Flag Belt

- Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms or the ball to deny the opportunity the opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag guarding includes:
 - Swing the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from de-flagging.
 - Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt or prevent an opponent from de-flagging.
 - Lower the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from de-flagging.
- Penalty - Flag guarding: 5 yards

Stiff Arm

- The runner shall be prohibited from contacting an opponent with extended hand or arm. This includes the use of a "Stiff Arm" extended to ward off an opponent attempting to De-flag/tag.
- Penalty - Personal Foul: 5 yards

Obstruction of Runner

- The defensive player shall not hold, push, or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the flag or making a legal tag.
- Penalty - Personal Foul: 5 yards

Defense

Players must be on their feet to de-flag a ball carrier.

The rush is instant; however, all defensive players must line up 3 yards from the line of scrimmage.

All attempts at the ball carrier must be towards his flag.

Players on defense must grab the flag. Grabbing the flag belt or any article of clothing of the ball carrier will be a holding violation.

Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent.

- Personal foul – 5 yards

Safeties will result in two points. The ball will return to the offensive team who had the ball when the safety took place.

7-8 yrs. League

7-8 years old: This non-competitive league to teach this age group the fundamentals of Football.

Game Rules:

The playing field will be divided into Eight (8) 10 yard zones.

The offensive team has four downs to advance the ball from one zone to the next.

The game will consist of Two (2) Eighteen (18) minute halves.

A team is allowed 25 seconds to put the ball in play after the ready for play signal. A team will be warned once about taking too much time. Next warning will result in a penalty.

The ball is placed on the 20 yard line to begin each half and after each score.

If a player inadvertently loses his belt, re-do play in result will be a loss of down.

Offense

5 players must be on the line of scrimmage.

All offensive players are eligible receivers.

A ball handed forward behind the line of scrimmage is a forward pass. Only one forward pass may be attempted per down.

Motion-only one offensive player can be in motion at the snap. This player must be at least 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage.

A back who receives a snap must be at least 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage.

All snaps must be made between the center's legs.

Teammates cannot assist or help the ball carrier.

Offensive Screen Blocking - The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his hands and arms at his side or behind his back. Any use of the arms, elbows or legs to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his hand or arms to break a fall or retain his balance. A player must be on his feet before, during and after screen blocking.

- Penalty: Personal foul - 10 yards.

Screen Blocking Fundamentals - A player who screens shall not:

- When he is behind a stationary opponent, take a position closer than a normal step from him.
- When he assumes a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent make contact with him.
- Take a position so close to a moving opponent that his opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing directions. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take his stationary position. This position will vary and may be 1 to 2 normal steps or strides from the opponent.
- After assuming his legal screening position move and maintain it, unless he moves in the same direction and path of his opponent. If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results, he has committed a personal foul.

A team must declare its intention to punt. Each team must put 5 players on the line of scrimmage. The punter can come up to the center to take the snap. No player can move until the ball is kicked.

Offensive Fumble: An offensive fumble belongs to the offensive team unless lost by rule. Fumbled kicks that hit the ground belong to the receiving team.

Runner

Guarding the Flag Belt

- Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms or the ball to deny the opportunity the opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag guarding includes:
 - Swing the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from de-flagging.
 - Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt or prevent an opponent from de-flagging.
 - Lower the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from de-flagging.
- Penalty - Flag guarding: 10 yards

Stiff Arm

- The runner shall be prohibited from contacting an opponent with extended hand or arm. This includes the use of a "Stiff Arm" extended to ward off an opponent attempting to De-flag/tag.
- Penalty - Personal Foul: 10 yards

Obstruction of Runner

- The defensive player shall not hold, push, or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the flag or making a legal tag.
- Penalty - Personal Foul: 10 yards

Defense

Players must be on their feet to de-flag a ball carrier.

The rush is instant; however, all defensive players must line up 3 yards from the line of scrimmage.

All attempts at the ball carrier must be towards his flag.

Players on defense must grab the flag. Grabbing the flag belt or any article of clothing of the ball carrier will be a holding violation.

Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent.

- Personal foul – 10 yards

Safeties will result in two points. The ball will return to the offensive team who had the ball when the safety took place.

Complaints/Ineligible

Complaint against Officials, Supervisors Procedures

Complaints concerning officials, supervisors, and other aspects of the program can be made in writing at any time after the game has been played.

