

OPERATIONS MANUAL &
INTRODUCTION TO RISK MANAGEMENT
BIG CITY FOOTBALL LEAGUE



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(2011 REV.)

Big City Football League

Member Club Operations Manual and Introduction to Risk Management

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**BIG CITY FOOTBALL, INC.
TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**WELCOME TO BIG CITY FOOTBALL
TRADEMARKS**

**Page 5
Page 6**

Introduction to Big City Football, Inc.	Page 5
Organizing Your Franchise	Page 7
Seven Rules of Coaching	Page 9
Practice Planning	Page 10
Instruction and Coaching	Page 11
Equipment Evaluation	Page 13
Environment and Injuries	Page 14
Evaluating Talent	Page 16
Medical Response	Page 17
Field Safety	Page 18
Program Evaluation	Page 20
Summary	Page 20

BIG CITY FOOTBALL, INC.

The national headquarters of BIG CITY FOOTBALL, INC. (BCFL) is located in Detroit, MI. Your feedback is solicited and encouraged to make your membership with BCFL a memorable experience.

The BCFL website at www.bccfl.org is a good way to keep current with BCFL activities and events. Each member of BCFL should have its own website highlighting benefits of participation and affiliation with BCFL. Member organization websites are linked to the BCFL website. For more information on the BCFL contact: info@bccfl.org.

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WELCOME TO BIG CITY FOOTBALL, INC.

Purpose of This Manual

This manual was developed for volunteers and staff of Big City Football. Team, association, and league officers will find it informative and helpful. Your suggestions to improve the validity of this document are encouraged to update future editions of this guide. The purpose of this manual is to serve a guide for all member teams/associations/conferences of the Big City Football League. BCFL is a registered member of American Youth Football (AYF). Any instructions for individual formation and operation of teams/associations/conference within AYF can be found in the AYF League – Club Operations Manual and the American Youth Football Official Rules and Regulations. The BCFL abides by the formation procedures, rules and regulations of AYF in operation of this league and management of member organizations.

What is Big City Football?

Mission: Big City Football, Inc. exists to teach the fundamentals of tackle football without the pressure to win at all costs.

Established in 2006, **Big City Football, Inc.** is a non-profit organization that is the administrative body for youth football: for its teams, associations and leagues. These programs are designed to help youth learn skills and develop into more productive adults through their participation in organized, supervised sports. The Big City Football home site can be found at www.bccfl.org.

Big City Football League (BCFL) is created to serve football, cheer and dance members. Sportsmanship, teamwork, honesty, responsibility, self-reliance and self-discipline are among the traits needed by youth you face the future with positive aspirations and confidence.

American Youth Football (AYF) believes youth exemplify what they are taught. If we teach them positive traits, such as playing by the rules, they will learn to live by the rules. The AYF Home Site can be found at www.americanyouthfootball.com.

BCFL Headquarters

The Big City Football National headquarters is the point of contact for all programs associated with the BCFL.

The Big City Football Name

TRADEMARKS

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BCFL hereby grants to your organization a Limited Use License. This license allows your team/association/conference to use the BCFL Marks on paper goods only; and specifically on office supplies, business cards, identification cards, marketing materials, pamphlets, flyers and web-sites, solely for the purpose of identifying your organization as a member of the BCFL. You may also use the Marks on trophies, medals, awards and banners to be displayed at games, meetings and competitions. The BCFL Marks may not be used in any other way by your organization or any of your agents, assigns, subordinates, sponsors and/or affiliates.

You may not alter the Marks in any way other than by adding a textual reference to your own geographic location or team name. You may include the words “BIG CITY FOOTBALL LEAGUE” and/or “BCFL” into the legal name of your organization in so long as it appears in connection with your local geographic location and/or team name.

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HISTORY OF BIG CITY FOOTBALL, INC.

Big City Football, Inc. was founded in 2006 to ensure best practices are being used by coaches and participants in tackle football. The Big City Football organization is made up of coaches, officials and representatives of youth football programs. The primary goals of Big City Football are:

- Provide instruction to coaches including training, support and methods of evaluation.
- Provide certification to new chartered organizations in recreational football leagues.
- Help organizations ensure fair and impartial treatment of players and participants.
- Provide clinics and workshops for continuous improvement of coaching staffs.
- Provide screening and background checks for staff and volunteers.
- Develop rules and ethical practices for youth football.

