

WSFL Charter

The Wisconsin State Football League, hereafter WSFL, is a semi-pro football league established by Michael Rzepkowski in 2003. The purpose was to create a league in which every team would be involved in the decision making process, and have a voice in the day-to-day operation of the league. Any changes to the league charter require a majority vote (majority being defined as one vote more than half of all teams with a representative in attendance at that meeting. Teams not sending a representative will not be considered in the vote).

Article 1: Governing the League

Section 1: A board of directors, a head referee, and a commissioner shall govern the WSFL.

Each team must appoint a representative to the board before they may participate in the league's governing board. In the absence of a team's representative, any other member of that team may be appointed to represent their team that day, but the team representative must first notify the commissioner of the appointee. Any member of a team may attend a meeting, but may not vote unless they are the team's appointed representative. **Decisions of a team appointee are final, and represent their team's decision.** Attendance will be taken at meetings and recorded.

The board shall appoint the commissioner. The commissioner is responsible to organize meetings, prepared the schedule, act as a liaison between teams and referees, enforce decisions and discipline as indicated by the referees or board of directors, and facilitate all league communication and organization as needed. The commissioner reserves the right to act on behalf of the league matters of urgency when it is unreasonable to assemble the board for a vote. The board may remove the commissioner with a majority vote in the event of misappropriation, and a new commissioner need not be affiliated with any team in the league. The league commissioner shall act as treasurer unless the league's board of directors otherwise appoints a treasurer. Officers shall be unpaid. Salaries for officers may be awarded only by a majority vote of all teams in the league.

The league shall establish a **Head Referee**. The head referee will aid/oversee all other referee crews. No referee crew shall work for the WSFL without review of their credentials by the head referee. The head referee will facilitate interpretation of ambiguous rules, and may encourage rules changes to the needs of the league.

Section 2: Player Code of Conduct

The WSFL has established a "Player Code of Conduct" which shall be signed by every prospective player prior to his or her participation in the league (See Appendix A). All players are to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Any conduct detrimental to the WSFL or its teams can be met with suspension, disqualification, or banishment from the league. The commissioner and board of directors shall only be involved in the discipline process for **on-field indiscretions** if the commissioner is notified by the referees of an incident which they feel could not be properly dealt with on field. If the referees feel they have sufficiently dealt with the situation, the board and commissioner shall not be involved. Failure of the team to uphold their player's disciplinary plan shall result in forfeit of any game in which the player participates. All league teams shall be notified of disciplinary action against a player or team. The commissioner and league's board retain the right to administer discipline as needed for **off-field indiscretions**.

Section 3: Teams/players will be required to adhere strongly to the league rules and standards. The league and its teams benefit from business/corporate sponsorship. If any team jeopardizes the league's image with actions that embarrass or detract from the league in any public forum or venue, the board may elect to remove that team's/player's participation privileges. The

team/player shall first be informed on the issue of concern. The team/player must then submit a satisfactory plan of action. If no action is taken to correct the issue, the board shall then meet and vote on the future of that team's/player's status with the league.

Article 2: Participation in the League

Section 1: Player Participation

No individual shall be recognized as a member of a team's roster until that player has first signed and returned the aforementioned "Player Code of Conduct" (Appendix A). If a team elects to field a non-roster player that team will forfeit the game that day. The Player Code of Conduct shall also represent a player's intent to play for a particular WSFL team. Once the player has indicated intent to play, the player is bound to that team for the remainder of the season. A player may only join another team if their original team agrees to release them and notifies the commissioner of the agreement. The player must then sign a second form if they wish to participate with another team. A player who excludes themselves from a team without consent of that team will have their status to participate in the league withheld for the remainder of the season. Each player shall sign a form every season.

The WSFL does not carry health insurance for its players. Participants must attest that they have individual health insurance prior to participation in the league. Participants need not show proof of insurance nor will a copy of the policy/card be kept to remain in compliance with current privacy laws. Participants will be required to attest that they have had a pre-participation physical and are of reasonable condition to participate in the WSFL. The WSFL and its teams will not require proof of physical exam or keep a copy on file to comply with privacy laws.

A player may not compete in a regular season game unless he is equipped with a team uniform (jersey and pants), and a uniform team helmet. The league claims no domain over shoes, socks, gloves, undergarments or other accessories. The league retains the right to mandate a brand name of uniforms and attire in the event of corporate league sponsorship. Each team shall be afforded one warning per season for non-uniform players.

