



WILDCATS FOOTBALL

PARENTS HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome to Wildcats Football	Page 2
Wildcat Football History and Tradition	Page 2
Wildcat Football Levels & General Information	Page 6
Wildcat Area Boundaries and Registration	Page 3
Fees	Page 13
Fundraising Goals and Expectations	Page 9
Commitment to Your Child	Page 5
Expectation of Parents / Development Team	Page 11
Communications / Confidentiality	Page 12
Board of Directors / Coaches / Contact Information	Page 14



Wildcats Football **Parents Handbook**

Welcome to Wildcats Football

The Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the *Calgary Wildcats Football Club*. Whether you are a first time parent or a ‘seasoned veteran’ the Wildcats leadership are presenting you with a Parents Handbook to help us establish and communicate accurate and realistic expectations for our Program.

Like any other sport, football requires the precise timing of many players on the field at any given time. However, unlike most sports, the magnitude of physical contact in football also calls for a higher degree of readiness and skill, not only from a competitive standpoint, but from a safety standpoint as well. As a result, football demands focus and dedication to developing the skills needed for each position. This means lots of repetition and a high level of commitment. Unlike the tryouts in other team sports, there is only one team and no tiering of the type you may be used to . In many cases, coaches will have to make difficult decisions in terms of who will make our teams and who will not. If your child does not make the team they will be given a release to try out for any other team in the League or they may be placed on our Development Team.

Wildcat Football Tradition and History

Wildcats Football has a rich history and tradition. The Wildcats have made a significant contribution to youth development in our city for over several generations. The Wildcats name has been in used for the past 15 years, but the Team operated as the Cooke Motors Jaguars for over 25 years prior to that. We pride ourselves on a record of consistent top level performance and our numerous championships at the PeeWee, Bantam and Midget levels speak to this expectation. Of note, our most recent on-field achievements are:

- *2009 Bantam Tier II Provincial Championship*
- *2007 Midget City Championship*
- *2007 Bantam Tier II Provincial Championship*
- *2005 Pee Wee City Championship.*

The motto of the *Calgary Wildcats Football Club* is “Pride, Courage and Intensity”. We have focused on building discipline and leadership skills to provide our athletes with a foundation to build on as they move through their formative years. We believe that successes in the form of winning championships are empty without the development of good life skills. No doubt some of our players will go on to play football at the professional level, but those who don’t will also be a members of teams at school, in the workplace and elsewhere where these skills will be equally important.

Many fine young men and women have passed through our program. We require commitment and respect from our players and, in return, we will ensure the players have an enjoyable and competitive experience. At present we operate 5 (five) individual football teams within the organization. We have two Atom teams (8, 9, 10 yr olds), one PeeWee team (10, 11, 12 yr olds), one Bantam team (13, 14,15 yr olds) and one Midget team (Grades 9-11).

Wildcats Football exposes our players to the reality of organized football..... you earn the privilege to be on a Wildcats team. This means that not everyone will make the main playing squad (Atom excluded – see notes below). All tryouts will be at least 5 practices in duration before a decision is made. The Wildcats will have a limited Developmental squad for the PeeWee, Bantam and Midget divisions. This gives a select group of athletes who did not make the main playing squad the opportunity to continue to practice, develop and stay involved with the team with the objective of eventually developing to a level where they can compete on the main playing squad. Many players who go through the Development squad experience, enjoy success as starters in their second year.

We consider it a privilege to coach our players. Our goal as a coaching staff is to teach them football skills, enhance their athletic skills, develop traits such as determination and fortitude to use in their everyday life, and to ***HAVE FUN!***

Wildcats Football Club - Area Boundaries

Minor football clubs at all levels operates within very specific geographic boundaries established by the Calgary Bantam Football Association (CBFA). Other Leagues including the Calgary & Area PeeWee Football Association and the Calgary & Area Midget Football Association abide by these same boundaries. It is very important that you carefully check these boundaries to be sure that you are within the Wildcats area. Each football club in the City of Calgary strives to integrate their programs and develop their players as they mature through ages 8 to 18 years. The Wildcats respect the tenets of the various leagues and their desire to promote football as a whole in the city and surrounding areas. Area maps can be viewed on the respective association web sites. A list of these websites is located at the end of this document.

Wildcat boundaries are described below:

South Boundary / Wildcat Geographical Area Description

1. North of Richmond Road to Sarcee Trail.
2. East of Sarcee Trail North to 17th Avenue.
3. North of 17th Avenue West to Sirocco Drive.
4. North of Sirocco Drive West to 69th Street.
5. West of 69th Street South to Hwy 8.
6. North of Hwy 8 West Undefined West Boundary.

