

### Player Attire

- Cleats are allowed but must be rubber (no metal tips).
- Players must wear shorts or pants of a solid color; jerseys must be always tucked in.
- Shorts or Pants cannot have pockets for safety reasons
- Baseball Caps, Ski Masks/Balaclavas, Sunglasses & jewelry of any kind is not permitted on the field of play.
- **All players MUST wear a mouthguard. They cannot play without one.**

### Field Dimensions and Markings

- Length: 85 yards
- Width: 30 yards
- End Zones: 10 yards deep
- No-running zones: Must be marked 5 yards from each end zone.
- Parents are designated the side of the field opposite from the players

### Scoring

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point: 1 point (played from 5-yard line)
- 2 points (played from 10-yard line)
- Safety: 2 points
- Rouge: 1 point
- A win constitutes 2 pts, a tie 1pt, a loss 0 pts

**Note:** An interception return to opponent's end zone on any extra-point play by the defense will result in the defense scoring 2 points plus gaining possession for the next series at its own 35yd line.

### Number of Players

- Teams consist of 12-16 players (7 on the field at a time).
- Teams may play with a minimum of six (6) players (due to injuries).
- If less than 6 players are available, the game is cancelled and the team without enough players will forfeit
- **If an entire team comes to the field without their mouthguards, it's an automatic forfeit**

### Timing/Overtime

- Game length is 50-55 minutes running time (two halves, 25 minutes each). If the score remains tied at the end of regulation, a tie will be rewarded with each team receiving one point
- Each time the ball is spotted the offense has 25 seconds to snap the ball.
- Each team has 1 x 60-second time outs per half. The clock stops during a time out. These cannot be carried over to the second half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion. (i.e., if there's an injury)
- The teams will be warned when there are two minutes left to play in both halves. The game cannot end on a defensive penalty.
- There will be a halftime period of 1 minutes between the first and second half. Can be shortened at refs' discretion

### Specific Rules for Different Age Groups

#### **6/7 Years (Tartans Division)**

- No Rush at all.
- Ball does not have to be centered between legs.
- No Punting, ball is advanced 15yds if a team decides to punt.
- Coaches are always allowed on the field all season.
- **1 run play is allowed for every 3 plays. No run zone is 5yds from goal line. It's not mandatory to run the ball, however if you do its 1 run play for every 3 plays. Doesn't reset when in NRZ or for converts**
- Teams **MUST** declare if they are gambling or punting on 3<sup>rd</sup> down.

#### **Bad Snaps**

6/7yo – Continue Play

8/9 div – Dead Ball, Re-do Play (1 time)

10/11 – 16/17 divs – Loss of Downs

## Specific Rules for Different Age Groups

### 8/9 Years (Hilltops Division)

- Rusher at 7 yards goes on the snap of the ball.
- Ball does not have to be centered between legs.
- Coaches are always allowed on the field all season.
- **1 run play is allowed for every 3 plays. No run zone is 5yds from goal line. It is not mandatory to run the ball, however if you do its 1 run play for every 3 plays. Doesn't reset when in NRZ or for converts**
- Teams **MUST** declare if they are gambling or punting on 3<sup>rd</sup> down. If a team states they are gambling and then punts the ball, it's a penalty on the offence (5yds), TOD (turnover on downs), and no points will be awarded if a single was attained.
- Players must wait 3 seconds before rushing the punter

### 10/11 Years (Thunder Division)

- Rusher at 7 yards goes on the snap of the ball.
- **1 run play is allowed for every 3 plays. No run zone is 5yds from goal line. It is not mandatory to run the ball, however if you do its 1 run play for every 3 plays. Doesn't reset when in NRZ or for converts**
- Ball must be snapped between legs.
- Coaches are allowed on the field for the first two games only.
- **Teams DO NOT HAVE TO** declare if they are gambling or punting on 3<sup>rd</sup> down

### 12/13 & 14/15 Years (Rams & Huskies Division)

- Rusher at 7 yards goes on the snap of the ball.
- Ball must be snapped between legs.
- **1 run play is allowed for every 3 plays. No run zone is 5yds from goal line. It is not mandatory to run the ball, however if you do its 1 run play for every 3 plays. Doesn't reset when in NRZ or for converts**
- Coaches are not allowed on the field, unless during a timeout or injury
- **Teams DO NOT HAVE TO** declare if they are gambling or punting on 3<sup>rd</sup> down