In addition, BIG CITY FOOTBALL will also assist players and participants in academic, social and leadership development to help players mature in citizenship. BIG CITY FOOTBALL works with a variety of personnel in youth and professional sports.

BIG CITY FOOTBALL helps organizations remained focused on the core values of athletic competition, sportsmanship and respect for the game. BIG CITY FOOTBALL also helps coaches who are knowledgeable about the game of football, but not as knowledgeable about how to work with youth. Lastly, BIG CITY FOOTBALL serves as an aid to organizations to assist them in maintaining integrity and efficiency in the daily business operations of their programs.

Winning is an important part of all sports. However, the desire to win by many coaches, parents and organizations can often overshadow other important aspects of playing football. These aspects include developing young men to be leaders, scholars and law abiding citizens; developing relationships, and learning the importance of teamwork

There are good programs for kids and there are great programs for kids. There are also poor programs for kids and many of these programs could become great with the right assistance and mentoring. BIG CITY FOOTBALL is a group of dedicated individuals who love the game of football and want to see it improve for the fun and enjoyment of kids and adults.

ORGANIZING YOUR FRANCHISE

The success of your franchise depends on the proper organization and management of your regular business operations. As a non-profit organization, you are accountable to your clients, your community, your supporters and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). You should be mindful of all pertinent laws and restrictions surrounding your organization and be sure that you

are in compliance with all regulatory laws governing the operation of your company. An organization that is in compliance should be able to present the following upon request:

1. Proof of IRS Tax Exempt, 501 (c)(3) status, determination letter
2. List of Board of Directors
3. List of other significant personnel
4. Proof of \$1,000,000 Each Claim Directors & Officers Liability insurance policy; \$1,000,000 Each Occurrence/\$2,000,000 General Aggregate General Liability insurance policy; \$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit Bodily Injury and Property Damage Non-Owned and Hired Automobile Liability insurance policy, all of which indemnify The Big City Football League, the City in which your franchise resides and the school district of the fields used for home games
5. Financial statements for its most recently-ended fiscal year that document separate football and cheerleading revenue and expenses
6. Executed agreement binding the organization to follow the Constitution and Bylaws

Participant Registration with Franchises

Parents are the guardians of the interests of their children; therefore, you must be sure to advise parents of all policies and procedures as well as costs associated with the complete participation in your franchise. This information should be documented in writing and given to parents when children are registered for your organization in football and cheerleading programs. Efficient facilitation of this process includes;

1. A registration fee (which must include, but is not limited to, practice and game uniforms, equipment rental, banquet and trophy).
2. A list of items covered and not covered in the registration fee.
3. Policies regarding insurance and refunds of registration fees.
4. Information on parent participation provided to parents at time of registration.
5. A designated staff person in the franchise should be responsible to make sure that every participant in the franchise is eligible.
6. Every contract should be signed by legal parent or guardian and on file with the member club or organization.

Staffing Your Organization

Your coaches, volunteers, staff and key personnel should be qualified individuals who can competently handle the administrative duties of your club. Certification is required by ALL coaches, volunteers and staff of each member club who have a direct or indirect relationship with children. The following chart will help you complete the appropriate training for your club or organization.

FOOTBALL PERSONNEL				
Position	Background Check	USA Football/AYF Certification	Glazier Clinic or Other Coaching School	First Aid/CPR
President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Head Coach	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Athletic Dir.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Assist. Coaches	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Trainers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cheer Director	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cheer Coord.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Cheer Coaches	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Volunteers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Team Moms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Team Dads	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Administrators	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Board Members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
League Liaison	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory				

In addition, all coaches must complete eight (8) hours of mandatory, certified training prior to the start of the season. This training must be completed through and approved organization of the League and documented with the League office before coaches can take the field with participants.

SEVEN RULES OF COACHING

The success of any football program is dependent upon the coaches. You can have great talent, but lose every game with poor coaching. You can have marginal talent and build a dynasty with good coaching. The fundamentals of football are blocking and tackling. The game has evolved into an air-it-out, offensive showdown; however, the major rules of the game have not changed and no team will consistently win without practicing the fundamentals. There are seven rules of effective coaching.