North Boundary / Wildcat Geographical Area Description

1. Undefined West Boundary.
2. South of Hwy 1 / 16th Avenue East to Memorial Drive.
3. South of Memorial Drive East to Crowchild Trail.
4. West of Crowchild Trail South to Richmond Road.

These boundaries will change from time-to-time as football expands in Calgary. To qualify as a Wildcat, your son/daughter **MUST reside** within these boundaries.

Out-of Area Player Registration

Players at any level (Atom, PeeWee, Bantam, Midget) will not be accepted from other areas unless a qualified representative of the player's Resident club provides a Release Form and the Wildcats accept that release. This release must be obtained BEFORE registering with the Wildcats. The task of requesting a release is a parent/guardian responsibility, not a Wildcat responsibility. The release provided may only qualify the player to participate with the Wildcats for the current playing level. For example, if a player receives a release to play with the Wildcats at the PeeWee level at age 11 years, that child can play two years with the PeeWee Wildcats but may need re-apply with the Resident club to play with the Wildcats at the Bantam level when they turn 13. Over the past couple of seasons there has been a movement to change this practice, but parents should be very careful to gain an understanding of the various League rules in this regard.

Typically, the player must register and practice with the resident club before consideration is given to providing a release. Parents who are qualified to coach and are considering a coaching assignment with the Wildcats but are out-of-area residents, must also adhere to this release policy. The Wildcats will provide releases on a case-by-case basis.

Atom Registration

The Atom league is not a formal, competitive league and as such players are generally accepted on a first come first served basis. Later registrants will be placed on a reserve list until season registration has been completed.

Our Commitment to your Son or Daughter

The Wildcats Board of Directors commits to the following:

- 1) A positive football experience for every player.
- 2) A respectful environment for every player – swearing, spitting, bullying etc. will not be tolerated. This applies to coaches, players and parents.
- 3) We will not ridicule or humiliate your child. If our coaches raise their voice it will be in an instructional sense and as a last resort in the demonstration of a coaching point.

- 4) Your child will show a higher level of skill at their position and be a better football player at the end of the season than they were at the start.
- 5) We will strive to prepare your child for the next level of football – if this is their aspiration.
- 6) Game success – your child will have the opportunity to contribute to the team in a game situation, but keep in mind that all players DO NOT get equal playing time. This is a **full contact/high impact sport** and some players may not have achieved enough skill or physical maturity to play every game or in every situation. The coach's first consideration is safety of the players, not how much time they spend on the field.

The Wildcat Board of Directors selects Head Coaches and they are subject to further League approval at the Pee Wee, Bantam and Midget levels. Head Coaches select the remainder of their coaching staff, but these coaches are also vetted by the Board.

Wildcat Football Levels and General Information

Every minor football level has its own unique administrative board and rules. In addition to their practical experience, coaches are required to complete certification programs administered by Football Alberta.

We consider your involvement with the Wildcats to be as much as a 10-year partnership, progressing through 4 levels of play.

ATOM – Players ages 8 to 10 years old as of December 31st.

- Wildcats supply the equipment, except cleats.
- Runs early August to mid-October.
- Practice is generally 2-3 times per week for two hours games on the weekends.
- Parent volunteers are required to do field set-up and take down
- Wildcat fundraising and volunteering are mandatory
- Games are played at the teams' local team fields generally on Saturdays and Sundays
- Wildcats carry two teams with 20 players per team
- Focus is on fun and skill development, team building. No official game scoring occurs.

PEEWEE – Players ages 11 to 12 years old as of December 31st.

- League governing body is the Calgary PeeWee & Area Football Association
- Wildcats supply all equipment except cleats and gloves. All other equipment supplements that you may wish to purchase should be done only after consultation with the coaching staff.
- Wildcat fundraising and volunteering are mandatory
- Volunteers are required for games (gate, sideline crew) and light set up
- Volunteers are required for the PeeWee league's casino rotation (every second year)
- Games are played at Shouldice Park and McMahon Stadium
- Practice is generally 3-4 times per week for two hours with games generally on Saturdays

- The season runs from mid-July to mid-November including city and provincial playoffs
- Focus is on fun, skill development and a competitive atmosphere.
- Structured practices at a moderate to high level of activity.

BANTAM – Players ages 13 to 15 years of age as of December 31st and who are not going into Grade 10.

