**Frequently Asked Questions**

**When does the season start and end?**

Practices for Mini Pony, Pony, JV, & Varsity will start the week of July 20 while Flag will start the week of July 27. Our first game will be over the weekend of August 22.There are 9 games in the regular season.  Division 1 teams that make the play offs will start play offs in week 11.  All division 2 teams will have a bowl series game in week 10.

**What does it cost to play football?**

The cost for tackle football is $150 per player. Additional Siblings will be $125. The cost for flag football is $50. Other costs include mandatory participation in fundraisers.

**Does each child get a minimum amount of plays per game?**

No, there is no mandatory play time in the Mountain Valley Youth Football League. However, SMFA coaches will do their best to make sure every player gets to play in every game. D1 has no mandatory minimum play time. D2 team players will have 10 play minimum.

**What equipment and clothing are provided when signing up?**

SMFA will provide you with a game jersey, pant shell and helmet.  You will be responsible for purchasing shoulder pads, chin strap, cleats, socks, protective cup, mouth piece (must be colored and attaches to facemask), girdle, practice pants, and a practice jersey. These items will be available for purchase through our apparel web page.

FLAG ONLY:  SMFA will provide you a jersey/t-shirt and flags. You will be responsible for providing cleats, socks, shorts, and mouth piece.

**Is it mandatory to have jerseys personalized?**

Yes, players will need to get a name plate put on their jersey.

**Can you reuse your personalized jerseys each season?**

Yes, as long as the jersey fits appropriately and is in good shape.

**Which program should I sign up for?**

If your child will eventually go to Spring Mills High School (SMHS), then you should sign up in our league.  Basically, if your child goes to Spring Mills Middle, Potomack Elementary, Eagle Elementary, North Middle (portion), Marlowe Elementary, then you are a Cardinal.  Please visit the Berkeley County School (BCS) High School districting map HERE. Or visit the BSC website HERE for more information.

**Are there team pictures?**

Yes.  Once the teams have been picked for the season, we will have pictures scheduled.  We are looking to have pictures taken all in the same day at SMHS Cardinal Stadium.

**Am I required to stay at practice with my child?**

For the younger age groups, we do ask that you stay at the practice location in the event your child needs you (i.e. bathroom break).  For all age groups, we do ask that even if parents are at the practice that they allow for player water bottles to be centrally located so players can take water breaks together and not with their parents.  We want to foster a team environment by doing things as a team.  Simply, we want to ask for less parent/child interaction during practice, but for the parents to be available should they be needed by their child.

**What should I expect from my coach, what should I do if I have an issue with my coach?**

Please read our Parent-Coach Relationship document that includes information on what parents should expect from their Head Coach, what Head Coaches should expect from parents, as well as other information regarding our 24 hour rule and issue/resolutions.

**What if I need to report other team issues?**

If you have a non-coaching related issue, please discuss the issue with your team mom.  If the resolution is not to your satisfaction, you can bring the issue to the Team Mom Coordinator.  If the resolution is not to your satisfaction, you can bring the issue to the Coach Coordinator and then to the Commissioners and Board.

**Are there any other forms I need to be aware of?**

All parents are required to fill out and submit a medical waiver form, Parent code of conduct and player code of conduct form.

**How many games are played each season?**

There are a total of 10 regular season games.  For those teams making playoffs, playoffs will start in week 11.

**How many coaches and team moms are on each team?**

There is no maximum amount of coaches/team moms for a team.  Head Coaches are responsible for the placement of assistant coaches and team moms on their team.  If you are interested in being a Head Coach or filling one of staff positions, then please fill out an application.  If you would rather assistant coach or volunteer in another capacity, please contact us at springmillsyouthfootball@gmail.com or contacting the head coach or Head Team Mom directly.

**Are parents expected to volunteer during the season?**

Yes, parents are expected to volunteer throughout the season. Once teams have been scheduled, each team mom will coordinate volunteer schedules.   Volunteering and fundraiser is required to help our organization run.

**Are there weights limits?**

Yes-

**Flag Football**- No Weight Limit

**Mini Pony**- 85lbs to run the ball and 105 lbs. to play

**Pony**- 110lbs. to run the ball and lbs. to play

**Junior Varsity**- 125 lbs. to run the ball and 145 lbs. to play

**Varsity**-

Tackle to Tackle – Unlimited Weight

 13 year old : 150 lbs. to carry ball and positions off the line.

 14 year old : 135 lbs. to carry ball and positions off the line.