The Recreation Department will not recognize protests that will alter the scores or outcomes of games.

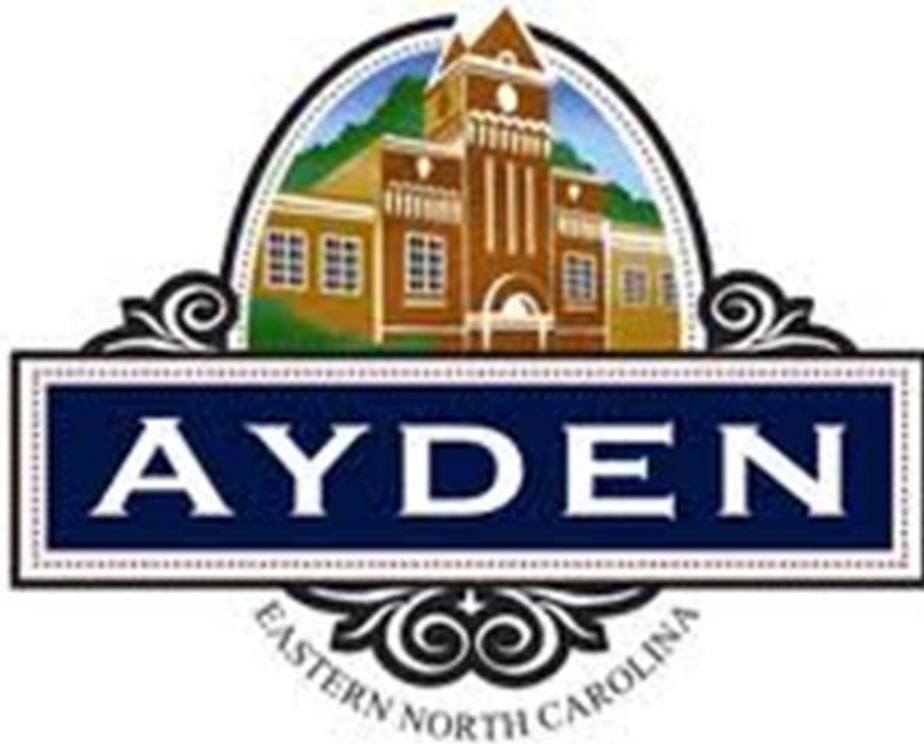
Players/Forfeits

Requests for determining eligibility of a player can be made at any point during the season by head coaches. When requesting the inquiry, coach must give players known name, jersey number, and team for which he/she participated. Teams will forfeit all games in which an ineligible player participates.

Complaint against Coach Procedures

This section outlines the procedures Ayden Arts and Recreation Department will use when the Department receives a complaint against a coach in an Ayden Arts and Recreation program.

- Gather information and document eyewitness accounts of the event(s) that took place from interested parties involved to determine if a violation of the letter or intent of the Coaches' Code of Ethics Pledge has occurred. This may include the officials, other coaches, parents and children.
- Require the coach to attend a meeting with the Recreation Director to address the complaint and to offer his/her side of the incident. This meeting will be documented.
- Ayden Arts and Recreation Department has the authority to determine the severity of the situation and whether or not the affected coach has violated the expected behaviors outlined under each of the canons of the Code of Ethics Pledge.
- Ayden Arts and Recreation Department Director has the authority to enforce the appropriate range of disciplinary actions outlined in *Offense & Penalty* section of this manual

