**MLFA PHILOSOPHY**

1. Safety, Sportsmanship and Education are the PRIMARY goals of the Mt. Lebanon Football Association (“MLFA”)
2. Coaches will concentrate on providing the best of all possible tutelage in the basics of football and shall stress teamwork and sportsmanship, as well as the fundamentals of the game.
3. Coaches will make every effort to stress to their players the need to follow directions and attend ALL practices and games.
4. Coaches and their Assistants will confine any policy differences with the league, or judgments by game officials, to appropriate league meetings and shall NOT relay their feelings to players or their parents.
5. Head Coaches will attempt to play each of their players the maximum amount of time possible dependent upon each players’ ability, attitude and attendance, and in accordance with specific league rules.
6. **ALL Coaches and Directors will adhere to this Philosophy without exception.**

**Variations / Amendments to the National Federation of High School Rules (NFHS)**

**Combined Varsity AND Junior Varsity variations:**

1. Varsity and JV games shall consist of four (4) ten minute (10:00) quarters of regulation play with three (3) timeouts per half for each team.
2. Heavyweights will be identified by a “dot” on the rear of their helmet – dot color will be determined prior to the start of the season.
3. **All heavyweights shall be restricted by the following:**
	* They must be positioned on the line of scrimmage both offensively AND defensively.
	* The player must be in a 3 or 4-point stance at all times before and at the snap of the ball. *Exception:* They may play as a stand-up Defensive End.
	* They cannot be positioned in the backfield nor in return positions on punts or kick-offs (line of scrimmage on punt return and front line on kick-offs is permitted).
	* Heavyweights are NOT permitted to “drop” into pass coverage.
	* Heavyweights ARE permitted to advance a fumble, interception or kick-off.
4. **Heavyweight “Tight End Rule”:**
	* A heavyweight is permitted to play tight end as an eligible receiver.
	* A heavyweight tight end is NOT eligible to receive a handoff or pass behind the line of scrimmage. Resulting penalty – Illegal Forward Pass, 10 yards and Loss of Down.
5. **Punt Formation** – the following shall be used, without exception by ALL teams when in punt formation:

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**PUNT FORMATION RULES:**

* The 7 internal offensive linemen can maintain splits NO WIDER than 1 yard.
* The outside “wings” on offense are permitted to advance downfield ONLY after the punter has begun his forward motion to kick.
* Quick kicks (punting prior to 4th down) ARE permitted but are also subject to defensive pressure.
* Fake punts on fourth down are NOT permitted.
* Punter MUST punt the ball after NO MORE than three steps toward the line of scrimmage.
* The third “receiver” on the receiving team is also eligible to line up over center.

 \*\* A punted ball MUST land inbounds before going out of bounds. Penalty: 5 yards from original scrimmage spot.

1. **Extra Point Scoring:**
	* **1 Point** – Try originates from the 3 yard-line
	* **2 Points** – Try originates from the 5 yard-line
2. **Weigh-In Policy:**

 No player will be weighed in after a league official has weighed them. The signature of the league official who conducted the player’s weigh-in must be present on the player’s Registration Form. The official player weigh-ins will be coordinated and conducted in advance of Draft Day. NO player will be permitted to participate in the MLFA without being weighed in by a league official. Players are allowed to weigh-in wearing a minimum of shorts. No player will weigh-in with helmet or shoulder pads.

1. Coaches and Directors shall be responsible for controlling their staff and spectators at all times during all MLFA activities (camps, clinics, practices, games, etc.).
2. Any deliberate violation of the rules and amendments will result in a forfeiture of the game, or games.
3. Any player deemed “too talented” for league participation may be declared ineligible by the Board of the MLFA.
4. It is advised that each team permit a total of four (4) coaches on the sidelines during games.
5. The use of any electronic devices (cell phones, walkie-talkies, etc.) on the sidelines is prohibited.
6. **Playoff Criteria:**
	* **Won / Loss Record,** then…
	* **Head-to-head Record (won/loss only),** then…
	* **Total points surrendered in season,** then, if necessary…
	* **Coin toss**
7. The Board of Directors shall establish registration dates each year. ALL players that did not participate in the Varsity program of the MLFA the prior year MUST participate in the league’s summer camps. The camps are for instruction as well as providing coaches an opportunity to evaluate the individual players prior to the draft. **No eligible player** **will be denied the opportunity to participate in the Mt. Lebanon Football Association.**

**VARSITY SPECIFIC RULES**

1. No coaches shall be permitted on the field of play during games.
2. For safety reasons, and based on past cumulative knowledge of the average weight for 5th and 6th grade participants, the MLFA Board has established the weight limit for “skilled” players to be one hundred **(100)** pounds. However, if the average weight, as calculated based on official weights obtained from registration, is significantly different than the established weight of 100 pounds, the MLFA Board reserves the right to adjust the limit for “skilled” players.
3. **Official Game Balls:**
	1. Wilson GST 1321
	2. Wilson TDJ
	3. Nike 1000J

