



HIGH POINT MIDGET FOOTBALL, INC.

Welcome to the team...

Introduction

We are happy to welcome all players and parents to the High Point Hawks Midget Football program. We are hopeful that this will be the most exciting and rewarding football season you've ever experienced.

Our goal is to develop well-rounded young men and women who learn not only the fundamentals of football, but also the importance of education and teamwork, in an atmosphere conducive to developing sound mind, body and character - and having a good time along the way. We practice the ideals of sportsmanship, scholarship and physical fitness. Our program stresses learning lessons of value far beyond the playing days, such as self-discipline, teamwork, concentration, friendship, leadership, and, good sportsmanship.

We, as coaches, will do our very best to ensure that each player is utilized to his utmost potential and their talents are used for the team's best advantage. The team comes before individuals. Safety is our top concern. Many of the exercises, drills, and team rules are there to ensure your child is physically and mentally fit for football. Each child is unique and will develop at his own pace. We will exercise their bodies and minds in an effort to develop the skills needed to execute the game of football.

CONFIDENCE: The belief that he can do what he has been asked to do. Football is a sport that builds it. The coaches will yell and bark a lot, kind of like the military, but the idea is not to humiliate or hurt the players, it's to get the kids to wake up, to realize that they are part of a team, and their actions affect their teammates. Most kids will get yelled at and be upset by it. Parents will be worried by it and begin to feel protective. The coach is just trying to motivate the player, to toughen him up, to prepare him, and to get him excited enough to put forth the effort needed to play football. Sometimes the coaches will need to bark at a player who is not paying attention. We don't do it because we like to yell, and we certainly don't do it to make the player feel bad. We do it because all team sports, football especially, require team effort. A player who is doing his own thing, talking, or not paying attention while the coaches are teaching is risking possible injury to himself or a teammate, and is setting himself up for failure. Remember, as the great Woody Hayes once said, "Discipline is something you do *for* someone, not *to* them."

TEAM RULES

- Keep up with your schoolwork.
- If you don't practice, you don't play. All excused absences must be coordinated with the coaches. We have a minimum play rule. However, if you don't make an effort to attend practices, we as coaches are not required to play you.
- What the coaches say goes. Back talking, profanity, or any form of disrespect will result in disciplinary actions. With the high quality of kids we have on this team, this is not expected to be a problem.
- Respect other players. Remember your teammates are working with you, not against you. Any unnecessary aggression or violence towards another player will result in disciplinary actions. This also goes for our opponents. Without them, there would be no football game, so treat them with respect.
- Take care of your equipment. Let the coaches know if your equipment needs repair. This is the key to safety.
- Wear your mouthpiece when required and keep a spare. On game day, if a player draws a safety penalty for not having a mouthpiece in, he will sit out the remainder of that quarter.
- Come to practice prepared to work and play.
- Learn the rules of the game. Remember especially the safety rules.
- Know the name of each position.
- Arrive on time for practices and games. Six pm means you are *on the field and in position* at six pm, so you must be a few minutes early. A six pm practice begins at 5:55pm.

REWARDS

Rewards can come in two forms: verbal and material. Many of the rewards a player receives are positive reinforcement from coaches and parents. However, the best reward is always a smile and a pat on the back by a parent. A game captain has shown, through considerable effort that week, that he deserves the honor of representing our team to the officials.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Running is an everyday part of practice. On those few occasions when it is necessary to discipline a player for a minor infraction, like failing to pay attention, or talking while the coaches are talking, the player may be asked to run additional laps around the practice field, do pushups, or perform another exercise. Normally that will be the end of disciplinary action. A player will be asked to leave practices early for more severe incidents (i.e. fighting or profanity). If a parent is not present the player will be supervised until the child is picked up. The last resort is to use game suspensions. Coaches will use each of these sparingly. With such a high caliber of kids, severe disciplinary problems are not expected to be a problem on this team.

FIELD POSITIONS

During the first few weeks of practice the coaches will decide the best position for each player. In general, the fastest kids play in the backfield on both offense and defense. The biggest most heavily built kids play on the line. Aggressive kids who combine speed, strength, and agility play linebacker. Taller kids who have some quickness play end, offensive end if they can catch and block, or defensive end if they have the discipline required for that position. The quarterback is the one who has it all: He must know every position, and have agility, good hands, and a strong arm. He must be able to receive snaps, remember plays, and hand off the ball securely. Throwing the football is secondary when compared to the player's ability to lead the offensive unit and earn the respect of his teammates. The Quarterback must know every position, every play for the entire offense. He is the field general of the team, and the coach on the field.

A key thing to remember is the importance of the offensive line. Without a strong, motivated, and disciplined offensive line our offense will go backwards more often than forwards. Without dominating linemen to block for them our backs cannot run for touchdowns. Therefore, it is important to understand that lineman is a coveted position on this team. Although you cannot carry the ball, you, more than any other person, are responsible for the success of this team. A player is never *condemned* to play offensive line; they *earn* the right through hard work and effort. To be an offensive lineman on this team is to be one of the elite: you will be stronger, faster, and better trained than any other player in this league. That is our coaches' promise to you.

