

Revised 08/25/2008

THE OLIVE BRANCH YOUTH FOOTBALL & CHEERLEADING LEAGUE

Purpose

The purpose for which the League (hereinafter referred to as OBYFCL) is organized is to promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, fellowship and community unity through recreational athletics; and to provide fun, instruction, and recreation for all participants regardless of race, creed, color, sex or national origin. This will be accomplished by providing a supervised football and cheerleading program for eligible participants and an opportunity for adults to coach, supervise, instruct, officiate, or otherwise participate in the activities of the League. **The League is established with and will maintain a full participation athletic initiative. Building youth, strengthening family, providing instruction and encouraging recreation are the main goals of this league.**

Motto

YOUTH & FAMILY FIRST, SPORTS SECOND, is the motto of the League. All actions and decisions will be predicated on the advancement of this ideal.

Governing Policy and Procedure

The OBYFCL policies and procedures are written as a guideline to govern all facets of football, cheerleading, and officiating for the League. Any situation that arises, which is not covered herein, will be handled by the OBYFCL Board, referring to the current NFHS rules to make a decision.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Registration

General Registration will be designated and decided upon by the OBYFCL board. Participants will be registered throughout this period on a first-come, first-serve basis. Each participant should be present at their registration for uniform fitting and height and weight of all players must be recorded. Interested participants will be placed on a waiting list and contacted on a space-available basis by a league representative. (See "waiting list")

The following information can be obtained on the league website (www.obyfcl.org) or a paper copy will be supplied upon request:

- Email address of the Commissioner.
- A list of the Board of Directors of the given league
- Insurance claim instructions.
- Complete list of rules and regulations which includes:
 - Code of Conduct Form with detachment to be signed by parent and kept in player's file
 - Complaint procedures form.
 - List of uniform/accessory components approved by league.
 - Uniform information.
- Medical Information Form.

All registration fees must be paid to make registration complete.

Waiting List

After the last date of registration a "waiting list" for each age group within the league will be started by the league and will continue until two weeks prior to the first game of the season.

No player will be placed on a team after the waiting list period has expired. This waiting list will be strictly followed on a first-come, first-served basis and will be securely monitored. No name will change order once it is added to the list. Those individuals requesting to be added to the waiting list may do so, in person, and should request to be told their number in line on the waiting list.

Individuals on the waiting list **are not** guaranteed team placement for the given season. For this reason, no registration fees will be accepted until that individual is accepted onto a team.

Registration Fees

Registration fees are determined by the OBYFCL and are based on the cost of insurance, the cost of uniforms to be included in the fee, and projected cost of officials. Registration fees are due in full at the time of registration and registration is not valid until all fees are paid.

Once a participant having a waiting list status is placed, an additional fee may be charged to cover additional paperwork, and "rush charges" for uniforms or equipment.

Items necessary for participants that are not included in the registration fee must also be posted, with explanation, prior to registration.

Procedures for Contacting Individuals on the Waiting List

Once league officials determine that a team is in need of an additional player, they shall provide a player from the waiting list.

Contact with the individual at the top of the waiting list for that league/age group must be attempted that day and for the following two consecutive business days. The league shall attempt contact at least three times at various intervals of the day, including at least one attempt after business hours.

If contact is made, that individual must be instructed that they have three business days to register their child or they will forfeit their place on the waiting list.

If contact is not made, the league will proceed to the next name on the list and begin the procedure again. Individuals, who have been contacted and instructed to register, but fail to do so within three days, will lose their spot at the top of the waiting list.

Individuals not contacted and passed over are to remain on the waiting list and will be contacted first should a new need arise. If there is need for more than one player at any given time, the league shall utilize the above procedures for each of those players needed. These attempts will be documented in writing in a waiting list call log.

Anticipated Registration Schedule

Second week of April – Second week of June - advertise registration: newspapers, marquee, school fliers

First week of May – Second week of June - Registration

Eligibility

The participant must be five years of age and not more than twelve years of age on or before September 1st of the registration year. Participants from nearby counties are welcome to register and will be governed by all rules and regulations contained herein. In order to be eligible to participate in any given event, the participant must be in attendance at a minimum of 60% of all meetings, training sessions and scheduled practices preceding that event.

Uniforms

All uniforms will be ordered and chosen by the OBYFCL Board of Directors. There will be **no altering** of the uniforms unless approved by the OBYFCL Board of Directors. If a change is allowed it must be a league-wide change, not a team or individual change.

The league will supply the game uniform (jersey, pants, pants' pads and socks) only. Helmet, shoulder-pads and decals must be purchased by each participant. Any other padding will be the participant's responsibility.

Safety equipment, such as the helmet, shoulder pads or mouthpiece may only be altered in color, strapping or shape if it does not jeopardize any player that may come in contact with it and then only if the entire league or team chooses to do so, after understanding all implications and understanding that the league will not be bound by any color change or held responsible in the event of an equipment failure.

Rubber cleat shoes are permitted so long as they are molded rubber cleats and not removable. Steel or any other type of cleats will not be permitted. Tennis or running shoes are acceptable but not recommended.

Dual Sport Participation:

Dual sport participation should be allowed only if it does not adversely affect the player's attendance and performance at practice and games. Consideration should also be given to the effect on schoolwork of excessive participation in league activities. The head coach will determine whether or not the player is missing practice or games excessively. If the head coach deems this to be a problem, he/she will advise the parent of the problem and give them an opportunity to address the attendance issue. If significant attendance problems continue, the head coach will advise the parent(s) that a decision needs to be made as to which single sport their child will play.

Football Team Selection & Formation

Each team per age division will begin the season with a minimum of 17 players and a maximum of 25 players, with the exception of the flag football division whereby a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 15 players will be allowed.