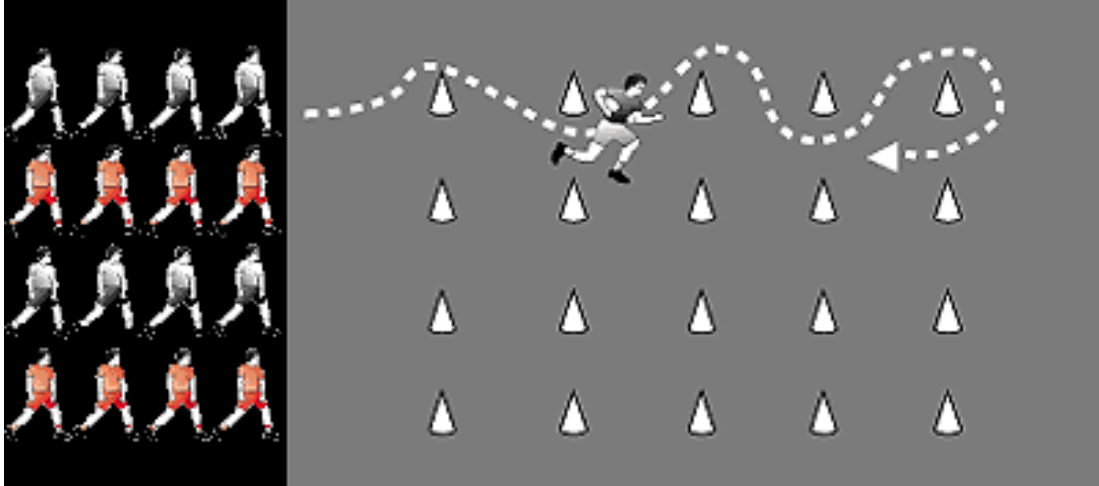


Youth Flag Football Coaches Handbook

Appendix

Flag Football Drills

Running with the Ball Drill 1



Purpose: To develop running skills.

Organization: Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. Cones are set 8 yards apart to simulate a mini-end zone. One ball per team. The entire class can participate. If cones are limited, use t-shirts, shoes, or tape on the floor as markers.

Drill Outline:

This is a relay race between teams.

The first participant in each line has a football and will run with the football around each cone and then come back to the beginning of his/her line.

When the participant returns to the line, they will hand off to the next participant at the front of the line, then go to the back of the team's line.

The race is won by the first team to have each participant complete the race.

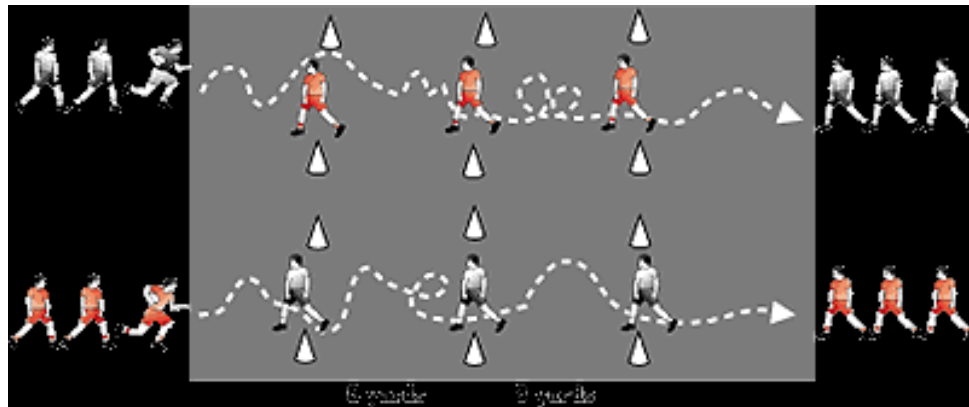
Progression: Have players backpedal or hop over the cones.

Key Coaching Points:

Player switches arms carrying the football, with the football always carried in the arm nearest the sideline.

Players cut on their outside foot, not crossing their legs over when they go around a cone.

Drill 2



Purpose: To develop running skills and avoid having the flag pulled.

Organization: Set out a 40 x 40-yard area. Place cones 8 yards apart to simulate a mini-end zone; one ball per team. The entire class can participate in one drill, or duplicate the cone set-up if space permits.

Drill Outline:

Relay race between teams.

Drill is completed when all RBs have run through the mini end zone once.

There are 3 mini-end zones for the RB to run through.

Offensive team has to play against the other team's defense.

RB has to run through three mini-end zones and avoid the defenders in each.

The DB attempts to pull the RB flag and stop him/her from scoring.

DB's are awarded 3 points for each flag pulled. Points are counted after the race.

The RB is awarded 6 points for each successful TD.

The RB must run directly to the end of the line after handing off the football to a teammate on the other side of the drill.

Offensive and defensive players are switched after each relay race is completed.

