



***Restore the  
ROOOARRRR!!***



**2011 PARENT GUIDE**

[WWW.SJGRIZZLIES.COM](http://WWW.SJGRIZZLIES.COM)

**SouthJeffcoGrizzlies**



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our team, the **South Jeffco Grizzlies!** As you can probably guess by now, I believe that planning and organization are major priorities. Yes, this is “*only*” 4th grade football, but this is when the foundation is laid for these kids. The reason for this little Parents Guide is that if I and my coaches are to truly teach your children all of the wonderful lessons that this team sport provides, we all have to be on the same page at all times. It is my goal that this season be a fun-filled experience for your child and your families. – Coach Paul

## PHYSICALS REQUIRED

Your son cannot participate at all unless and until we have a copy of a sports physical clearance by a licensed doctor saying he is cleared to play. There are no exceptions to this rule. In fact, coaches can be suspended for a full year from all SJSA activities for allowing a player on the field without this form.

## COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents and coaches is simply vital in youth athletics. We will communicate with our parents via pre and post practice announcements, email, text messaging (practice / game cancellations, etc.), and telephone, depending upon which is most appropriate and convenient.

Parent communication with our coaching staff shall be directly with the head coach. In addition, the head coach will be available for any short individual issues 10 minutes prior to each practice. Individual parent issues will not be addressed on the day of a game, either before or after.

**Equally important is parent-to-parent communication. Keep it positive when discussing our team.** Also, be sure to communicate in times of need, such as transportation to/from games or practices, etc. We are never let down when it comes to the generosity and teamwork of our parents working together! When issues may arise, talk to the head coach, do not get that infamous “rumor mill” or “complain train” started among parents on the sideline.

## PARENT CONDUCT

Remember, fewer than 1% of youth sports participants receive college scholarships and that the top three reasons kids play sports are a) to have fun, b) to make new friends, and c) to learn new skills. Please keep in mind that the game is for the players and not the adults, and help keep sports in the proper perspective. As a reminder, here are a few simple ground rules:

- Cheering and rooting, both in practice and on game day, should always be for our team in the most positive manner; we root FOR our team, not AGAINST any other team.
- **Our coaching staff will determine what position(s) a player will play and the final decision is that of the head coach. Once a decision has been made, please respect that and do not “lobby” for a change of position.**
  - **DO NOT LOBBY FOR YOUR SON(S) TO PLAY ANOTHER POSITION**
  - **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL WE REPLY TO ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ABOUT A CHILD OTHER THAN YOUR OWN. THIS INCLUDES “SUGGESTING” OR RECOMMENDING ANOTHER POSITION MAY BE “BETTER SUITED” FOR ANOTHER CHILD.**
- Ears are everywhere. Remember to keep any cursing or any critical comments to yourself. Children hearing those comments are bound to repeat them and become jaded toward that view. **Also, we videotape every game and the audio can be heard by everyone, so be mindful of that when commenting on the sidelines.**



- Please be responsive to team requests for payment of team fees, snack schedules, etc.
- **Practice is mandatory.** Please be sure your child is on time for practice, and that his ride home is also on time. Any player missing practice will not be guaranteed the 15 minimum plays for that week's game, and the parent will have to sign the JMFA Limited Play Sheet.
- Remember...our kids will feed off the emotion exhibited by you! Let's set a great example, at all times.