Cheerleading squads will be represented for each team/age division and will be formed equally based on the number of teams formed in each age division. An equal number of cheerleaders shall form each squad.

In the forming of teams, the League will recognize both AFC Division and the NFC Division of the National Football League. Every attempt will be made to always have an equal number of teams from each division to accommodate regular season game scheduling and post season games.

The five original teams and team colors from the inaugural season will remain primary teams throughout the duration of the League. These teams and team colors are as follows:

- BRONCOS orange w/ navy
- COWBOYS royal blue w/ silver
- PACKERS forest green w/ gold
- RAIDERS black w/ silver
- REDSKINS cardinal red w/ gold
- CHEIFS Red w/white
- TITANS Columbia Blue w/Navy
- SAINTS Vegas Gold w/black

Team colors will remain standard once approved by the OBYFCL Board and will be based on availability of uniforms and color coordination with other team colors throughout the league.

Age Divisions

The OBYFCL Board will check every year for the ability to play in two year age groups, however due to the number of registered participant we may play in three year age groups. The age groups for each situation are as follows:

Two Year Age Groups

Ages 5-6 Flag Football Division. Players must be five years of age on or before September 1st.

Ages 7-8 Tackle Football Division Players must be seven years of age on or before September 1st.

Ages 9-10 Tackle Football Division Players must be nine years of age on or before September 1st.

Ages 11-12 Tackle Football Division Players must be eleven years of age on or before September 1st

Three Year Age Groups

Ages 5-6 Flag Football Division. Players must be five years of age on or before September 1st.

Ages 7-9 Tackle Football Division Players must be nine years of age on or before September 1st.

Ages 10-12 Tackle Football Division Players must be twelve years of age on or before September 1st.

Once players are drafted or assigned to a team they shall remain on that team until they progress to the next age division. At that time, they will be selected for a new team by way of open draft. (See "Drafting of Players")

Team Formation Procedures

Each of the five original teams in each tackle age groups will have the minimum 17 players at the beginning of the season, before any expansion teams are formed.

Each of the five original teams in the 5-6 age leagues will have no less than 10 players at the beginning of the season before any expansion teams are formed.

Established teams will maintain the same team names and colors.

The Board of Directors and the League Commissioner will select expansion team names and uniform colors with input from the current coaching staff.

A coaching staff consisting of a head coach and no more than two assistant coaches will represent each team.

Player Team Assignments

Player Selection

Participants returning from the previous season who are not moving up to a different age group will remain with the same team with which they played the previous year, unless requesting to be placed into the open draft.

Participants moving into a different division/age bracket will be selected for a team by way of open draft. *See "Drafting of Players".

New participants entering the league will be selected for a team by way of open draft. *See "Drafting of Players"

Players who will be a certain age on or before September 1st will play in the age-league in which their birthday falls. *See "Drafting of Players".

Siblings who are in the same age group will be assigned to the same team. In cases where siblings are not the same age, the older sibling will be drafted first and the younger sibling will be placed on the same team (different age league) if the team has not reached its limited number of players.

Participants currently assigned to a team who are not moving into a new age bracket will not be moved/traded to a different team. The League will attempt to place siblings of different age levels on the same team names if at all possible. This rule is included to aid in transportation and scheduling for parents with multiple players.

A player whose parent coaches in the age division of their child will not be placed in the draft. These children will automatically be placed on their parent's team unless otherwise stated. This parent/child relationship includes: son/daughter, stepson/stepdaughter, and guardian relationships.

A player may request to participate in a higher age group but may not play in a lower age group except in special cases of significant weight and/or size differential of the player. In order to play up or down, approval must first be obtained from the OBYFCL Board.

Note: The OBYFCL believes players should participate at their own age level and we discourage the practice of playing up with older participants.

Two Year Age Groups

Players in the 7-8 tackle division weighing more than 85lbs. will be separated from their draft pool and drafted separately in order to more evenly distribute the larger players.

Players in the 9-10 tackle division weighing more than 110lbs. will be separated from their draft pool and drafted separately in order to more evenly distribute the larger players.

Players in the 11-12 tackle division weighing more than 125lbs. will be separated from their draft pool and drafted separately in order to more evenly distribute the larger players.

Three Year Age Groups

Players in the 7-9 tackle division weighing more than 100 lbs. will be separated from their draft pool and drafted separately in order to more evenly distribute the larger players.

Players in the 10-12 tackle division weighing more than 125lbs. will be separated from their draft pool and drafted separately in order to more evenly distribute the larger players.

Each player's registration number will be put into a drawing separated by weights.

There must be enough players to fill rosters for the pre-existing teams before expansion teams are considered. Once it is determined that there are enough new players to fill the existing teams to the specified number there will be an expansion team developed for that age group.

Draft Procedures

The League Commissioner, Board of Directors and returning head coaches should be present to conduct the draft and oversee fairness of selection.

If expansion teams have been added, they will have first pick in the draft and will select one player from each category, with the first established expansion team for that season going first and drawing a number of players which is equal to the team with the lowest number of returning players.

The next pick will be decided by a drawing/lottery. Each team will enter the draft during the appropriate round to ensure that they have an equal number of players as the other teams in the league.

The team who's to draft first will to select one player from the #1 player category. The heaviest players will be chosen first. The draft selection will then go in rotation until all players are selected.

Once all the teams have reached their maximum capacity of players and if there are not enough players to form a new expansion team, these players are then added by rotation to the established teams.

After the drawing/draft is completed, the team members will fill out a roster form for each team they represented in the draft.

