

Kent Exiles
American Football
Adult Flag Team
2023-2024



“Relentlessly chase perfection knowing full well we won’t catch it, because nothing is perfect.

*But we’re going to relentlessly chase it, because in the process **we will catch excellence**, I’m not remotely interested in being just good.”*

Vince Lombardi

Kent Exiles Adult Flag Team Vision and Values

OUR VISION

We aim to promote the sport of American Football, developing players to their highest potential in a positive environment, while encouraging discipline, commitment, integrity and respect both on and off the pitch.

MISSION STATEMENT

We will provide an environment for all involved to achieve personal and team excellence through our five Core Values:

RESPECT – INTEGRITY – DEVELOPMENT – COMMITMENT – ENJOYMENT

CORE VALUES

RESPECT – Everyone in the team is valued and is expected to show respect to each other, officials, opponents and the game of football.

INTEGRITY – Honesty and trust are central to the team, with every member being expected to always demonstrate sound moral and ethical principles.

DEVELOPMENT – We will provide players and coaches the opportunity to learn, develop and progress their skills and abilities.

COMMITMENT – There must be willingness to give up time and energy to achieve the team goals, and dedication to each other by committing to training, game days and Club events.

ENJOYMENT – Having fun, enjoying football, and feeling part of the Club is fundamental to its overall success.

OUR GOALS

- To develop a framework for ***achieving excellence***, for both our players and coaching staff;
- To aspire to the very ***highest standards*** of play;
- To grow individually and as a team to progress and have at least one team reach the highest tier of Adult Flag football in the UK

TEAM EXPECTATIONS

1. Be physical and athletic on the field.
2. Out-work and out-fight our opponent.
3. Learn from experiences and always seek improvement

WHAT WE OFFER?

Why play for our adult flag team? We like to think we've got a lot to offer both new players and those who've played before that sets us apart from other clubs in the South East.

Our coaching

We offer dedicated and experienced coaching with a sound knowledge of flag, but also contact football. We also support and encourage our coaches to develop, and have a strong focus on player development. If you commit to the Exiles you will get better as a player.

Our training facilities

We train at Westcombe Park RFC.

Training days/times:

Saturdays: 11.30am-1.30pm

Our gameday

We have our own pitch at WPRFC. There is a clubhouse serving food and drink. We have a team of volunteers who work hard to make this a great day out you'll be proud to invite your friends and family to.

Be part of something bigger

We're bigger than one team. Our club is made up of seven teams and has over 300 players, coaches and staff involved. As well as having one of the longest established adult (contact) teams, we have thriving and successful youth and women's teams. The size of our club also means that if you want to make the jump from playing to coaching or helping out behind the scenes, we've lots of different ways you can stay part of the Exiles family.

We're well run

Our club is managed by a dedicated committee. We follow all the rules, make sure everything is always done in the right way and with player health and safety in mind. We don't settle for second best and are always pushing to be better. We are in partnership with Go London! which recognises well governed, safe, and inclusive clubs.

We have strong finances

Our finances are in great shape and are managed transparently. At our AGM we share a full copy of our accounts so you can see exactly what we've spent your money on. You're also very welcome to look at our accounts or ask questions about our finances at any time. We have a fantastic track record at securing grant funding for the club.

We look out for you

We take things like medical cover at games and insurance seriously and make sure claims are made swiftly and any incidents are recorded. We have dedicated first aider presence at all games wherever possible. The club can also provide advice on nutrition and gym programs and technique from our many experienced players and coaches.

We listen

Your views are important to us. We regularly invite players, coaches and staff to share their views on every aspect of the organisation and we regularly act on this feedback.

WHAT DO WE EXPECT FROM OUR PLAYERS?

You're interested in joining our adult flag team and we've told you what's on offer. But what do we expect from you?

The fundamental thing is **commitment**. If you regularly work most weekends, then it will be difficult to be prepared physically, to learn techniques, plays, strategies and gameplans and the Exiles aren't for you. Players who don't regularly attend practices, team meetings and make themselves available for games will simply not get time on the field. We would also like you to be a student of the game, knowing your playbook and seeking opportunities to learn more, putting in effort to maintain a level of fitness and to pay your player subs regularly.

You'll have a **desire to improve** and a **great attitude**. We'll help you understand your strengths and your limitations and make you into a better footballer, but you need to leave your ego at the door and come to work as a team player.

You'll go **the extra mile** for your team off the field too. This includes attending team nights out and supporting and helping our other teams on their gamedays.

You'll need a **competitive nature**. You'll have the desire to fight for a starting spot on the team and the desire to get on the field and win.

OFFENSIVE PHILOSOPHY

The Exiles Adult Flag Offense is designed to set the tempo of the game. Offensively, we believe in being aggressive and running an attack style of offense. In what are short games with minimal possessions maximising scoring is critical to success. Our goal is to really challenge and put stress on the defense, taking advantage of any opportunities presented, recognising and using mismatches and identifying weaknesses to take advantage of. We will look to create confusion on the other side of the ball, opening up spaces to capitalise on, whilst using variety of play calling, formations and looks to keep the defense honest and guessing our intentions. We believe that an effective offense needs to be able to take what the defense is willing to give them and exploit it. When the defense makes their adjustments, we need to be able to identify that and then take advantage of the next weakness that they are giving up. This is both an important part of preparation and also game time identification. We aim to be smart with the football, yet be creative and adventurous and unafraid of risk when the opportunities are there.

