

# Royal City Hyacks Football Club Parents Handbook

## Team Managers

Four parents have already volunteered to share duties as team managers this year: Jodie Sharpe and Lianne Gentile for the peewee team, and Shelley Clayton and Candice Cote for the junior bantam team. Without their hard work and dedication, the football teams cannot function properly. Please assist them whenever and wherever possible.

## Team Communication

Communication regarding team functions and other information will be provided by the managers via email and/or phone call. If there is a need to speak with the head coach about a particular issue, the best times are after practice or to phone him at home. You can also email the head coach about any issues or logistical details. If a player cannot make it to a practice or game, the head coach or team manager must be contacted as far in advance as possible.

## Family Involvement

Crucial to both the short- and long-term success of the football program.

## Sign-In, Safety and Field Rules

Players are required to sign in prior to each practice and game. This is done with a manager or with the head coach if no manager is available. Players that don't sign in will run extra at the end of practice. This is to ensure the accountability and safety of all players on the team.

No parent is permitted on the field during practices and/or games unless invited by the head coach. This is also to ensure the safety of the players, who are the responsibility of the coaches on the field during practices.

Please abide by the rules of the parks in which we practice or play. We are guests of these facilities, and should endeavor to help keep them clean and in good order.

## Basic Rules

Be respectful of players, coaches, parents, volunteers, officials and the many resources provided to you as a member of this football program.

Players do not speak when a coach is speaking. "Eyes up" on a coach when he is speaking will let him know that you are actively listening. This is to ensure that players are receiving clear instruction from the coaches and protecting their safety.

No horseplay at the football field. Players are not permitted to "goof around" in line ups during practice. Such follies can often lead to kids getting carried away and one or more being injured. It also disruptive to the development of the players involved, and others in the same environment.

Always hit with your chin up. This is the safest position to hit in, and is also necessary for players to see what they are hitting and be successful at it.

If a rule is broken, the player is removed from the activity and sat down away from the team for a limited time. The player will be required to run extra after practice. Should a player be repeatedly breaking the rules, further discipline may be required in consultation with the player's family.

## **The Parent's Role**

Football is a very emotional game, and kids need very strong parental support. It is critical that parents support their child in being positive and encouraging their successes. Refrain from dwelling on the negative. Telling your child that "they should have hit harder or should have run faster" is not productive to the development of the player. Parents are not referees or coaches, and any negative comments towards them will further hamper the development of the player and the success of the team.

Please do not coach your child. The coaches are working towards building success through a team structure and parents coaching their children can take away from the team concept, and may introduce or reinforce incorrect or contrary techniques and concepts. If a parent wants to work with their child, they can approach the coach who will advise them what they could be working on.

## **Parental Discipline**

The coaches will support parents in disciplinary absences. If a parent keeps the player from attending a practice they have missed homework or have been failing in school, the full support of the coaches is behind the parent's decision. The player will be required to run extra at the next practice, and there may be other consequences within the context of the football team.

## **Addressing your Concerns**

If you have a concern or grievance, please let a team manager know and they will address the head coach regarding the concern. If it cannot be resolved directly with the head coach, the team manager will speak with the club president, Farhan Lalji. If you wish to approach Farhan directly regarding a concern, you are welcome to do so. His email address is [flalji@tsn.ca](mailto:flalji@tsn.ca), and phone number is 604-522-9779.

## **Roster Size and Playing Time**

Each team carries up to 34 players on the active playing roster. The selection is primarily on a first-come, first-served basis with preference given to returning players. Attendance and commitment levels are important parts of the selection process. Residual players will be placed on a "waiting list" and are able to practice with the team but will not be eligible to play league games. Each player on the active game roster is to be included in a minimum of 10 plays in the game. We must have two volunteers at each game monitoring compliance with this rule (monitoring both teams).

## **Practice Times and Transportation**

Parents are responsible to ensure transportation is provided to and from practices and games. For assistance with arranging transportation for games or practices, contact a team manager. Throughout the summer, practices take place every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Mercer Stadium. We are having three Saturday practices to kick off the summer (June 28, July 5 and July 12), all from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm at Mercer Stadium. We will begin weekly Saturday practices on September 6, from 10:00 am to 11:45 am, held at Simcoe Park (behind John Robson school). From September 16 onwards, the majority of the weeknight practices take place from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at Queensborough Middle School.

While two hours may seem like a long period to hold a practice, the complexity of this sport requires the use of those full two hours. All practices involve warm-up and drills developing individual and team fundamentals for defense, offense, special teams. Besides, time flies when you're having fun! Many times our players exclaim at the conclusion of practice that "practice shouldn't be over yet!" Please note that practices in the summer will often be extended for a few minutes beyond 8:00 pm to perform extra football-specific physical conditioning.