The roster will be comprised of names of players from the draft selection as well as from registration forms of returning players for that team from the previous year. Immediately following the open draft, head coaches will be convened and will be given their team roster. Each head coach or designee must be

present to receive their teams' roster. If a team has no coach present to receive the roster, that roster will not be revealed to other coaches.

Trading of Players

Trading of players will **only** be done by the OBYFCL Board of Directors on a case by case basis.

Player Responsibilities

Players will be expected to respect their coaches' judgment and instructions.

Profanity and unsportsmanlike conduct from any participant will not be tolerated.

Players are expected to attend all practices and games. It will be the responsibility of players to contact their coach if, for some reason, they cannot attend a practice or game.

Players must be in complete uniform for all games. Individual coaches will determine practice uniforms/clothing.

Players are expected to dress appropriately for practice.

It is the responsibility of each player to learn all plays/responsibilities to the best of his/her ability.

Each player is responsible for cooperating with his/her teammates and coach(s) and must exhibit good sportsmanship at all practices, games and other activities.

Each player must remain on the sideline for the duration of games, except for the halftime break.

League Coaches (Football/Cheerleading)

Selection of Coaches

Persons interested in coaching must complete a coach's application and return it to the OBYFCL Board of Directors. The OBYFCL Board will review and vote on coaching staffs (Head Coaches and Assistants). All coaches (head and assistant) will agree to have a criminal background check performed. All coaches will understand this is a full participation instructional league. The focus is to teach players the fundamentals of playing football and to play in a fair, sportsmanlike manner. All prospective coaches will read and sign a code of conduct, if chosen as a coach. The Board may choose and formally interview all head coaches before final selection. The Board will re-evaluate every head coach who wants to return as a head coach on a yearly basis. **Based on the number, type and severity of complaints against a Head Coach, the Board of Directors is granted the authority to decide not to allow a coach to return.**

All coaches that have been in the league the previous year will have the first right of refusal as a head coach for new teams. If no one is interested, the position will be opened up to new coaches. Any new head coaches moving up or being appointed cannot remove any assistant coach that coached that team the previous year.

All teams will consist of one head coach and two assistant coaches. Only three coaches (per team) will be allowed on the field on game day. For Cheerleading, all teams will have 1 head coach, 1 assistant (1 team mom optional).

Training of Coaches

We recommend that all coaches should be certified by a sports coaches association such as, but not limited to, National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA). All coaches must maintain a good standing with the Sports Coaches Association. Preferably, all coaches must be certified at the highest level within the association.

Coaches Code of Conduct

In order to assure the reputation and integrity of the OBYFCL and have it free from the effects of irresponsible conduct of teams, coaches, participants and other parties, the objective of this organization shall be to teach good sportsmanship, teamwork, the basic fundamentals of football and to stimulate the young person's interest in sports while providing constructive recreational use of leisure time.

Code of Conduct

No alcohol is allowed on Olive Branch Park premises.

Coaches are responsible for their own conduct and for the conduct of their players at all games. Abusive or obscene language, violent play, violent conduct, use of drugs or alcohol or other behavior detrimental to the game or players will not be tolerated.

Coaches must refrain from loud, persistent or intrusive coaching of players on and off the field of play.

Parents and other spectators must remain outside the field of play.

No coach, head or otherwise, may be on the field during play with three exceptions:

In two year age groups, two Coaches may be on the field of play for the 5-6 year olds. Only one coach may be on the field of play for the 7-8 and 9-10 year old football leagues.

In three year age groups, two Coaches may be on the field of play for the 5-6 year olds. Only one coach may be on the field of play for the 7-9. No coach can be on the field in the 10-12 year old football league.

In case of an injury or other emergency, any necessary members of the coaching staff may enter the field.

A coach may carry the play to the team, so long as it does not interfere with the normal flow of the game. Coaches must demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times; practices, meetings, games, and in interfacing with other league personnel. Fairness, respect for one's opponent, and graciousness in winning or losing should become a standard in behavior for all those representing the league.

Poor sportsmanship such as "running up the score", "booing", blatant disrespect of officials or other coaches, not allowing players fair playing time, excessive bragging, "hot-dogging", or taunting of other teams will not be tolerated.

Coaches are expected to set the example regarding the officials. This can be achieved by explanation to parents that officials are almost always better positioned than a spectator to see what actually happened. Additionally, coaches will point out that much of officiating is judgment and that the officials are neutral; while coaches, parents and fans are not. It is the coaches' responsibility to set the tone for the conduct of players, parents and fans alike. If a coach, player, parent or fan becomes abusive in any way and cannot be quieted, they must be asked to leave before the officials, an OBYFCL member, or its Commissioner has to do so.

Football Head Coaches Responsibilities

He/she will be required to attend at least 60% of all coaches meetings and training sessions; an assistant coach must be present in their absence.

Be responsible for obtaining medical care for players injured during games or practices, if parents are not present. Parents will sign forms ahead of time to allow for medical care. Coaches must have immediate access to the release forms at all practices and games.

Report all injuries to the Safety Commissioner on the provided injury Form within 24 hours of injury and must follow-up regarding condition of the player. Safety Commissioner then must notify the Commissioner, Vice Commissioner or League Secretary within 24 hours of the injury.

Be responsible for turning in all equipment issued to him and/or the team by the OBYFCL. Equipment must be turned in within one week of the last scheduled game. Failure to return equipment may result in a forfeiture of future coaching positions.

Choose a practice site for practices within the city limits, obtain permission to use the site/field and will report site to the League Commissioner, Vice Commissioner or the Coaches Commissioner. All off site locations must be approved by the board.

Report to League Commissioner, within three days, any player who drops out of the program.

Not leave participants alone on field or practice sites, unless supervised by a responsible party 18 years of age or older.