## OUR COACHES

- **PAUL SHEEHY (Head Coach)** – Jeremy's dad, Paul has coached flag football for kindergartners (assistant coach) and was head coach as 1<sup>st</sup> graders, and has been the head coach of the Grizzlies from their start in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. He is an attorney who has specialized in representing NFL players and coaches as a sports agent for 23 years. He also taught sports law/contract negotiations at the University of Denver's Daniels College of Business as part of the Sports Management masters degree program. Paul played center and was a longsnapper through high school and 4 years of college football. His son Jeremy plays for the Grizzlies and you'll also see his wife, Sheila and son Sean at all games and at many practices! Sheila is there patrolling the sidelines with her camera taking some great shots of all the Grizzlies! Contact info: (303-948-1510 office; 303-638-5533 cell; 303-948-9938 home; [sjgrizzlies@aol.com](mailto:sjgrizzlies@aol.com) or [ProStarPRS@aol.com](mailto:ProStarPRS@aol.com) via email.
- **WALT LOPEZ (Assistant Head Coach/Defensive Coordinator)** – Matthew's dad, Walt has been the assistant coach for his son's various sports teams over the last 4 years, including flag football in 2008 and the Grizzlies in 2009. Walt enjoys many sports but *especially* football. He played and lettered in football throughout high school playing on the offensive line, defensive line, as well as linebacker and fullback. Walt is married to Anna and they have one child, Matthew who will be on the Grizzlies this season. Walt is most looking forward to the teaching aspect of coaching and seeing the growth in the kids from the beginning of the season to the end. Contact info: [GrizCoach77@gmail.com](mailto:GrizCoach77@gmail.com)
- **NICK GRAHAM (Assistant Coach)** – David's dad, Nick has been coaching 4-8 year olds for the last 10 years, in a variety of sports and activities. As a father of four active children, he has served in both head coach and assistant coach roles. A graduate of Clemson University, Nick is an avid sports fan. He played both defensive and offensive line in high school and lettered in football, track, wrestling, and baseball. Nick loves the coaching process, providing skills to the individual player and establishing strong team alignment. His son David has been coached by Paul in two seasons of Flag-Football, and he took his game to the next level with the Grizzlies beginning in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade!. You will see his other children Nicole, Joey and Anthony on the sidelines cheering their brother on. His son, Joey is our team videographer and is of huge importance and assistance to us with his video taping skills!! Nick's wife Dina will most often be seen working her camera on the sidelines!
- **BRETT CALLAHAN (Assistant Coach)** – Jacob's dad, Brett has been coaching youth sports in South Jeffco since 2005, coaching both baseball and football. He just finished coaching his older son, TJ's football team for the last four years, and was the offensive coordinator. Brett's experience includes serving as a high school football coach for three years. He has been a police officer for 17 years, and has a BS from Columbia Southern University, with graduate work at North Western University. Brett played football, basketball, baseball and track in high school, lettering a whopping 9 times. He is married to Kim, our Team Manager, and has four children.



## PARENT VOLUNTEERS

### TEAM MANAGER – KIM CALLAHAN

Jacob's mom, Kim is entering her 2<sup>nd</sup> season as the Grizzlies Team Manager. She also is very generous with her time to South Jeffco Football, serving on the uniform committee and on the JMFA scheduling and bracketing board. In her role as our Team Manager, Kim is responsible for our Team Book, all eligibility records, game day roster changes, game day volunteers, and coordinating with SJSA on all issues, such as weigh-ins, weight challenges, uniforms, field closures, etc., and of course, fundraising, organizing team events (i.e., year-end gathering), etc.. All persons acting as a Team Manager must also pass a criminal background check through SJSA. For these issues, the Team Manager is your "go-to" person, not any of the coaches. Under JMFA By Laws, this position must be an elected position, the election must occur before December 31 each year (so we vote at our year-end gathering), the position begins on January 1.

### TEAM MEDIC/MEDICAL ASSISTANT – JOHN MORRIN

Benjamin's dad, John, has graciously agreed once again to be our designated medical assistant for the season. John is a Registered Nurse and is absolutely great with our kids! He'll be there to help protect our boys and guide them through the inevitable bumps and bruises which come along with playing a collision sport.

### TEAM FEES / FUND RAISING / DONATIONS

We recognize the costs involved in allowing your son(s) to play football. Yet, there are still some items we would like to pay for as a group, through equal donations among parents throughout the season. We will have several parents involved in organizing and arranging for these additional funds and we thank you in advance for your support and continued assistance!

