

SCARBOROUGH YOUTH AND MIDDLE SCHOOL FOOTBALL STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

It is the objective of the Scarborough youth and middle school football programs to ensure that every student-athlete enjoys a positive and beneficial experience through participation in the game of football. Toward that end, the program stresses the following bedrock principles:

- Safety:*** Through proper conditioning, physical and mental preparation and the requirement that all players be properly equipped at all times;
- Fun:*** By fostering comradeship and a sense of teamwork in working toward common goals while at the same time recognizing the natural enthusiasm and playfulness of early teenagers; and
- Success:*** By striving for accomplishment at every practice and honorable victory in every game.

To truly enjoy the game of football, young athletes require competitive playing time. Of all the challenges confronting the coaches involved in our youth and middle school programs, this is perhaps the most difficult to overcome. Over the years, we have made numerous modifications in our programs to provide our rapidly growing number of athletes with quality playing time. At the youth level, we have expanded from one to two teams at both the junior varsity (fourth/fifth grade) and varsity (sixth grade) level. At the middle school level, our junior varsity program now schedules regular mid-week games with teams from surrounding communities in addition to our customary Sunday league games. These modifications have greatly improved our ability to ensure sufficient playing time for our players at all skill and experience levels.

It is our objective to give our players the opportunity to be successful in each and every game we play. While we reject a “win at all costs” approach, we recognize the need to instill confidence and a “can-do” attitude in our players so that by the time they confront the competition of Maine Class A high school football, they are both mentally and physically prepared to meet the challenge.

Against this backdrop, we approach player participation in accordance with the following guidelines:

Youth Program Level 1 (Junior Varsity Play for 4th and 5th Graders)

This is a purely instructional and introductory phase of the football experience. Consistent with safety concerns, all children are to be accorded roughly equivalent playing time. The emphasis is on having fun and learning the fundamentals of the game.

Youth Program Level 2 (Varsity Play 6th Graders)

Here, we continue to stress fundamentals and, consistent with safety concerns, we will continue to accord each child roughly equivalent playing time. However, at this level, we begin to emphasize the importance of teamwork and execution in working toward the common goal of success on the playing field. More is expected of the players by way of physical preparation, effort and concentration.

Middle School Junior Varsity

The Junior Varsity program is for those players who are not yet fully prepared to participate competitively in the Varsity program. Though consisting largely of 7th graders, a considerable number of 8th graders may choose or be encouraged to play with the Junior Varsity team. At this level, play becomes slightly more complex and demanding and we find that the players are instinctively becoming more competitive. They have begun to identify players on opposing teams against whom they will compete throughout high school. Also, physical strength and athletic ability become a more important ingredient for success. We will strive to give every Junior Varsity player considerable playing time during our Sunday league contests. However, in some hotly contested games we may be unable to afford all players as much playing as we might like. Therefore, we have developed a supplemental schedule of fully officiated mid-week games to give priority to those youngsters who saw less action during the Sunday league games. This program has been a tremendous success, and has virtually eliminated any concern that Junior Varsity players are not getting sufficient playing time.

Middle School Varsity

At this level, we increase the emphasis on meeting the competitive challenge. Winning, self-control and sportsmanship become important objectives. Consistent with our desire to be competitive, we attempt to give all of our Varsity players playing time during our Sunday league games. We are usually successful in giving all players some playing time on Sunday. However, those players who fail to get adequate playing time in Varsity play are invited and encouraged to participate in the Sunday Junior Varsity game, where they will be given playing priority. While some less mature 8th graders may be encouraged to play at the Junior Varsity level, absent a safety concern, no 8th grader will be required to play at the Junior Varsity level.

By following these general guidelines, we have been able to ensure that each and every child participating in the youth and middle school football programs enjoys a favorable football experience. However, parental understanding, acceptance and support of these principles is essential to our ability as coaches and administrators to achieve success and forge a sense of teamwork among our players. If you have any questions or

concerns about our coaching philosophy or our participation guidelines, please do not hesitate to contact me. Otherwise, please confirm below your receipt of this Statement of Principles and Policies and your agreement with them. Thank you for your all-important support of Scarborough football.

Sincerely,

George M. Spino
Middle School Head Coach
Youth Football Supervisor

Seen and Agreed To:

Parent or Guardian's Name (Please Print)

Parent or Guardian's Signature

Date: