



## Flag Football League Rule Book

**ATTENTION: SPOKANE PARKS AND RECREATIONS FLAG FOOTBALL SUPERVISORS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO OVERRULE ANY "GREY AREA" SITUATIONS THAT MAY OCCUR WITHIN THE FOLLOWING FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES!**



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## 1. UNIFORMS

All uniforms/jerseys MUST MATCH! They must be the same color and style. At the start of each play, all jerseys must be tucked in. If a player's jersey is untucked at the start of a play, a 5 yard penalty will be assessed. It is discouraged to wear jerseys that stop at the belt line AND jerseys tied in the back.

Shorts, pants, or tights with open pockets are not allowed. No pockets are allowed, unless they are sewn or zipped.

## 2. MONEY: REFUNDS, CREDITS AND TRANSFERS

All registration and other fees are non-refundable after the schedule is released. **Fees are nontransferable.**

## 3. FORFEIT TIMING

**Game time is forfeit time.** Teams may start games with 7 players on the field, but no less. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Teams will have a game forfeited if they are using an illegal player (player not on the roster at the moment that the game is being played) or an intoxicated player (Player Code of Conduct). In this case, the team is NOT disqualified from the playoffs.

**Forfeited games: If game is forfeited, the winning team will be awarded the average of points scored (by the winning team) that season as the points for that game.**

## 4. TEAM ROSTERS

Team Captains are fully responsible for maintaining an updated roster online. Players not rostered are considered illegal players. A team may have only 3 players who are part of an upper division team on its roster. A player playing for 2 divisions may play down one division from his higher division in the league.

**There is a limit of 21 players per roster for an 8v8 team and 12 players per team for 5v5 teams.**

### DIVISION ADVANCEMENT

Champions and runner-ups from B, C, and D divisions in the earlier year are expected to register in the next higher division in the next season. The exception is for those teams that are returning 4 or less players from last season's roster. If your team skipped a season but is returning a roster with 5 or more players from the last season played, you are still expected to play up one division.

## 5. CAPTAINS & TEAM MANAGER'S MEETING

Attending the Captains & Team Managers meeting is mandatory. Team captains who do not attend or teams that do not provide a person of representation release their rights to vote on league matters that are discussed and voted on at these meetings.

## 6. CHAMPIONSHIP PRIZES

The Playoffs Champions teams have 14 days from the day of notification from the department that their shirts or trophy are in are ready for pick up or the prize will be considered forfeited and they will be donated. The league will contact the team captain if they have indicated they want shirts. That team captain then has 72 hours to get team sizes if they were not already turned in. After 72 hours the league will default to ordering a trophy instead for that team.

## THE GAME

## 1. THE GAME

The game will be played between two (2) teams of eight (8) players each on a regulation football field (360 feet x 160 feet). The field may be modified if space constraints so determine.

The game will be played under the supervision of two (2) to four (4) Game Officials. The Officials' positions/roles are:

- Referee
- Linesman
- Line Judge
- Back Judge

Team representatives, including players, team managers, coaches, and group members, are subject to the rules of the game and will be governed by the decisions of the Officials assigned to the game. **The Referee's decision is final.**

## 2. LENGTH OF GAME

Playing time for each regular season game will be 48 minutes in duration, divided into two (2) 24- minute halves, with 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> halves of straight running clock and a 1 minute warning for both halves.

## 3. SCRIMMAGE

All plays from scrimmage must be started by a legal snap from a point along the scrimmage line between the sidelines. An Official will mark the line of scrimmage.

Every snap must go between the Center's legs and the Center's shoulders must be parallel to the line of scrimmage when the snap is made to another player. When the ball is snapped for play by the center, the ball may touch the ground before reaching the receiver of the snap as long as the ball is fielded cleanly. If the ball is muffed or dropped to the ground by the snap receiver, the ball is considered dead at the spot it contacts the ground after the snap receiver's touch.

Any dropped snap, muff, or fumbled ball that touches the ground is dead at the spot of contact with the ground.

The Center may not be touched until he has stood up to block or has stepped into their pass pattern. **Penalty: Roughing the Center: 15 yards from the succeeding spot and an automatic first down**

During scrimmage plays, except kicks, the Defense may have any number of players on the line of scrimmage. The Offense must have at least four (4) players on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. **Penalty: Illegal Formation: 5 yards from the previous spot**

When lined up on the line of scrimmage the Offensive Lineman's head can be no farther back than where the Center's hips are as he bends over to snap the ball.

**Penalty: Illegal Formation: 5 yards from the previous spot**

#### **4. COIN TOSS**

**Five (5) minutes before the start of the game**, the Referee will toss a coin in the presence of the opposing Team Captains, after designating which Captain will **call the coin prior to the flip. Team calling the toss will call heads or tails prior to the coin being tossed.**

At the coin toss in the center of the field, the visiting Team Captain will be given the privilege of calling the coin. The winner of the toss will be given their choice of defense, offense, designating the end of the field at which the ball will be put in play, or may defer their choice to the second half. The loser will have their choice of the remaining options.

To indicate which team will go on the offense, the Referee will have that Captain face the goal toward which their team will advance and indicate this with the first down signal.

The other Team Captain will face the offensive Captain with is back toward the goal he will defend.

#### **5. START OF GAME**

To begin the game a team must have a **minimum of seven (7) players.**

If a team that DOES NOT have seven (7) eligible players at **game time**, the referee shall declare a forfeit.

Each period will start with the ball being placed on the 30-yard line.

#### **6. TEAM POSSESSION**

The team in possession of the ball will have four (4) consecutive downs to advance the ball to the next zone line-to-gain by scrimmage. Any down may be repeated if provided for by the rules. 'Line-to-gain' lines are noted every 20 yards of the field at the 20-yardlines, 40-yard-lines, and goal lines.

#### **7. ADVANCING THE BALL**

The forward progress of the ball is used to determine the succeeding spot, not the flag belt. If a player touches the ground with any part of their body aside from their hands or feet, that spot will be marked as their forward progress. If a player carrying the Ball in hand allows the Ball to touch the ground, the ball is dead at the spot where the ball touched the ground.