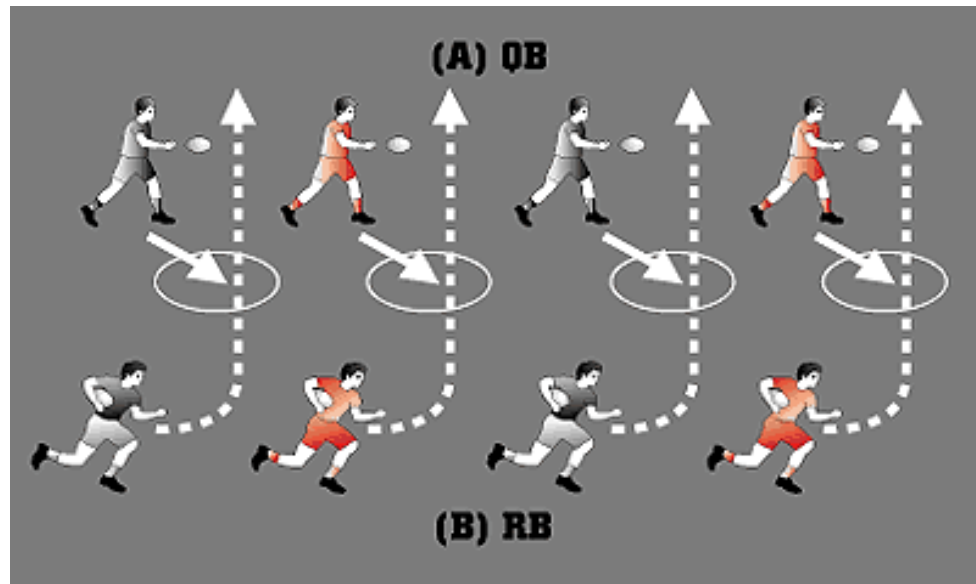
If both RBs flags are removed before reaching the last DB, the RBs run back to the next RB in line and hands off the ball.

Key Coaching Points:

RB plays with head up.

DB watches the movement of RB's hips, not the head or shoulders.

Tossing the Ball



Purpose: To develop proper tosses or pitches.

Organization: Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. Divide teams into even groups and place players opposite each other across the line about 5 yards apart. Players on Team A are the quarterbacks. The players on the B team are running backs. They will switch positions after each turn. Footballs for each pair are recommended and the entire class can participate if space permits.

Drill Outline:

The QBs will have their backs to the RBs.

The first several practices, the instructor will call the cadence, "SET GO." The instructor will then choose a QB to call out the cadence. .

Each QB holds the football in front of them with their knees bent and their feet apart.

On the QB's "SET GO" the RB moves to the right to take the pitch from the QB at a distance of 3-5 yards.

The first time through the drill, have players move in slow motion to get the feel of the drill.

Switch positions; the QBs are now RBs and vice versa.

The players now run half speed through the drill to the left.

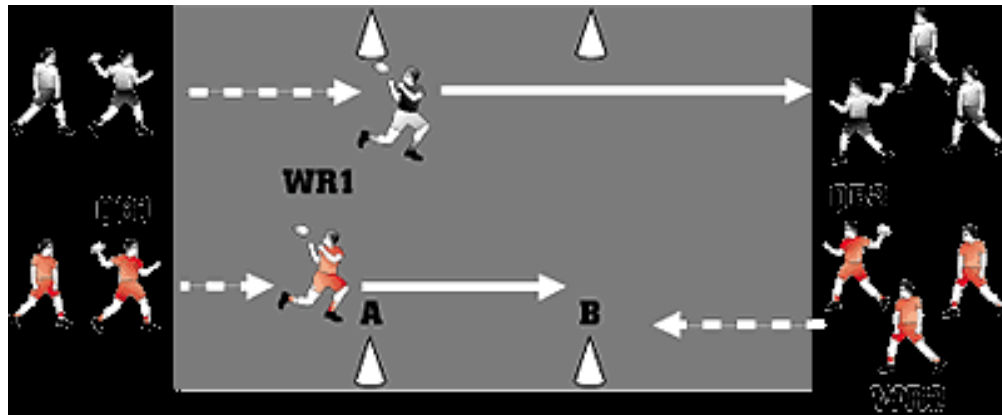
The players switch positions again and run through the drill at full speed.

Key Coaching Points:

The QB will look at the stomach area of the RB when making the pitch it to that area.

The toss or pitch is similar to passing in Rugby.

Passing & Receiving
Drill 1



Purpose: To develop running, passing, and receiving skills.

Organization: Set out a 20 x 20-yard area and divide the team into even groups. Set cones 5 yards from each end line and 10 yards apart. Each team requires one football so the entire class can participate.

Drill Outline:

This is a relay race.

The object is for QB 1 to pass to WR 1, who has run to cone (A) to catch the ball.