Players will recognize that their participation in the league is a privilege, and this privilege may be revoked for any violation of the "Player Code of Conduct." Players are asked to take pride in the league and are required to represent themselves, their team, and the league positively in their communities.

The WSFL will not compensate players participating in the league. The WSFL will not prevent its representative teams from compensating that team's players.

Section 2: Team Participation

All teams shall be required to sign a letter of "Intent to Participate" (Appendix B) before they are considered members of the WSFL. Each team will be required to sign the "Intent to Participate" each year. Each team shall also be required to pay a league fee. The amount of the league fee will be voted upon on an annual basis. The league fee shall cover league expenses, and will also cover the expense to enroll each team in the AFA/AFN – which includes a liability insurance policy to protect the team and the league in the event of an injury. The liability policy is also required for many organizations to grant field usage permits. No team shall be considered as a member of the league until both of these conditions are satisfactorily met. Team representatives will vote on what will become of any unused annual dues.

The WSFL shall pursue controlled growth to ensure league quality. New teams shall be required to issue a proposal. The proposal must include: team name, brief history, name of team organizer, prospective roster, home field ideas with names of contact, indications of financial standing, proposed team colors, and a statement why they chose the WSFL. The proposals shall be due by April 15th. Any team not meeting this deadline will not be considered for that season, but their submission may be retained for consideration for the following season. The board will then confer and decide which teams to include in the league.

Article 3: Fields

Section 1: Home Fields

The WSFL allows its teams to secure and play on a home field. Any team may elect not to have a home field for the season, but must notify the commissioner in writing. It is the responsibility of the team to secure its own home field, and must provide the league with written documentation of a secured venue one month prior to the start of the season. If no documentation is presented to the league by that point, that team shall have all their games revert to “road” or traveling games. The league may elect to show leniency on the deadline if the team is question can show reasonable progress toward securing a their field.

Each team shall assume the costs associated with their home field (this does not include referee costs). The WSFL, therefore, permits the home teams to collect admission fees. Neither the WSFL, nor the visiting team shall claim any entitlement to any portion of the admission. The WSFL shall not interfere with the amount charged for admission unless the league is notified by the team’s or league’s supporters that the fees are excessive.

The WSFL shall hold no domain over any concessions sold at games. Teams are encouraged to comply with state laws, and obtain necessary permits required to dispense food and beverages. The WSFL shall not be recognized as having any association with the sale of food at games.

Each team shall be responsible to properly equip and line their fields. Home teams shall supply: down markers, regulation chains and a chain crew, and yard markers (cones are acceptable). While fields with scoreboards and announcers are preferred, they are not required as quality teams may not always have access to them. Host teams may, but are not required to, provide water, locker rooms, or other amenities.

Section 2: Field Criteria

All fields must be of regulation size (high school, collegiate, or NFL dimensions), and must have painted lines at least every 10 yards. Fields must be equipped with regulation goalposts.

Section 3: Playoffs/Championship Game

The higher seeded team will host the game in all playoff games until the championship. The league shall secure a neutral field prior to the season. The field will be agreed upon by a majority vote. The league will be responsible for the costs associated with the field. Any revenue from the game will be divided (50% to the winning team and 25% to the league and the losing team). Participating teams will be responsible for payment of referees.

Article 4: Competition

Section 1: Referee/Officials

All referees in the WSFL will be required to have at least a high school level certification. No referee shall officiate a WSFL game without appointment by the league’s head referee. The WSFL requires a five-man referee crew. Games may be played with four referees when unfavorable circumstances dictate. If fewer than four referees are available to officiate, both teams must contact the commissioner so the situation can be discussed. Playoff appointments of referees will be dictated by referee performance during the regular season. Officials are required to report any player misconduct that could not be properly resolved on the field.

Referees shall be paid in cash prior to the game with each team participating in the game being responsible for half of the total referee pay. Any team that elects to pay by check of money order must make arrangements with the head official at least 3 days prior to competition. Officials will be paid per man, and not as a crew. Officials will be paid in accordance with a rate agreed upon prior to the season.