Inform player's parent or guardian and the age group commissioner (in writing) if a player will not be allowed to participate in a game prior to the game. Specific reasons must be given to justify said action. If a parent is keeping their child from participating, please have them fill out the Non-participation Form.

Be responsible for enforcing the player participation rule.

Be responsible for seeing that his assistant coaches fulfill duties and responsibilities as listed under "All Coaches".

Be responsible for appointing a team mom and give the name to the Team Mom Coordinator.

Team parents are responsible for all communication throughout League. It is therefore imperative that a responsible parent be appointed as soon as possible. In order to guarantee good communication all coaches must have a home phone and make the number available

All coaches are heavily encouraged to attend coach's clinics sponsored by the League.

Should attain assistance from parents for:

Taking down and storing game field equipment, announcing, time-keeping, chain crew and score-keeping.

Upon selection as a coach, head coaches are to be issued a "Coach's Packet" which will consist of:

- Injury forms/reports
- Code of conduct agreement to be signed and kept on file with the league.
- Equipment inventory list & key to storage locks
- First-aid/emergency procedures quick check list.
- Playing Rules.
- League Rules.
- Medical Care Forms.

The most important responsibility the Head Coaches will have is to ensure that the game stays fun and every player plays at least 25% of every game if the player meets the participation requirements.

Exceptions would include injury during the course of the game/practice.

The Head Coach must also enforce the 60% participation rule

Responsibility of All Coaches

All coaches shall be responsible for fully supporting the OBYFCL Fundraisers and assuring that every member of his/her team fully supports and participates in the Fund Raising activities. In addition, all coaches shall:

- Will teach each player the rules and fundamentals of football.
- Will stress the fact that football is a team effort.
- Will teach and encourage good sportsmanship by players.
- Will treat all players equally.
- Will not physically or verbally abuse any player.
- Will be responsible for checking safety of players' equipment and having equipment replaced if necessary in the coach's judgment.
- Must monitor team for safety and equipment quality as specified in "Safety & Equipment" section.
- Will teach players proper care of equipment.
- Will provide water or drink and individual drinking cups at practices and games.
- Will be responsible for keeping practice fields clean and safe.
- Will be required to make 60% of practice sessions.

Should **not** administer medication.

The OBYFCL will discipline a coach whose conduct causes a game to be forfeited with recommendations from the Coaching Commissioners.

Any coach who fails to appear before the Board when notified, for disciplinary purposes, will forfeit all rights of appeal.

After the game ends, all participants, including cheerleaders and coaches, will line up at midfield to shake hands with the opposing team, in order to demonstrate good sportsmanship.

Selection and Responsibilities of League Officials

Selection and hiring of league officials will be the responsibility of the OBYFCL Board of Directors.

An Official Commissioner or "Umpire in Charge" (UIC) will be selected to represent the officiating staff of each individual sports league by the Parks and Recreation Department. Throughout the given season, the UIC will be responsible for overseeing all adherences to rules and codes of conduct, and scheduling of officiating staff for all games. Rules of play, various age requirements, experience level requirements and rate of pay will be determined and agreed by the league commissioner each season,

Various officiating clinics and staff meetings will be scheduled and led by the UIC.

Officiating uniforms will be pre-determined for each sports league and must be provided by individual officials.

All officials upon employment must sign a "code of conduct" and demonstrate throughout the season, professionalism, fairness, and courtesy must be exemplified

Eligibility

Requirements to officiate for the OBYFCL are as follows:

At least 16 yr. old (flag games only and with at least one adult official).

Be available to work on either evenings or Saturdays.

Physical condition to be able to keep pace with the flow of the game and be able to make clear judgmental calls appropriately & quickly.

Training

Prior to being assigned to work in an official game each official will be required to attend an officials clinic and training sessions held prior to the start of the season. Attendance at these clinics will directly impact the games that will be assigned to you during the season.

Officials who are currently registered with the local high school officiating association will conduct the training.

Responsibilities of League Officials

To rule promptly, in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not covered by the league rules. Officials' decisions are final in all matters pertaining to the game.

Officials assume authority for the game, including unsportsmanlike acts, 30 minutes prior to scheduled game, extending until game is declared complete by the referee.

Officials have the authority to make decisions on rules and infractions as to their best judgment.

Officials are responsible for managing the conduct of players and coaches during pre-game and game periods.

Officials have full authority to warn or eject players or coaches for misconduct. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to:

1. Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures, taunting which is intended to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender or national origin.
2. Attempting to influence a decision by an official.
3. Disrespectfully addressing an official.
4. Inappropriate indication of objection to an official's decision.
5. Use of tobacco or alcohol products by players, coaches, or team assistants on or near the field of play.
6. Blatant disrespect or ridicule by one team towards the opposing team.
7. Disrespect towards the integrity or personality of any player or coach.
8. Deliberate roughness or negative treatment towards any player.

Officials have a responsibility to know the rules of the game thoroughly, and are to maintain confidence, poise, and control throughout the contest.

Officials are to never exhibit emotions or argue with participants and coaches when enforcing rules.

Cheerleading Policies

The Cheerleading teams will be full participation. The teams will be set up for recreational and instructional purposes only. Parents who enroll their child in the OBYFCL Cheerleading program will be considered a member of the OBYFCL.

Eligibility

A participant must register with OBYFCL. A participant must be at least 5 years of age on or before September 1st of the registration year and not more than 13 years of age. No child may be in the 9th grade.

Placement

Participants returning from the previous season will remain on the same team, on which they cheered the previous year, unless otherwise requested by a parent/guardian, and approved by the Cheerleading Commissioner and Vice Commissioner.