A player may not dive with the ball. It's an Official's judgement call.

**Penalty: Illegal Advancement (Diving): 15 yards from the spot where the player left their feet**

Players advancing the ball MAY NOT shield their flags with their arms, elbows, ball or prevent the opponent from deflagging them.

**Penalty: Flag Guarding: 10 yards and down consumed**

## **8. SCORING**

Each team will be allowed the opportunity to advance the ball across the opponent's goal line by running or passing. Teams will be awarded points for scoring according to the rules, and unless the game is forfeited, the team having the larger score at the end of the game will be the winning team.

When the ball is out-of-bounds behind the goal line (except from an incomplete forward pass) or when the ball becomes dead in the possession of a player on, above, or behind the player's own goal line, it is a touch back if the attacking team is responsible for the ball being on or behind that goal line.

When the ball is out-of-bounds behind the goal line (except from an incomplete forward pass) or when the ball becomes dead in the possession of a player on, above, or behind the player's own goal line, it is a safety if the Defense is responsible for the ball being on or behind that goal line.

When a team leads by 17 or more points, inside the one-minute warning of the second half, the game is over. When a team leads by 30 or more points at any point in the second half, the referees will have the discretion to continue or end the game after consulting with team captains. The referees will make the final determination.

## **9. TEAM CAPTAINS**

Each team manager or coach will designate to the Referee their Team Captain(s). If more than one (1) player is designated as Team Captain, a Speaking Captain must be selected to make all decisions. The Captain's first choice of any option is irrevocable.

## **10. EJECTED AND DISQUALIFIED PLAYERS**

**Any player who has been ejected must leave the game and *MUST* physically leave the playing premises; code of conduct will be enforced.** A disqualified player must be removed for a portion (5 plays) of a game to cool off.

## **THE FIELD**

## **1. SIZE**

The field will be a regulation football field. The dimensions of a regulation field are 120 yards X 53 1/3 yards (360 feet X 160 feet). SPRD reserves the right to modify the field dimensions if necessary.

## **2. FIELD MARKINGS**

The field will be lined at 20-yard intervals from goal line to goal line. These zone markings may be changed according to field dimensions.

## **3. TEAM BOXES**

On each side of the field, a team box area is designated between the 20-yard lines for the players, coaches, and authorized attendants.

## **4. BOUNDARY LINES**

The lines bounding the sidelines and the end zones are out-of-bounds in their entirety and the inbound area is bound by these lines.

Goal lines for each team will be established at opposite ends of the field. Soft, flexible pylons will be placed at the inside corner of each intersection of the sidelines with the goal lines and the end lines. The entire width of each goal line will be part of the end zone.

# **EQUIPMENT**

## **1. THE BALL**

The official football will be pebble-grained leather or rubber covered and will meet the recommendations of size and shape for a regulation football.

The Referee will be the sole judge of any football offered for play and may change the football during play at their discretion. During the game each team must use a legal football of its choice when on Offense.

## **2. UNIFORMS**

Players on opposing teams must wear contrasting colored jerseys. Players on both teams must wear jerseys with numbers on their back. Numbers on the front of the jersey are optional. Numbers must be approx. 2-5 inches wide and 10 inches tall. Each player's pants must be a different color than the flags. The visiting team will make any changes required.

No article of clothing may cover any portion of the player's flag (excludes belts) at the start of play. Jerseys must be tucked in at start of each new play. Penalty for untucked jersey: 5 yards.

### 3. SHOES

Shoes must be of either a leather or man-made upper with a one-piece molded bottom, which may or may not have rubber cleats. Metal tipped cleats will not be worn, however rubber cleats with a smooth, flat metal bottom are allowed.

If a player is caught wearing illegal shoes during the game, that player will be ejected and the team charged with a penalty.

**Penalty: Illegal Shoes: 15 yards and the player ejected from the game**

### 4. FLAGS

Each player on the field must wear a one-piece belt with three **(3) flags sewn onto the belt**. The belt **MUST** have a Plastic Clip to secure the flags. Flags must be worn with one flag in the back and one on each side at the start of every play. The flags must be of contrasting color with the pants. Flags or Belt or Belt Clip **Must** not be altered or have anything added.

**Flags must be regulations which are 2 1/2 inches wide and 14 1/2 inches long.**

**Penalty: Illegal or Altered Flags/Belt: 15 yards and Player may be ejected (Referee discretion)**

### 5. ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT

The use of headgear (of any nature), shoulder pads, body pads, or shoes with metal tipped cleats, regardless of material is prohibited. Additionally, any unyielding or dangerous equipment is prohibited. **Baseball caps are prohibited.**

Players may use an ace bandage if needed. Knee braces must be covered by a soft, yielding material not to exceed 3/8" thickness.

No loose jewelry of any kind will be worn (excluding stud earrings and necklaces under the jersey).

## THE CLOCK

### 1. RUNNING CLOCK

The clock will start running when the ball is legally snapped. The clock will run continuously for the first 24 minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> half unless stopped due to:

- Time out, injury time-out, or official's time-out. The clock restarts when ball is legally snapped

If the clock has been stopped by a team time out, the Referee **WILL** signal when the timeout is consumed, and the 25-second play clock will start. The game clock starts when the ball is legally snapped.

The Referee WILL signal, and the game clock will start when the ball is ready for play if the clock was stopped due to Referee's discretion.

## 2. THE FINAL MINUTE OF EACH HALF

During the final minute of each half, the Referee will stop the clock for:

- Incomplete passes, clock restarts when ball is legally snapped
- Out-of-bounds, clock restarts when ball is legally snapped
- Change of possession, clock restarts when ball is legally snapped
- Penalty administration, clock restart is dependent on previous play
- Touchdown, clock restarts when ball is legally snapped after the PAT is completed
- Team timeout, clock restarts when ball is legally snapped □ First down, clock restart is dependent on previous play
- Referee's discretion, clock restarts at their discretion
- Fair catch, clock restarts when ball is legally snapped

**Clock does not stop for a backward pass that is not caught, pitch that is not caught, or on a fumble.**

## 3. UNFAIR TACTICS

The Referee may order the game clock started or stopped whenever a team is trying to either conserve or consume playing time by tactics that are obviously unfair. The Referee's decision is final.

