



Introduction

Welcome to the Kent Exiles Youth, Junior and Flag American Football teams.

This **Parents Pack** is designed to help parents & carers understand the character and ethos of the club, and show how we support players and their families. In illustrating the team's work and values, we also hope to allow parents & carers the opportunity to become involved in supporting and developing the Exiles family going forward.

The Kent Exiles are a **family friendly** club, and we pride ourselves on being welcoming for players and their families alike. On gamedays you will find parents, friends, former players, kids and fans on our sidelines, and we work hard to provide a fun and positive environment for our teams and supporters.

The Exiles organisation is made up of an:

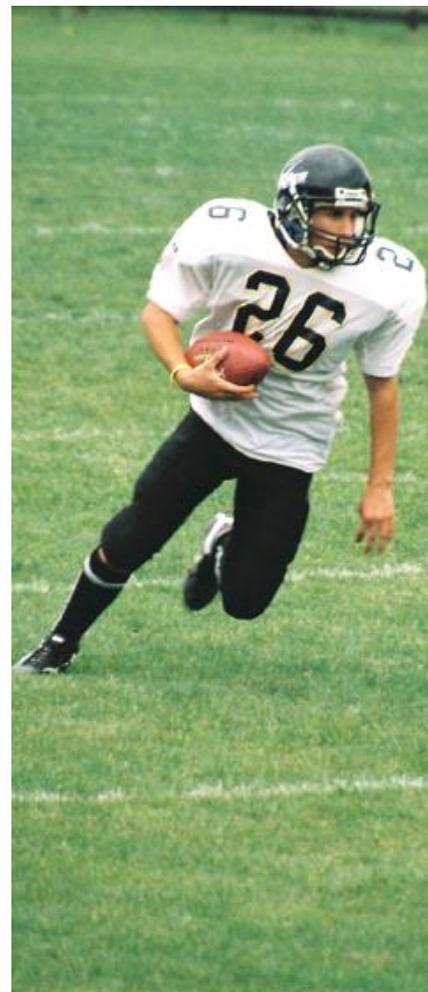
- Adult contact team – for ages 19+
- Junior contact team – for ages 16-19
- Youth contact team – for ages 14-16
- Flag non-contact team – for ages 7-11 and 11-14

The Youth, Junior and Flag set up is very **inclusive**, with good size squads of enthusiastic players of all sizes and abilities. The range of positions in the game means that American Football has a role for everyone. Each year we take on a large number of 'rookies' in addition to our returning players, and when players reach the end of their final season many "graduate" to the next Exiles team, while some go on to play in the British University league when they are studying.

The club is dedicated to ensuring that our Youth and Junior set up is built around character and discipline as well as healthy competition and sporting development. All our players are subject to a **Code of Conduct** that requires a respectful attitude towards coaches, team mates and opponents, as well as good personal behaviour.

Our commitment to ensuring good behaviour on and off the field is reflected in the way the team plays – hard but fair. Both at training and during games, our game and our team teaches **character, teamwork and competition**, and we also like our players to have a lot of fun along the way! In American Football, more than in any other team sport, every player on the field must make their contribution for the team to succeed, so our teams and players support each other and work together, while competing against teams from all over the country.

As an organisation we are always aware of players' **safety**, and have a number of policies and arrangements in place to ensure that every player is competing at an appropriate level and is given as much coaching and support as they need. In addition, we actively encourage parents & carers to be as involved as possible in the **Kent Exiles** community.



1. Player Activities

Our League season runs from May-September, but the Youth and Junior squads practice all year round at our training ground in Orpington.

Training: The Youth/Junior team practices on Thursday evenings and specified Sunday mornings. The Flag teams practice on Sunday mornings.

Games: Junior contact - During the season, games are on Sundays. Each season the schedule is distributed at the beginning of the year and made available on our website.

Youth kitted and Flag tournaments are held throughout the year, on Saturdays and Sundays, and we make these dates available as soon as possible.

Coaching: We have a range of experienced and qualified Coaches, including some Adult team players who help out with the Youth set up.

All Coaches hold official League qualifications. Each position has its own assigned Coach who is responsible for players' development at that position, and the Head Coach oversees the team as a whole.

Junior Contact Head Coach – Aaron Alexis
Youth Contact Head Coach – Julius Hobbs
Flag Teams Head Coach – Ted Smith

A typical practice will include fitness and conditioning work, footwork and agility drills, tackling and blocking, separate group work for each position and full team scrimmage.

2. Safety

- × Players only play games against opponents in their age group.
- × All training sessions, games and team activities are supervised by Exiles' coaches and volunteers.
- × Willing parents & carers can attend any training sessions or games.
- × Coaches are qualified and registered with the national league.
- × All registered players are covered under the league's insurance policies.
- × Each game has qualified first aid & medical staff present.

3. Games & Tournaments

The Kent Exiles' are registered with the British American Football Association and play in official BAFA competitions.

- × The **Junior** team (age 16-19) play 9-a-side fully kitted American Football in the national league. The team competes in the Southern Division, playing four home and four away games each season, with additional playoff games if the team progresses to the postseason. The Junior team may also play friendly games throughout the year.
- × The **Youth** team (age 14-16) play 5-a-side fully kitted American Football in the National league. Competing in the Southern Conference playing one-day tournaments organised throughout the season. Junior Football is a good introduction to the kitted version of the sport because new and young players can learn the basics in a safe environment before eventually progressing to the full 11-a side version. There will normally be between 5 and 8 one day tournaments, including at least one hosted by the Exiles organisation.
- × The **Flag** teams (age 7-11 & 11-14) play 5-a-side non kitted American Football in one-day tournaments organised locally throughout the year. The emphasis is on introducing the sport, and having fun!