New participants entering the league will be selected to a team by way of open draft.

Cheerleaders will be assigned to a team in their age-appropriate league based on the September 1st birthday rule: cheerleaders who will be a certain age on or before September 1st will cheer in the age-league in which their birthday falls.

Siblings who are in the same age group will be assigned to the same team. In cases where siblings are not in the same age league, the new participant will be placed on the same team (different age league) as his/her returning sibling, if that team has not reached its limited number of players/cheerleaders. In cases where both siblings are new to the OBYFCL league, the older sibling will be drafted first, and the younger sibling will be placed on the same team (different age group), if that team has not reached its limited number of players/cheerleaders.

The League will attempt to place siblings of different age levels on the same team names if at all possible. This rule is included to aid in transportation and scheduling for parents with multiple players/cheerleaders.

Participants currently assigned to a team who are not moving into a new age bracket will not be moved to a different team, unless permission has been granted from the Cheerleading Commissioner for the participant to be placed in the draft.

Participants whose parents coach will be allowed to cheer on the team represented by their parent if that child's age qualifies them to be on that team

Teams

Every effort will be made for each cheer team, in each age group, to have an equal number of participants on the team.

The cheer teams will be separated into the following age groups:

- 5 - 6 flag football cheer teams
- 7 – 8 tackle football cheer teams
- 9 –10 tackle football cheer teams
- 11 - 12 tackle football cheer teams

Drafting

The Cheer Commissioner and Vice Cheer Commissioner will be responsible for placing cheerleaders on squads. Cheerleaders will be divided evenly among squads, according to age.

Cheerleaders, who are placed in the draft, with siblings that are participants in the OBYFCL football league, will not be drafted until the football draft is complete.

Parents of participants can request that the child “move-up” in age groups. The request will be evaluated, and the final placement will be determined by the Cheer Commissioner and Vice Commissioner.

Uniforms

The basic uniform will be decided upon by the league and may consist of a shell, skirt, briefs, pom poms, and cheer socks. Cheer shoes will also be considered as part of the cheer uniform but must be purchased by the participant. The following are the parts of the uniform that are included in the cheerleading uniform fee: Shell, Skirt, Briefs, and Pom Poms. This will be the standard uniform for all cheerleaders. All cheerleaders must be in full uniform provided by the league, for the current year, to participate in the games and league functions. In the event that an unavoidable, or unforeseen, complication arises, such as a delay in delivery, the Board will provide an alternative option.

All team colors will be set by the OBYFCL Board.

All squad members should wear the accessories (such as hair bow, turtleneck, and socks), as directed by the head coach. Each cheerleading team is expected to look uniform.

Shorts and skirts must be worn at an appropriate length (approximately mid-thigh), at all games and practices. If skirts are worn, briefs **MUST** be worn underneath or the cheerleader may not participate in that day's event. The child can be sent home if not in proper uniform.

Uniform Accessories

Each cheerleader will be allowed a \$75.00 spending limit on accessories. This is to ensure that all children will be dressed in a similar fashion. All teams will go by the list of items. Below are the only accessories allowed to be purchased. We want all of the girls to look good and feel comfortable. This will prohibit any team from trying to outdo or out-dress the cheer squads. Each Head Coach will be responsible for keeping up with their squads purchases. If needed, the receipts will be kept and turned into the Cheerleading Commissioner.

Items sold by the league (team t-shirts, parent shirts, promotional fan items, etc.) are not included in the \$75.00 spending limit. These items are considered optional, and are considered to be the responsibility and decision of the parent/guardian, to purchase or not.

Cheer camp is an optional OBYFCL sponsored event. The cost of camp (including camp wear) is not included in the \$75.00 spending limit.

Approved List of Accessories

Turtle Neck	Hair Bow	Cheer bag
Gloves	Jacket	Hat
Leggings	Ear Muffs	Jog Pants

In order to assure uniformity, all of the above items (with the exception of gloves, jackets, and cheer bags) must be purchased by the team, as a whole. The items should be voted on by the parents prior to purchase, with the coach having the final decision. Other items may be purchased by one, or all, team member(s) and are considered optional and not required by the league.

* In order to assure uniformity, all of the above items (with the exception of gloves, jackets, and cheer bags) must be purchased by the team, as a whole. The items should be voted on by the parents prior to purchase, with the coach having the final decision. Other items may be purchased by one, or all, team member(s) and are considered optional and not required by the league.

Cheerleader Selection

Participants returning from the previous season will remain on the same team, on which they cheered the previous year, unless otherwise requested by parent /guardian, and approved by the Cheerleading Commissioner and Vice Cheer Commissioner.

Participants moving into a different league/age bracket will be selected to a team by way of open draft.

New participants entering the league will be selected to a team by way of open draft. *See "Drafting of Cheerleaders"

Cheerleaders will be assigned to a team in their age-appropriate league, based on September 1st birthday rule: cheerleaders who will be a certain age on or before September 1st will cheer in the age-league in which their birthday falls.

Siblings who are in the same age group will be assigned to the same team. In cases where siblings are not in the same age group, the new participant will be placed on the same team name (different age league) as his / her returning sibling, if that team has not reached its limited number of players / cheerleaders. In cases where both siblings are new to the OBYFCL league, the older sibling will be drafted first and the younger sibling will be placed on the same team name (different age group).

Participants currently assigned to a team who are not moving into a new age bracket will not be moved to a different team.

The league will attempt to place siblings of different age levels on the same team names, if at all possible. This rule is included to aid in transportation and scheduling for parents with multiple players / cheerleaders.

Participants currently assigned to a team, who are not moving into a new age bracket, will not be moved to a different team, unless permission has been granted from the Cheerleading Commissioner for the participant to be placed in the draft.