The second participant in line is WR 2.

WR 2 runs to cone (B) and repeats the drill.

The drill is repeated until every participant has a turn.

If the ball is dropped, the WR picks it up and continues with the drill.

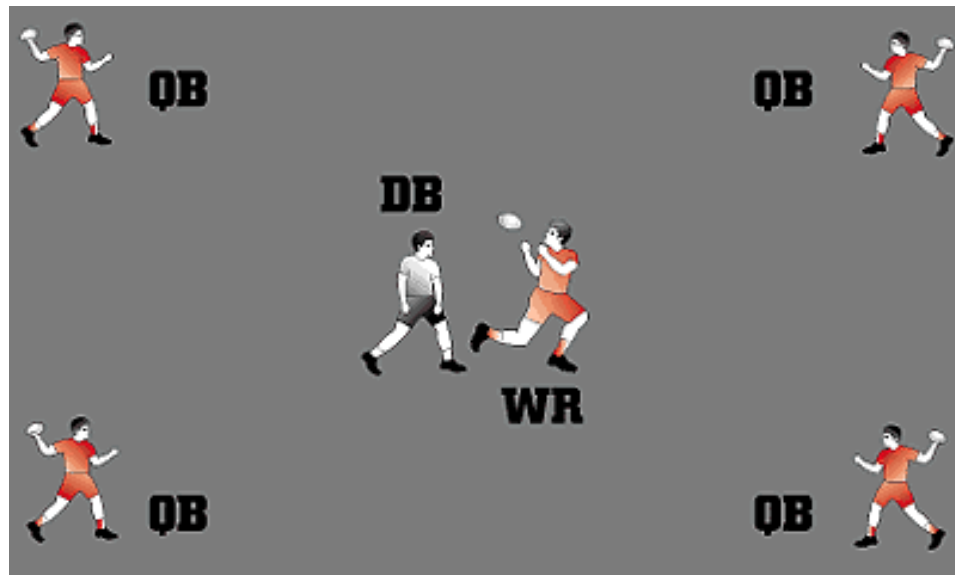
Key Coaching Points:

WR must stop and completely turn around giving the QB a big target.

WR must give a solid handoff to the QB when returning to line.

After each relay race, a WR becomes the new QB.

Drill 2



Purpose: For a WR to find an open area in order to catch a pass.

Organization: Set out a 10 x 10-yard area. Divide the players into groups of six, five players on offense and a single player on defense. Station four players in the corners of the area and a lone receiver, shadowed by a defender inside the area. This can be duplicated to allow full participation for entire class. One football is needed per group.

Drill Outline:

The object is for the QB's to pass the football around until an opportunity arises to throw the football to the WR.

The length of the drill is 30 seconds. Six points are awarded for each reception and the defense is awarded three points for an interception.

Either switch to a whole new group of players at QB, WR, and DB. Or, switch kids on the field into new positions or bring new kids into game.

Progression:

Lower drill time to (20) seconds in length.

Add an additional DB to the field.

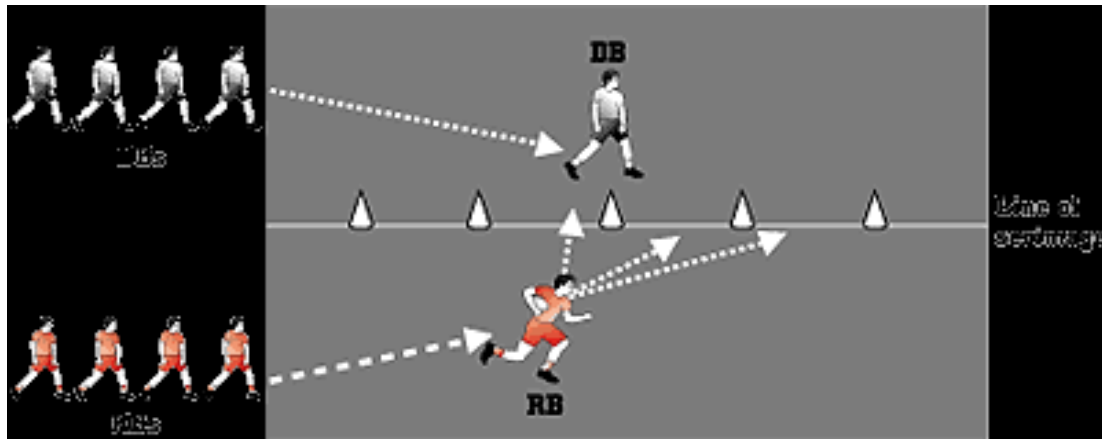
If the football is intercepted, put the QB who threw the interception on defense.