We follow the trend of most teams in SJFA, and we have a "Team Fee" payable at the start of the season, of **\$125 per player**. However, this is how the team fee is handled:

- Each Player is assessed a \$125 team fee
- Before the start of the first official practice each year, our Team Manager will provide a total Grizzly account balance which is carried forward from the past year.
- The amount carried forward will be divided by the total number of RETURNING players and that amount will be credited toward the \$125 per player fee, since those returning families were directly responsible for the fundraising efforts to accumulate those funds
- All NEW families will be responsible to pay the full \$125 fee in year 1, then in future years, will be treated as a RETURNING family and credited accordingly.
- If any family cannot afford to pay the team fee, please talk directly to Coach Paul, in confidence.
- Under no circumstances will there be any refunds of any money at any time, even if a family leaves the Grizzlies at some point.

We are once again "ahead of the game" this year, thanks to our Super Bowl Pool, a little money raised through the RedZone Passing Challenge, and our sponsorship from Virgilio's Pizzeria. We also earn between 7% - 17% of all Grizzly apparel purchased from our online store, which you can access from our home page at [www.sjgrizzlies.com](http://www.sjgrizzlies.com).

Things we need money for include:

- The Bill Smith Kickoff Classic Jamboree (\$249 per team); this is a GREAT opportunity for our kids to play 3 shortened games over the weekend of August 26-28, before our season begins!
- Inclement weather fields to practice on. Our bad-weather field will be at Collegiate Academy, which costs us \$30 an hour, or \$60 per practice if we are on it alone. As we did last year, we'll try to get another team to share the field with us to cut that cost in half. We know we want this field for the playoffs.
- Team Gatherings & Team Building (off-season, in-season, and end-of-season celebration)
- Team awards/recognition



- Miscellaneous equipment (SJFA provides us with the bare-bones minimum equipment)
- Team “Spirit” items

Note that many of the Grizzly items purchased for the boys to enhance their experience, and even some parent items **do not** come out of the Team funds, they are simply donated by Coach Paul and Sheila.

### GAME DAY VOLUNTEERS

On game days, we may need volunteers to do such things as manager our “minimum play sheets” for each player, hold “the sticks” (first down markers, etc), keep statistics for us, video our games from the corner of the end zone, etc.

### PRACTICE VOLUNTEERS

On practice nights, on occasion, we may ask for parent volunteers to help with a drill, or to fill in for a position on the field when we do not have enough players.

## OUR TEAM

- We will be a fast, high-tempo team which is smart and disciplined.
- We will teach that the helmet is for PROTECTION and is NOT a weapon.
- We, as coaches, are responsible to each player, on every play, to teach proper
  - Alignment
  - Assignment
  - Technique
  - Skills needed to Execute the task/play

## EXPECTATIONS

- Our young players expect:
  - Instruction
  - Organization & Structure
  - Discipline & Leadership
- What we can expect from our players are:
  - Attention
  - Effort
  - That their parent(s) properly and realistically placed them on a division 1 team
- Winning. In joining or staying with the Grizzlies, you have elected to have your son play on a JMFA **Division 1 team, which is the highest level of competition the league has to offer.** This is not “rec” league football; this is highly competitive football meant to help prepare your son to continue to advance his skill sets and ultimately prepare him for high school football and beyond. It is important to create an environment that is successful. Winning reinforces the lessons and skills we teach. It is not a “win at all costs” environment we want to create. Any lessons we teach our kids are lost if we don’t win. Winning adds excitement, enthusiasm, and credibility to what we teach, do and say.

## DISCIPLINE

- In my experience, most “discipline” issues arise out of simple “horsing around” or sportsmanship issues (i.e., taunting, teasing). When this occurs, the player becomes a distraction to the teaching process and an appropriate response is to have the player do a set of push-ups (10) and/or “run a lap” or other type of conditioning drill.
- For persistent behavior, we will remove a player from the drill and have him sit out.
- If there are safety issues involved, such as persistent “spearing”, then we need to evaluate how



we are teaching the kids and get the proper message across, however intentional conduct which causes a safety issue or concern will result in the player being removed from the field and other discipline consistent with SJSA/JMFA rules.