**Penalty: Unfair Clock Tactics: 5 yards for first offense and 15 yards for each subsequent offense**

## 4. TIME OUTS

**Time outs can ONLY be called by a player on the field. NO players from the sideline can call a time out.** The Referee will declare a time out when he suspends play for any reason. Each time out will be charged either to the Referee or to one of the teams. A charged time out will not exceed one (1) minute. The Referee will warn both teams when the charged time out expires. At that time, the offense then has twenty-five (25) seconds to put the ball into play.

### 4.1 CHARGED TIME OUT

There will be 4 timeouts total during a game. Timeouts can be used at any point during regulation, but only 3 can be carried over to 2<sup>nd</sup> half.

Successive charged time outs may be granted to each team during a dead ball period. If the ball is dead and a team has not exhausted its allowed timeouts, the Referee will allow a time out and charge it to that team.

### 4.2 OFFICIAL TIME OUT

The Referee may declare an Official's time out for any contingency not elsewhere covered by the rules. The time out will also be charged to the Referee due to an injured player.

## **5. DELAYING THE GAME**

Each team will have its players on the field at the scheduled time for the beginning of each period. **All players must have their flags in legal position at the start of each play.**

**Penalty: Illegal Flag Placement: 5 yards from the previous spot**

The ball must be put in play promptly and legally. Any action or inaction that tends to prevent this is an illegal delay of the game penalty. This includes, but is not limited to consuming more than 25 seconds to put the ball in play after it is “ready for play.”

**Penalty: Delay Of Game: 5 yards**

## **6. CHANGE IN PLAYING TIME**

Before the start of the game, playing time may be shortened by mutual agreement of the Team Captains and the Referee. Anytime during the game, the playing time of any remaining period(s) may be shortened by mutual agreement of the opposing Captains and the Referee.

The period may be extended by an un-timed down, only when during the last timed down one of the following occurred:

- Touchdown was scored, and the try-for-point is attempted as part of the same period
- The penalty from a foul by the Defense was accepted (the period must be extended)
- There was a fair catch interference foul and the offended team accepts an awarded fair catch (the period may be extended, and the ball put in play by a legal snap)
- There was a fair catch interference foul and the offended team accepts the distance penalty (the period must be extended and the down re-played)
- There is a deliberate foul by the kicking team and the penalty is not declined (the period must be extended)

## **KICKING**

### **1. LEGAL KICKS**

Legal kicks are punts or field goals by a player of the team in possession. Kicking the ball in any other manner is unsportsmanlike conduct and penalized as such.

Any kick continues to be a kick until it is caught, recovered by a player, or becomes dead.

If a punt goes out of bounds between the goal lines, is fumbled or muffed, or comes to rest inbound untouched, the ball is dead and belongs to R TEAM at the dead ball spot.

### **2. PUNTS/SNAPS**

All punts must be announced. There are no quick kicks. K TEAM must announce to the Referee before the ball is ready for play whether or not they are going to punt. K may change their mind if a time out is called and informs the Referee of their decision not to kick. The Referee will announce to R whether or not a kick is being attempted. After such announcement, play is to resume without delay.

Exception: If a penalty occurs anytime during this down that result in K being in a position of fourth down again, K then must re-declare the punt.

**No direct snap is allowed anytime during the game. The punter/quarterback must be at least five (5) yards behind the line of scrimmage when receiving the snap.** After receiving the snap, the Punter must kick the ball immediately and in a continuous motion.

**Penalty: 5 yards for first offense, unsportsmanlike conduct 15 yards and loss of down for each subsequent offense.**

### 3. SAFETY (FREE KICK)

After a safety is scored, the ball will belong to the defending team at its own 20-yard line and that team will put the ball in play by a free kick.

For any free kick formation, both teams must have at least four (4) players at their respective restraining line. K's restraining line will be the yard line through the forwardmost point from which the ball may be kicked. R's restraining line will be the yard line ten (10) yards beyond that point. Return team's players at the restraining line and all Kicking team players (except the Kicker) **must remain motionless** until the ball is kicked. When the ball is legally kicked, all players of K must be inbound, and all players must be behind their restraining line. It is encroachment for any player to be beyond their designated restraining line after the ball is marked ready for play and until it is kicked.

**Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot (dead ball foul)**

This kick shall not be off a tee and be from the 20-yard line. The ball is dead if muffed by a player and the ball will belong to R.

### 4. KICKING FORMATIONS - PUNTS

Both teams must have at least four (4) players on the line of scrimmage during any punting play and until the kick is made. Return team's players on the line of scrimmage and all Kicking team players (except the Kicker) **must remain motionless** until the ball is kicked.

**Penalty: Illegal Motion/Offside: 5 yards from the previous line of scrimmage**

Blocking must be done in a legal manner, as described by rule, regardless of the stance.

**Penalty: Illegal Blocking: 10 yards from the spot of the foul**

### 5. CATCHING AND TOUCHING KICKED BALLS

A punt is the ONLY kick that can be advanced by R after hitting the ground without being previously touched by a player. Muffed and fumbled kicks are dead at the spot they contact the ground.

Any scrimmage kick that touches anything on or goes out-of-bounds behinds R's goal line (or its plane), is a touch back and the ball belongs to R at their 20-yard line.

If any member of K catches or touches a free kick before the ball is touched by R or hits the ground, it is fair catch interference.

**Penalty: Fair Catch Interference: 15 yards from the previous spot or the fair catch is awarded**

No player of K will touch a free or scrimmage kick that goes beyond the neutral zone before it touches the ground or an opponent. Such first touching is a violation, which

gives R the option of taking the ball at the spot of the touching when the ball becomes dead or taking the result of the play. Any foul during the down committed by R cancels their right to the first touch option.