1. Always place the health, safety and well being of the participants above everything else. Value each participant. They signed up to play football and have fun.
2. Teach fundamental blocking and tackling first. Every participant needs to know how to execute blocking and tackling regardless of position.

3. Make sure you have the best fit of talent at each position on your team. Keep things simple and don't ask more of any position than there is ability to give. Avoid favoritism. Work with your assistant coaches and get a consensus on who should play where for the good of the team.
4. Structure your offense and defense to account for your player abilities. You play the game to win. You cannot overcome a lack of talent. Don't try to create what isn't available. Enjoy coaching the game.
5. Win by executing the fundamentals. Don't think that using the entire playbook will win games. Teach the players to execute a few plays well.
6. Practice the following regularly: Center/QB exchange; defensive contain and pursuit; ball control and avoiding turnovers.
7. The success of a good teacher is in the student's ability to recall. Unless your players know what you know, you cannot expect them to execute on the field. Communicate your knowledge to your players in a way they can understand. Have patience and teach until the concepts are learned. If it is not done in practice, it won't be done in the game.

PLANNING A GOOD PRACTICE

It is important to plan practices in advance to make sure time is not wasted and to document the skills and techniques taught. Proper practice planning ensures that procedures are followed and accidents reduced. Practice planning also ensures that the team will have fun while learning to play tackle football. The following should be a part of every practice script:

Warm Up & Cool Down

Starting practice without warming up can increase injuries. Proper warm up increased body temperature, respiration, heart rate, reduces muscle and ligament sprains. Warm ups should provide exercises for the following:

- Strength
- Flexibility
- Motion at Position

Warm up should be tailored for conditioning and last at least 10 minutes. Warm up should also be monitored closely to avoid fatigue. Athletes should cool down following warm up and water breaks should be given often during the practice. Water should be delivered to avoid the spread of any contagious disease.

Training is to prepare athletes for competition and is not to be used as a disciplinary method. Conditioning should begin before the official start of the season. Injuries are more likely to occur when athletes have not been properly conditioned. Training intensity should increase gradually and provide balance for fitness and skill development. Athletes train at different levels. This should be monitored to maximize skill development and technique. Prior to the beginning practice, coaches should inquire of the health of each player. In warmer climates, practice should be modified to avoid heat related emergencies.

The following is a sample practice script:

TIME	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
3:00 – 3:15	Flex & Stretch	Flex & Stretch	Flex & Stretch	Flex & Stretch
3:15 – 3:20	Water	Water	Water	Water
3:20 – 3:45	Tackle Stations	Tackle Stations	Pass Defense	Formation Walk Through
3:45 – 4:00	Pursuit Drill	Pursuit Drill	Run Defense	Walk Through – Off
4:00 – 4:05	Water	Water	Water	Water
4:05 – 4:20	Individual Period	Individual Period	Individual Period	Walk Through – Def
4:20 – 4:35	Team Period – Off	Team Period – Def	Team Period – Off	Team Period – Punts
4:35 – 4:50	Specials Extra Pts	Specials Kick Off	Specials Kick Ret	Walk Through – Specials
4:50 – 5:00	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Game Prep/Dismissal

The practice should be scripted for each day of the week. This ensures that the coaches communicate better, drills are instructed more efficiently and players are not uninvolved in the practices. Every player should take part in each part of the practice. It is important for coaches to prepare all the players to perform at one offensive and one defensive position. There are many variations to the practice script. It is important for the coaching staffs to agree upon one format and use is consistently. The script should be kept by each coach on the practice field at all times. **COACHES ARE NOT TO ENGAGE PLAYERS IN ANY DRILL OR ACTIVITY THAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRACTICE SCRIPT.**

INSTRUCTION AND COACHING

Coaches are responsible for providing appropriate supervision to prevent risk of injury. Supervision is to be conducted during general sessions that involve the entire team and specific supervision during drills or individual periods. The coaches must be aware of all the activities of the players on the field. Supervision begins when the athletes arrive at practice and does not end

until players leave practice. There should always be two coaches present at the practice facility at all times. **Coaches should avoid any isolated time with minors.**

The following guidelines will help coaches supervise players:

1. Consider the ages of your players. Younger players usually require more supervision.
2. Supervise all activities of the practice and game.
3. Act quickly on injuries and potentially threatening problems.
4. Plan and direct activities.
5. Tightly monitor drills and activities that have a high risk of injury.
6. Insist that players use appropriate techniques and equipment.
7. Document and investigate all injuries, problems and occurrences.
8. Make sure facilities are free from hazards.