4. Club Policies

The Kent Exiles organisation is supervised by a **management committee**, which is elected every year and includes club founders who have overseen the Exiles since the team's formation in 1989. The Committee is responsible for the organisation's structure and finances, appointing coaches and developing all of our teams.

The Committee includes a **Welfare Officer** who is responsible for players' well-being and issues like Child Protection. Other members are in charge of areas like kit & equipment management, player development and coaching and are always available to discuss any aspect of the team or answer specific questions any parent or carer may have. Committee members' contact details are available on our website.

All players, Flag, Youth, Junior & Adult, are subject to a **Code of Conduct**. The Code of Conduct governs players' behaviour on and off the pitch, and emphasise respect for coaches, teammates, officials and opponents. We want our programme to develop players' character, leadership and teamwork as much as their skill and sporting ability.

In addition the League maintains a strict **disciplinary policy** during games, and takes player conduct very seriously – bad behaviour can result in ejections, suspensions, and fines. The League also requires certain safety procedures for supervisors and volunteers, so all our coaches are subject to background checks with the league and national authorities.

Our medical policy ensures trained personnel and appropriate **first aid** equipment are available at training sessions and games, and emergency medical personnel are present at every game in case of injury. Each player has League insurance cover as part of their registration.

5. Community

The Kent Exiles is a family orientated club, and we're justifiably proud of the wide community of support we've built up since 1989. We are always working towards the growth of the Exiles organisation.



Teams

- × Cadet and Youth Flag Teams
- × Youth Contact team
- × Junior Contact team
- × Adult Contact team

Volunteers

- × Coaches – Adult, Junior, Youth & Flag
- × Welfare Officer
- × Sideline volunteers
- × Chain crew & ballboys
- × First aid & medical personnel (including physio)
- × Media & photographers

Press relations: We regularly feature in local and specialist newspapers and websites and have an active and successful social media following

Sponsors: In recent years we have been sponsored by the Natwest Community Fund, American Sports retailers, local businesses, local press, and equipment suppliers. We are constantly looking for more sponsors to support the club and allow us to expand and improve.

Websites: www.kentexiles.co.uk registered over 100,000 hits in its' first 8 months. It offers news, match reports, team history, rosters and schedules, photo galleries, video clips and our online shop. The club also maintains a private message board for each team to keep players and parents/carers up to date.



Merchandise: Exiles t-shirts, sweatshirts, shorts, lanyards, posters, mugs, bags and much more are on sale via our website.

Media: Our registered sideline media staff captures each game on film. Photos are free to download from the club website

Gameday: We encourage a fun atmosphere at games, and have a sideline BBQ for supporters (and players!), as well as enjoyable half time distractions like bouncy castles for those not quite old enough to be on the field.

6. Role of Parent/Carer

We pay a lot of attention to providing safeguards, first aid, loads of water, safety equipment and the proper coaching to players, but there are some things that only parents and carers can do.

- ✗ **Kit** – we try to provide as much kit & equipment as possible, especially for new players, but over time players need to have their own equipment. As well as shirts, padding and helmets, players need to make sure they have everyday things like football boots and gumshields. The club has a partnering scheme with equipment providers which can help to bring down the cost.
- ✗ Parents and carers should ensure players have the **basics**, like sunblock on hot days or a couple of layers of clothes for cold winter training sessions. Also, on top of our sideline supplies, players can never have enough water before, during or after the game. Needless to say for such an energetic game, making sure players eat enough of the right kinds of food before games/training is also something that has to start at home.
- ✗ We take great care to guard players' welfare, and ask that parents & carers let us know about any **medical conditions** or injuries – we don't want players on the field if it isn't healthy for them to play. Likewise we insist on having up to date contact details.
- ✗ Whilst we try and emphasise that players should behave maturely, ultimately we do hold guardians responsible for the **behaviour** of their child, and if necessary coaches and staff will discuss any problems with parents & carers.
- ✗ Last but not least, we ask that parents & carers ensure that players are on time – latecomers are not excused from warm-ups!



7. Fees

Player fees for **Youth** players (14-16) are £80 per year + League Registration Fee
Player fees for **Junior** players (16-19) are £115 per year + League Registration Fee
There are no fees for Flag players

This fees include:

- × Club registration
- × League registration
- × Hire of pitches for training sessions each week and games all season.
- × Training equipment (i.e. tackle bags and footballs)
- × Game shirts
- × Club kit for training/games (as far as possible)
- × Insurance cover
- × Referees
- × Ambulances & emergency medical staff for games

For **away games** we try and arrange carpooling etc as far as possible, but on occasion we will hire a coach for the team, with a charge to players.

Parents and carers tell us that American Football compares very well in cost to other activities like swimming, tennis, football or other sports teams. Because the Kent Exiles Youth teams use many of the same facilities as the Adult team, we often have lower costs than standalone teams.

The Kent Exiles is a **non-profit organisation** and every single penny we receive – from player fees, sponsorship, fundraising or other sources like Tesco Vouchers for Schools – goes straight into providing a safe and enjoyable environment for our players and supporters.

8. Contacts

If you have any questions or for further information, please feel free to contact any of the committee or coaches:

Email: contactus@kentexiles.co.uk
Phone: Chairman **David Pester** 01689 859356 / 07778 548488

Chairman:	David Pester
Kit & Equipment:	Robert Osborn
Welfare Officer:	Claire Pester
Treasurer:	Martin Jefkins
Secretary:	Claire Pester
Website:	Kieron Hyams