Defense is the key to winning football. Vince Lombardi once said, "A good offense will win you games, but a good defense will win you *championships*." Playing defense requires a more aggressive mentality and a desire to make an *impact*. The coaches have put in literally hundreds of hours of research in order to find and develop the most effective defense for this level of play. Our defense requires much more discipline than some others, so our defensive players must be ready to do the right thing, first time, and every time.

The defensive unit also uses a quarterback, called Sam, who is the strong side linebacker. Sam must be the most "football smart" player on the team, and a strong leader as well. He must also know every player's position and responsibility for the defense. In the defensive huddle, Sam is the only player who talks.

A kid's attitude plays a large role in the position they play. The kid who has a bad attitude, who is oversensitive, or who demonstrates any sort of problem with a position will be passed over. A negative attitude is costly. When selecting starting players, attitude and desire wins over ability every time. *Can't* has no place on this football team.

If you wish to play a particular position, then make an effort to study the playbook for that position's responsibilities. We will give you the chance to earn any position on the team. Make certain you do not neglect your assigned position while you are learning the new one though!

WINNING

Nothing in life, including football, is worthwhile unless you enjoy it and gain something from the experience. Sure, we're trying to win football games and we are going to set our goals high, but it shouldn't ruin our lives if we lose. Our football team should not believe that a football loss is a tragedy. All you can ask of our kids is to do their best. If we win, Great! If we lose, it's not the end of the world. There will be another game along in a few days. Coaches that think only of winning don't belong in football. Try this: Ask your child if he had a good time instead of whether he won or lost.

By the same token, we feel that we owe it to the players to do everything we can to make them winners. We plan to win every game, because if you don't, then you need to ask yourself which game you plan to lose, and if you're planning to lose, why show up, or practice the week before?

We're going to practice hard, we're going to play hard, and our scores will reflect this.

COACHES

We can only do our best. We view coaching as an awesome responsibility. Your coaches will:

- Get the players in shape
- Understand each player's potential
- Work on individual skills for each position
- Work on team execution of plays
- Motivate, communicate, lead
- Perform the "behind the scenes work" that will give the players the maximum chance of success; like researching our opponents and doing necessary scouting.
- Teach the players the skills they need to play football safely

Coaches must have the freedom to develop three things in their athletes: pride, poise, and self-confidence. We use the following steps to instruct the game of football.

- Explain what is required
- Demonstrate the technique
- Have the player perform the technique
- Explain the consequences of not performing the technique properly
- If necessary, execute the consequences

If you have any problems with the coaching staff please contact the Coaching Director.

PLAYERS EQUIPMENT

Each player is required to supply the following equipment in order to play football.

- Mouth piece (*HPMF provides 1 Mouth Piece per player*)
- Athletic supporter with protective cup
- Socks of calf or knee length
- Custom mouth guards, if preferred, (Made by dentists) must attach to helmet face guard
- Water jug containing only water or a sport drink such as Gatorade
- A practice jersey (HPMF supplies)
- Shoes must not have detachable cleats.

Players will be issued the following equipment:

- Helmet with face mask and chin straps
- Mouth guard
- Shoulder pads
- Hip pads
- Thigh pads
- Knee pads
- Game/Practice Jersey and Game/Practice Pants

This equipment must be returned to the High Point Midget Football Youth Football Program at the season's end or parents will be billed for replacement equipment.

PARENTS

Parents are as important to the success of the team as the players. Coaches and parents must work together. Please keep the coaches informed about problems that may be going on with your child. If the child has been sick, taking medication, or going through some emotional trauma please make sure the coaches are made aware of the problem as soon as possible. Parents and coaches must communicate with mutual respect. Parents and coaches reserve the right to postpone conversations that are getting out of hand. Heated discussions have no place in front of the players.

PRACTICES

Every week practices are different. New skills are learned, problem areas are corrected, and new plays are taught. Your child will be at a disadvantage by not making practice on time and regularly. Practices are held August 1 through end of season, from 6pm to 8:00pm until the games begin. Practices are held at various locations, your coach will provide you with all of the details.

HOME CONDITIONING

Proper nutrition and hydration is very important to a young football player. Players need to drink as much water as possible every day; at least four to six glasses. Heat stroke is always a danger, despite cooler weather during fall, so it is very important to stay hydrated at all times. It is also recommended that players wear a tee shirt under their pads and jersey to help keep them warm during the colder practices and games.

Players need a high-carbohydrate diet, with plenty of fruits and vegetables and few fats and sugars. We will not be teaching any form of weight lifting other than standard calisthenics like pushups and sit-ups. If your child wishes to lift weights during the off-season he is encouraged to do so, *provided* he obtains a doctor's permission to do so and has his workout designed by a specialist in youth fitness. Improper weight lifting can cause irreparable damage to young joints and bones.

CHALK TALKS

Chalk Talks are a five to ten-minute period near the end of every practice where the coaches will teach or discuss a wide variety of topics with the players. Sometimes we will tell old "war" stories of our days in football to motivate the players. Sometimes we'll discuss athletic role models. Sometimes we'll discuss nutrition and fitness. Chalk Talks are an important part of playing football. They give the coaches a chance to teach concepts that may otherwise be left out of a regular practice due to time constraints or other reasons. Practice is not over until the Chalk Talk ends.

We wish everyone a safe and productive season...

GO HAWKS!!!