Many coaches display a great deal of intensity during instruction and in games. It is important that coaches set an example of self-control and positive leadership for players. Football is the game, but the lessons learned can affect the outcome of life. You are a role model and the players will remember you long after their playing days are over. Apply the following rules to your coaching style:

- Set a standard of responsibility for the team. Do your best to control the attitudes of players, coaches and parents.
- Show respect for players, coaches, parents and officials.
- Avoid any abuse. This includes physical, sexual, emotional or verbal.
- Offensive language is not permitted. Model good communication skills.
- Do not discriminate or use discriminating language. Discrimination of race, religion, gender, ethnicity, or disability is not permitted.
- Use discretion when providing constructive criticism and discipline.
- Do not threaten, mock, insult or offend parents or players.
- Give parents clear guidelines for the participation of their children. Document all conversations with parents regarding players.
- The coaching environment should be free from hazing, fighting, smoking, alcohol, drugs, profane language and violent aggression.
- Limit physical contact to the teaching of skills and techniques.

Provide Proper Instruction

While it is important to understand the rules and strategies of the sport, it is equally important to know how to teach the rules, skills and strategies. Proper instruction of skills or techniques should follow the following:

- Introduce the technique
- Demonstrate the technique
- Explain the technique
- Watch athletes practice the technique

In introducing the technique coaches should name the technique so that athletes can understand the skills they are learning. In demonstrating the technique, proper form should be used and the skill should be demonstrated until the athletes comprehend it. The skill should then be explained so athletes will know how to use it in the game. In observance of athletes, some players may have to be guided through the drill to master it effectively.

Coaches must provide feedback to each player to ensure that the skill is being done correctly. Progression of the players should be documented and a matter of discussion by coaches when evaluating players and setting depth charts.

UNIFORM/EQUIPMENT EVALUATION

Equipment should be inspected at each practice and game. This will reduce injury and equipment failure on the field. Equipment wears over time and this reduces its ability to properly protect players. Equipment should be available, high-quality, in good condition, sized properly, fitted correctly, maintained and replaced or repaired when damaged. **Coaches should never modify equipment. Modifications may void warranties and increase liability.**

When purchasing equipment:

1. Be knowledgeable of equipment, material and design.
2. Use only authorized dealers.
3. Require use of all equipment related to safety of head, eyes and critical injury areas.
4. Inspect equipment for defects.
5. Instruct athletes on proper use and maintenance.
6. Instruct athletes to report damages and to repair or replace equipment when necessary.

There shall be no exploitation of a member club or individual participant for monetary gain through the placement of any visible advertising on any part of the uniform or equipment of a participant or coach. The only exception shall be for the placement of the official team name on the uniform and the placement of the official logo of the League on the uniform.

The following regulation equipment shall be mandatory of all players and must be worn: helmet with face guard, shoulder pads, complete hip pad or girdle, thigh pads, kneepads, football jersey, football pants and cleats. The following regulations must also be applied to each member club or organization;

1. Altered face guards are not allowed.

2. Drilled or altered helmets are not allowed.
3. Dark colored visors are not allowed.
4. Mouth/teeth guards are mandatory.

Offensive Jersey Number Requirements

- Backs (1-49)
- Ends (1-49, 80-19)
- Tackle (50-79)
- Guard (50-79)
- Center (50-79)

Additional Uniform Requirements

- Each player's equipment must fit properly to give maximum possible protection.
- Each player must wear rubber sole/molded cleats. No tennis shoes are allowed.
- All players must wear protective cups.
- Each member club or organization will have a first aid kit on hand at all practices and games.
- The following game balls are to be used:
 - Varsity – High School
 - Junior Varsity – Youth
 - Freshman – Junior
 - Instructional – Pee Wee

Each member club is responsible for the collection/return of all equipment at the end of the season.

Helmets are to be reconditioned and recertified every two years.