## 6. FIELD GOALS AND EXTRA POINTS

Field Goals may be declared and attempted at any point. A successful field goal is worth 3 points. Field goal immediately following a touchdown (PAT) are worth 1 point. The holder must kneel with one or both knees on the ground seven (7) yards behind the line of scrimmage. The holder may not remove their grounded knee(s) from the ground to receive the ball. Should the holder remove a knee from the ground it will be considered a dead ball and change of possession at the spot the knee was lifted. The holder may use a PAT tee. The kicker has five (5) seconds to kick the ball after the ball is snapped, or the play will be blown dead at the spot of the hold.

When the ball is snapped for play by the center, the ball may touch the ground before reaching the receiver of the snap as long as the ball is fielded cleanly. If the ball is muffed or dropped to the ground by the snap receiver, the ball is considered dead at the spot it contacts the ground after the snap receiver's touch.

During a field goal or extra point play, neither the offense nor defense can cross the line of scrimmage or physically engage the opposing team. Any offside will be penalized 5 yards and the down may be replayed. On a 3-point field goal, the offense after a penalty may declare whether they want to re-kick or run a play from scrimmage.

**The defense can block a field goal as long as they do not cross the line of scrimmage or are aided by another player in any way to block the ball.** If a kick is legally blocked a change of possession will occur and the ball will be spotted at the previous line of scrimmage. The ball may not be returned or advanced. Additionally, the defense can choose to declare one player to attempt to block the kick by crossing the line of scrimmage. Before the ball is snapped, this player would need to begin play 5 yards beyond the line of scrimmage on the hash mark, and not cross 4 yards behind the line of scrimmage. If this designated player crosses 4 yards behind the line of scrimmage during the play, the kick will be declared successful.

A field goal attempt must be declared to the Referee before the ball is ready for play. Once a field goal is declared to the official, the team must take a time out to change the play type unless a penalty has occurred.

**Once a field goal play is attempted, it is either a successful field goal or a dead ball.** A missed field goal may not be returned by the defense. If a kicked field goal is unsuccessful the defense will take possession at the previous spot.

The kicking team may not fake a field goal or extra point.

**Penalty: Faking Field Goal: 10 yard penalty and change of possession Penalty: Faking Extra Point: Extra Point play is over, 10 yard penalty will be assessed on the next possession**

~~The ball will be placed at the 10 yard line for an extra point. The holder will be at the 17 yard line. The ball is dead after the kick. No player may cross the scrimmage line.~~

## **PASSING**

### **1. LEGAL FORWARD PASS**

During a scrimmage down and before a team possession has changed, a forward pass may be thrown provided the ball, when it leaves the Passer's hand, is on A's side of the line of scrimmage. All players are eligible to touch, throw, or catch a pass. Only one forward pass can be thrown per down.

An offensive player, who goes out-of-bounds on their own volition during a passing down, loses their eligibility to catch the ball until the ball has been touched by another player.

**Penalty: Illegal Touching: 5 yards**

When a legal forward pass touches the ground or anything out-of-bounds it becomes dead and is ruled an incomplete pass. The ball belongs to the passing team at the spot of previous snap unless a new series has been created by penalty.

### **2. ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS**

A forward pass is ILLEGAL if:

- A is beyond the line of scrimmage when the ball leaves the hand
- The ball is thrown after a team possession has changed during the down
- The ball is thrown intentionally out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage
- There is more than one forward pass per down
- A player throws a ball to himself untouched by a defensive player

Once a player in possession passes the line of scrimmage, their team may not throw a forward pass during that down.

**Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass: 10 yards from the previous spot (loss of down if by A and before a team possession change during a scrimmage down)**

If a player catches an illegal forward pass, the ball continues in play until declared dead.

### **3. BACKWARD PASS OR FUMBLE**

A backward pass or fumble caught in flight and in bounds by ANY player may be advanced.

A backward pass in flight will not be intentionally batted forward by the passing team. **A backward pass or fumble is dead at the spot when it goes out of bounds or touches the ground.** The clock does not stop. The ball belongs to the team last in possession, unless lost on downs.

The Ball Carrier may pass the ball backward or lose player possession by a fumble at any time, except if intentionally thrown out-of-bounds to conserve time or to avoid the capture.

**Penalty: Illegal Backward Pass: 5 yards, clock starting or stopping is at Referee's discretion**

#### **4. LEGAL CATCH**

A player who establishes possession of a thrown ball with one (1) of their feet in bounds constitutes a legal catch.

A forward pass is complete when caught by A with at least one (1) foot in bounds. It is an interception when caught by B with at least one (1) foot in bounds. **If a legal forward pass is caught simultaneously by A and B, the ball becomes dead and belongs to A.** Simultaneous catching is judgment call by Official.

#### **5. ROUGHING THE PASSER**

If a player makes contact with the Passer – above the shoulders - it is roughing. If a defender is blocked, and makes contact with the Passer, no Roughing the Passer will be called. Legal play on the Passer should be at the flag level.

**Penalty: Roughing the Passer: 15 yards from the succeeding spot and automatic first down OR if pass is completed, 15 yards will be added to the end of the run and an automatic first down.**

## **HANDING OFF**

#### **1. HANDING OFF FORWARD**

No player may hand off the ball forward except as follows:

A player, who is behind the line of scrimmage, may hand off the ball forward to a backfield teammate who is also behind the line of scrimmage or to a teammate who was on the scrimmage line when the ball was snapped.

**Penalty: Illegal Forward Hand Off: 5 yards from the succeeding spot**

#### **2. HANDING OFF BACKWARD**

The Ball Carrier may hand the ball backward at any time, except to intentionally throw out-of-bounds to conserve or consume time.

**Penalty: 5 yards, clock is started and stopped at the Referee's discretion**

## **DEFLAGGING**

### **1. DEFLAGGING**

**All players must have all of their flags in proper position at the start of each play.**

Offensive players must have possession of the ball before they can be legally deflagged.

If a flag is legally pulled off, then the ball is dead at the spot of the removal. If a flag comes off the ball carrier then the ball carrier can continue forward motion until he is touched.

A player may leave their feet to remove an opponent's flags.

Flags that are observed by the official to have been unhooked but have not fallen off as a result of the flags be caught on the uniform shall be called dead at the spot where the official observed the flags becoming unhooked.

