

**N.R.M.F.A**

**RULE BOOK**

**2017**



## HEAD SAFETY PENALTY

- In order to further protect NRMFA players the NRMFA executive has create the Head Safety Penalty.
- Players that use the Head improperly on the field or hit other players in the head will receive additional game penalties from the NRMFA.
- Players in violation of the Head Safety Penalty will not be permitted to play for the remaining time of the current quarter and the next quarter. A player violating the Head Safety Penalty in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter will not play the remainder of the game and the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the next game.
- A player that commits 3 Head Safety Penalties in a season will be suspended for an additional game. Each Head Safety Penalty after the 3<sup>rd</sup> violation will result in an additional game suspension. The player will be removed immediately from the current game if the penalty is the 3<sup>rd</sup> or more Head Safety Penalty.
- The following penalties will receive the NRMFA Head Safety Penalty
  1. **Article 6 – Head Tackling, Clotheslining** (It shall be illegal to tackle around the head, in the open field, or straight-arm tackle to the head, commonly referred to as “clotheslining”.)
  2. **Article 7 – Spearing** (Spearing is deliberate and malicious driving of the helmet into a player who is down, or is held so that he is going down, or whose forward progress has been stopped, or who is in a position unable to protect himself. A player shall be called for Spearing even if he commits himself before the ball is dead, if he used the head and helmet as the primary or main point of force.)
  3. **Article 8 – Butt Block or Butt Tackle**
    - (a) Butt Block – no player, including the ball carrier, shall deliberately use his helmet to butt or ram an opponent.
    - (b) Butt Tackle – no player shall intentionally strike the runner with the crown or top of his helmet, or with the facemask.

NOTE: The facemask is considered to be part of the helmet, in the application of this rule.

## N.R.M.F.A. FAIR PLAY RULE

- If a team has 24 players, all players have a starting position on offence or defense. All players must have and keep a starting position on either offence or defense, and no player may play on both sides of the ball. At half time, players starting position on either offense or defense may switch to the other side of the ball. This is encouraged to develop well rounded football players.
- The offence and defense cannot substitute unless there is an injury, or less than 24 players.
- Teams with more than 24 players **MUST** rotate their extra players that are not in a starting position. Players are to be substituted every series at a minimum. Teams may also rotate players during the series. For example if you want to rotate at Wr position, you can do it every play (ex. Wr A, Wr B, Wr C –rotate one at a time each play or every two plays.) At half time, players starting position on either offense or defense may switch to the other side of the ball. This is encouraged to develop well rounded football players.
- The offence and defense cannot substitute unless there is an injury, or less than 24 players.
- If less than 24 players at game time or during the game, the two-way players must be rotated off one side of the ball every other series at a minimum.
- No player may play more **than 3 consecutive series** in the game.
- Teams that start the game with less than 18 players must also attempt to follow the fair play rule. No player on teams with less than 18 players should remain on the field for the entire game.
- On fourth down the offence has the choice to substitute two players to punt the ball or attempt a field goal (long snapper & punter/kicker), but if they do so they must punt or kick the ball.
- The defense may substitute one player for special teams (punt or field goal/extra point try) when the offence substitutes for special team. The substituted player may not be over the weight limit in the atom or peewee level.
- After a punt or field goal substitution, teams **MUST** punt/kick the ball, the offence cannot go under center and run a play or fake the punt or field goal try. **If the offense substitutes on 4<sup>th</sup> down and runs a play or fake instead of kicking, the offensive team will lose possession of the ball at the original line of scrimmage.**