Participants whose parents coach will be allowed to cheer on the team represented by their parent if that child's age qualifies them to be on that team.

Drafting of Cheerleaders

The Cheerleading Commissioner and Vice Cheer Commissioner will be responsible for placing children on squads. They will be divided evenly among the squads, according to age.

Cheerleaders, with siblings that are participants in the OBYFCL football league, will not be drafted until the football draft is complete.

Parents of participants can request that the child "move-up" in age groups. The request will be evaluated, and the final placement will be determined by the Cheerleading Commissioner.

Each board member will be assigned to represent a certain league team while the draft is being conducted.

If new expansion teams have been added, they will have first pick in the draft and will select one cheerleader from each category.

The next pick will be decided by a drawing/lottery.

The board member whose team gets first draft pick will select one cheerleader from the lottery. When a team reaches its full capacity of cheerleaders the draft board member representing that team will not select any more players.

Cheerleader Responsibilities

Cheerleaders will be expected to respect their coach's judgment and instructions.

Profanity and unsportsmanlike conduct from any participant will not be tolerated.

Cheerleaders are expected to attend all practices and games. It will be the responsibility of cheerleaders to contact their coach if, for some reason, she cannot attend a practice or game.

All cheerleaders must attend 60% of all practices, or she may be withheld from participating in regular or post season games and activities. A coach may choose to have a cheerleader "sit-out" of a cheer or routine that was taught during the cheerleader's absence, until the cheerleader has learned the new routine or cheer. It is the cheerleader's/parent's responsibility to make arrangements to learn any material missed during absences.

There will be a maximum of (3) practices per week for the 9/10 and 11/12 age groups, and (2) per week for the other age groups. Each practice should last a maximum of (2) hours.

Cheerleaders must be in complete uniform for all cheerleading activities, except practices.

It is the responsibility of each cheerleader to learn all cheers, chants, stunts, and dance routines to the best of her ability.

Each cheerleader is responsible for cooperating with her teammates and coach (es) and must exhibit good sportsmanship at all practices, games and other activities.

Each cheerleader must remain on the sideline for the duration of games, except for the halftime break.

Cheerleaders are expected to dress appropriately for practice. (Comfortable clothing and tennis shoes, shorts, or warm-ups.)

Sandals, flip-flops or jewelry with exception of stud earrings, worn in the ear only, will not be allowed.

Cheerleading is a team sport. All cheerleaders are expected to attend all practices and games. If the weather conditions are not appropriate, the Board will cancel games and/or practices. Otherwise, full participation is expected.

Cheerleading Head Coaches Responsibility

The Head Coach and Assistant Coach must be at least 21 years of age. All squads MUST be supervised, at all times, by a coach or parent of at least 21 years of age. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS!

All coaches and assistants must be willing to submit to a background check, and must provide the league permission to do so.

Responsible for fully supporting the OBYFCL Fundraisers and assuring that every member of his/her team fully supports and participates in the Fund Raising activities.

Fund raisers, sponsored by the OBYFCL, may be held to assist with the purchase of additional equipment and/or to raise funds for the football and cheerleading league, as a whole.

No individual squad is allowed to host any type of fund raising event, on its own. Individual persons/teams are not allowed to use the OBYFCL for any fund raising purposes that are not initiated by the league. Any such violation of this rule can lead to immediate termination of coach/coaches, and can cause him/her to lose all coaching privileges in the future.

Must attend at least 60% of all meetings and training sessions.

Responsible for obtaining medical care for cheerleaders injured during games or practices, if parents are not present.

Parents will sign forms ahead of time to allow for medical care. Coaches must have immediate access to the release forms at all practices and games.

Must report all injuries to the OBYFCL Safety Commissioner on the OBYFCL Incident/Injury Form no later than the close of the next business day and must follow-up regarding condition of the player.

Must be responsible for turning in all equipment issued to her and/or the team by OBYFCL.

Equipment must be turned in within one week of the last scheduled game. Failure to return equipment may result in a forfeiture of future coaching positions.

Choose a practice site for practices within the city limits, obtain permission to use the site/field and will report site to the League Commissioner, Vice Commissioner or the Cheerleading Commissioner.

There will be a maximum of (3) practices per week for the 9/10 and 11/12 age groups, and (2) per week for the other age groups. Each practice should last maximum of (2) hours.

Must report to the Cheerleading Commissioner or Vice Cheer Commissioner any Cheerleader who drops out of the program within three days.

Will not leave participants alone on field or practice sites, unless supervised by a responsible party 21 years of age or older.

Upon selection as a coach, head coaches are to be issued a "Coach's Packet" which will consist of:

Injury forms/reports
Code of conduct agreement to be signed and kept on file.

Equipment inventory list & key to field locks
Medical Care Forms

Cheerleading Safety Guidelines

All stunts/pyramids are only allowed to be performed, if the squad is taught proper mounting, dismounting, and spotting procedures. The Head Coach is responsible for learning proper techniques prior to instruction the squad.

Any stunt/pyramid that is observed being performed without proper mounting, dismounting, or spotting in place will be called down immediately, whether during a practice or game, and may not be performed again until approved by the Commissioner of Cheerleading.

5 - 6 age group cheerleading squads may perform stunts/pyramids that are limited to "one girl up" and at a maximum of knee or hip height level.

7 - 8 age group cheerleading squads may perform stunts/pyramids that are limited to "two girls up" and a maximum of waist height level.

9 - 10 age group cheerleading squads may perform stunts/pyramids that are limited to "one girl up" and at a maximum chest or shoulder height level.

11 - 12 age group cheerleading squads may perform stunts/pyramids which have no "girls up" limit and a maximum of chest or shoulder height level.