Section 2: Schedules

It is the duty of the league commissioner to establish a league schedule. The schedule must include at least ten regular season games to satisfy the criteria for a semi-professional league. The schedule will be completed and presented no later than 2 months before the season commences. In the event that a team withdraws from the league after the schedule is completed, the league will aid teams affected in attempting to schedule replacement games. Opponents of the withdrawn team will be awarded a 7-0 victory (the outcome of the non-league game will not affect league record). If any team withdraws from participation during the season, their remaining opponents will be afforded a 7-0 forfeit victory. Results of all previously played games will stay on record.

The head referee will compile a referee schedule to be distributed no later than the first week of regular season competition.

Section 3: Stats/Record Keeping

Each team will be required to utilize a statistician. Significant stats will be shared between the competing teams immediately after the game for press and news release purposes. Game records are to be retained for the duration of the season. Any team that fails to keep thorough and accurate records will not have their players considered for post-season honors.

Section 4: Forfeits

The league will recognize any team that fails to present for a scheduled game as a forfeit. In the event of a forfeit the presenting team receives a 7-0 victory. Games must begin within 15 minutes of the scheduled time unless the involved teams reach an agreement prior to game time. One team must present 11 players to receive a forfeit victory. The referees will receive full pay for the forfeited game. The forfeiting team must compensate the league \$400 for referee costs and league credibility damages. The team receiving will be reimbursed their referee costs by the league once the amount is collected. The forfeiting team will be withheld from further competition in the WSFL until the \$400 is satisfactorily paid. Each subsequent game will be forfeited and referee cancelled to prevent further financial losses. The forfeiting team's players may not play on any other team for that year unless the \$400 is paid. The forfeiting team's organizer may not present a team to the league until the \$400 is paid.

If a team accepts a forfeit due to lack of players, they may prevent the \$400 fee if they present a team – non-roster players allowed – for an exhibition game. Referees must receive full payment, and the opponent will receive a 7-0 victory in spite of the exhibition score.

Section 5: Playoffs

Due to the fluctuating number of teams from season to season, playoff format will be determined on an annual basis. Tiebreakers for playoff consideration shall be: 1. Head to Head, 2. Divisional Record, 3. Point Differential.

Section 6: Divisions

The league shall be divided into divisions, unless the total number of teams prevents reasonable allotment to divisions. In the event of a divisional format, each team shall play each other team in their division twice, and shall play teams outside of their division once or not at all. The divisions shall be determined geographically regardless of the previous season record. In the event of a non-divisional format, teams may play twice, once, or not at all depending on what is needed to achieve a 10 game schedule.

Section 7: Safety/Injured Players

For the safety of the leagues players and to prevent league liability, each team will comply with the compiled "Essential Emergency Procedures" (Appendix C).

No team may field a player unless that player has shown proof of individual health insurance.

Section 8: Standards of Fair Play

Teams shall be required to use an NFL regulation leather football. No composite or rubber balls shall be accepted. Teams must have light and dark jerseys. If a team cannot afford 2 sets of jerseys, they must provide pinneys (practice jerseys) to their players for use at away games. Teams may be afforded to play the season with only one color jersey if they present to the league and a majority vote permits their play with only one color jersey.

The WSFL will adopt the NFL rulebook. If changes to the NFL rules are necessary, team representatives will be notified in writing after the new rule is adopted by a majority vote.

Section 9: Interference/Sabotage

No team may interfere in the day-to-day business of another WSFL team. A team's private workouts or tryouts are off limits to other WSFL teams unless that team is otherwise invited. No team or player shall defame another team or player to affect that team's standing in their community or prevent recruitment of a player or players. No team shall sabotage the efforts of another to secure a home field. Any actions that may be deemed **interference/sabotage** are to be brought to league commissioner who will contact both teams about the incident. The board, minus the involved teams, will then convene to discuss whether or not any infraction exists. If a team has been found to commit an infraction, the board will vote on punishment that will range from issuing a formal apology to a fine or even banishment from the league depending on the severity of the infraction.

Article 5: Logos/Likeness

Section 1: League Logos

The WSFL is an extension of the teams involved. The WSFL logo may be utilized for league's promotion without the consent of the league. The WSFL logo may be recreated on any clothing, banners, signs, etc. without league consent as long as it is a positive promotion of the league.