**There seem to be so many overlapping age groups.  How do I know which one is for my child?**

The Mountain Valley Youth Football League (MVYFL) has 5 age groups.  There are Division 1 and Division 2 teams at the Mini-Pony, JV, and Varsity levels. These age groups are followed with additional weight restrictions, so the below table is an example without applying weight restrictions.  Please click HERE for the MVYFL weight chart.  These age groups are as follows:

**Flag**- Ages eligible: 5 & 6 (Must be 5 by Sept. 1)

**Mini Pony**- Ages eligible: 7 (Must be 7 by Sept. 1)

**Pony**- Ages eligible: 9 (Must be 9 by Sept. 1)

**Junior Varsity Team-** Ages Eligible: 11 and under. (Must be 11 by Sept. 1)

\*Maximum grade eligible for Junior Varsity Team (Age 12), is 7th Grade

**Varsity Team-** Ages Eligible: 14 and under. (Must be 13 by Sept. 1)

\*Maximum grade eligible for Varsity Team is 8th Grade

**When are practices?**

Practices for Mini Pony, Pony, JV, and Varsity will start the week of July 21 while Flag will start the week of July 28. Once practices begin, we will practice up to 5 days a week until school start depending on the level (e.g. Mini Pony vs Varsity).  The practice locations will be the Spring Mills Middle School (SMMS) and Spring Mills High School (SMHS).  Practice duration will be 2 hours.  There will be scrimmages scheduled for some Saturdays.  Once school begins, our standard practice days will be on Tuesday and Thursdays.  Coaches will be allowed to practice a third day on either Monday or Wednesday.  There will be no practices on Friday so that our players can go support Spring Mills High School varsity football team.

 For Flag, practices will be up to 4 days per week until school starts. Once school starts, practices will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays.  Each Flag practice duration will be at the coaches’ discretion, but usually will last at least 1 - 1.5 hours.

**Do we play at SMHS?**

Yes, our home field is Spring Mills High School (SMHS).

**What are the division rules for play?**

**Flag Team**

Flag football is for players, age 5 and 6. The only equipment used is a flag belt, mouthpiece and cleats. Basic concepts in football are addressed at this level. Game day is a controlled scrimmage against the flag team representing the organization that the rest of our program faces on that particular day. Coaches will be on the field providing instruction during these scrimmages in a similar fashion that takes place during scrimmages.

**Mini-Pony Team**

 Mini-pony division is primarily for players, age 7-8 years, with a maximum weight limit of 105 lbs. In order to advance the football, ball handlers must under 85 lbs. Players over the 85 lbs. are considered “red stripers” and must play on the line. This division is the first level of contact football. Practices will be critical in developing sound fundamentals in blocking and tackling. Basic team concepts in offense and defense as well as learning specific positions will be an important part of the team experience. Game day is in the format of a controlled scrimmage against the mini-pony team that our program plays on that particular day. There are no special teams, referees or score at this level in accordance with MVYFL rules. Coaches are on the field during these scrimmages providing instruction to the players in the scrimmage setting in a similar fashion to what would take place in a practice. This division is a great opportunity for participants to develop into full contact football players.

**Pony Team**

The pony division is primarily for players, ages 9-10 years old, with a maximum weight limit of 130 lbs. In order to advance the football, ball handlers must under 110 lbs. Players over the 110 lbs. are considered “red stripers” and must play on the line. During pony games, coaches are on the sidelines at all times. These contests are played under complete game regulations inclusive of special teams. Each quarter is 8 minutes in length and the games are regulated by High School officials. This division is a great opportunity for participants to begin playing full contact football in true game situations. First time players and experienced players are welcome.

**Junior Varsity Team**

The JV division is primarily for players, ages 11-12 years old, with a maximum weight limit of 145 lbs. In order to advance the football, ball handlers must under 125 lbs. Players over the 125 lbs. are considered “red stripers” and must play on the line. During JV games, coaches are on the sidelines at all times. These contests are played under complete game regulations inclusive of special teams. Each quarter is 8 minutes in length and the games are regulated by High School officials. This division is a great opportunity for participants to further develop their full contact football skills or learn them for the first time. New players and experienced players are welcome.

**Varsity Team**

The varsity division is primarily for players, ages 13-14 years old, with no maximum weight limits. Players over the 150 lbs. or 135 lbs. weight limits depending on age are considered “red stripers” and must play on the line. Each quarter is 8 minutes in length and the games are regulated by High School officials. First year players are welcome to join the team and historically have become impact players. For our returning players and those moving up from JV, the varsity level prepares them mentally and physically for the next step of their football careers.

**Where is our home field?**

Our home field is Spring Mills High School (SMHS).  Address is as follows:

 499 Campus Drive

 Martinsburg, WV 25404