**Penalty: Illegal Deflagging: 15 yards from the spot**

### **2. CAPTURE**

When the flag belt is clearly taken from the Ball Carrier, the down will end, and the ball is declared dead. The player who removes the flag belt from the Ball Carrier should immediately hold the flag belt over their head or immediately drop the flags to assist the official in locating the spot where the capture occurred. Players flagrantly throwing the flags will be penalized.

**Penalty: 1st Occurrence: Warning Penalty: 2nd Occurrence: Official's discretion but can be 15 yards for Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

If a player touches the ground with any part of their body aside from their hands or feet, that spot will be marked as their forward progress. If a player carrying the Ball in hand allows the Ball to touch the ground, the ball is dead at the spot where the ball touched the ground.

### **3. AFTER A SCORE**

If the flag belt is tied, illegally fastened or altered in any way, it is a penalty.

**Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct: If the scoring player, a team member, or fan removes the flag belt or causes the belt to come off (in the observance of an**

**Official), the score will not count, and a 15-yard penalty will be assessed from the previous spot. The player may be ejected, Official's discretion.**

#### **4. FLAG GUARDING**

Ball Carriers will not protect their flags by blocking with arms, hands, or the ball or prevent the opportunity of an opponent to pull or remove a flag.

**Penalty: Flag Guarding: 10 yards from spot of foul and down is consumed**

#### **5. ILLEGAL CONTACT**

In an attempt to remove a flag, both A and B are responsible for avoiding head-on collisions. Neither team A or B can contact an opponent's head or neck. B may not hold, grasp, push, or knock the Ball Carrier down or obstruct forward progress in an attempt to remove the Ball Carrier's flag. B may not knock the ball loose after A has possession. **B may not push A out of bounds to stop the play. Penalty: 5 yards added from the spot**

After the initial bump, B may not bump, push, or touch A after five (5) yards on a passing play.

**Penalty: Defensive Holding: 5 yards and an automatic first down**

## **SCORING**

### **1. POINTS**

The following methods will be used in scoring a game:

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Safety: 2 points
- Successful Field Goal: 3 points
- Successful Try-For-Point Field Goal: 1 point
- Successful Try-For-Point From 5 yards: 1 point
- Successful Try-For-Point From 10 yards: 2 points
- Forfeited Game: 6 points

### **2. TOUCHDOWN**

Touchdown will be scored for the team to which the ball legally belongs, when a down is completed, and any part of the ball is in, on, above, or behind the opponent's goal line.

### **3. TRY-FOR-POINT**

After a team scores a touchdown, they have the option to declare one of the following:

- Try-For-Point Field Goal From 10 yards: 1 point
- Try-For-Point From 5 yards: 1 point
- Try-For-Point From 10 yards: 2 points

A team is given one (1) choice that cannot be changed (unless a timeout is called), even if a penalty should occur. If a team declares they are going for two (2) points, the ball is placed at the 10-yard line, and even if a penalty should occur, the team will only be able to run or pass, and if successful, no matter from what distance, the value of the try is two (2) points. The point(s) will be awarded if the try results in what would have been a touchdown under rules governing play at other times.

If offsetting live ball fouls occur during the down, the down will be re-played. When a personal foul penalty is incurred by B during a successful try, A will accept the score with enforcement of the penalty from the 30-yard line.

After a successful try-for-point, possession will change and the next play will be from the 30-yard line, unless a penalty on B is accepted. **B can return A's try-for-point for a score resulting in two points.**

## **TIE-BREAKER CRITERIA**

1. Winning Percentage
2. Head-to-Head
3. Points Against
4. Points Differential
5. Points for
6. Common Opponents
7. Strength of Schedule
8. Coin Toss

## **OVERTIME**

### **PROCEDURE (Kansas City Style)**

- Start on 20-yard line
- Both teams will have an opportunity to score – unless there is a turnover that results in a touchdown.
- League: One overtime, after that game may end in a tie. Playoffs: After one overtime, teams must try for a 2 point conversion.

## **SUBSTITUTIONS**

### **1. ENTRY INTO GAME**

No Substitute Player will enter the game during a down.

Between downs, any number of eligible Substitutes may replace players, provided the substitution is completed by having the replaced players off the field before the ball

becomes live. Having 9 or more players on the field during a live ball period is illegal participation.

**Penalty: Illegal Participation: 5 yards from the previous spot**

An incoming Substitute must enter the field directly from their team area. The replaced player must leave the field at the sideline nearest their team area prior to the ball being snapped.

**Penalty: Players exiting to the opponent's sideline will be penalized 15 yards from the previous spot.**

Once a Substitute has entered the game, he must remain in for one (1) play, unless their team calls a time out during which time the player may be replaced without penalty.

**Penalty: 5 yards for any team having a player exiting the field when the ball becomes live, but does not participate in the play OR has player enter the game but does not remain in for the required one (1) play**

## **2. RE-ENTRY**

During the same dead ball interval, no Substitute will become a player then withdraw. No player will withdraw and then re-enter as a Substitute unless a dead ball foul occurs or there is a charged time out or a period ends.

**Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot**

## **3. READY FOR PLAY**

Each Substitute will be in uniform, ready for play, with flags in position by the start of the play.

**Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot**

# **INTERFERENCE**

## **1. PASS INTERFERENCE**

During a down in which a legal forward pass is thrown, and contact is made which interferes with an eligible Receiver who is beyond five (5) yards down field is pass interference unless it occurs when two (2) or more eligible Receivers make a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, contact, or bat a pass.

Only one (1) chuck of the Receiver is allowed within the first five (5) yards.

If a Team B player is face guarding and defending against a legal forward pass with their back to the ball, and his arms waving in the face of an eligible receiver of Team A who is attempting to catch the pass, it will be ruled as a pass interference on the Team B player because a bona fide attempt to catch or bat the pass was not being made.

## **2. OFFENSIVE INTERFERENCE**

After the ball is snapped, and until it has been touched by a Receiver there will be no offensive interference beyond the five (5) yard zone while the ball is in flight.