- League governing body is the Calgary Bantam Football Association
- The Calgary Bantam Football Association supplies all equipment except cleats and gloves. All other equipment supplements that you may wish to purchase should be done only after consultation with the coaching staff.
- Mandatory commitment, 1-2 times per season, to participate in the CBFA 50/50 fundraiser at Stampeder games (funding for equipment.)
- Volunteers are required for the Bantam league's casino rotation (every second year)
- Volunteers are required for sideline crew at games and light set up
- Wildcat fundraisers volunteering and financial commitment mandatory
- Runs mid-July – mid-November including city and provincial playoffs
- Practice is generally 3-4 times per week for two hours with games on Saturday
- Games are played at Shouldice Park and McMahon Stadium
- Focus on fun, skill development and a high level of competition.
- Structured practices requiring a high level of fitness and commitment
- Must have a medical every year as required by the CBFA

MIDGET – Players ages 15 to 18 years of age as of December 31st and who are not going into Grade 12 in the fall.

- League governing body is the Calgary & Area Midget Football Association
- Wildcats supply all equipment except girdles, cleats and gloves. All other equipment supplements that you may wish to purchase should be done only after consultation with the coaching staff.
- Volunteers are required for the gate, setup of the field and sideline crew
- Wildcat fundraiser volunteering and financial commitment mandatory
- Runs early February to mid-June including city playoffs
- Practice is generally 3-4 times per week for two hours with games on Friday or Saturday
- Games are played at the Shouldice Park, the Midget Field (at Alazar Temple), McMahon Stadium, Okotoks, Springbank and Leduc
- Midget football is extremely competitive in nature, and the athletes involved are among the most elite players in Alberta.

Roles and Responsibilities

Every team has a Head Coach, a Parent Representative and a Field Manager. We generally have 8-10 additional coaches per team plus a qualified Trainer and a Team Doctor. Head Coaches are responsible for the program and field activities. Field Managers handle all off field administration. Parent Reps liaise between parents and

coaches and with League Officials. Other coaches have designated field play duties e.g. offensive line, quarterbacks, special teams, etc.

The Club Registrar is responsible for overall Registration and the Communications Lead is responsible for all club wide communications. The Fundraising Lead and their team of 10-12 volunteers is responsible for all aspects of fundraising.

You are encouraged to contact your Parent Representative or Manager with any questions or concerns. If this avenue proves unsuccessful or you are unsatisfied with the outcome, your next step is to speak to the General Manager. If you are still unsuccessful please contact the President or any other member of the Board of Directors. Your confidentiality will be respected at all times.

Time Commitments

Further Practice Information

Summer Months – 4 (four) nights per week from 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM rain or shine.

During School Year – 3 (three) nights per week 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM rain, shine or snow.

These time windows are subject to change due to available light conditions and other issues. Occasionally extra practices will be called typically at playoff time. In addition, we may call early practices to align with Calgary Stampeder games.

Conditioning

We recommend a daily routine of hydration, exercise and rest to be prepared for the physically demanding nature of football. The Wildcats Club will occasionally hold conditioning camps and we encourage players to participate in any football camps, both contact and non-contact. We do not endorse any camp specifically, but will send out any information we receive about upcoming camps to players. Being a Wildcat is **not** contingent on attendance at outside camps.

After an initial period of fitness training and basic instruction in football fundamentals, your son or daughter will be issued full equipment. As a result they should be prepared for some mild discomfort for a couple weeks. This is a perfectly normal part of the fitting and settling in process. If you have any concerns please see the Equipment Manager as they arise.

Game Day

Games are approximately 90 minutes in duration with a 60-90 minute preparation session before the start of the game. Most league games are played on Saturdays. Atom games require less preparation time than other divisions and are held at the Midget field and other team facilities on Saturdays and Sundays. PeeWee and Bantam games are held at Shouldice Park in Northwest Calgary with some opportunities to play at McMahon Stadium. Due to limited availability of referees on weekends we may also have weeknight games. Midget

games are held at the Midget Field in Northwest Calgary, at Shouldice Park and at McMahon Stadium. Weather always plays a factor in our games. There are sometimes frost delays or cancellations due to rain or snow.

Holidays

Many families take summer vacation, which is understandable. Please consider that each practice a player misses sets that player back with reference to the other players on the team forcing them into a 'catch-up' mode. The absence of an individual player at training camp makes a thorough and fair evaluation more challenging and also makes it much more difficult to select the team. Consideration for those players who make the commitment to attend practices is a significant factor with making the team. For these reasons, we recommend that you take summer vacation prior to July 15 if at all possible and for Midget league, vacation during the spring season should be carefully considered.