- The fair play rule will be altered one series when the mercy principal takes place (this allows players to be rotated to the other side of the ball without violating the fair play rule)
- X-Men may play both ways in a game
- X-Men that play both ways must rotate the 3<sup>rd</sup> series. (Rotation: Offence, Defense, Offence, Substitution or Defense, Offence, Defense, Substitution)
- If a violation of the fair play rule occurs, the head coach and the team will be given a warning by the convener/executive supervising the game. If the violation occurs again during the game the incident will be brought forward to the NRMFA executive and the NRMFA rules committee to rule on the violation. Any sanctions will depend on the circumstances of the game and the nature of the violation. Sanctions will be based on the discretion of the rules committee, up to and including a warning from the rules committee to a forfeiture of the game, all based on the discretion of the rules committee. The rules committee will establish a procedure for hearings. There will be no appeals of rule committee decisions. The rules committee will make a ruling in a timely fashion.
- A coach violating the fair play rule maybe subject to a one game suspension, after a rules committee hearing. A second offence will result in a three game suspension. Any further violation will result in the coach being suspended from the league, after a meeting with the executive.
- **NRMFA SERIES DEFINITION.** A series will be considered started when there is a new exchange from the center to the quarterback.

## N.R.M.F.A. MERCY Rule

- When a game's outcome has been clearly decided before time has expired, coaches of the winning team should do whatever is in their power to make the remainder of the game as competitive as possible. The purpose of the Mercy Rule is to limit the scoring by the winning team, and to create a better competitive balance in the game. The winning team also has the opportunity to use different players in skilled positions without the game being at risk.
  - a. When a team has a 28 point lead in a football game the Mercy Rule can take effect
  - b. The onus is on the losing team to notify the Convener that they want the Mercy Rule to be implemented. The game day convener may also institute the Mercy Rule at their discretion and will notify both teams that the mercy rule is in effect. There is no appeal to a convener's decision to invoke the mercy rule on the two teams.
  - c. When a coach/convener implements the Mercy Rule the outcome of the game is then determined. The team that has asked for the Mercy Rule has forfeited the ability to win the game. The remaining time will be played out, and any new scores will be recorded, but the winner of the game is the team that has not asked for or given mercy.
  - d. The Winning team must replace their entire backfield (QB, RB, WB, FB, SB)
  - e. The Winning team may run their regular offense as long as the backfield has been changed
  - f. The Winning team must punt on 4<sup>th</sup> down
  - g. The losing team can play whatever defense they choose with no restrictions
  - h. The Winning team will not blitz on defense
  
- If a violation of the Mercy Rule occurs, the head coach and the team will be given a warning by the convener/executive supervising the game.
- If the violation occurs again during the game the incident will be brought forward to the NRMFA executive and the NRMFA rules committee to rule on the violation.
- Any sanctions will depend on the circumstances of the game and the nature of the violation. Sanctions will be based on the discretion of the rules committee, up to and including a warning from the rules committee to a forfeiture of the game, all based on the discretion of the rules committee.
- The rules committee will establish a procedure for hearings. There will be no appeals of rule committee decisions. The rules committee will make a ruling in a timely fashion. A coach violating the Mercy Rule maybe subject to a one game suspension, after a rules committee hearing. A second offence will result in a three game suspension. Any further violation will result in the coach being suspended from the league, after a meeting with the executive.

## N.R.M.F.A. TEAM CREATION

- After player evaluations, teams will be drafted with all coaches in attendance.
- There will be No protected players on a team except for the head coach's sons/daughters
- Coach's son/daughter counts as a draft pick, based on their evaluation, and will be automatically picked at that round by the team.
- Siblings will be kept together on the same team, and the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> sibling will count as a draft pick based on their evaluation score. The sibling will be automatically picked at that round by the team.
- The drafting of players should be done by age group to create balance on each team.
- There should be a balance in age groups (ex equal number of grade "03's and "04's with other teams).
- All teams weight and average score should be in a to be determined close range.
- Team lists are to be submitted to the N.R.M.F.A. executive at the first league meeting following the draft.
- All teams must be submitted to the NRMFA executive for approval. After approval teams are then confirmed
- Waiting list players will be put unto teams in order until June 15th
- City directors will determine where additional players will play

## **N.R.M.F.A. WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS**

- Players will play with their birth year as of Jan. 1
- 115 lbs. weight limit before restrictive policy for atom players
- 145 lbs. weight limit before restrictive policy for peewee players
- All players will be weighed in at registration before the season begins.
- Restricted players are limited to playing on the interior offensive (T/G/C) or defensive line (DT/NT) for the game
- Restricted players can only play ½ of the game on defense
- Restricted players may play the whole game on offensive line
- Restricted players must be identified on the N.R.M.F.A. game sheet
- Restricted players will also be identified with a "X" on the back of their helmet
- Restricted players at the Atom and Peewee level may play on special teams, but they must play on the front row on the return team.