DEFENSIVE PHILOSOPHY

We strongly believe that a great defense can set the tone of the game. We will play a sound style of defense, being well drilled and disciplined, with the ability to adjust to the offensive formations and strengths. Our defense must be able to play with controlled aggression and will blitz regularly, while maintaining responsibilities over the rest of the field. Our defense will utilise its strengths in personnel and doesn't try to play outside of its abilities. A great defense needs to be able to play their techniques with discipline and unselfishness. It must be able to identify every offensive set a team displays and both respect their offensive strengths while taking advantage of their weakness.

In 5-a-side flag football it is imperative that every player plays with hustle and total commitment on every play. We cannot be carrying anyone in this version of football. Players must recognise the play early and swarm to the ball/direction of the ball.

A strong defense supports the team offense, but cannot rely on them to win the game. It needs to be able to keep the opponent out of the end zone, create turnovers and take advantage of opportunities when they occur. We will focus on tackling and taking the ball away from the opponent's offense. The ability for a defense to recognize and adjust to a different style of offense on the fly is critical. It's the coaches' jobs to have the defense prepared through practice head of games. Defensive player must be taught to understand why adjustments are made and what changes in technique are required to be successful in a given situation. A great defense is also able to have a short memory and regroup to learn from errors.

SUBS & REGISTRATION

Running an American Football club is expensive, so we rely on regular income from player fees or 'subs' to cover our costs. Without that money we wouldn't be able to pay for training facilities, gamedays, equipment or afford all of the other things our team needs. However, we are a new team so have kept subs low to help build the program.

How it works

Annual fees for the 2023/2024 season are as follows:

£60 (covers basic insurance)

All new players get an initial free trial period of three weeks, but after that point we ask that a standing order is set up for payment and both league and club registration is completed.

Our payment year runs from the 1st December 2023 to the 31st October 2024. So, team fees must be paid off in full by 31 October 2024. Slightly shortened this year due to launching new club admin system.

Club Registration link: <https://app.joinin.online/#/app/joinin/organisation/shop/26e3ae5c-94aa-4c19-81ee-00b262716aab>

What we expect

We require all our players to pay in full or regularly in instalments by standing order. We only accept cash by exception and by prior agreement with that team's Head Coach and the club Treasurer or Chairperson.

What happens if you fall behind

Players who fall behind on their player fees without prior agreement will become ineligible to play in games and may also be unable to train with the team until their debt is cleared. For players with kit on loan, we will also request that kit is returned until they are no longer in debt to the club.

Players still in debt in October of each year will be placed on the British American Football Association's debtors list and will not be able to transfer to another team until this debt has been cleared satisfactorily.

We can provide a regular update to players in our teams on their subs balance and we are also happy to share or answer questions on all aspects of our income and expenditure.

Other costs

We're very upfront about what our player subs include, and what they don't. All practices and gameday expenses are included.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We're regularly asked the same questions about subs – here are answers to some of the common ones....

I've quit the team part way through the season – why do I still need to pay?

We charge an annual fee, not a monthly one. We base our budget on the number of players we have on the roster for the season ahead. For all teams (from 2023 onwards) we ask players to sign a player agreement committing to pay the full fee for the year ahead. This usually takes place just before the start of the season, at the point we expect players to have decided if they wish to play with us this year and fully commit to the club. Think of it like a phone contract that you agree to pay monthly for a certain period of time, not pay as you go. We will also always treat each case individually where injury or other extenuating circumstances apply.

What if I'm having money problems?

We know that sometimes life doesn't go quite to plan – so if you find yourself in financial difficulties, let us know as soon as possible so we can discuss your circumstances and agree a way forward. Please don't just ignore the problem.

Practice isn't currently on – why do we still have to pay if there's no team activity?

As outlined above, our subs are based on an annual fee and are used to budget for the year ahead. We split the fees into 3 monthly payments to make them more affordable for you. We also often have out of season activities going on too – such as conditioning training, awards nights or training events that have costs attached too or have team registration fees to pay so we need a continuous stream of income.

Where does my money go?

All money you pay in is spent on running our teams. This means paying for practice facilities, gameday venues, team registration fees, first aid supplies, training and development for our coaching staff amongst many other things. We have Community Amateur Sports Club status with HMRC, and are an entirely non-profit making organisation.

SPOND

We use an app called Spond where all information re training and games can be found. We use this app to track attendance at practice and games and to disseminate key information.

The link to join is: <https://group.spond.com/OQZLF>

There is an expectation that all players advise on Spond, in advance, re. their attendance at training and games as soon as possible to allow for planning.

KIT & EQUIPMENT

What we provide:

- Game day jersey
- Flag belt

What you need to provide:

- Mouthguard
- Black shorts
- Gloves (optional)
- Suitable footwear

PRE-SEASON SOCIAL

Saturday 30th March 2024, 7pm, at Westcombe Park RFC

Whole club event - Head Coaches will be making a short 2-3 minute speech re the season ahead and will be announcing Team Leaders for the 2024 season.

£10 per head

7pm arrival for a 7.30pm start

Food served at 7.30pm

Dress code: Casual Please make every effort to attend and let's get 2024 off to a great start!

Payment via the Club's admin system:

<https://app.joinin.online/#/app/joinin/organisation/shop/product/3888/26e3ae5c-94aa-4c19-81ee-00b262716aab>