**The pass does NOT have to be catchable.**

**Penalty: 10 yards and loss of down**

## **3. DEFENSIVE INTERFERENCE**

After the pass is thrown by the Passer, and until it is touched, there will be no defensive interference beyond the five (5) yard zone while the ball is in flight.

**The pass does NOT have to be catchable.**

**Penalty: Spot of the foul and automatic first down**

## **4. FAIR CATCH INTERFERENCE**

While any kick is in flight beyond K's free kick line (during a free kick) or beyond the neutral zone (during a scrimmage kick) K will not touch the ball in flight, touch the Receiver, or obstruct the Receiver's path to the ball. This prohibition applies even when no signal is given by the Receiver.

**Penalty: Fair Catch Interference: 15 yards from the previous spot or an awarded fair catch at spot of interference**

# **UNFAIR AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE ACTS**

## **1. UNFAIR AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE ACTS**

The Referee may enforce any penalty he considers equitable, including the awarding of a score, for the following acts:

- A team refuses to play with one (1) minute after ordered to play by the Referee
- A play is interfered with by an obvious unfair or unsportsmanlike act not specifically covered by rule
- A team repeatedly commits fouls that can be penalized only by halving the distance to its goal line

The Referee may award a touchdown when B tackles A on a breakaway or inside of B's 20-yard line.

For refusal to play or for repeated fouls the Referee will, after one (1) warning, forfeit the game to the opponents.

## 2. PERSONAL FOULS AND PROHIBITED ACTS

No player will commit a personal foul during a period or intermission. Whenever, in the judgment of any game Official, the following acts are deliberate or flagrant, the players involved will be immediately ejected from the game:

- Blocking in a manner that would cause a Player's feet, knees, or legs to strike an opponent (all blocking will be with the feet in contact with the ground)
- Hurdling or diving to advance the ball (A player may only dive, jump, or hurdle to avoid contact or injury)
- Contact with an opponent who is on the ground
- Throwing the Ball Carrier to the ground
- Pushing a Player out-of-bounds
- Unnecessary roughness of any nature
- The Ball Carrier deliberately driving or running into a defensive player
- The defensive player deliberately driving or running into the Ball Carrier
- Roughing the Center before he has begun their pass pattern or has stood up to block. **Penalty: 15 yards plus yardage gained and an automatic first down**
- **Abusive or insulting language**
- Any acts of unfair play
- Managers, Coaches, or other non-players on the field of play at any time
- Players leaving the field of play other than during the intermission at halftime
- Interfering with a player or any play while the ball is live
- Using a "sleeper" play, by placing a player(s) near the sideline who were not within the huddle at the time of the ready-for-play signal
- The Punter delaying the kick
- Attempting to substitute a suspended player. **Penalty: Forfeiture of game**
- Intentionally pulling or removing the flags from a player without the ball (either A or B).
- Roughing the Quarterback - **Penalty: 15 yards plus yardage gained and an automatic first down**
- Any other flagrant, deliberate, or violent act
- Blocking using locked hands, elbows, or any part of the forearm or hand in a manner inconsistent with the rules
- Fighting

**Penalty: Personal Foul: 15 yards, if flagrant the offender will be ejected**

## FOULS AND PENALTIES

### 1. PROCEDURE AFTER A FOUL

When a foul occurs during a live ball, the Referee will, at the end of the down, notify the offended Captain of their options.

If the penalty is declined or there is a double foul, there is no loss of distance.

The Captain's choice of options may not be revoked.

When a foul occurs during a dead ball between downs or prior to a free kick or snap, the ball does not become live. The Referee will notify the offended captain of their options.

If the penalty is declined, the number of the next down will be whatever it would have been if that foul had not occurred.

## 2. FOULS BY BOTH TEAMS

If offsetting fouls occur during a down, that down will be repeated.

Exception: If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of possession, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball, provided its foul was not prior to the final change of possession and it declined the penalty of its opponent's foul.

When a live ball foul is followed by a dead ball foul by the opponent, the penalties are administered separately and in the order of occurrence.

## 3. FOUL BETWEEN DOWNS

The penalty for a foul between downs is enforced from the succeeding spot.

Any foul following a penalty incurred after a series ends and before the next series begins will be first down, but the zone line-to-gain will be established after the penalty is enforced.

## 4. BLOCKING

Teammates of a Runner or Passer may block for them, but will not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any matter. The Ball Carrier will not grasp a teammate or be grasped, pulled, or pushed by a teammate.

**Penalty: Illegal Blocking: 10 yards (spot foul)**

**Both offense and defense are responsible for blocking legally. The block will take place with the Blocker's arms extended and palms facing the opponent. The block must be initiated on the opponent's chest or either side. Contact that begins from behind, above the shoulders, or below the waist is illegal.** If the person being blocked presents their back to the Blocker after a legal block was initiated, and has not lost contact, no foul shall be called. During a block neither player may quickly with force extend their arms launching the other player. During a block neither player may grab the others clothing. The player must be on their feet before, during, and after blocking.

The Blocker may use their hand or arm to break a fall or to retain their balance.

The offensive team will be prohibited from obstructing an opponent with extended hand or arm. This includes the use of a "stiff arm" extended to prevent an opponent's attempt to deflag.

**Penalty: Illegal Offensive Blocking: 10 yards from the spot of the foul Penalty: Illegal Defensive Blocking: 10 yards from previous spot penalty: Offensive Holding: 10 yards from the spot of the foul Penalty: Defensive Holding: 5 yards and an automatic 1st down**

## 5. MULTIPLE FOULS

Penalties for dead ball fouls are administered separately and in order of occurrence.

Dead ball fouls are not coupled with live ball fouls or other dead ball fouls to create double or multiple fouls.

All unsportsmanlike fouls are penalized separately and in addition to those occurring during a down by the same team.

When two (2) or more live ball fouls are committed by the same team, only one penalty may be chosen except when a foul(s) for unsportsmanlike conduct follows a previous foul. In such a case, the penalty for the unsportsmanlike conduct is administered separately. The offended Captain may choose which penalty will be administered and he may also decline all penalties.