## **N.R.M.F.A. SUSPENSION POLICY**

- Any player or coach that has been disqualified from a game by the referee for objectionable conduct will also be suspended by the N.R.M.F.A.
- The player or coach will be suspended from the current game and will also be suspended for the next game.
- A second game suspension of a player or coach will result in a three game suspension by the N.R.M.F.A.
- A third game suspension of a player or coach will result in a lifetime ban from the league by the N.R.M.F.A..
- All disqualifications will be subject to review by the N.R.M.F.A. executive and rules committee



# N.R.M.F.A. ATOM RULES

## EQUIPMENT

- Shoes-- Only sneakers or shoes with molded soles or molded cleats are allowed (no flat soled sneakers). No metal cleats
- Ball-- A smaller official N.R.M.F.A.- TDJ ball is to be used and must be properly inflated
- Mouth guards and other equipment must be worn

## TIME PERIOD

- Play is (4) 12 minute quarters
- Each team has 20 seconds in the huddle
- Stop time for the last three (3) minutes of the 2nd and 4th quarters
- The officials will keep time on the field
- There will be a running clock and it is only stopped on change of possession, touchdowns or when there is a stoppage in play for an injury.
- There will be no 5th quarter or overtime play during the season, only during playoffs.
- There will (2) 2 minute time outs per half per team. If it is extremely hot or humid there may be more official time outs to allow the players to obtain water. This can be determined by any coach, official, or any member of the executive committee at the game.

## GAME SPECIFICS

- Kickoffs to take place in atom football
- Kickoffs will take place on the 55 Yard line.
- Punting is not allowed. The offense can give up possession on 4th down if they think they are unable to make a 1st down. The opposing team retains possession 25 yards from the previous spot.
- If the punting team is within the opposing team's 30 yard line, the ball will be placed on the opposing team's 10 yard line
- **Defenses must play with a maximum of four down linemen (Must be in 3 or 4 point stance).**
- **Defensive ends may not line up outside of the head of the last man on the line of scrimmage (OT or TE)**
- All other defensive players (cb/s/lb) must start the play five yards off the line of scrimmage before the snap of the football.
- Violation of the 5 yard zone will result in a five yard penalty after a warning.
- There are no special goal-line rules. Teams must still follow all NRMFA atom rules in a goal line situation.
- Every player must have a **starting role** either on offence or defense (**Fair Play Rule**).
- Safety — scoring team puts ball in play on the 55 yard line.
- Six (6) points for a touchdown

- Point after touchdown — 1 point for a run, 2 points for a pass, from the 5 yard line, **3 points for a kick from the 5 yard line.**
- A fast whistle by officials is recommended for the safety of the players
- A one yard neutral zone must be maintained between the offensive and defensive line
- **There must be 7 players on the offensive line of scrimmage.**
- No restriction on offensive football formations
- No restrictions on defensive football formations, except the four down linemen maximum
- 115 lbs. weight limit before restrictive policy for atom players
- Restricted players are limited to playing on the interior offensive or defensive line (T/G/C ) (DT) for half of the game
- Restricted players can only play ½ of the game on defense
- Restricted players may play the whole game on offensive line
- **Restricted players will be identified with a “X” decal on the back of their helmet**
- **One offensive and defensive coach on the field.** After the QB sets, no further instructions are allowed by the offensive or defensive coach, if a coach continues to instruct after this point, there will be a 5yd dead ball penalty.
- When the offensive huddle breaks both coaches on the field must take position 20 yards from the line of scrimmage
- X-Men will be limited to the front line on Kickoff and Kickoff Return
- X-Men are able to kick the ball on Kickoffs and extra points
- X-Men who are kickers cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage

**ON AN INJURY STOPPAGE IN PLAY. A COACH MUST ESCORT THE PLAYER OFF THE FIELD**

# N.R.M.F.A. PEEWEE RULES

## EQUIPMENT

- Shoes - Only sneakers or shoes with molded soles or molded cleats are allowed (no flat soled sneakers). No metal cleats
- Ball - A smaller official NRMFA Wilson TDJ ball is to be used and must be properly inflated
- Mouth guards and other equipment must be worn

## TIME PERIOD

- Play is (4) 12 minute quarters
- Each team has 20 seconds in the huddle
- Stop time for the last 3 minutes of the 2nd and 4th quarters and the officials will keep time on the field
- There will be a running clock and it is only stopped on change of possession, touchdowns or when there is a stoppage in play for an injury.
- There will be no 5th quarter or overtime play during the season, only during playoffs.
- There will (2) 2 minute time outs per half per team. If it is extremely hot or humid there may be more official time outs to allow the players to obtain water. This can be determined by any coach, official, or any member of the executive committee at the game.

## GAME SPECIFICS

- Kick-off, start from the kicking team's 45 yard line.
- All players on kicking team are onside.
- Kick must travel 10 yards for an onside kick.
- PUNTING, PAT, AND FIELD GOALS are allowed, although the center is protected (no player over the center ON ANY SPECIAL TEAM PLAY- cannot rush the punter over the center).
- Every player must have a **starting role** either on offense or defense (**Fair Play Rule**).
- Attempt to train and teach every player an offensive and defensive position. (**Ex. Offense #1. and Defense # 2**)
- Safety - scoring team puts ball in play on the 55 yard line.
- Point after touchdown. 2 points for a kicked convert, and 1 point for a run or pass
- A fast whistle by officials is recommended for the safety of the players
- A one yard neutral zone must be maintained between the offensive and defensive line
- There must be 7 players on the offensive line of scrimmage
- Blitzing of linebackers is allowed
- 145 lbs. weight limit before restrictive policy for peewee players
- Restricted players are limited to playing on the interior offensive or defensive line (T/G/C ) (DT) for half of the game
- Restricted players can only play ½ of the game on defense
- Restricted players may play the whole game on offensive line

- **Restricted players will be identified with a "X" decal on the back of their helmet**
- **One offensive and defensive coach on the field.** After the QB sets, no further instructions are allowed by the offensive or defensive coach, if a coach continues to instruct after this point, there will be a 5yd dead ball penalty.
- When the offensive huddle breaks both coaches on the field must take position 20 yards from the line of scrimmage
- After the first three games Peewee coaches are no longer permitted on the field

**ON AN INJURY STOPPAGE IN PLAY. A COACH MUST ESCORT THE PLAYER OFF THE FIELD**



# N.R.M.F.A. PLAYER GAME SHEET



DIVISION: \_\_\_\_\_ PLAYED AT: \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ GAME #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TEAM: \_\_\_\_\_ OPPONENT: \_\_\_\_\_

FINAL SCORE:	FINAL SCORE:
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### OVER-WEIGHT EXCEPTIONS

	<u>NAME</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>GAME POSITION</u>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

Please make sure that all areas of this sheet are completed accurately.

Please email by Sunday evening or hand in to the Convener for your area or at the game who will see that they get to Tuesday's meeting.

Text the final score to **905 682-2733**

Scores not handed in cannot be counted.

As Head Coach I understand the N.R.M.F.A. fair-play rule and the N.R.M.F.A. weight restriction policy. I agree to follow these rules in all N.R.M.F.A. games, and follow the instructions of the N.R.M.F.A. game convener. I understand that violations of the N.R.M.F.A. rules will be directed to the N.R.M.F.A. executive and rules committee and sanctions may then follow.