## JMFA MINIMUM PLAY REQUIREMENT

- **MINIMUM PLAY RULE**
  - Every player must play a minimum of 15 plays per game. Special teams player ARE included in this count.
  - For safety reasons, if a player misses 2 practices during the week, he is not entitled to his 15 plays. (SJFA rules say 1 unexcused practice can be grounds not to play.) Yes, every practice is mandatory, as described previously in this Guide.
- **Note...if your child has been a “minimum play player” in the past, please re-read “EXPECTATIONS”, above, and read “PLAYER EVALUATIONS/POSITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS” below.**

## ON-THE-FIELD INJURIES

- On-field bumps & bruises will be handled, evaluated & managed by John Morrin, our Team Medical Assistant whenever he is available.



- **“LIGHTNING!!”**
- Even though the risk of catastrophic injury at this age is very low, we will still have a plan in place “just in case”. We will employ a plan called **“LIGHTNING!”** for any on-the-field head/neck/spinal injury. With this plan, as soon as this type of injury may occur and is recognized, **“LIGHTNING!!”** will be yelled loud and often and all coaches must act as follows:
  - JOHN MORRIN and WALT will go TO the player. They will be WITH THE PLAYER the entire time until official medical personnel arrive, comforting, and keeping him calm and **unmoved**.
  - BRETT will get OUR kids off the field and to the sidelines in a calm, firm manner.
  - NICK and BRETT will be with the kids on the sideline, providing comfort, instruction and keeping them calm.
  - NICK will call 911 if needed, as instructed by JOHN/WALT.
  - PAUL will go to/with the injured player’s parent(s) and stay with them until the child is safely handled by official medical personnel.
- This is a topic the no one enjoys talking about, but we MUST be prepared for this scenario, so we can act swiftly and decisively.
- **Keep in mind that if your child is SUSPECTED of having a concussion, we follow the “WHEN IN DOUBT, SIT HIM OUT” philosophy. We also follow a strict “Return to Play Protocol” as established by the Jake Snakenberg Youth Concussion Law, which requires a doctors’ note before he can step back on the field in any capacity.**

## PLAYER EVALUATIONS/POSITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

- This is always a difficult, sometimes even touchy subject with kids AND parents. Just so we are perfectly clear, top 2 criteria are 1) **putting players in the best position to succeed** and 2) **putting players in the best position to help the team as a whole**. Not everyone can play QB or WB or FB, for example. We will do an honest job of evaluating appropriate skill sets for each kid, based on what we ask each position to do.



- When evaluating a player's skills and role (or potential role) on our team, it is not done in a vacuum, considering only that particular child; rather, it is also based on a comparison of his skills relative to others on the team, relative to what we ask players at that position to do and be prepared to do, etc. So, for example, simply because a player can throw a football the furthest does not mean he will or should be a quarterback...that ability to throw is merely one of many variables we use to evaluate and place players in positions. As mentioned above, this is absolutely, positively 100% coach's discretion and no parent will be allowed or afforded the opportunity to comment or "suggest" otherwise.
- Parents must recognize that in football, more than any other sport, EVERY position on the field is important to the success of the team. We encourage parents to encourage kids to excel at any position they are put in by the coaching staff.
- We realize that very few kids go into football hoping to be an offensive lineman, for example. However, on OUR team, those players will be treated like stars. In fact, they will have special helmet decals which they can earn that no other position on the field will be awarded, among other things!
- Keep in mind a few other things:
  - **OFF-SEASON PREPARATION.** Off-season football "skills" camps and speed camps are the best way to help your Grizzly prepare for the season, prepare for his position, prepare to compete for a position he may WANT to play. For example, if your son played Center last year, but wants to compete at the QB position, if you did not give the opportunity to learn those QB skills in the off-season through these camps, clinics, etc., then there can be no reasonable expectation that he will make that switch. Some of the burden to prepare kids for desired positions rests on you.
  - **NATURAL GROWTH = NATURAL POSITION CHANGE.** One other important thing to remember is this: kids will grow into and out of football positions. Your son may be bigger and stockier, or slower than others today, but by 5<sup>th</sup> grade, he may be the tallest, fastest kid out there. He may be that fast little wingback for us today, and may grow to be a mammoth of a kid, best suited to play offensive tackle. In youth football more than any other sport, time and physical development will be as big a determinant of position assignment as anything!
- **New for 2011** - JMFA reduced the preseason preparation time by one full week, giving us just 8 preseason practices before we enter our game 1 practice week. As such, and since we a) know all returning players fairly well, and b) specifically recruited our new players to fill specific roles on our team, **we will not be conducting our traditional strength, speed, and positional tryouts during the first practice session(s).** We will have a preseason, very loose depth and position chart. This is simply a starting point. We will also be moving some players around to various positions from time to time and evaluating players actually in those positions, rather than through positional drills.

