

Western Iowa Football Tackle Rulebook – 2025 Season

1. LEAGUE STANDINGS

Team records will be kept throughout the season and used to determine seeding for Bowl Games.

2. SEASON SCHEDULE

Key Dates:

- **First Practice:** August 4
 - First two practices: Helmets only
 - Three-week preseason period before first game (scrimmages allowed)
 - Minimum of 12 practices required before first game
- **First Game:** August 24
- **Final Weekend / Bowl Games:** October 11
- **Bye Week:** No games Labor Day weekend
- **Total Games:** 8 total (7 regular season + 1 Bowl Game)

Game Day Format:

- Games begin at 12:30 PM and are scheduled every 1.5 hours.
 - Final games conclude by 4:30 PM.
 - Weekly scheduling will take travel distances into account.
 - Glenwood may serve as a backup game site due to weather. Final decisions will be made the evening prior.
 - Rainouts may be rescheduled for Sundays or another mutually agreed time during the week.
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3. PRACTICE GUIDELINES Preseason: (Prior to the first game)

- Maximum of 5 practices per week
- Each practice does not exceed 2 hours
- Scrimmages are allowed during this period

In-Season: (After the first game or school starts)

- Maximum of 3 practices per week
- Each practice does not exceed 2 hours

General Rules:

- No practices may begin before the official league start date.
- At least 30 minutes of every practice must be dedicated to USA Football's blocking and tackling instruction.
- Practice locations are determined by each community's local coaches per facility availability and safety.

Extreme Heat & Outdoor Practices:

- **Player safety during hot weather is a top priority.**
 - Coaches must monitor weather conditions and adjust practice plans accordingly:
 - **Heat Index > 100°F:** No outdoor practices between 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM. May resume after 6:00 PM if heat index drops below 95°F.
 - **Heat Index 95°F–99°F:** Practice allowed for a maximum of 1 hour, with helmets only (no full pads). Water breaks required every 15 minutes.
 - **Heat Index 90°F–94°F:** Practice allowed, with frequent water breaks (every 20 minutes) and monitoring for signs of heat-related illness.
 - **Heat Index < 90°F:** Normal conditions; hydration should still be emphasized.
 - Coaches are expected to use reliable sources (e.g., NWS, local forecasts) to monitor the hourly heat index.
 - If a practice is canceled due to heat, coaches should attempt to reschedule for a cooler time (e.g., morning or post-6:00 PM).
 - **If the League Director issues heat-related restrictions, ALL coaches must comply regardless of conditions at practice time.**
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4. COACHES REQUIREMENTS

- All coaches must complete registration through the **WIF TeamSnap Coaches Registration** system.
 - Only approved and badged coaches are allowed on the field or in contact with players.
 - All coaches must visibly wear a badge on the sideline. Badges are non-transferable.
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5. AGE, GRADE, WEIGHT

Western Iowa Football is a grade-based league, not age-based. All players must provide proof of grade at the time of certification.

Grade & Age Requirements: For the 5th & 6th Grade Division, players must be enrolled in 6th grade or lower and **may not turn 13 before December 31** of the current calendar year.

Weigh-In Requirements: All players must attend a league-sanctioned weigh-in prior to the season. Each player may weigh in only once. A player's classification (including striper designation) is determined at this time and remains in effect for the entire season.

Players who miss all scheduled weigh-in dates may be weighed at a time and place designated by the league but will be ineligible to participate in their team's next scheduled game.

Players will not be weighed without:

- A completed and signed league consent form (done during registration)
- Proof of grade & Proof of age (if requested)
- Inclusion on the official team roster

Weight Challenge: All weigh-ins are final. No challenges permitted.

6. DIVISIONS & STRIPER RULES

Weight Limits:

- 5th/6th Grade: Players at or above 135 pounds are classified as Stripers.

Striper Identification:

- A one-inch-wide tape halo must be placed on the helmet in a color contrasting the helmet. Logos must not interfere with the halo.