Specific Safety Regulations**Partner Stunts / Pyramids**

All pyramids and partner stunts are limited to two persons high. "Two high" is defined as the base (bottom person) having at least one foot on the ground.

The top person in a partner stunt, pyramid or transition may not be in an inverted (head below the waist) position, with the exception of a double based forward suspended roll.

Suspended splits in a transition are allowed provided there are a total of 4 bases that support the top person; at least three of the bases must support under the legs of the top person, and the fourth base may support under the legs or make contact with the hands of the top person. The top person must have hand contact with the bases.

Partner stunts and pyramids higher than shoulder stand level must have a continuous spotter for each person over shoulder stand level.

When one person is bracing another (including over lapping of arms), one of the individuals must be at shoulder height or below. (Exception: Extensions may brace other extensions.)

If a person in a partner stunt or pyramid is used as a brace for an extended stunt, that brace must not be supporting a majority of the top person's weight. (To demonstrate this, the foot of the top person's braced leg must be at or above the knee of their supporting leg.)

Triple-base straddle lifts must have an additional spotter for the head and shoulders of the top person.

Hanging pyramids must have a continuous spotter for each shoulder stand involved in suspending another person.

All vaults are prohibited.

Basket tosses, toe pitch tosses, or similar tosses are limited to no more than four tossers and must be dismounted to a cradle position by two of the original bases, plus an additional spotter at the head and shoulder area. These tosses may not be directed so that the bases must move to catch the top person.

Partner stunts, pyramids or participants may not pass over, under or through other partner stunts or pyramids.

Bird partner stunts must have a continuous spotter at the head and shoulder of the top person.

Free falling flips or swan dives from any type of toss, partner stunt or pyramids are prohibited.

Double based forward-suspended rolls are allowed as long as the bases have their feet on the ground, and the top person and the bases maintain hand-to-hand contact throughout the skill.

Backward suspended rolls and single based suspended rolls are prohibited.

Cradle dismounts from shoulder stand level and above must use a spotter in addition to the number of bases required for the stunt. Exception: A "chair" does not require an additional spotter. (A cradle is defined as a dismount from partner stunt or pyramid in which the top person is caught in a face-up, piked position before being placed on the floor or remounting into another stunt or pyramid.)

Cradle dismounts, which involve a jump twist or other gymnastic skills, require a spotter in addition to the original base(s).

All backward dismounts from partner stunts or pyramids must use three catchers. The execution of any gymnastic skill (i.e., jump, twist, etc.) during a backward dismount is prohibited.

Twists greater than two rotations in stunts, tosses or dismounts are prohibited. (Exception: Double full cradles to the front from side facing stunts such as Arabesques and Scorpions are legal.)

Knee drops are prohibited.

Tension rolls and tension drops are prohibited.

Helicopter tosses are prohibited.

Single based split catches are prohibited.

Toe pitch and leg pitch flips are prohibited.

The use of mini-trampolines, springboards, or any other height-increasing apparatus is prohibited.

Tosses that land in stunts (i.e. toss to hands, basket toss to elevator, etc.) are allowed; however, they cannot significantly exceed the height of the intended stunt. Tosses cannot land in a loading position for another stunt. (Exception: Single base tosses without assistance from another person are allowed into a loading position.)

Tumbling/Gymnastics/Jumps

Dive rolls are prohibited. (A dive roll is defined as a forward roll where your feet leave the ground before your hands reach the ground.)

Flips greater than one rotation are prohibited.

Twists greater than two rotations are prohibited.

A forward three-quarter flip to the seat or knees is prohibited.

The use of mini-trampolines, springboards, or any other height increasing apparatus is prohibited.

Participants may not tumble under or through partner stunts, pyramids, or over or under individuals.

Participants may not land in a partner stunt or in a catching position from an aerial tumbling skill. (Example: A back flip from a tumbling pass into a cradle is prohibited, however, rebounding from a back handspring into a cradle is allowed.)

Landings for all jumps must bear weight on at least one foot. (Example: A toe touch jump or kick to a hurdler position, to the seat, knees, or landing with both feet back, or to a push-up position are prohibited.)

High kicks to a hurdler position are prohibited.

Any type of hurdler position or the position with both feet back (sitting, landing or lying) is prohibited with the exception of a "Z" sits.

General Safety Guidelines

Cheerleading squads should be placed under the direction of a knowledgeable advisor or coach. The cheerleading coach or another knowledgeable designated school representative should be in attendance at all practices and functions.

All cheerleaders should receive proper training before attempting any form of cheerleading gymnastics (tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids and jumps).

All partner stunts should be mastered according the "Partner Stunt Progressions".

All practice sessions should be held in a location suitable for the activities of cheerleaders (i.e., use of tumbling mats where available away from excessive noise and distractions, etc.).

Training in proper spotting techniques should be mandatory for all squads attempting cheerleading gymnastics.

Jewelry, only stud earrings will be allowed.

Warm-up exercises and stretching should precede all practice sessions, pep rallies, games, competitions, and other physical activity.

All cheerleading squads should develop a conditioning and strength building program.

The cheering surface, location, lighting, and weather conditions should be taken into consideration before engaging in physical activity.

Advisors/coaches should recognize the entire squad's particular ability level and limit the squad's activities accordingly.

****Note: The above safety guidelines are general in nature and are not intended to cover all circumstances. All cheerleading gymnastics including tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids and jumps should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult advisor or coach.**

Risk Management

Injury Reports

For all injuries requiring medical attention (during game/practice or afterwards) an Injury Incident Report must be completed by coaching staff and turned into the OBYFCL Safety Commissioner no later than the close of the next business day. The Safety Commissioner will review report for completeness and then forward to the Commissioner. All coaches or designated person for each team must have league approved Injury Incident Report form at all practices and games.