No member of the league may solicit funds or commit the WSFL to any financial agreement without the approval of the league and its board. The WSFL logo may not be used on letterhead without written consent of the league. Consent must be obtained each time the logo is used for financial reason. The league will take legal action upon anyone caught representing the league for financial gain without the consent of the league.

Section 2: Team Logos

Team logos are property of the individual teams and may not be used by another league team without written consent of the team represented by the logo. The WSFL retains the right as a league to utilize its teams' likeness for league promotion and media releases. The league may not achieve financial gain from the use of a team logo unless a compensation agreement is reached prior to use.

Article 6: Finances

Section 1: Team Dues

The league claims no domain on the topic of the dues collected by its teams.

Section 2: Sponsorship

Teams will not be permitted to acknowledge sponsors that will discredit the league. The league retains the right to censor any distasteful representation by its teams. If a team fails to comply with the censor, they may be removed from the league with a majority vote not involving

the team in question. Any team found to be funded by illegal enterprise (i.e. drug dealing, prostitution, racketeering, etc.) will be removed from league participation with a majority vote not involving the team in question.

Section 3: Payment of League Participants

Players in the WSFL shall receive no compensation from the WSFL for their participation. The WSFL claims no domain over player compensation by their respective teams.

Appendix A

Player Code of Conduct

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I will be a member of the _____ in the Wisconsin State Football League (hereafter WSFL) for the _____ season. I acknowledge that in signing this I am committed to this team for the full season and may not play for another WSFL team until the following season unless the _____ grant permission for me to play elsewhere.

I understand that I am a representative of my team and the WSFL and promise to represent both with integrity and character. I acknowledge that my participation in the WSFL is a privilege that can be revoked for violating this agreement.

I will not threaten anyone associated with the WSFL with non-football violence or bodily harm. I will not fight. I will not cast doubt dispersions on the league, referees, or anyone involved in any public forum, but rather address issues through my team representative and the league board. I will not attempt to injure any player or official purposely.

I recognize that failure to uphold this vow may result in suspension or banishment from the league. I understand that the league board may restrict or terminate my participation for any reason they see necessary. I acknowledge that my team representative will not be actively involved in any disciplinary hearing on my behalf and will not be afforded a vote on the action to be taken.

I recognize that I will not be allowed to participate in any contest that I do not have a team uniform and team helmet. I recognize that my team may be forced to forfeit or may be disqualified from the league if I violate league orders.

I understand that football is a collision sport and risk of injury and impairment are high. I attest that I have been informed that the WSFL does not carry health insurance for its players, assert that I carry my own individual health insurance. I understand that I am a willing participant in the WSFL, and release the league – and its officials – along with my team and any opposing team – and its officials – from any liability for injury or impairment I may experience.

I assert that I am in good health and can reasonably participate in the sport of football. I attest that I have been examined by a physician, in accordance with league policy, and am found to be in reasonable condition to participate in the WSFL.

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Phone #: _____

Date: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B

Intent to Participate

I, _____, affirm that I represent the _____ and am authorized to commit the _____ to participate in the Wisconsin State Football League (hereafter WSFL) for the _____ season. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the WSFL League Charter. I attest that I have been afforded a copy of the WSFL Charter, and accept that it is the governing document of the WSFL.

I understand that if I fail to present a team for league competition I forfeit all fees allocated to the league. I recognize that the league does not recognize my team until this intent is returned accompanied by payment of the fee.

I promise to govern my team in accordance with the ratified league charter. I understand that failure to comply with the leagues expectations may result in my team's dismissal from the league and forfeiture of all fees paid.

I recognize that as a representative of a WSFL team I am part of the WSFL, and hold a voice and a responsibility in the league operations.

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Representing: _____ Date: _____

Commissioner Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C

Essential Emergency Procedures

Note: These are not comprehensive emergency procedures. The WSFL, to protect its players, feels these are things all teams need to know to assess players for return to play eligibility, and aid teams in knowing when to activate EMS. **WHEN IN DOUBT, ACTIVATE EMS.** At times it may be acceptable for an individual on the team to drive the player to the hospital, however, in the event of unforeseen circumstances it is likely that the drive will be unable to assist.

** Any time EMS is activated team captain should see a written release from health practitioner*

Heat Related Problems

Heat Cramps = Muscle spasms and cramps due to loss of salt from profuse sweating and too much is taken without replacing salts.

