

# Laurel Highlands Developmental Football League

## Rules Committee Meeting Minutes

Prepared by Nate Sann (Richland), Commissioner

- Meeting called to order by Matt Sinosky (Central Cambria)
- Matt S. welcomes new league representatives. Roll call:
  - Present: Central Cambria (Matt Sinosky), Forest Hills (Joel Shumaker), Johnstown (Mike Capriotti), Richland (Tom Feichtel), Somerset (Andy Hagans).
  - Absent: Bishop McCort, Mainline (Penn Cambria), Westmont

### Old Business:

- 2016 Season Review. No outstanding issues from 2016 season. Reviewed some concerns for discussion regarding rule changes and/or adherence issues leading into 2017 season
  - Huddle clock – Need to balance a line between staying fair and competitive with developing.
  - Moving from 8 minute quarters back to 10 minute quarters
  - For the minors, once the team approaches the line of scrimmage, the on field coaches will move 10 yards back from the closest play and can no longer communicate with the players until the play is blown dead. Audible and other communication is permitted from the sideline coaches.
  - Encourage no on field coaches in 4<sup>th</sup> grade year.
  - Omitting the mercy rule from the rule book
  - Require offense to have an audible snap count. No silent count.
  - Each league representative should maintain some proof of age and current academic grade enrollment for every player

### New Business:

- Huddle clock
  - Discussed possible penalty for running past the current 25 second play clock. (loss of down, loss of time outs, 5 yard penalty and stop of game clock until the next snap of the ball)
  - Recommending the following rule change
    - Minors - will have a 30 second play clock with no officials discretion. The official will keep the play clock and give an audible and hand signal for 5 seconds left

and count down. If the ball is not snapped by the expiration of the play clock. The official will stop the game clock and administer a 5 yard penalty without a loss of down. The game clock will resume upon the next snap of the ball.

- Majors - will have a 25 second play clock with no officials discretion. The official will keep the play clock and give an audible and hand signal for 5 seconds left and count down. If the ball is not snapped by the expiration of the play clock. The official will stop the game clock and administer a 5 yard penalty without a loss of down. The game clock will resume upon the next snap of the ball.

➤ Changing back to 10 minute quarters

- The premise for increasing the length of the quarters was that time was being run off the clock because the play clock was not being enforced. This was probably due to the official's discretion as well as there was no penalty associated with violations.
- The rationale for reducing the quarter length was due to:
  - Safety concerns to limit injuries as players become fatigued. It also ensures teams with lower participation numbers are not penalized or at increased risk for injury.
  - The length of the games were running too long and this was affecting numerous logistical issues.
  - The junior high level goes is 8 minute quarters with traditional timing rules.

- Since we changed the rule for the play clock and will implement an enforceable penalty without discretion, we elected to leave the quarter length at 8 minutes.

➤ Change on field coaching rule for minors (5.2)

- Recommend amending the rule to: once the team approaches the line of scrimmage, the on field coaches will move 10 yards back from the closest play and can no longer communicate with the players until the play is blown dead. Audible and other communication is permitted from the sideline coaches.
- Encourage no on field coaches in 4<sup>th</sup> grade year.

➤ Recommend omitting the *mercy rule* (Modified Competition Rule 1.5) from the rule book.

- Recommend adding a rule for both minors and majors requiring an offense to have an audible snap count. No silent count permitted.
- Proof of age and grade (Section 4):
  - Recommend that the addition to the rules be made to have each league representative should maintain some proof of age (copy of birth certificate) and a current academic grade enrollment (school roster, home room assignment list, etc.) for every player.
  - If there is a dispute of eligible players due to age or grade level according to the league rule 5.0 then these documents must be presented to the league officials.
- Additional items discussed but consensus was reached nor formal recommendations made for the board:
  - Allow players to request a weigh-in after the initial weight in order to not punish a player who just missed the weight limit at the initial weigh-in.
  - Requiring a minimum number of officials in the league rules
  - Propose a universal monetary amount for what the league advises the referees make per game. Also encourage free food & drinks for officials during and after games.
  - Reduce the amount of rules in the major division
- ❖ The meeting was adjourned at 9:30
- ❖ Recommendations will be submitted to the league board representatives for review.