When both teams commit live ball fouls during the same live ball period and (a) there is no change of possession, or (b) there was a change of possession and the team in possession at the end of the down had fouled prior to final then the penalties cancel and the down is re-played.

If both teams foul during a down where there is a change of team possession, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball, provided it did not foul prior to the final change of possession and it declined the penalty for its opponent's foul.

## 6. SCRIMMAGE FOULS

For a snap preceded by a huddle or shift, all players of the Offense must come to a complete stop and remain stationary in a legal position without any movement of their feet, body, head, or arms for at least one (1) full second before the ball is snapped.

## **7. PENALTY RESULTING IN FIRST DOWN**

When a scrimmage down follows a penalty for a foul committed during a free kick, the down and distance established by the penalty will be first down with the next zone line to-gain.

After a penalty which leaves the ball in possession of A beyond its zone line-to gain or when a penalty stipulates a first down, the down and distance established by that penalty will be first down with the next zone line-to-gain.

After a distance penalty for a foul is committed during a down where team possession has changed, the ball belongs to the team in possession when the foul occurred and the down and distance established by that penalty will be first down with zone line-to gain.

## **8. TYPES OF PLAY AND BASIC ENFORCEMENT SPOTS**

If a foul occurs during a down, the basic enforcement spot is fixed by the type of play. There are two (2) types of play, loose ball plays and running plays.

A loose ball play is action during a:

- Scrimmage kick
- Legal forward pass
- Backward pass or a fumble by A from, on, or behind the scrimmage line
- The run that precedes a legal pass, kick, or fumble
- When a foul occurs during a loose ball play, the basic enforcement spot is the previous spot.

A running play is any action not considered a loose ball play.

A running play includes any run and any loose ball play that starts beyond the line of scrimmage following the run.

When a foul occurs during a running play, the basic enforcement spot is where the related run ends, which is where the ball becomes dead or where the player loses possession. The basic enforcement spot for a penalty on the offense is where the foul occurs.

A measurement cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line. If the penalty is greater than this, the ball is placed halfway from the enforcement spot to the goal line.

## **SUMMARY OF PENALTIES**

**DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE:** Spot foul and automatic first down. (If occurring in the end zone, ball will be placed at the 1-yard line).

### **5-YARDS**

- Less than four (4) players on A's line for an offensive play
- Less than four (4) players on B's line at the snap for a punt
- Defensive holding: Spot foul (Automatic first down)
- Player exits field after not participating in the play
- Re-entry after withdrawing on the same play
- Players outside of team box
- Delaying the game
- Throwing ball out of bounds to stop play or conserve time
- Encroachment by defense
- False start
- Offside by offense

### **10-YARDS**

- Illegal forward pass (if by the Offense, the down is consumed)
- Offensive Holding: 10 yards from spot of the foul
- Illegal Ball switch or Illegal Ball
- Offensive interference (down consumed)
- Illegal Block (if by the Offense, 10 yards from the spot)
- Swim Move (arms and hands going over the head of the opponent)
- Flag guarding (spot foul, down consumed)
- Stiff arm

### **15-YARDS**

- Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Player or Bench (2nd offense = ejection)
- Roughing the Passer or Center (Automatic 1st down)
- Illegal contact
- Flagrant Foul (player ejected)
- Player exiting the field after coming to line to start play 5 yards
- Illegally removing flags
- Illegally removing flags prior to receiver catching the ball
- Throwing flags after deflagging (1st = warning, 2nd = 15 yards)
- Diving, leaping, sliding to advance ball (spot foul)
- Altered flags (player ejected)
- Fair catch interference
- 9 players on field during live ball play 5 yards
- Illegal Flags (not appropriate length and or width)

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

1. Forfeiture of game is not a penalty, but an edict by the Referee.
2. Any flagrant foul, in addition to the yardage penalty, results in disqualification.
3. **Any fighting results in ejection of the combatants.** Eligibility is restored only after setting a meeting with the league director. The league director will determine when eligibility is to be restored.
4. **Any player who touches or threatens an Official, an employee, or staff member is automatically suspended for the remainder of the season** unless cause can be shown to the league director to alter the suspension.

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

**A:** Team that puts the ball in play or obtains the ball from a change of possession.

**B:** Opponent of A.

**BACK:** Any player who is legally behind the backfield line when the ball is snapped.

**BACKFIELD LINE:** To be legally in the backfield, the head an A's player must not break the plane of the line drawn through the waistline of the nearest A player (except the Snapper) on the line of scrimmage.

**BACKWARD PASS:** A live ball thrown toward or parallel to the Passer's end line. It continues to be a pass until it is caught or strikes the ground. A backward pass that hits the ground is ruled the same as a fumble, dead at the spot where it hits the ground.

**BALL CARRIER:** Player in possession of a live ball.

**BALL READY FOR PLAY:** If time is in, a dead ball is ready for play when the Referee sounds the whistle and signals "ready for play." If time is out, a dead ball is ready for play when the Referee sounds the whistle and signals either "start the clock" or "ready for play."

**BATTING:** Intentionally striking the ball with a hand or arm, or in other than a legal kick, with leg or knee.

**BENCH:** Any person belonging to a team in the team box on the sideline.

**BETWEEN DOWNS:** Interval during which the ball is dead.

**CATCH:** Act of establishing player possession of a live ball in flight. If a player attempts to catch while in the air, the ball **MUST** be in control when the player returns to the ground inbound.

**CENTER:** Player who snaps the ball.

**CLIPPING:** Running or driving into the back of an opponent, or throwing or dropping the body across the back of the leg(s) of an opponent or pushing an opponent in the back.

**DEAD BALL:** A ball not in play.

**DEAD BALL FOUL:** Foul committed between live ball periods.

**DEFENSIVE TEAM:** The Offense's opposing team.

**DEFLAGGING:** Legal removal of a flag from an opponent in possession of the ball. Pushing, striking, holding, slapping, or tripping is not permitted.

**DISQUALIFIED PLAYER:** A Player who becomes ineligible for part or all of the game.

**Down:** Unit of the game which starts, after the ball is ready for play, with a snap or a free kick and ends when the ball becomes dead.