Heat Exhaustion = Heat emergency causing pooling of blood in capillaries just below the skin, and away from vital organs. Skin may be normal to cool, pale or gray in color and sweaty, altered mental status unlikely.

Heat Stroke = Heat regulating mechanisms breakdown

- Body Overheats
- 50% will continue to sweat, 50% stop sweating
- Skin will be hot and red
- Moist or dry
- Probably altered mental status

Signs and Symptoms of Heat Emergency

- Muscle cramps
- Weakness and exhaustion
- Dizziness or faintness
- Rapid heart beat which grows more rapid and weak
- Deep, rapid breathing which becomes shallow and weak
- Headache
- Seizures
- Nausea/vomiting
- Pale or red skin
- Cool or hot skin
- Altered mental status (possible unresponsive)
- Hot skin whether dry or moist is dire medical emergency

Care and Return Policy

Heat Cramps = loosen pads, move to cool place, introduce fluids with electrolytes (Electrolyte powders, Gatorade, etc.). Return to play on cessation of symptoms.

Heat Exhaustion = Transport via EMS if:

- Unresponsive, altered mental status
- Vomiting
- Temp over 101 F
- Poor medical history
- Does not respond to therapy

Therapy

- Move player to cool place
- Remove pads and clothing
- Apply cold compresses, fan player (especially areas at folded skin, i.e. neck, armpits, groin).
- Lie on back with legs elevated 8-12"
- Water if alert and not nauseous
- NO water if unresponsive and nauseous/vomiting or altered mental state.

If player does not respond after 15 minutes of therapy must contact EMS. *PLAYER WILL NOT RETURN TO COMPETITION*

Heat Stroke

- Activate EMS immediately
- Maintain Airway
- Move to coolest area possible (air conditioned car if possible)
- Remove clothing
- Utilize same therapies as with heat exhaustion

*** *PLAYER WILL NOT RETURN TO COMPETITION***

Concussions

Grade I

- No loss of consciousness
- Transient confusion (inattentive, poor stream of thought)
- Symptoms resolve in less than 15 minutes.

Grade II

- No loss of consciousness
- Transient confusion
- Amnesia = anterograde (before incident) or retrograde (after incident)
- Symptoms last longer than 15 minutes

Grade III

- Any loss of consciousness

Management

Grade I

- Remove from play

- Examine at 5 minute intervals
- May return if symptoms clear in 15 minutes

Grade II

- Remove from play for rest of day
- Instruct player to be professionally examined within 24 hours
- Return to play after 1 asymptotic week (rest from exertion)

Grade III

- CALL FOR EMS IMMEDIATELY
- Maintain airway
- May return after 2 asymptotic weeks

What Constitutes an Asymptotic Week

All signs of concussion and post-concussive syndrome alleviated

- Vacant stare
- Delayed verbal/motor responses
- Confusion, problems with focus
- Disorientation
- Slurred speech
- Gross uncoordination
- Disproportionate emotional responses
- Memory deficits

Post Concussive Syndrome

- Headache after exertion
- Personality changes
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Irritability
- Impaired memory and concentration

Must Perform These Without Symptoms

- Orientation: aware of time, place, situation, etc.
 - Concentration: remember 3-5 digits backward and forward, months of year, forward and backward.
 - Memory: recall lists of 3 items/objects, recall recent newsworthy events, details of contest.
 - Physical Performance: 40 yd sprint, 5 push ups, 5 sit ups, 5 deep knee bends, upper extremity strength tests.
- * Neurological test should be performed by professional if used to assess player.**

Neck and Spinal Cord Injuries

- *Erroneously returning player to participation can cause significant morbidity/mortality, even paralysis and death. When in doubt, activate EMS.*
- If you suspect a spinal injury, do not attempt to move or lift player.

- Players may not wear dark or reflective shields because it will prevent visualization of pupils.
- Activate EMS if player does not get up on their own in 2-3 minutes, or suffers paralysis or numbness/tingling of extremities.

Return to play only if:

- Free of pain and spasm.
- Free of arm and leg symptoms at rest during range of motion tests.
- Pain free on active and passive neck range of motion.
- Athlete shows normal strength on neck and arm range of motion.
- Athlete shows no sign of concussion.