***Coaches do not decide where a player ends up on the depth chart, whether as a starter, rotational player, or minimum play performer. Players do that on their own, through their physical and mental performance, preparation, effort, and enthusiasm.***

## **OUR PRACTICES**

WHERE: **MARKER PARK, FIELD #4** (Same as last season) which is at the north corner of the tennis courts, adjacent to Sara Moseley Field.

WHEN: **TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAYS and FRIDAYS from 5:15 pm – 7:15 pm;** this time will be adjusted to an earlier start time as we start losing daylight hours.

**SouthJeffcoGrizzlies**



A few notes: Our first practice is **Tuesday August 16**. During the “preseason” we can practice 4 times per week, per JMFA rules. The first 3 practices will be helmets-only; please have your son wear his assigned practice jersey and loose, comfortable shorts, cup, and cleats. No shoulder pads, girdle or football pants. **Our first day of contact, with full pads will be Saturday August 20.** We will post our full practice schedule on our team website. Remember...practices are mandatory. Your child will not play if he does not attend practice. Throughout the season we may also hold joint practice sessions or scrimmages with other SJSA or JMFA teams. These joint practices/scrimmages may be held at fields other than our own, such as in Bear Creek, Highlands Ranch, other SJSA practice fields, etc.

### FORMAT OF PRACTICES

- We will Practice 3 Times Per Week, per South Jeffco Football rules.
- Practices will run 2 hours each
- Each practice will be broken down into segmented “Practice Blocks” which may consist of:
  - **Warm-Ups & Stretching**
  - **Team Installation**
    - Offense and/or Defense and/or Special Teams
  - **Foundational Individual Positional Skills Sessions**
    - i.e., Offensive Line, Backfield, Defensive Line, Backers & DB’s, etc.
  - **Team “Thud” / Hopefully scrimmages vs other 3rd grade teams**
    - Offense and/or Defense and/or Special Teams
  - **Conditioning**
  - **Team Together / Cool Down**

### GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Coaching IS TEACHING
- Teach our kids the proper skills to
  - Be Safe
  - Succeed
- Have Crisp, FUN practices, keeping EVERYONE INVOLVED, AT ALL TIMES

### WATER BREAKS & HYDRATION

- **Adequate hydration begins 2-3 hours BEFORE practice and is the parent responsibility**
- During practice, we will build in specific 5 minute water breaks
- We will also ENCOURAGE our kids to HYDRATE **every single time** they are off the field or not actively involved in a drill – impress upon your child that he should hydrate whenever possible, not just during the assigned water breaks
- We will also not merely “allow” a player to get water on request, we will ENCOURAGE every player to hydrate whenever he needs to.
- **Players can get dehydrated in ANY type of weather. HYDRATION is vital to the health and safety of our players.**
- **YOU ARE REQUIRED TO SEND YOUR SON TO PRACTICE WITH ADEQUATE WATER!**
- **We will NOT have “community” or “team” water bottles... remember the Swine Flu spread of 2 years ago? 3 Kids missing last year because of Strep Throat? Yep...that’s why we don’t do it.**

## GAME DAY

On game days, please have your son at the field 1 hour before game time for all HOME games; and 1 hour 15 minutes before game time for all AWAY games. This will give time to pad-up and allow us to go through our pre-game routine.