Relative to the complexity of the sport, there is a small number of practices each week in which to prepare the players for the season and each game. Due to the strategic nature of the sport, and the number of skills that each athlete must master in order to make their contribution on the team a success, attendance at all practices is mandatory. If there is an issue that will prevent your child from participating, please contact the head coach directly. Low practice attendance may impact a player's eligibility to fully participate in games.

During the pre-season, some players at key positions (e.g. quarterbacks) may be asked to participate in extra practices to receive more individual instruction and development than what is possible to achieve in the regular practices.

## **Vacations**

We believe that family and education are extremely important and football is relatively low in priority in comparison to these. Vacations are a part of the summer with all families and are supported by the coaches. Please let the head coach and team manager know of vacations as far in advance as possible.

## **Conflicts with other Sports or Activities**

Football is a sport that demands a high level of commitment in order to achieve team success and individual player development. Scheduling conflicts between football events (practices and games) and other activities are handled on a case by case basis and are to be discussed with the head coach as soon as the conflict is known to exist. The coaches understand that there are other worthy pursuits in life, and will work with the player's family to ensure a reasonable balance is maintained.

## **Pre-Season Tournaments (August)**

We will participate in three tournaments in which teams play 2-3 30-minute mini-games in a round-robin format over the course of a few hours. These tournaments provide the athletes a great opportunity to build on their efforts of the summer practices and scrimmage live against potential regular season or playoff opponents. As tournament schedules are confirmed, we will communicate these to all parents.

There are three weekend tournament dates in August to be mindful of:

- August 9 or 10 – in a tournament at Coquitlam or Maple Ridge
- August 17 – we will be hosting a tournament games at Mercer Stadium
- August 23 – at a tournament in Surrey

## **Games**

There are ten regular season games that take place weekly from the Labour Day weekend onwards. Our home games are typically scheduled on the Friday nights at Mercer Stadium when the NWSS varsity team does not have a home game. In 2008, this means that our home game dates will fall on Aug 29, Sept 12, Oct 11, Oct 24 and Oct 31 (exact dates are not confirmed until the league schedule is formally

established in August). For Friday night home dates, the peewee game starts at 6:00 pm, and the junior bantam game at 8:00 pm. Away games are usually on Sunday mornings and afternoons, and take place at parks around the Greater Vancouver region. Peewee and junior bantam teams do not necessarily have their away games at the same parks or at consecutive times. Note that for all games (both home and away), all players need to be at the park an hour before kickoff for team warm-ups and final coaching.

## **Nutrition and Hydration**

Football is an extremely physical game where there is a great amount of stress on the player's body and of energy expended. Drinking plenty of water and/or sports drinks (Gatorade or Powerade) on the days of practice and games will help to ensure the player is properly hydrated. Sugary or fatty food should be very limited on the days of practices or games, as these types of food generally have an adverse effect on an athlete's body during periods of activity. We do our best as coaches to ensure that players continue to drink water throughout the practice. Generally, we do not break for water, but rather prefer that water bottles be available to players at their drills so that they can take a quick drink when they are not directly participating. As such, it will be of great help to have one or two parents volunteer to keep the water bottles replenished throughout the practice.

## **Other Important Events**

In the fall, a more extensive *Football 101 for Ladies* session takes place during the first week of September for all levels of Hyack football. This session provides another fun time to learn some of the basic rules, positions and strategies of the game. We even explain what it means when "the stripey man throws the orange hanky."

**NWSS Hyacks Homecoming - Sept 19:** On September 19, the varsity high school team takes on the South Delta Sun Devils (7:30 pm kickoff). A huge crowd is always on hand for the great pre-game festivities, and the Hyacks have never disappointed to provide a great game to complete the atmosphere over the past five years.

**Annual Tailgate Party & Auction - Sept 20:** The sixth annual Hyack Football Tailgate Auction will be held on Saturday, September 20th at the Justice Institute of BC. This has been a very entertaining and successful event in past years and is the biggest fundraiser of the year for the football program (high school and youth teams). If you know of any potential auction items you or your associates might be willing to donate, please contact Barbara ([Barbara.Duggan@kwantlen.ca](mailto:Barbara.Duggan@kwantlen.ca)). Tickets are \$50 each (or 8 for \$350). For ticket information please contact Marilyn ([mdavis@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:mdavis@sd40.bc.ca)).