**EJECTED PLAYER:** Player who becomes ineligible from further participation in the game.

**ENCROACHMENT:** The position of a player, except the Snapper, any part of whose person is beyond their scrimmage line or their restraining line when the ball is about to be played.

**ENFORCEMENT SPOT:** Point from which the penalty for a foul is enforced.

**FAIR CATCH:** Catch of a free kick or scrimmage kick that is beyond the neutral zone and between the goal line by a Player of the receiving team who has signaled intention by extending one (1) arm above their head and waving it from side-to-side more than once.

**FORWARD PASS:** A live ball thrown towards the opponent's goal line. A pass continues to be a pass until it is caught or strikes the ground. Only one (1) forward pass is allowed per down.

**FOUL:** Rule infraction for which a penalty is determined.

**FREE KICK:** Kick made under restrictions that prohibit either team from advancing beyond established restraining lines until the ball is kicked.

**FUMBLE:** Loss of player possession other than by handing off, passing, or kicking the ball. A fumble that hits the ground is immediately considered dead.

**GOAL LINE:** The vertical plane separating an end-zone from the field of play.

**HANDING OFF THE BALL:** Transferring player possession of the ball from one (1) teammate to another without passing or kicking it.

**HUDDLE:** Two (2) or more offensive players grouping together after the ball is ready for play and before assuming scrimmage formation prior to the snap.

**HURDLING:** An attempt by a Runner who has either feet or both knees foremost, to jump over a player on the scrimmage line or a similar jump over an opponent who is on their feet at any place.

**INBOUND SPOT:** The intersection of the nearest inbound line and the yard line passing through the dead ball spot.

**INTERCEPTION:** Catch of an opponent's pass or fumble before it hits the ground. If a player attempts an interception while in the air the ball must be in control when the player returns to the ground inbound.

**K:** Team that kicks the ball.

**KICKER:** Any player who makes a kick. The Kicker is a Runner until he actually kicks the ball.

**LINEMAN:** Any player on their scrimmage line when the ball is snapped.

**LIVE BALL:** A ball in play. A pass, kick, or fumble that has not yet touched the ground is a live ball in flight and therefore recoverable by either team.

**LOOSE BALL:** A live ball not in player possession during a running play or a scrimmage or free kick before possession is gained or the interval after a legal forward pass is touched, becomes complete, incomplete, or intercepted.

**LOSS OF DOWN:** Loss of the right to repeat the down.

**NEUTRAL ZONE:** Space between the two (2) free kick lines during a free kick and between the two (2) lines of scrimmage during a scrimmage down. It is the length of a football and is established when the ball is ready for play.

**MUFF:** Touching a ball while unsuccessfully attempting to catch or recover it. All muffs that strike the ground result in a dead ball.

**OFFENSIVE TEAM:** Team in possession, or the team that the ball belongs to.

**OUT-OF-BOUNDS SPOT:** The point at which the ball becomes dead because of going or being declared out-of-bounds.

**PASS:** Throwing the ball. A pass continues to be a pass until caught, intercepted, or becomes dead.

**PASSER:** The player who has thrown a legal pass. He remains the Passer while the ball is in flight.

**PENALTY:** A loss imposed by rule upon a team which has committed a foul.

**PLAYER:** Any one of the participants in the game at any particular time.

**POSSESSION:** A player is in possession when he is both holding and controlling the ball. A team is in possession when one of its players is in possession, while a punt is being attempted, while a forward pass is in flight, and during a fumble, backward pass, or illegal forward pass.

**PREVIOUS SPOT:** Point from which the ball was last put into play.

**PROTECTED KICK:** Scrimmage kick by A that is made under the restrictions that prohibits either team from advancing beyond the neutral zone until the ball is kicked.

**PUNT:** Kicking the ball by the player who drops it and kicks it before it strikes the ground.

**R:** Team that receives the kick.

**RECOVERY:** Securing possession of a live ball after it strikes the ground. If a player attempts recovery while in the air, the ball must be in control when the player returns to the ground inbound.

**SCRIMMAGE:** The interplay of two (2) teams during a down in which play begins with a snap and ends when the ball next becomes dead.

**SCRIMMAGE KICK:** Kick by A during a scrimmage down other than a "free kick" before team possession changes.

**SCRIMMAGE LINE:** Yard line, and its vertical plane, that passes through the point of the ball nearest the opponent's goal line when a play starts.

**SHIFT:** Simultaneous change of position by two (2) or more offensive players after the ball is ready for play and before the snap.

**SNAP:** Handing off or passing the ball back from the position on the ground through the legs. The movement must be a quick and continuous motion of the hand(s) during which the ball actually leaves the hand(s). The ball may not be raised to move more than a 45-degree angle at the snap and the long axis of the ball must be at right angles to the scrimmage line.

**SNAPPER:** Player who snaps the ball.

**SPOT OF THE FOUL:** The point at which the foul occurs. If the ball is out of bounds between the goal lines it will be the intersection of the nearer inbound line and the yard line extended through the spot of the foul.

**SUBSTITUTE:** A replacement for a player or player vacancy.

**SUCCEEDING SPOT:** As related to a foul, the point at which the ball would have been put in play if that foul had not occurred.

**SWIM:** When player raises hands and arms over opponent's head to get by them.

**TOUCHING:** Contacting the Ball Carrier placing both hands anywhere between the armpits and knees. This includes the ball in the Ball Carrier possession. The feet of a Player may leave the ground to make a touch. Pushing, striking, slapping, or holding is not permitted. If a player trips the Ball Carrier in their attempt to make a diving tag it is a penalty.

**TRIPPING:** Using the lower leg, foot, or arm extended in an obvious manner to obstruct an opponent (including the Ball Carrier) below the knee.

**YARD LINE:** Any line in the field of play parallel to the end lines and between the goal lines.

**ZONE LINE-TO-GAIN:** The next zone line in advance of the ball. If distance has been lost due to penalty or failure to gain, the original zone in advance of the ball at the beginning of the series of downs is the zone line-to-gain.