Key Coaching Points:

How WR and QB communicate.

Defenders should focus on WR hips not shoulders.

Defense
Drill 1



Purpose: To develop defensive back skills.

Organization: Set out a 10 x 20-yard area. Place the cones five yards apart. One football is needed. The entire class can participate in this drill which, can be duplicated for more players if space permits.

Drill Outline:

The object is for the RB to run along the line of scrimmage and select an area between the cones to run through.

RB starts with the football. On coach's signal, RB begins running. The DB must mirror the RB and attempt to capture the RB's flag before the RB selects a hole between the cones.

This drill simulates making a one-on-one flag capture. Progression: Progress to two defensive players.

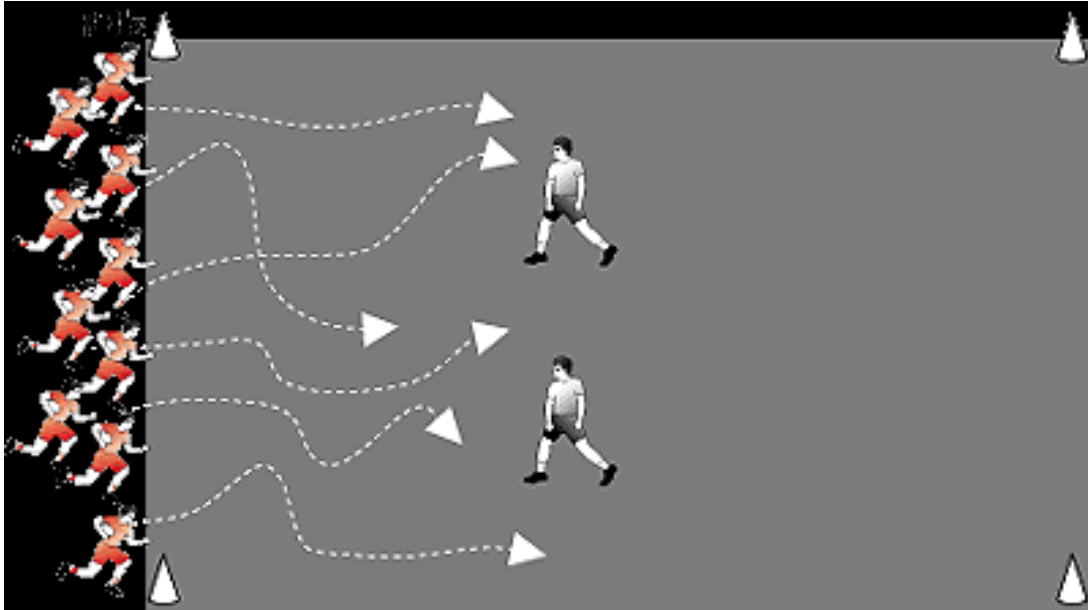
Key Coaching Points:

RB must keep head up and the football firmly tucked away.

DB must keep shoulders square and head and eyes looking upfield.

DB watches the RB's hips.

Drill 2



Purpose: To develop running skills and avoid the DB. Also teaches RBs to run to an open area

Organization: Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. 10 players start at one end zone, each with a football (if available). Two DBs are stationed in the middle of the field.

Drill Outline:

The object is for the RBs to run past the DBs to the opposite end zone without getting their flags pulled.

If a RB has his/her flag pulled, he/she sits out.

Stop the drill after RBs reach the opposite end zone. Identify kids with pulled flags and allow players to catch their breath.

The drill continues then by changing direction until there is one RB remaining.

Progression: Instead a RB sitting out after his/her flag is pulled, have him switch to a DB and assist in pulling other RB's flags.

Key Coaching Points:

DBs should run to where the RB is going, not to where they are.

Watch RB's waist, not his/her head or shoulders.

Additional Resources:

<http://flagfootballacademy.com/youth-flag-football-drills/>

<http://www.broncosflagfootball.com/Default.aspx?tabid=479102>

http://www.y-coach.com/CD/Flag_Football_Drills.htm