Head Coach: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**NRMFA PLAYER ELIGIBILITY GAME SHEET**

	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	PLAYER NUMBER
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
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11			
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**Game sheets must be completed accurately and exchanged between the two head coaches. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the NRMFA executive and rules committee.**



## **NRMFA CODE OF CONDUCT**

The **Players, Parents or Guardians (collectively referred to as “Participants”)**, must agree to this Code of Conduct (Code) as condition of membership in the Niagara Minor Football Association (NRMFA). At the start each season, each of the Participants must sign this Code and submit it to the Player’s Head Coach prior to the beginning of the season.

### **Governing Standards of Conduct**

1. We, the Participants, understand that being allowed to play football with NRMFA is a privilege and that full compliance with the Code at all times is required.
2. I, the Player agree to abide fully by the rules of the game applicable to the level of play in which my team participates.
3. We, The Participants, understand that we must set an example, and conduct ourselves in accordance with all Federal, Provincial, and Municipal laws while attending fields for both practice and games. We will be respectfully and courtesy towards everyone associated with the game and that our team, the organization and myself will be judged by our behaviour.
4. We, the Participants, understand that any irresponsible or disrespectful behaviour at any centre facility and/ or toward any Coach, Official, players, or parents whether before, during or after a game or practice is inappropriate and will not be tolerated.
5. We, the Participants, understand that yelling, taunting, use of obscene gestures or language, racial or ethnic slurs, striking or attempting to strike (except allowable on body contact under league rules) or otherwise abusing another player, Official, Coach, or spectator will not be tolerated.
6. We, the Participants, understand that we must abide by and respect the Officials and their authority during any and all games. We will not question or confront Officials whether before, during or after a game.
7. We, the Participants will not publicly criticize or question Coaches, teammates, opponents or Officials and shall only raise our concerns privately in a civil and respectful manner.
8. I, the Player, understand that I am expected to attend every practice or game to the best of my ability and participate in all skill development sessions where applicable. It is my responsibility to notify my coach if I am unable to attend.
9. I, the Player, understand that winning is not everything and that having fun, improving skills, making friends and learning sportsmanship is the primary goal of the NRMFA. Winning and losing will be done with equal grace and dignity.
10. We, the Participants, understand that failure to abide by the Code will result in disciplinary actions as set out in this Code. I have reviewed this Code of Conduct, and if I am a Player I have discussed its contents with my Parent or Guardian, who also agree to be bound by the standards outlined above.

### **NRMFA’s Drug and Alcohol Policy**

The Niagara Regional Minor Football Association enforces a “Zero Tolerance” policy with respect to the use of drugs and alcohol by all NRMFA players, coaches, parents, and bench staff Any player, coach, parent or bench staff member found to be consuming or under the influence of drugs or alcohol during practices or games will be subjected to an automatic 1 game suspension or In the case of a parent/ guardian, immediate suspension of rights to



attend all team activities until further notice. Multiple violations of this policy will be severely dealt with by the NRMFA Board of Directors and will lead to multi-game suspensions, and ultimately removal of NRMFA membership privileges.

### **NRMFA's 24 Hour Rule**

The best way to avoid situations that can lead to a violation of the NRMFA Code of Conduct is to use the "24 Hour Rule". The NRMFA endorses this rule and mandates its application to all its sanctioned events.

Simply put, if an incident occurs at a game or practice that is likely to create a conflict, everyone involved must step back and reflect on the situation for a period of at least 24 hours. After 24 hours have passed the Participant having an issue must first raise the concern with the team Parent Representative. The Parent Representative will discuss the issue with the Team Coach who will render a decision on the matter.

Where the Participant remains dissatisfied with the Coach's resolution of the matter, the issue must be reduced to writing with full particulars and submitted to the Centre Convener for further deliberation in accordance with NRMFA policy and procedure.

### **Disciplinary Actions Resulting from a Breach of the NRMFA Code of Conduct**

The code of conduct demands that coaches not argue with officials and that they cannot criticize them. Players must respect officials, coaches, teammates and opponents. Fans may not criticize officials, coaches or players. They can cheer for their own player, but they may not deride members of the opposing team.