ENVIRONMENT AND INJURIES

Sports injuries can be prevented by prevention and recognition/treatment. Coaches should incorporate methods to reduce the number of injuries in a season. This can be done with conditioning, strength training and participation screening. Football is not for everyone and a player may have a desire, but not possess the physical abilities needed to play the game. This information should be communicated to the parents and players for their own safety.

If an athlete has been injured, the coach must use discretion in determining if the player is able to return to play. This should be confirmed by a doctor and not merely the advice of parents or other coaches. The severity of an injury is not easily determined. If an injury is not properly

identified, and proper care is delayed, the recovery time is increased. The player may also experience permanent damage that could end his playing career.

The following should be practiced during injury in a game:

1. The player must sit out at least one down and not return without medical clearance.
2. The player cannot return if any pain is present.
3. The player should not move or try to “walk off” any injury.
4. Call EMS immediately for injuries to the head, neck or back. Stabilize the player and do not allow movement.
5. If an athlete reports pain, do not allow to return to play.
6. A player cannot return from a serious injury without medical approval. This includes unconsciousness, concussion or surgery.
7. Athletes must be able to demonstrate full range of motion without pain to return to play.

Coaches are responsible for inspecting the practice and game areas to insure the environment is safe. All possible hazards should be identified. Inspections should be documented to defend against possible lawsuits. **All hazards should be identified and corrected. Use warning signs and keep fans and athletes away from the hazards.**

The following should be part of a field inspection:

1. Inspect all areas used by athletes.
2. Inspect all potentially hazardous equipment.
3. Make sure unused equipment is not near a playing area.
4. Make sure electrical devices have protective coverings.
5. Report structures that could be unsafe.
6. Ask athletes to report potential hazards.
7. Report the facility condition to the proper authorities for repairs.
8. Ensure facility provides access to water for athletes.
9. Ensure easy access to first aid supplies.
10. Ensure access to telephone or emergency communication devices.
11. Have phone numbers of all parents or guardians on hand.

In inclement weather, a game may be called for two conditions: condition of the playing field and weather at the time of the game. Coaches must exercise good judgment to determine whether a game should be played. Officials will also assist in making game time decisions. If a decision is made to continue play and a parent does not agree, the coach should report the parent’s decision to remove the child from the game.

Severe storms and lightning are conditions for suspension of play. If these conditions appear, the playing field should be vacated and shelter sought. Play should not resume for 30 minutes in determining the distance of the storms. Coaches should discuss methods for notifying athletes of cancelled events (practice or games) at the beginning of the season.

Coaches and administrators should avoid driving alone with a non-family athlete. In the event that an athlete remains at the field waiting for transportation, the coach should wait with the athlete to guarantee safety and well-being. Coaches should stress to the parents and guardians the importance of safe and timely transportation to and from the field.

EVALUATING TALENT

Coaches have a responsibility to match players according to their size, speed, talent and potential. The following should be used to evaluate player potential at each position:

1. Skill
2. Experience
3. Height and weight
4. Injuries
5. Age
6. Maturity
7. Mental state
8. Gender

A good way to evaluate talent is to allow players to try out for skill positions. Many athletes want to play the high profile positions and many parents assume that their children possess the skills needed to perform at those positions. Coaches cannot be pressured into positioning an athlete where they are not suited. Players and parents must understand that position assignments are given based on skill, effort and ability to play the position. Partiality must be avoided and favoritism cannot be allowed. Players must be given a fair chance to compete for starting positions and the outcomes of the competition should be documented.

Coaches must also encourage players to do what is good for the team and not their individual goals. Selfish play and ambition can destroy team chemistry, reduce performance of other players and eliminate chances to win. Coaches must be able to recognize skill levels of players and assign players to positions that give them their best chance to play and perform in games. In addition, the coach is to prepare players for participation at the next level; therefore, a realistic expectation must be placed upon the players so that they will not be disappointed when competing for positions at their school. The overall advantage of playing in an unlimited league is that players not usually given a chance to play can play and be developed for competitive tackle football.

MEDICAL RESPONSE

Injuries are a part of football and cannot be avoided. The change in the game, the increased size and speed of players has greatly increased the possibility of injury. Fields that are not properly maintained or fields that use artificial surfaces also increase the risk of injury. Coaches must advise parents and players of the risks associated with tackle football. Parent orientations should be conducted prior to the start of practice to provide information regarding participation and to have parents sign a waiver of liability in giving their child consent to play. The following should be presented at orientations:

1. Information regarding injuries.
2. Information regarding required medical examinations.
3. Injury prevention methods at practice and games.
4. Equipment inspection.
5. Information on safety equipment not provided by the team or league and where it can be purchased.
6. Emergency procedures.

