MIDDLE TENNESSEE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

The work on the field matters most.

A youth tackle football and cheer league for Middle Tennessee, launching in 2027. One pool per age group, placed by results, and every team plays for a championship.

Founding-program call · Thursday, November 12, 2026 · 7:00 PM Central

Geoff Cottrill, President · **president@mtfafootball.org** · mtfafootball.org

TONIGHT

What we'll cover, and what we won't ask

1

Why MTFA

The one design choice that keeps causing the same fights, and the alternative.

2

How a season works

Jamborees, four Saturdays of results, flights, and a postseason for every team.

3

What changed this month

Draft v4.12: the rule changes from comparing six other Middle Tennessee leagues' rulebooks with ours.

4

Running it, paying for it

One vote per program, the 2027 calendar, fees and founding membership.

OUR COMMITMENTS TONIGHT

No commitment asked.

This is information. Decisions come later, with your board.

No ask to leave your league.

Founding commitments are due January 31, 2027.

Private.

Who signed up for this call is never shared or published.

Most leagues here set a team's level before a snap

We compared the rulebooks of six other Middle Tennessee leagues with ours. They differ in many details. Most share one design: a board made of member programs fixes a team's level in the preseason, and can tie the postseason to that decision.

1

Placed before anyone plays

Level rests on a July prediction about a team nobody has seen play.

2

"Play-down" is undefined

The word that can end a season appears in no definition.

3

The kids carry the sanction

When adults misjudge or misstate, twenty children lose their postseason.

This is about design, not people. The same argument happens every year in every league because the same power sits in every league.

The work on the field matters most.

Why should an arbitrary classification, made by people who don't know your team, decide your season?

IN MTFA

No declarations. Your roster and two Jamborees set where you start.

Four Saturdays of football show where you belong.

Every team finishes in a bracket, playing for a championship.

HOW A SEASON WORKS

One pool per age group, sorted by results

JAMBOREES

Where you start

Two scored Saturdays. With roster facts and each community's last league finishes, they set the Preseason Index.

Aug 7 and 14

WEEKS 1–4

The Sort

Week 1 by the Index, then winners play winners. No rematches; sister teams kept apart.

Aug 28 – Sep 18

REALIGNMENT

Cup and Shield

Your Sort record decides it: top half Cup, the rest Shield. Records reset. No program picks.

Sun Sep 19

WEEKS 5–8

Flight Play

Weeks 5–7 in your flight. Week 8 Ladder Games: last in Cup v first in Shield; the winner plays for the Cup.

Sep 25 – Oct 16

POSTSEASON

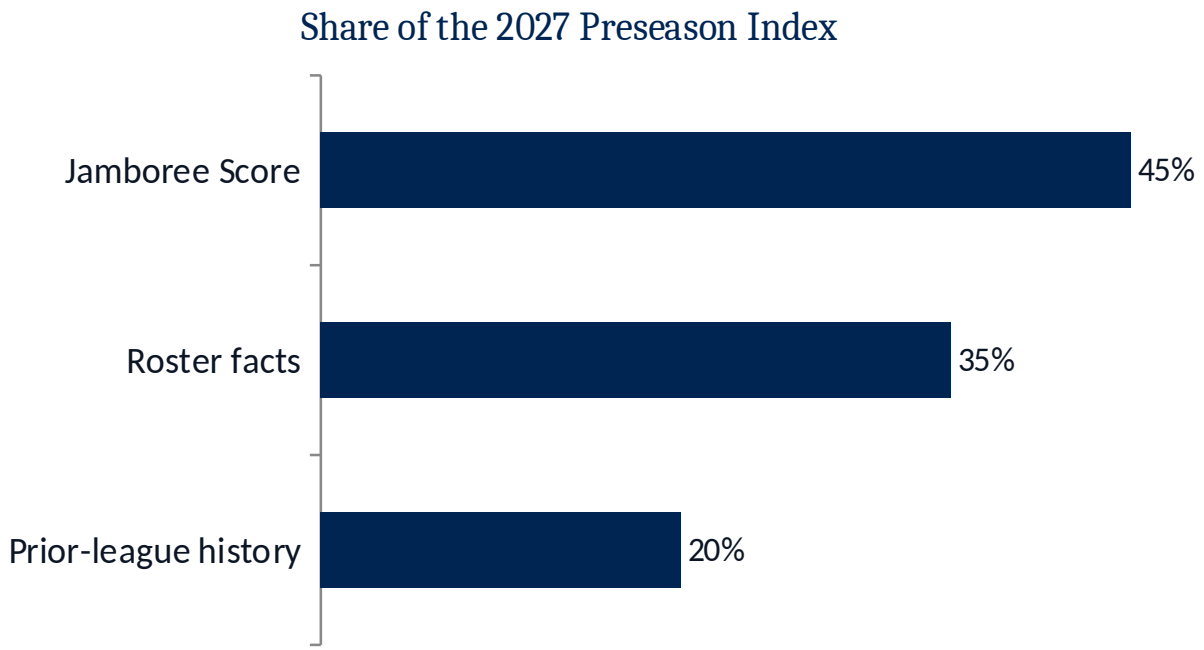
Every team

Each flight has its own bracket and title. Every final on one Championship Day.