When it is reported in writing that a member has broken their own code of conduct, league officials will investigate and discuss with all parties. Disciplinary actions can include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal warning by official, head coach, and/or head of league organization
- Written warning
- Game suspension with written documentation of incident kept on file
- Game forfeit through the official or coach
- Parental, Player or Coaching game or season suspension
- Lifetime ban.

The code of conduct is an educational tool for all parties involved. Not only does it give players, coaches and parents a baseline when it comes to behavior at sporting events, but also it lets them know that they are being watched. When people know that their behavior is being examined, they are less likely to behave irresponsibly. If you have a concern, please write/email the NRMFA Area Director, NRMFA Vice President or the NRMFA [President](#) - all matters are dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

- In the case of a parent/guardian, immediate suspension of rights to attend all team activities. The head coach will provide a written notice to his city center convener who will provide a copy to the NRMFA Board. The Board will initiate a Disciplinary Committee review of the parent's/guardian's conduct and issue a formal written response informing the parent/guardian of their suspension for the remainder of the season. At the Board's discretion, the parent/guardian and therefore the associated player may also permanently lose their right to membership in the Niagara Minor Football Association.

**The NRMFA Board of directors will maintain a permanent record of all breaches of the NRMFA Code of Conduct and will take into account historical information when ruling on disciplinary action.**

## **PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT:**

The essential elements of character building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship. We believe the highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. Every member of N.R.M.F.A. will therefore agree:

- I will not force my child to participate in sports.
- I will inform the coach of any disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
- I will understand that player safety is paramount and I will not encourage any behaviours or practices that would endanger the health and well being of the athletes.
- I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
- I will remember that children participate to have fun and that the game is for youth, not adults.
- I and my guests will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators on or off the field, in every game, practice or other team related forum or event, including but not limited to methods of mass communication and all social media such as emails, online activities or in print.
- I and my guests will not engage in any kind of booing and taunting or using profane language or gestures.
- I will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches at the game field, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
- I will demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability.
- I will teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or his/her performance. I will emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit my child over winning.
- I will never ridicule or yell at my child or other participant for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all sports events.
- I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am one of the official coaches of the team.

I agree that by signing the Code of Conduct, I accept its rules as guidelines for my behaviour as well as that of my immediate family. I agree that if I or members of my immediate family fail to abide by Code of Conduct, I will be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Verbal warning by official, head coach, and/or head of league organization
- Written warning
- Parental game suspension with written documentation of incident kept on file
- Parental season suspension Parent/Guardian Signature Play

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Player's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **COACHES CODE OF ETHICS:**

With the understanding that youth sports are for the education, fun and the enjoyment of the kids, and that I, along with the other coaches, am responsible for the safety and well being of the kids on the team and do hereby agree to the following:

- I am a volunteer for the Niagara Regional Minor Football Association as a whole.
- I understand that this is not "MY" team. Any decisions by the appointed N.R.M.F.A. Executive will be enacted without challenge.
- I will place the emotional and physical well being of the players ahead of my personal desire to win.
- I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for children in the same age group.
- I will provide a positive, encouraging and safe playing environment for programs players.
- I will NOT use foul, derogatory or abusive language when coaching or attending youth sports events.
- I will provide a sports environment for the programs team that is free of drugs, tobacco and alcohol at all youth sports events, including practices and games.
- I will be knowledgeable in and abide by the rules of the youth football and the league in which we play and teach those rules to the programs players.
- I will use coaching techniques appropriate for all the skills I teach.
- I will always remember that I am a youth sports coach and that the game is for the kids not the adults.
- I will always show respect for and abide by the decisions, calls and judgments of the officials at any game.
- I will not criticize a fellow coach, board member, child or family member in front of the players, fans or families. I will only discuss any disagreements, differences of opinion or conflicts I may have with the person to whom I have the disagreement or a NRMFA executive member and at an appropriate time and place.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_