Proper first aid equipment must be available at practice and games. If not, teams cannot participate. One coach on each team must be certified in CPR. Coaches should renew their training in accordance with certification guidelines to remain current on the changes and procedures and nature of treatment. All coaches should have an emergency medical treatment plan. Basic first aid requires the following:

1. Check scene for safety.
2. Check the injured athlete and protect from further harm.
3. Use latex gloves and blood-borne pathogen to inspect injuries.
4. Do not move the athlete.
5. Activate emergency medical plan.
6. Care for athlete until EMS arrives.

An emergency medical plan should cover the following elements:

1. Who dials 911 in case of emergency?
2. Who attends to the injured athlete?
3. Where is nearest treatment facility?
4. Who meets paramedics and guides them to athlete?
5. Who initiates crowd control and contacts security/police?
6. Who notifies parents/guardians if not on site?
7. Who accompanies the injured athlete for treatment?
8. Who supervises the team?
9. Who provides proof of insurance?
10. Who documents the incident and the emergency response?

Coaches should also have access to Emergency Treatment Authorization Cards (ETAC) that give permission to treat in case of emergency. Each coach should have a binder of all personal and medical information for each player on hand at practice and games. If the head coach is not present, this information should be in the possession of a team/organization officer. The following information should be on each card:

1. Name, age and birth date of athlete
2. Name of parent/guardian and phone numbers
3. Address of athlete
4. Alternative medical contact
5. Special medical conditions
6. Medication athlete is taking
7. Allergies
8. Physician's name and number
9. Insurance information
10. Date
11. Notary if required by hospital or state

Coaches should have a first aid kit at practice and games. These can be purchased from hospitals, sporting goods stores, or pharmacies.

Heat related injuries can be the most severe. In recent years, athletes have died on the practice field and in games due to over-exertion, heat stroke, heart failure and dehydration. These emergencies can be eliminated by canceling practice in extreme weather (high temperatures and high humidity) and taking frequent breaks for water.