**Hyack Football Banquet – (TBD - typically first week of December):** The high school and youth football teams join together for a gala dinner to celebrate another great year of football in New Westminster. Outstanding players are recognized at this event, which features well over 250 attendees. Last year, a more informal team wrap-up dinner was also held for each of the youth teams after the regular season ended in November.

## **Equipment Basics**

The player and parents are responsible for ensuring that the football equipment provided is kept clean and functional. Throwing helmets on the ground is not tolerated, nor are they to be used as stools. Do not throw equipment on the garage floor or have it rolling around the back of a pickup truck. Scratches and chips in the helmet and shoulder pads can affect the structural integrity of the equipment, and thus can endanger the player. Storing the equipment on a shelf or hanging rack at home is preferable.

**Helmet** - The helmet is typically the most recognizable piece of all equipment. It protects various parts of the head from collisions with other players and the ground. The face mask on the helmet shields the face from contact and collisions. Any maintenance on the helmet, such as removing or fixing the facemask, should only be performed by a qualified equipment manager or by one of the experienced coaches. Anytime that players are on the field the helmet should be on their head.

**Mouth Guard** - Mouth guards are mandatory and must be worn during all live play in practices and games. **They must be attached to the face mask.** If a player is wearing braces or a similar dental device, a special mouth guard may be worn – but officials must be notified prior to each game.

**Shoulder Pads** – Shoulder pads must be properly sized to provide protection for the collarbone, shoulders, chest and upper back. Certain styles of these pads are meant to be used for receivers, quarterbacks, or players along the line of scrimmage. We have a wide variety of brands, styles and sizes of shoulder pads, so if a change needs to be made, please see the head coach.

**Hip, Tail, Thigh & Knee Pads** – Pads to protect the hips and tail bone are worn around the waist of the player. An athletic girdle may be worn that provides a more comfortable fit for these pads than what is achieved from the belt. Thigh pads fit into slots on the front of each leg, protecting the quadriceps from contact (charley-horses are not fun to experience). Knee pads fit into a pouch inside the pant leg, with the round part of the pad extending downwards.

**Cleats** – Shoes are to be a rubber-molded style only and may have unlimited cleats. No screw-in or screw-out cleats are allowed. League rules mandate that illegal cleats will lead to the offending player being ejected from the game, and suspended for one additional game. In addition, the head coach of the offending team is also ejected and suspended.

## **Important Contact Information**

Ryan Leslie  
Head Coach – Junior Bantam  
Phone: 604-868-7926  
[rleslie@hyackfootball.com](mailto:rleslie@hyackfootball.com)

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Head Coach – Peewee  
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# Football 101 for Families

## Welcome & Introduction

Welcome to the 2008 football season! The coaches are very excited that you have decided to be a part of the Hyack Football family, and we hope that the experience will be a positive and enriching experience for all involved. The coaches are committed to providing a structure and environment for kids to learn the game of football and develop in all facets within the program.

The Royal City Hyacks Football Club was established in 2004 with three main goals in mind:

- To have a positive impact on the lives of young people in New Westminster, enabling and encouraging their healthy physical, emotional and mental development.
- To teach the sport of football, building competitive teams that exhibit sportsmanship and have fun while executing with great fundamentals.
- To assist in the long-term growth and success of the New Westminster high school football program.

## Introduce Coaches and Managers

## Equipment Demonstration

### Basic Rules

Be respectful of players, coaches, parents, volunteers, officials and the many resources provided to you as a member of this football program.

Players do not speak when a coach is speaking. Players should have their “eyes up” on a coach when he is speaking to let the coach know that they are actively listening. This is to ensure that players are receiving clear instruction from the coaches and learning how to safely and properly play football.

No horseplay at the football field. Players are not permitted to “goof around” in line ups during practice. Such follies can often lead to kids getting carried away and one or more being injured. It also disruptive to the development of the players involved, and others in the same environment.

Always hit with your chin up. This is the safest position to hit in, and is also necessary for players to see what they are hitting and be successful at it. Any hits with the top of the helmet are illegal, and can lead to serious injuries, paralysis or even death.

If a rule is broken, the player is removed from the activity and sat down away from the team for a limited time. The player will be required to run extra after practice. Should a player be repeatedly breaking the rules, further discipline may be required in consultation with the player’s family.

### Sign-In, Safety and Field Rules

Players are required to sign in prior to each practice and game. This is done with a manager or with the head coach if no manager is available. Players that don’t sign in will run extra at the end of practice. This is to ensure the accountability and safety of all players on the team.

No parent is permitted on the field during practices and/or games unless invited by the head coach. This is also to ensure the safety of the players, who are the responsibility of the coaches on the field during practices.