Oct 23 – Nov 6

No tiers. No play-down list. No team is ever ineligible because of where it was placed.

The Preseason Index: three layers, no opinions



The Index only sets the Week 1 pairings. It has to be roughly right, not perfect: the Sort corrects it, and no placement depends on it.

Roster facts, not opinions

Older-year share, prior tackle seasons, prior top-level players, players over the limit, roster size and pool depth.

Year one: no MTFA history

There are no MTFA results yet, so 2027 uses how each community finished in its 2025–26 league. A new program starts at a neutral 50.

Jamborees, scored

Two games against teams of similar strength, worked by certified officials. They carry the most weight, and never count on your record.

REALIGNMENT SUNDAY

Your record decides Cup and Shield

THE ORDER AFTER WEEK 4

1	**Wins**	Most wins in the four Sort games
2	**Head-to-head**	Beat a team and you finish ahead of it
3	**Opponents' win %**	Who you played
4	**Point differential**	Each game counted up to 33
5	**Coaches' Poll**	Every head coach ranks the age group
6	**Coin flip**	Drawn in public by the Commissioner

Each step only breaks a tie left by the one above it. 33 is the same number that ends a game and scores a forfeit.

1 Run by an independent Commissioner

No child in the league, no role in any program, and no discretion over the result.

2 Every input published

Scores, ballots, standings and pairings go up every week. Anyone can check them.

3 No board can move a team

Placing a team other than by the published order, or keeping one out of the postseason, is void.

4 No program picks its flight

No opting up, no moving down. The order puts every team where it lands.

INTEGRITY

Sandbagging gets caught, and the adults pay

THREE AUTOMATIC CHECKS

History check

Every child's prior seasons are verified against published rosters.

Shield Dominance

After the Sort: wins its first two Shield games by 33 or more, and plays the postseason in the Cup bracket.

Peer Flag

Most coaches who played it rank it in the top half.

A check is not a finding. A team that is simply better than expected is never penalized.

IF SANDBAGGING IS FOUND

	First finding
Team	Placed in the Cup bracket; keeps its postseason
Head coach	Out for the postseason and two games
President	Barred from League office for two seasons
Program	$500 fine

The kids keep playing for a championship. The penalty falls on the adults.

DRAFT V4.12 · PUBLISHED TODAY

What changed after reading six other rulebooks

6

other Middle Tennessee league rulebooks compared with ours, rule by rule

57

gaps checked against MTFA's own books

40+

rule changes and additions this month

Familiar game rules

We kept what works locally: 33-point margin rule, kickoffs from the 40, tries from the 2 and the 4, forfeits 33–0.

Fewer trips

Weigh-in moves to Jamboree I, in game pants and jersey. Rosters are filed online the Saturday before.

Safety, tightened

15-minute lightning delay, first-aid kit and ice everywhere, cardiac arrest training, banned drills.

Less micromanagement

Programs set their own playing-time rules. Sideline tech is allowed. Outside games allowed with your own insurance.

GAME DAY, AT A GLANCE

The playing rules by age group

	A · 12U	B · 10U	C · 8U	PeeWee · 6U
Ball-carrier limit	135 lb	110 lb	90 lb	65 lb
Target kickoff	1:30 PM	12:00 PM	10:30 AM	9:00 AM
Kickoffs	From the 40	From the 40	None: ball at own 20	None: ball at own 20
Punts	Live	Live	Declared, 30 yards	Declared, 20 yards
Play clock	40 seconds	40 seconds	45 seconds	45 seconds
Coach on the field	No	No	1 offense, 1 defense	1 offense, 1 defense
6U defense	—	—	—	6-man line; LBs 3 yds off; blitz only in red zone

Every age Four 10-minute quarters · clock runs through incompletions and out of bounds until the last 2 minutes

Margin Running clock at 33 · the game ends at 33 after the third quarter unless the losing team has the ball · forfeit 33–0

Tries From the 2 for one, from the 4 for two, a kick for two where goalposts exist

Kickoffs Target times. They depend on how many teams each age group has and where games are that week; we hold the window wherever we can

One limit per age group, weighed once

1

Filing Day · Sat Jul 31

Rosters filed online. No trip required.

2

Weigh-in at Jamboree I · Sat Aug 7

Every player weighed before his first game, in padded game pants and a numbered jersey, behind a screen. Same-sex witness on request.

3

Watch list only, twice more

Players just under the limit are rechecked before Realignment and before the quarterfinals.

4

Game day

No weigh-in. Officials check stripes against the certified list.

DOUBLE STRIPER RULES

- May kick off, punt and kick tries.
- On a bad snap, recover and go to the ground; no fake, no advance.
- A fumble or interception they recover is dead at the spot; their team keeps it.
- Max 5 on the offensive line, each covered; max 4 on the defensive line, inside the tight ends, in a 3- or 4-point stance.
- Out of position: 10 yards.

