

# **LOFTIS MIDDLE SCHOOL FOOTBAL**

## General Information 2020

To: Parents and Prospective Players

**2020 Update:** As you know, this is a different year. I will put in writing the things that I know of at the moment. This is not the full list and many things will have to be told when we gather in whatever numbers we are allowed to. Please be patient with the coaches and administrators. We have to answer to the higher authorities of the county and the state.

- Our numbers will likely be limited. Coaches must work within the structure and times allowed. Some of this we know of, but it may change by the time we get to our first day.
- We will likely not be allowed to practice indoors. In the past a thunderstorm or heat would force us to use the gym. This will not be an option.
- Water has been furnished on the field via water horse and fountain. Players will have to bring water from home **every day**. You will need to buy a good water container and make sure to **label it!** It will be very important to keep hydrated and not to use one another's water this year.
- There was no camp and so it is important that players arrive in shape before reporting to practice.

**Pre-Season:** You have plenty of time before July 27, use it wisely. All players need to start running and exercising (push ups and sit ups recommended) in the mornings and afternoons. Get out in the mid-day to get used to the heat and humidity. Also, you should reduce the intake of soft drinks and junk food.

There is usually a mandatory parent meeting on Thursday of the first week. That date will **July 30 at 5:30 PM in the gym...if unaffected**. Normally we require the player and at least one parent attend. This will be updated as soon as we know what we can and can not do.

**Physicals:** All players must have a physical prior to the first practice **or you will not be allowed to participate in tryouts**. The physical must be dated after **April 15 of this year**. The physical will be good for the entire school year and it will work for all sports. Physicals must be conducted yearly under these guidelines and may come from any doctor. You must also have a parent fill out the **Concussion Form** as well as the

**Cardiac Form. All three forms: Physical, Concussion, and Cardiac can be found on the school website under the athletics tab in the Sports Forms section.**

***To repeat, students will not be allowed to practice without a physical, concussion, and cardiac forms completed. It will be a waste of your time and ours if you show up without these three items.***

**Tryouts:** As always we are limited to three coaches for two teams, Varsity and Junior Varsity. Things are going to look different this year with the number of players allowed to practice together at a time. Right now I see no reason to be concerned about the amount of helmets and shoulder pads available, we should be able to equip everyone with quality gear. However, it is important to us that we are coaching players who are committed to the sport and to improving their skills. All who come out will be given an opportunity to show that they are the players we are looking for. We will not allow players to hang out with the team if they are not willing to make an effort. Self motivation and effort are important to the staff.

**Practice:** The first official day of practice for all grades will be **Monday, July 27** from 8:00 AM - 12:30 PM. This day will be longer due to the need to put all players into helmets and shoulder pads. The coaches alone will perform the fitting of equipment unless you have your own equipment that you plan to use. The coaches will need to have a look at any outside equipment to make sure it is approved by NHSA standards. Players will have to practice for two days in helmets only, the next three days in helmet, shoulder pads, girdle, and shorts (this is considered half pads or shell). The first day following this will be full pads and full contact. We will only have four days in this full pads before we scrimmage so it is very important that we get everyone started together on July 27.

**Making the Team:** Football at the middle school level is a competitive sport. Players should arrive at practice from day one realizing that this is a tryout process and that their best effort should be given. If the coaches evaluation of a player is that they are not ready to compete at this level or that they are not committed to improving, that player will be cut. We are keeping two teams plus reserves. The varsity will be primarily made up of 8th graders with some 7th grade players who may be allowed to play up if the coaches deem them ready. The junior varsity team will be made up of the remaining 7th graders and 6th grade players. Most players will go through both teams over the

course of the time at Loftis as we do play to win. In other words, **there are no guarantees of playing time in middle school football.** The coaches will play the players we feel are the most capable based primarily on what we see during practice. Finally, players will play the position(s) the coaches feel the team needs them to play. You may be asked to play a position you never thought or hoped to play.

**Participation Fee:** A fee of \$125 will be charged in order to provide your child with a team pack. This year's team pack will consist of a practice jersey, mouthpiece, mesh equipment bag, game socks and catastrophic insurance (mandatory by TSSAA). All leftover money will be put into buying football equipment and the field (fertilizer, paint, upkeep).

### **Please make checks payable to Loftis Middle School**

Also, please realize that the fee is not an attempt to make a profit, but rather to cover expenses. The fee does not entitle a player to anything other than the team pack. Paying for playing time should have ended at the recreational level.

**Due to past problems in collecting the fee, we will not allow anyone to play beyond the scrimmage games without money in hand. If two or more players come from the same household see the coaches.**

**Additional Equipment:** Although the school and booster club manage to pay for helmets, shoulder pads, game pants, and game jerseys, there is some other equipment you will have to purchase specifically for each player. You will want to purchase these items from a dedicated sports store such as Sports Spectrum on Hwy 58, or red Bank Athletic Shop on Dayton Blvd. I strongly recommend avoiding large chain retailers as I have seen some merchandise that while less costly is also less effective in protecting your biggest investment, your child.

#### Items you will need to purchase :

*Practice pants*

*Girdle pads for under the pants (hip pads)*

*Cleats (football specific! Not baseball or soccer) (I suggest primarily black)*

#### Items you may consider buying but that are not mandatory include:

*Gloves (must have NHSA tag inside, do not remove)*

*Extra pads (Cowboy collar, arm gauntlets, etc.)*

*Padded chin straps*

*Mouth pieces (if you have braces, see your orthodontist!)*

***Finally and perhaps most importantly, football is a daily event. If you are at school and not at practice you must notify a coach. Failure to do so will result in punishment the first time and dismissal the second occurrence .***

***Parents: thank you in advance for all you do to make this happen for Loftis Middle School and your player(s). We look forward to the upcoming season, with a few requirements from you.***

- 1. Be flexible. We will always do our best to keep you informed of changes as soon as possible, but weather cancellations happen, games get moved, and chaos ensues. We will get through it.***
- 2. Communicate with other parents to carpool to and from games and practices. We do not pay for buses to travel to games.***
- 3. Encourage, cheer, and even reinforce players at home. During the practice and during the games, they are ours. We are trying to manage the big picture and our point of view will be different. This is when we stop being individuals and start being a team.***
- 4. Practices are closed meaning that you must stay on the road or the parking lot. However, if you need to come get someone come down to the field. If you are at the fence, we stop practice to address why you are there. So if they forgot to leave early for the dentist, etc... come on down.***