Please abide by the rules of the parks in which we practice or play. We are guests of these facilities, and should endeavor to help keep them clean and in good order.

## **The Game of Football**

There is a lot of terminology and rules within football. Rules are meant to encourage fair and safe play by all players on the field. Infractions of the rules result in penalties that typically impact field position. Serious infractions for unsportsmanlike conduct or unnecessary roughness may result in players being ejected.

### **The Field**

Team score points through two main methods: possessing the football in their opponents' endzone, or kicking the ball through the uprights.

A touchdown is scored when you possess the football in your opponent's endzone. This can be achieved by: Carrying the ball across the goalline (into the endzone). Receiving a passed football within the endzone. Recovering a football that was loose in the endzone. Touchdowns are worth six points.

You can also score by kicking the football off the ground and through the uprights. These "field goals" are worth three points.

After a touchdown is scored, the offense is given an extra play from the five yard line to try and "convert" the score. If they successfully make a field goal on the play, that is worth two extra points. If the offense runs or passes the ball into the endzone, they score one extra point.

In Canadian football there are 12 players on the field for each team. Substitutions are allowed between plays. To start a play, an official places the ball down on the ground and whistles the clock to start. The offense has a limited amount of time to line up and start the play.

The Line of Scrimmage (LOS) is a virtual line extending across the field, parallel to the goal lines, that runs through the point where the ball is placed to start the play. Each team must start on their own side of the LOS on each play.

### **Downs & Sticks**

When your team is on offense, it gets a set of three plays (three downs) to move the ball forward a total of ten yards. If that ten-yard mark is exceeded by the end of the third play, then the offense gets a new set of plays (a first down) to move the ball another ten yards. However, if the ball has not been advanced ten yards by the end of the third play, then the defending team gets to go on offense from where you were stopped. As such, if there is a lot of distance to make up on the third down, the offense may decide to kick the ball (called a "punt") towards the defense in hopes of making them start the next play from further away.

### **Offensive Rules**

Legal formation: 7 on the line, 2 eligible ends, unlimited motion by backs. Ends and backs are eligible to handle the ball.

Forward passes can only take place once per play, and from behind the LOS. Any eligible player can pass the ball. The ball can be handed or passed backwards or laterally an unlimited number of times during a play, and from anywhere on the field.

## Defense

Defense cannot be within one yard of the offense when the ball is snapped. There are no other rules limiting where or how the defense has to line up. As such, there is often a lot of creativity and movement by the defense to try and confuse the offensive blockers and ballcarriers.

When tackling, you cannot grab the helmet or facemask to bring a ball carrier to the ground. The primary point of contact when tackling is optimally the top of the shoulders, but sometimes defenders are only in a position to grab and drag a ball carrier down.

The defense is allowed, and encouraged, to take the ball away from the offense. When the defense catches a pass, it is called an interception, and they are allowed to immediately start running the ball towards the offense's endzone. When a ball carrier drops the ball on the ground (or it is forced out), anyone on either team is allowed to grab and recover the ball (this situation is called a "fumble").

## Positions

### Offense

Linemen – These are very important players, as they block the defenders to enable the backs and receivers to carry the ball down the field, or to protect the quarterback who is passing the ball downfield.

Backs – These players are lined up in the backfield (behind the LOS) and have a variety of roles. They handle the ball most frequently, and carry it downfield, or block for the other backs. They can also pass the ball forwards (once per play, from behind the LOS) and fake that they have the ball.

Receivers – These players primarily run downfield and catch passes. They also block on running plays – their blocks often determine if a touchdown is scored on a long run or not.

### Defense

Linemen – These players line up along the LOS, one yard away from the offensive linemen. Their primary job is to stop the backs from running the ball down the field or to tackle the quarterback before he can pass the ball.

Linebackers – These players usually line up three to five yards behind the linemen, and also stop the offensive backs. They also defend passes by either following receivers or defending a certain area of the field (called a zone).

Backs – Defensive backs are responsible for stopping long passes, either by covering receivers and preventing a catch, or by intercepting the ball. They assist the linemen and linebackers in stopping long or wide running plays.

Special Teams. After touchdowns, the ball is kicked off by the scoring team towards their opponents. This is also how the game starts at the beginning and after the half-time break. Anytime a play involves the ball being kicked, it is considered to be a special play. Most teams will have specific players on the field for these plays, with these groups of players being called the "special teams". Many of the skills and strategies used in kicking the ball, covering the kick, or receiving the kick are unique and often complex.

These are typically wide-open plays that can dramatically determine the outcome of a game because it's possible to substantially change your field position, or that of your opponent, on these plays (or even score when returning or defending a kick).