First Aid kits should be provided by each head coach and be present at each practice and game.

All coaches should be provided first aid training at the beginning of the season, preferably prior to the first practice. All coaches are expected to attend first aid training if provided by the OBYFCL.

If significant injury occurs and medical treatment is required it is the coach's responsibility to ensure that assistance is provided to the child.

Field and parking lot lighting must be on for all scheduled practices and games.

An OBPR Dept. employee should be present and have direct contact with the Olive Branch Police Department during every scheduled game.

All safety concerns, violations of the law, drug/alcohol usage, fights, etc. shall be reported to Security promptly.

The City is requested to have emergency medical personnel assigned to each scheduled game and special event.

Security must have communication (preferably via radio) to the City of Olive Branch Police Dept. when on duty.

At least 1 member of team (Coaching staff or designated person) should be certified in First Aid. The certified person should be present at all practices and games. Only basic First Aid and will be administered to an injured party.

Emergencies

No medication will be given to any player by any coach. Medication to be given only by players' parents, step-parents or guardians.

Medical Care form will be present at all practices and games and will be followed in case a parent can not be contacted.

Safety & Equipment

The safety and well being of the players is **PARAMOUNT**.

This is a recreational league and the emphasis should be placed on instruction and safety above winning. All coaches should inspect the player's equipment prior to each game.

All pads must be league approved and free from defect.

Mouthpieces are mandatory for all players. Whenever a player is participating in practice, or games, their mouth guards must be in place.

Footwear must consist of one-piece (no removable cleats) rubber molded cleats.

5-6, 7-8, 9-10 or 5-6, 7-9 will use an official pee wee size football. 11-12 or 10-12 will use an official junior size football.

Equipment

Serial Numbers

The equipment will be labeled using the following naming convention

OBYFCL (two digit year)-(next sequential number) - Example OBPR99-001

The Serial number shall be fixed on to the equipment by any permanent means available to the Olive Branch Youth Football and Cheerleading League (OBYFL).

Cleaning and Storage

At the end of the season all equipment will be washed down with a mild soap and water solution and dried off prior to being stored. All equipment will be stored out of the weather in a facility that has the ability to be locked. The Commissioner and the Director of OBPR will have access to the storage facility.

Inspections

All equipment will be inspected semi-annually in the months of May and December. All inspections will be documented on the appropriate inspection form with copies being filed by the OBYFCL. All inspection forms will be kept on file for a minimum of two (2) years. Prior to disposal of the inspection sheets, the life of the equipment will be noted by the OBYFCL Commissioner for any abnormalities.

Fields

The maintenance of all fields is the responsibility of the OBPR.

Prior to the beginning of the football season all fields will be inspected by the OBPR Director and the OBYFL Commissioner for any defect that may cause harm to any player regardless of age. All defects are the responsibility of the OBPR and will be corrected as soon as possible.

All fields will be scheduled for either practice or game play by the OBYFCL Commissioner or appointed person prior to the beginning of the football season.

Fundraising & Sponsorship

The Olive Branch Parks and Recreation Department, being a branch of city government, is not allowed to accept funds or donations from individuals or businesses. Fundraising efforts may be coordinated through the league Board of Directors. Funds and donations are to be collected for the league as a whole, not for individual teams. The appointed fundraising committee alone will be responsible for fundraising efforts through out the community and league.

Disbursement of funds must be approved by the league Board of Directors and must be allocated fairly to all teams and cheerleading squads. No person may sponsor an individual team or person; sponsorship must be for the whole league.

Rule Changes/Complaints/Procedures

Rule Changes

All requests for rules changes, modifications, deletions, and additions will be in writing and submitted to a member of the Board of Directors or a member of the rules committee. All such recommendations will contain the requester's name and contact number. The receiving member will present the recommendation to the rules committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board of Directors will submit their written opinion on the recommendation within 7 days to the Commissioner and will forward a copy of their opinion to the requester.

Complaints

All complaints should be submitted to the Coaches Commissioner as soon as possible after the issue of concern has occurred. The complaint must include the complainant's name and contact number. The Coaches Commissioner shall review the incident and have the complaints committee investigate the matter and submit their findings in writing to the Board of Directors within 5 days after the complaint is received. The BOD shall communicate their findings and recommendations to the Commissioner within 7 days after receipt and will forward a copy of their opinion to the complainant. The Commissioner shall communicate his findings on the matter and his decision within 3 days after receipt.

Appeals of any decision made on a complaint should be made to the OBYFCL Board of Director at the next scheduled league meeting or at a meeting specifically convened for the matter.

****NOTE: Any life safety issue or issue involving gross misconduct or possible criminal violation shall be addressed by the Board of Directors as promptly as possible after notification. The Board will schedule an emergency meeting for these type complaints, as appropriate.**

Amendments:

After the rules committee obtains approval for proposed rules, any/all modifications, additions, deletions, etc. must be made by the BOD. The requesting party is required to submit the recommended change with

rationale to the BOD in writing. The BOD will respond to the requesting party their decision within 10 days of receipt.

Violations

Any person witnessing misconduct from any participant or guardian at any function during the season should report such behavior directly to a member of the Olive Branch Parks Department or to a member of the OBYFCL Board of Directors.

If any person is found guilty of misconduct in any way, against the code of conduct or any other infractions such as fighting, intoxication, using abusive language, verbally abusing officials, disrupting any part of the game, etc. at games or practice sites, action will be taken by the Board of Directors.

Any coach failing to fulfill his/her duties will be subject to probation, suspension or dismissal.