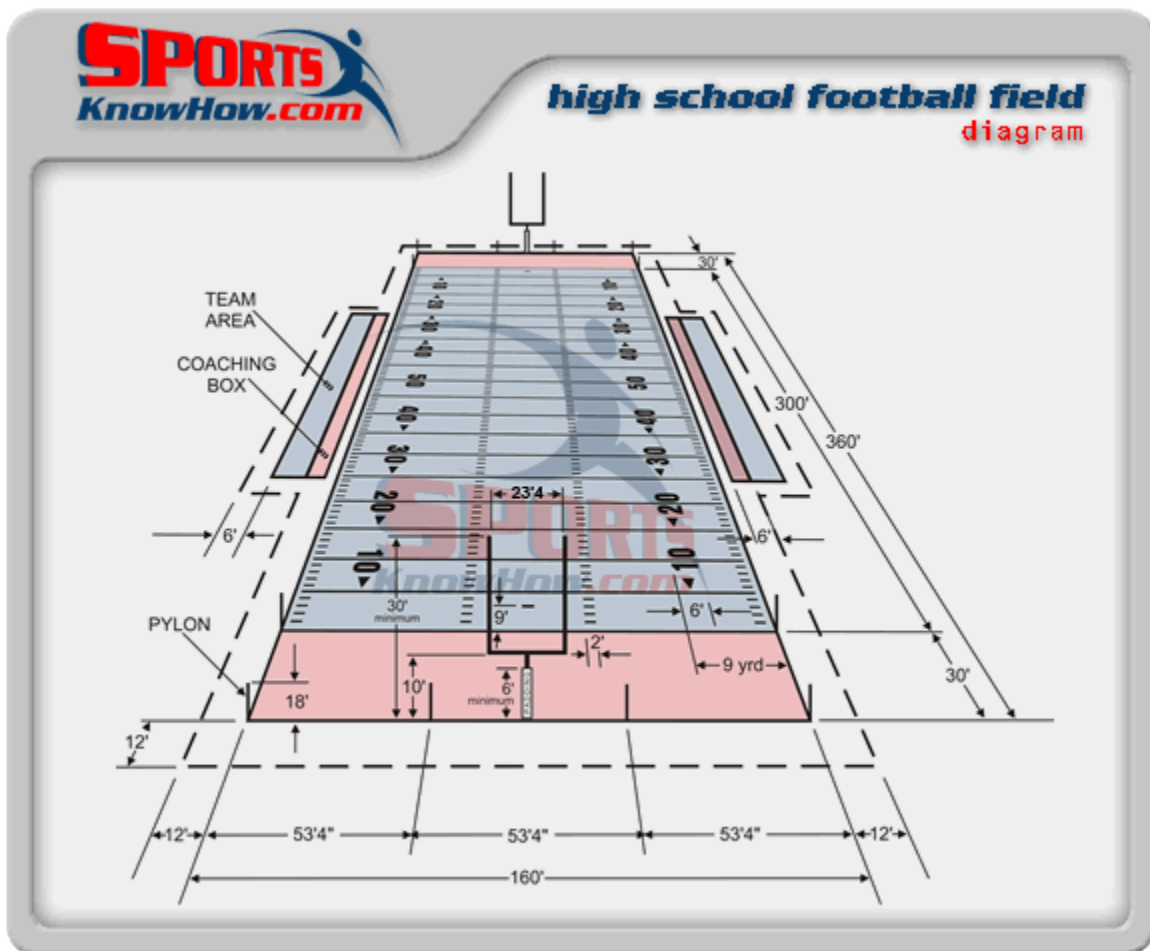
FIELD SAFETY

The following should be evaluated on the practice and playing field for proper safety concerns:

1. Playing surface free of debris and holes
2. Playing surface free of obstructions
3. Out of bounds areas free of obstructions
4. Playing area clearly marked
5. Lighting is adequate
6. Free of toxic wastes or diseases
7. Waste containers in place
8. Free of slip and fall hazards
9. Water fountains free of debris, puddles, mud
10. Barriers to protect fans in good condition
11. Bleachers do not move
12. Vertical openings between guardrails, seat rails and footboards

13. Bleachers free of rust, damage
14. Wood bleachers free of dry rot, damage
15. Transitional areas marked
16. Handrails secure
17. Bleachers strong enough to support weight
18. Security present
19. Walkways clear
20. Walk areas free of trash, debris
21. Entrance/Exit areas marked

Each member club shall ensure that the playing field is properly marked and in compliance with playing field dimensions. The referees will determine if the playing field does not meet regulation and make a determination with the League before each contest if a playing field is in question. See the following for proper field dimensions.



PROGRAM EVALUATION

Each member club must realize that effective program delivery is essential to our success. All organizations must submit an evaluation tool to the League office explaining the system in which they will evaluate their program. This system states the organization's goals, progress and plans for meeting additional goals and objectives. Each member club will meet with the League at the end of the season to review the progress of the previous year and assess benchmarks toward effective operation of the member club or organization.

Your evaluation should include responses from participants and parents on the management of your organization, coaching, facilities, professionalism, finances and overall image of your club or organization. A good time to collect this information is at your annual award banquet. This information should be shared with all staff, volunteers, coaches and personnel of your member club or organization to help assess your effectiveness and to help in future program planning.

SUMMARY

Playing the game of football can be very hazardous. Many athletes have had their careers ended by injuries and unfortunately, some have died. Injuries are a part of the game and although there are no sure fire ways to avoid injuries, every precaution must be taken on the field and at the chalkboard to advise players and parents of the risks and challenges associated with playing tackle football. Like every sport, football is not a game for everyone. Athletes should be encouraged to try football as a sport and not be forced to play because of their size, speed or athleticism. Parents should be given practical insight on the first day of practice that their child may or may not excel in the sport. Many parents view their children as tickets to fame and fortune and others look at their children as a way to relive their glory days and fulfill their personal destiny on the field. These should not be motivators for children who play sports as many of them will eventually resent the adults who force them to play against their will. The greatest way to avoid risk in playing football is to make sure that youth who do want to play are healthy, well conditioned, informed, given great instruction and allowed to play and participate in an environment that is safe, secure and fun.