Striper Rules:

Offense:

- Maximum of 5 Stripers allowed on the field.
- Must be on the line of scrimmage.
- Allowed in 2, 3, or 4-point stances.
- Unbalanced lines: no more than 2 Stripers on either side of the center.
- Cannot play more than 2 positions from the ball (typically tackle).

Defense:

- Maximum of 5 Stripers allowed.
- Must be on the line of scrimmage.
- Must be in a 3 or 4-point stance.
- May not line up wider than the outside shade of the offensive tackle.
- May shift 1 gap on unbalanced lines.
- Must remain forward players—no coverage or linebacker drops.

Special Teams:

- Not allowed on kickoff or kickoff return teams.
- Coaches must inform referees if they lack enough non-strippers. Opponents may match striper count.
- May be on punt team (not as punter).
- May participate on field goals and PAT (including kicker).
- Any striper gaining possession makes the play dead (unless in end zone).
- Improper use or marking results in "Illegal Participation" = "Unsportsmanlike Conduct" penalty.

7. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS & TEAM ADMINISTRATION

- **Geographic Boundaries:** Teams are assigned by school districts. Collaboration is encouraged.
- **Team Colors:** Duplicate colors require one team to wear pennies for a half. Coaches must coordinate.
- **Jersey Numbers:** No duplicates allowed.

Roster Guidelines:

- Maximum 30 players per team.
- No additions after weigh-in without league approval. Late additions miss the next game.
- If a roster drops below 12 due to injury/defection, players may be added (with notice and proper documents by 6 PM Friday prior to game).

Required Documents:

- Athlete Consent / WIF Waiver (signed by parent/guardian).
 - Proof of Grade (upon request).
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8. GAME RULES

- NFHS Football Rules apply except for the following:
 - No rushing on punts or field goals.
 - **No automatic punts.**
 - Extra Points:
 - Field Goal = 2 points
 - Run/Pass = 1 point
 - Four 10-minute quarters
 - Host team provides down markers. On neutral fields, the team on the assigned sideline manages them.
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9. SIDELINE & FIELD SECURITY

1. Maximum 5 badged coaches on the sideline. No badge = sideline warning, then penalties. Badges are non-transferable.
 2. Spectators must remain in stands. No footballs on track or near sidelines. Organizations must assist field supervisors in removing non-compliant individuals. If refusal continues, the game may be forfeited.
 3. Games require 11 players to start.
 4. Scheduled time = Game Start Time.
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10. OVERTIME

- Applies in regular season and playoffs.
 - Format: First and goal from the 10-yard line.
 - Regular season: Maximum 2 overtimes. If still tied = official tie.
 - Playoffs: Unlimited overtimes. From 3rd OT forward, teams must attempt 2-point conversions.
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11. MERCY RULE

- At 25+ point differential:
 - No kickoffs/kick returns.
 - Losing team starts on SHORT 40; Winning team starts at LONG 20.
 - Once margin is <25 points, normal play resumes.
 - No blitzing at any level if margin is >25.
 - Blitzing defined as movement toward LOS before snap.
 - Running clock in 2nd half if lead is 25+ points.
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12. SCHEDULING & SCORE REPORTING

- Admin Panel sets schedule and notifies teams
 - Tie Breakers:
 - A. Head-to-Head (if applicable)
 - B. Head-to-Head Point Differential (if 3+ teams)
 - C. Overall Point Differential (if no H2H)
 - D. Coin Toss
 - Max Point Differential: +/-25 per game
 - Score Reporting:
 - Coaches/orgs must report scores by **noon Monday**
 - League standings updated by **Tuesday noon** on WIF website
 - Discrepancies: winning team's report is used unless proven otherwise
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13. PLAYING FIELD REQUIREMENTS

- Restroom facilities (HC-accessible portable toilet at minimum)
 - Working scoreboard and operator
 - First down chains, down marker, yard markers, end zone pylons
 - Proper field striping every 5 yards (NFHS standards)
 - Host Field Supervisor present for entire game day
 - Temporary barriers required if permanent fencing is not in place
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This document serves as the complete Tackle Football Rulebook for the 2025 Western Iowa Football season. All coaches, teams, and organizations are expected to read and abide by its contents...