**JUNIOR VARSITY SPECIFIC RULES**

1. One (1) coach from each team shall be permitted on the field for the first two (2) games of the season ONLY. Prior to the snap of the ball, both coaches will remove themselves from the scrimmage area and remain AT LEAST five (5) yards behind their respective offenses and defenses until conclusion of the play. All adjustments, both verbal and physical, shall be made before the quarterback “goes under center”.
2. The “skilled” weight for JV will be determined after the cumulative average of all players’ official weights have been calculated. That determination will be decided prior to Draft Day between the participating JV Head Coaches and upon MLFA Board approval.
3. **Official Game Balls:**
	* Wilson GST 1322
	* Wilson K2
	* Nike 1000K
4. All players on a JV team shall be a “starter” on offense OR defense for every game, including every series within each game (i.e. if a player starts the game on offense, he is not permitted to also play defense unless all players who did not start on offense have played a defensive series).
5. **Rules for Offense:**
	* Offensive formations shall consist of ONE of the following:
		1. T-Formation
		2. Power I
		3. Split Backs
		4. Wings or Flankers are permitted
* NO unbalanced lines
* Motion is permitted
* Two (2) Tight Ends MUST be aligned on the line of scrimmage in formation just outside the “tackle box” at all times.
* Only one (1) skilled offensive player may be lined up as a wing or flanker
* NO *Twins* / *Trips* / *Double-Wing* formations
* Quarterback sneak IS permitted
* “Silent Snap Count” is prohibited
* “No Huddle” offense is permitted
1. **Rules for Defense:**
* Defense MUST align in a 6 – 2 or 4 – 4 formation
* No pre-planned or designed blitzing – **Movement toward the ball prior to the** **snap is prohibited.**
* All defensive lineman, including defensive ends, are required to line “head-up” on an offensive lineman, **excluding the center**. NO defensive lineman is permitted to line up over the center.
* It is understood that all linebackers, cornerbacks and safeties will NOT encroach the line of scrimmage prior to the snap.

**6 – 2 Defensive Rules:**

 The linebackers may move anywhere laterally prior to the snap of the ball provided they are (a), AT LEAST two (2) yards behind the defensive line, (b), never lined up outside the defensive ends (i.e. cannot shade to the inside or outside shoulder of the down linemen) and (c), must be “stacked” behind a DL…**at the snap of the ball**.

**4 – 4 Defensive Rules:**

 The linebackers MUST (a), be at least two (2) yards behind the defensive line and (b), be “stacked” behind a defensive lineman, and (c), cannot shade to the inside or outside shoulder of the down lineman…**at the snap of the ball.**

1. Any variations to the JV Rules MUST be agreed upon by the JV Head Coaches and the Director of the JV League, with final approval from the MLFA Board of Directors.

**DRAFT DAY PROCEDURES**

1. **Draft Day** shall ONLY consist of the selection of registered players. NO LEAGUE BUSINESS WILL BE CONDUCTED ON DRAFT DAY.
2. A “Late Registration” date will be determined at the conclusion of the draft. Any player(s) registering late will be entered into a Supplemental Draft. The Supplemental Draft order will be determined as follows:
	* A number will be assigned to all teams in the draft and placed in a hat.
	* Each team will select a number from the hat which will represent the order in which they will draft (1 = First, 2 = Second, etc.).
	* At the time of their scheduled pick, a team may reserve the right to “pass” on their pick.
3. Roster sizes and number of teams per league (minimum / maximum) will be determined after registration numbers are finalized.
4. **DRAFT PROCEDURE:**
	* The Draft date and pre-draft meeting shall be established by the League Director
	* Coaching staffs shall be assigned by the MLFA Selection Committee (upon Board approval). Special attention will be given to the number of coaches whose sons (players) are considered to be “Core” players.
	* All registered players in each league (Varsity, JV and Termite) will each be identified and “ranked”. This will be done by all coaches present at the pre-draft meetings or Draft Night at the discretion of the League Director.
	* Players shall be divided into “cores” based on Ability, age, experience and classification (heavyweight / lightweight). Every effort will be made to keep the cores consistent and equal in talent.
	* Final decisions regarding rankings, cores and any other draft issues shall be voted by the designated Head Coaches in each league. The highest ranking Board member in attendance (with NO affiliation with a player or team in the league) will serve as the deciding vote in the event of a tie.
	* Order in which teams will draft will be determined on Draft Day upon determination by the Head Coaches.