JUNIOR HILLTOPPER FOOTBALL HANDBOOK

Mission

Our mission is to teach boys who intend to go to Marquette University High School (MUHS) the game of football in adherence with the MUHS mission of creating men for others and in line with the Catholic identity and values of the school.

Eligibility

The program is for 5th through 8th grade boys who are considering attending MUHS. As such, the following rules are in place:

5th through 7th grade: A player is automatically eligible if they a) attend a Catholic grade school b) have a brother who currently attends MUHS or a father who has graduated from MUHS.

If these two qualifications are not met, the parents must indicate that they are seriously considering MUHS for their son. This requirement does not bind a player to attend MUHS, but if a parent knows that they will choose a different school for their son they should utilize that football program. If this applies, we can direct you to the appropriate program.

8th grade: A player must have completed the MUHS application and be enrolled to take the entrance exam prior to August 25th of the year. Players who do not do that will be dismissed from the team.

These rules are meant to both fulfill the mission of the program and adhere to our league rules regarding the recruiting of players who do not intend on going to a school. In fact, our public-school counterparts limit eligibility to boys who live in their school district as such the league wants to ensure we are not gaining a competitive advantage by having players who do not intend on going to the school. Finally, with the program sometimes having more interest than we can serve, we ask that spots be reserved for players who meet the requirements to play.

Players must play in their grade at school. Exceptions can only be made if an older grade needs additional players to have a functioning roster.

Please note, participation in this program does not guarantee admission into MUHS.

Team Sizes

5th and 6th Grade: Our 5th and 6th grade plays 8 on 8 football and team sizes are limited to 16 players per team. We typically field 2 teams at these levels.

7th and 8th Grade: Our 7th and 8th grade teams play 11 on 11 football and team sizes are limited to 35 players per team. We usually field one team at these levels.

Registration

To guarantee a spot on the team, returning players must complete their registration by March 1, 2025. Registration will then open up to all as of March 1, 2025 to May 1, 2025. Should we exceed team limits a player will be placed on a waiting list and added to the roster if a) an existing player drops out or b) we have enough players, equipment and coaches to field an additional team at that level.

Cost
The cost to play in the program is $325 and is due upon registration. If you have a financial need that limits your ability to participate there are scholarships available. If you qualified for a scholarship in the past, please use the code FBALL2025SCHOL at checkout. Any new request for aid must be submitted with Eamon Holahan at MUHS prior to registering. His email is holahane@muhs.edu.

All payments for the program must be online and registration fees are non-refundable. Players who have not turned in their equipment from the 2024 season will not be allowed to register.

Players will also be responsible for their own game jerseys, game pants, practice pants, game socks, five padded girdles and practice jerseys. These items will be sold through a third-party vendor and are expected to cost about $150. These items can be used multiple years (especially game jerseys) if they fit. We will be using the same game uniforms as the 2024 season. Players will also be expected to provide their own mouthguard.

Equipment
The program will issue the players the following equipment:

- Helmet
- Shoulder pads
- Knee pads

If this equipment is not returned at the end of the year a player will no longer be eligible for the program moving forward and will be invoiced $450 for a helmet and $300 for shoulder pads.

Practices
Teams will begin practice no earlier than August 4th in compliance with WIAA rules. Coaches can practice anytime between 5:00 and 7:30. We practice at Mount Mary Field and Takton Field (at MUHS). The Takton practices may be from 7:00 to 9:00 and we typically gain access to that field on Tuesdays and Thursdays once the Varsity season begins.

Individual coaches are given latitude in how much and when they want to practice. In the first 3 weeks of the season, they cannot practice more than 10 hours and after that point they are limited to 6 hours of practice per week.

Practice Attendance
Football is a team sport and players should attend all practices if possible. Should a player miss for vacation, to play another team sport or other unexcused absence their playing time may be limited by the coach. If you have a player who will miss a substantive amount of practice you should discuss your situation with your coach to determine if this is the right fit for your son. Again, the demand to join the program exceeds the number of spots, so please only sign up if you can be committed.

Physicals and Payment
A player physical must be on file with MUHS and all payments made to MUHS prior to a player participating in practice.

Contact Rules
Players must participate in 10 hours of practice before engaging in full contact drills.

League and Games
We play in the Classic Football League with Catholic Memorial, Menomonee Falls, Burlington, Waukesha West and several other programs in southeastern Wisconsin.

Games are played on Saturday and usually start the last week of August and run through October. Teams will play 7 or 8 games. There are no games on Labor Day weekend.

Our home games are played at Hart Park and the road games are generally played at our opponent's high school site. Road games tend to be played in the morning or early afternoon and our home games run from the afternoon to the night.

Team Rostering
In the event that we have multiple teams at a grade level the coaches will be tasked with creating two equal teams in terms of ability. We cannot and will not honor requests for a player to be assigned to a certain team. Even if there are multiple teams at a level, they will practice together.

Playing Time
The goal of 5th and 6th grade is to have all kids play at least 50% of the game. Exceptions can be made for disciplinary reasons, safety reasons or missing practices. Parents should note that there are some instances where a child may not get 50% of the playing time that is out of a coach's control. For example, a player may be assigned to defense in one quarter and our offense had the ball for the majority of that quarter. If you have issues with your child's playing time, we ask that you respectfully address it with the coach.

The goal of 7th and 8th is to have all children play at least 25% of the game. The same exceptions that apply to 5th and 6th grade are applied here.

Volunteers
Our program is run by volunteers and as such parents need to volunteer in the following roles:

- Head and assistant coaches
- Equipment handout and returns
- Scoreboard operator
- Chain gang
- Announcer
- Field Marshall on gameday



Coaching

If interested in coaching, please reach out to the Club President. Coaches must attend the Archdiocesan Safe Environment Education Session and maintain a current certification and also be certified with USA Football. If interested, information will be provided to complete these requirements. Head coaches will be named for each of the grades and they will assist the Club President in choosing assistants for the teams. While there is no set number of coaches for any grade, we usually need at least 6 at the 5th and 6th levels and 5 at the 7th and 8th grade levels.

Grievances

If you have an issue with a coach, we ask that you attempt to first address it constructively with them. If that cannot be accomplished, please reach out to the President or Eamon Holahan.