Built for parents, not just programs

SAFETY

- 15-minute lightning delay, restarting on every strike
- First-aid kit and ice at every practice and game
- CPR/AED-certified adult with every coaching staff
- TSSAA heat policy; full concussion protocol
- No bull-in-the-ring; no drills to humiliate

PRACTICE

- Starts the first Monday after July 4
- Camps and conditioning: League-approved, open to the public, 14+ days before practice
- No team-only events before the first practice

FAMILIES

- Target kickoff times published at Fee Day; we hold the window wherever we can
- Age verified by NSID; we never collect birth certificates
- Background check for every adult, every season
- Regular season games are free to watch

HOW THE LEAGUE IS RUN

One program, one vote, every vote on the record

Board of Directors

ONE DIRECTOR PER PROGRAM

Rules, budget, fees and membership. May not decide any team's pairing, flight or bracket.

Executive Committee

FOUR ELECTED OFFICERS

Day-to-day administration. No power over pairings, schedule or brackets.

Commissioner

INDEPENDENT; NO CHILD IN THE LEAGUE

Runs the published formulas and publishes every result.

Appeal Panel

THREE DIRECTORS DRAWN BY LOT

From programs not involved. Written reasons within five days.

- Roll-call votes published within 72 hours
- Notice and a hearing before any decision about your program
- No placement rule changed mid-season
- Mandatory recusal; a vote without it is void
- Any record on request in ten days
- Robert's Rules where our rules are silent

THE 2027 SEASON

From first practice to Championship Day



BEFORE THE SEASON

Jan 31, 2027 · founding commitments due

Before Jan 31 · organizational meeting seats the board

Spring 2027 · rulebooks ratified by roll call; insurance bound

EVERY SATURDAY

Target kickoffs: PeeWee 9:00, C 10:30, B 12:00, A 1:30; second teams about 3:00. Numbers and sites can move them, but we hold the window. Makeups go to Sunday afternoon.

THE WORDS WE USE

A season in twelve terms

Filing Day	Sat Jul 31. Rosters filed online. Nothing is declared.
Jamboree I and II	Aug 7 and 14. One scored game each, never on your record. Weigh-in is at Jamboree I.
Fee Day	Sun Aug 15 board meeting: fees, final rosters and kickoff times.
Preseason Index	Roster facts, last league finishes and the Jamborees. It sets Week 1 only.
The Sort	Weeks 1–4. Winners play winners and losers play losers, so the age group ranks itself on the field.
Realignment Sunday	Sun Sep 19. Sort records split each age group into flights.
Cup, Shield, Plate	The flights, each a championship of equal standing. A Plate only with 17+ teams.
Flight Play	Weeks 5–8 inside your flight. Records reset at Week 5.
Ladder Game	Week 8. Last in the higher flight plays first in the lower; the winner takes the higher bracket.
Shield Dominance	After the Sort: a Shield team that wins Weeks 5 and 6 by 33+ plays the postseason in the Cup bracket.
Double Striper	A player over his age group's ball-carrier weight. Two stripes; can't advance the ball.
Championship Day	Sat Nov 6. Every flight's final at one site.

WHAT IT COSTS

Founding programs pay no entry fee

$0

2027 membership fee for founding programs ($250 waived)

$500

Founding Commitment Deposit, credited in full at Fee Day

$50

per player, each season

FOUNDING MEMBER TERMS

- Sign the Affiliation Agreement and send the deposit by January 31, 2027.
- Deposit refunded if you withdraw before March 1, are not admitted, or the season is canceled.
- No admission fee, ever. Programs joining later pay $500 once.
- Through 2029, fees capped at $250 and $50, plus any insurance increase.
- No extra vote: one class of members.

Standard fees after 2027: $250 per program and $50 per player, reviewed yearly by Board vote.

WHAT WE ARE NOT GOING TO PRETEND

Still open, and decided by the founding board

1	**Fine amounts**	Most penalties are in the book. The dollar amounts for several fines are left to the founding board.
2	**Insurance**	Limits set on the broker's quote, including directors and officers coverage.
3	**Cheer details**	Squad size, routines, stunts and scoring will be set with an experienced cheer committee.
4	**Coaching certification**	The Board names the accepted certification bodies.

Plus one honest cost: for the four Sort weeks, families learn the next opponent and site on Sunday night.

Six to eight founding programs.
One season every kid plays for.

01 Read the draft rulebooks at mtfafootball.org/rulebook and send us your comments.

02 Take it to your board. We'll join your board meeting if that helps.

03 Commit as a founding program by January 31, 2027, and seat a director on the founding board.

CONTACT

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QUESTIONS

Your questions

Commonly asked

- Do we have to leave our league to join?
- What if our team is better or worse than people expect?
- How far will we travel?
- Can our kids play up?
- Who runs the league and how is it paid for?



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