Development Team Fee

These players are charged a reduced fee, generally one-half of the regular fee. In the event that your child is able to play in a regular league game two you will not be charged the extra fee that is required to obtain the league registration fee. The Wildcats Football Association will cover the fee as our commitment to the future development of your child.

Practice Facility

For Atom, Pee Wee and Bantam, the Wildcat practice facility is located at the Glenbrook Community Association - 3524 - 45th St SW. Our clubhouse is located in the Sport Shack (the brown building east of the Community Centre). We practice on the fields across 45th Street west of the Community Centre.

The Midget Wildcats practice outdoors at Rundle College in the southwest. Indoor conditioning and practices are held at Ambrose University College.

Fundraising / Goals and Expectations

The Wildcats Football Association is a non-profit organization operated completely by volunteers. No government proceeds are used to fund our programs. The **Wildcats Football Association** strives to keep football participation affordable for all families, especially compared with much more expensive alternatives such as organized hockey. In order to keep our registration fees low (less than \$450 per year in all cases) and ensure that our equipment is safe/certified and free to the players, we need to do a significant amount of fundraising each year. We require both your time and financial contribution to ensure the continued viability of our club. The table below outlines the approximate breakdown of our annual revenues and the importance of fundraising:

- Registration Fees – 48%
- Fundraising - 42%
- All Other Sources - 10%

Each year we have three primary sanctioned fundraising events:

- Silent Auction - 60% of fundraising proceeds
- Direct Corporate Donations - 10% of fundraising proceeds
- Food or Product Sales – 30% of fundraising proceeds

All families are required to participate in the food or product sales events and contribute items to the Silent Auction. In order to ensure broad membership participation, we require each family to provide a post dated payment of \$125 (Midgets \$250), that will be deposited only if the required level of participation in fundraising is not achieved.

As you can imagine, with a total of 6 different teams within the Association our annual expenses are very significant. In the past couple of years they have reached \$100,000 per season. Our annual cost breakdown is as follows:

1. Football Equipment	30%
2. League Registration and Insurance	28%
3. Indoor/Outdoor Fields/Facilities	22%
4. All Other Expenses	20%

The Wildcats Association is proud to say that **we have never turned away any player for financial reasons.** Between the financial resources of the Wildcats and excellent community support programs such as KidSport we have always found a way to make sure that everyone can play. In some cases, settlement of the registration fee may result in some families contributing more volunteer time, but in the end everyone will play.

If you have concerns about your ability to pay for your child, please contact the Association Treasurer Craig Reardon to determine a payment plan. We would much rather work out a longer term instalment plan than to go through the time, embarrassment and extra cost of an NSF Cheque situation. If, due to some unavoidable error, an NSF situation does occur, we will need you to replace the declined funds in cash.

Wildcats Apparel is sold at just above cost and is not used for significant revenue generation. It's primary purpose is to enhance team spirit.

On an annual basis and based on membership approval at the AGM, a portion of any surplus funds may be allocated to our Long-Term Capital Fund to be used for major capital projects such as field, clubhouse and lighting initiatives. Three Members of the Board and three Members of the membership at large govern this fund. The Board also awards up to four University Scholarships to alumni of the Wildcats who have moved on to a post-secondary educational institution.

Expectations of Parents

We ask all families to make an effort to have at least one parent attend any Parent Meetings called by your Head Coach. These meetings are held periodically through the season to keep parents informed of changes to practice times, game schedules etc. These meeting times are also an excellent opportunity to bring up any questions or concerns to the Head Coach or the General Manager.

Parents are expected to:

- Demonstrate behaviour which is supportive of their children and the coaches.
- Make a team commitment – Your child needs to attend practice on time for the benefit of all.
- Refrain from going onto the field – If you are needed a coach or trainer will come and get you from the sideline.
- Be proactive – If you have a concern please bring it up in person by phone or via email to the Parent Rep or Field Manager. Please appreciate that the coaches do not have time to talk to 40-50 sets of parents at each practice.
- Participate in Wildcats fundraising initiatives financially and with your time.
- Participate with League fundraising events - 50/50 Sales at Stampeder games (CBFA) as well as casinos for PeeWee, Bantam, and Midget levels.
- Volunteer for game day requirements, i.e. sideline crew.
- Pay Wildcat fees promptly. The Wildcat Association has expense obligations with specific deadlines.
- Read and respond to regular email communication.

