



Regina Minor Football Contact in Practice Policy

Background

The perception of football has changed significantly in recent years. In the past, football was often viewed as a game that could only be played and practiced with full-out physicality. Contact drills were sometimes used to “separate the men from the boys”. Players that made big hits on their teammates in practice were praised for their toughness and aggressiveness. Coaches tend to coach the way they were coached when they were players. “Old school” coaches from the 70s and 80s coached players who became coaches in the 80s and 90s and may have continued the old school approach to football that they learned when they were players. Unless a conscious decision is made to change, this inheritance of old school coaching philosophy perpetuates itself from generation to generation of coaches (watch “Friday Night Tykes” for negative and harmful examples of this).

By necessity, this must change. Football is under intense scrutiny due to fears about the long-term effects of head injuries and other injuries. Some politicians and activists are fighting for bans on tackle football at various levels based on worst-case scenarios and the proliferation of negative portrayals of football in the media. The foundation of these fears is concern for the short and long-term health of players, which is a completely valid concern. For that reason, our organization must do everything we can to minimize the physical risks that come with playing a collision sport while maintaining the aggressive nature of the game, providing playing opportunities for a wide variety of athletes, and continuing to promote the crucial values of the football experience like respect, teamwork, discipline and intensity.

Regina Minor Football continues to strive to be the leader in providing the best possible tackle football experience for young athletes. Continued integration of Football Canada’s Long-Term Athlete Development plan and Safe Contact program will provide our coaches with a consistent philosophy and methodology for teaching tackling and blocking skills. All our coaches are Safe Contact trained. We encourage our coaches to pursue National Coaching Certification Program training by covering their course registration fees; these clinics help train our coaches to effectively plan practices, organize drills, and instruct athletes. This policy will provide a specific framework to guide coaches in how they plan for and teach contact in their practices.