Communications

Regular direction and feedback to players is provided before and after practice. Most team specific communication is conducted by email, and is generally directed to parents. Club-wide communication is handled through email by the Communications Lead (Lynne Fennell) and is also directed to parents. Parent meetings are conducted a few times per season and facilitated by the Head Coach, Team Manager and often by a Board Member.

Each Wildcat club level has a Parent Representative and a Field Manager. Parents are encouraged to bring any registration or financial questions to the Field Manager. All other questions should be directed to the Parent Representative. These volunteers will bring issues to the Head Coach if warranted. If parents are unable to get satisfaction, they can contact any of the Board of Directors members directly. At the end of each season we conduct a confidential evaluation process of the programs and coaches. This gives parents/guardians opportunity to provide their feedback for further improvement or positive enforcement of Wildcats operations.

Confidentiality

ALL PERSONAL INFORMATION (INCLUDING PHONE NUMBERS AND EMAILS) COLLECTED BY THE TEAM IS FOR TEAM USE ONLY. THEY ARE NOT TO BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE. Federal Laws concerning individual privacy dictates that we ensure all of our members respect this and all privacy laws. The General Manager and Field Managers for specific levels control personal information. Head Coaches are the only others who have periodic access to the data.

Current Fees (Per Player unless noted)

	Atom	Peewee	Bantam	Midget
FEES (Cash, Cheque, VISA, MasterCard)				
Registration - Atom, Peewee, Bantam May (last week) Midget – Jan. (last week)	\$200	\$300	\$350	\$450
Equipment Security Deposit	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
Fundraising Security Deposit (per family and refundable)	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$250
Glenbrook Community Fee (per family)	\$25	\$25	\$25	N/A
Special Fees- e.g. tournaments	N/A	Additional but usually subsidized	Additional but usually subsidized	Additional but usually subsidized
NON-REFUNDABLE PORTION	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$75

Fees for players on the development squad are negotiable and are less than regular fees. An equipment deposit of \$100.00 is required. It is refundable at the end of the season when equipment is returned. Please make cheques payable to '**Calgary Wildcat Football Association**'. Credit card payments are accepted as well.

Calgary Wildcats Football Governance

The Wildcats Board directs all activity of the Wildcats Football Association. Individual team volunteers or members are not permitted to initiate any business with other members or represent the Wildcats without sanction from the Board. Proposals for new business must be formally submitted to the Board in writing and include all funding requirements. A meeting with the Board may be required. Changes in the initial approved proposal must be submitted again for approval. The Board will not provide funding to unsanctioned activity. Forms are available from Jim Palmer, Secretary of the Board. The Wildcat Board meets regularly through the year to conduct the business of the Association.

2009 / 2010 Wildcats Board of Directors

The Wildcats are proud to have a 10 member Board of Directors in place for the coming season. This group is made up of some of the most experienced and accomplished coaches, businessmen and civic volunteers in the city of Calgary. The Directors are:

Terry Brown,
Chris Baker,
Trevor Ferguson,
Eddy Fogarty,
Kevin Kopczynski,
Kevin Mackie, Dick Olson (President),
Craig Reardon (Secretary-Treasurer and General Manager),
John Ropchan,
Greg Wilson

The Board of Directors can be reached at the following email addresses:

John Ropchan allyson@shaw.ca;
Craig Reardon craig.reardon@encana.com;
Ed Fogarty efogarty@shaw.ca;
Greg Wilson grwi@statoilhydro.com;
Kevin Mackie ktmackie@shaw.ca;
Dick Olson olsonpg@shaw.ca;
Trevor Ferguson tdf2000@yahoo.com;
Terry Brown terrybrown@shaw.ca;
Kevin Kopczynski kevinandamy@shaw.ca;

The Annual General Meeting is held in early spring every year to elect the Board and conduct the business of the Association. 1/3 of the Board Members come up for re-election each year. Wildcat yearend financials are available on request. Wildcat bylaws are also available on request.

ALL COACHES AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ARE VOLUNTEERS

Related Websites:

League sites:

Football Alberta

<http://www.footballalberta.ab.ca/>

Calgary & Area Midget Football Association -

<http://www.calgarymidgetfootball.ca/league.php?scriptName=HOME&leagueID=10091>

Calgary Bantam Football - <http://www.cbfa.ab.ca/>

Calgary & Area PeeWee Football Association -

<http://calgarypeeweefootball.com/Main.html>

We hope you enjoy your Wildcat experience!!