## IN PLAY RULES

### Possession

- Before the start of the game, Coaches or captains will gather and flip a coin (or paper/rock/scissors if a coin is not available) to determine first possession. Loser of the coin toss has choice of end zone to defend.
- Kick-off is a free punt from the team's own 35-yard line. **(6/7 division begins on the 35yd line)**
- All kick-offs and punts are dead immediately when the ball hits the ground.
- The offensive team has 3 attempts or downs to advance the ball 10 yards down the field. Meanwhile, the defence tries to stop or delay the progress.
- Everyone is an eligible receiver.
- A defensive rusher (or rushers) stands 7 yards from the ball and at the snap of the ball runs in to attempt to flag the quarterback. **(EXCEPT 6/7yr old division, no rusher at all)**
- The quarterback stands a behind the line of scrimmage. He/she receives the ball from the centre by means of a snap between the legs.
- The First person to be a QB cannot run over the line of scrimmage.
- Following single points or safeties, ball is to be scrimmaged on the 35-yard line.
- Teams change sides at half time
- ***Any given player can only score THREE (3) OFFENSIVE touchdowns per game. If a player who has scored three offensive touchdowns in the current game scores a fourth touchdown, the ball is brought back to the line of scrimmage and the down is replayed. The first time no penalty is applied if it occurs afterwards a 5yd loss and Loss of Down penalty will be applied.***

### Punting

- Kick-off is a free punt from the team's own 35-yard line.
- No punting in the 6/7yr old division.
- A punter may not be hit on any part of their body while attempting to punt the ball. If that does occur, it's a 15-yard unsportsmanlike penalty on the defense & automatic first down.
- Punts can be blocked, however, once the ball has been blocked, if it hits the ground the play is dead, ball turns over on downs.
- If a punter is flagged before they punt the ball, the play is dead at the spot where the punter was flagged.

### Running

- To start the play, the ball must be snapped between the legs of the center.
- The center is the player who gives the ball to the quarterback via a snap.
- **FORWARD HANDOFFS ARE ALLOWED. ANY FORWARD HANDOFF CANNOT BE THROWN. THERE IS ONLY ONE FORWARD TRANSACTION ALLOWED.**
- Tosses or sweeps behind the line of scrimmage are allowed and are running plays. Downfield tosses are not permitted. Once a player has possession of the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, any loss of possession will be blown dead by the official.
- "No-running zones" are located 5 yards from each end zone. When the ball is on or inside the 5-yard line going towards the opponent's end zone, the offense cannot use a running play to cross the line of scrimmage. If a run play occurs within the 5yd no-run zone, the play will be blown dead and a loss of down will occur.
- Any player who takes a non-forward handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- All defensive players are eligible to rush once the ball has been handed off, tossed, or there is a play-action fake or fake handoff.
- If a player receives a handoff/pitch/pass behind the QB, that player who has gotten the handoff/pitch/pass behind the QB has the run/pass option.
- The quarterback is the player who receives the ball directly from the snap.
- The quarterback (first to receive the ball from the centre) cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage.
- Spinning is allowed, but offensive players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving). If a player leaves their feet, the play will be blown dead by the referee & the ball will be placed from the spot where the player left his/her feet. It can also result in a turnover on downs (if on 3rd down).
- No diving is allowed. If a player dives from his feet. The play will be blown dead by the referee & the ball will be placed from the spot where the player left his/her feet. It can also result in a turnover on downs (if on 3rd down).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's is flagged, not where the ball is.
- It is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender. Good defensive position should be rewarded by the officials.
- There are no fumbles in flag football. Any fumble will be considered a dead ball at the spot of the fumble.
- Any fumble by the offensive team in their own end-zone will result in a safety

### Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- All players may be in motion at the snap, with exception of the center.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception. (A receiver cannot return on to the playing field from an out of bounds position and be the first to touch the football)
- Once a player catches the ball, he/she is no longer allowed to lateral the ball. (i.e. hook and laterals are not permitted)

- Players may catch the ball while on their knees, back or side, however, the play is blown dead and the ball is spotted where the catch was made.
- If a player dives to catch a ball, the play is dead where the catch is made (i.e. where the players' feet/body are at the time of the catch)
- If both an offensive and defensive player catch the ball simultaneously, the tie will always go to the offense

### Passing

- The quarterback has seven (7) seconds to throw the ball; he/she cannot cross the line of scrimmage with the ball.
- Once the ball is handed off or tossed, or there is a play-action fake or fake handoff, the seven (7) second rule no longer is in effect.
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage
- Forward passes must cross the line of scrimmage. If a forward pass does not cross the line of scrimmage, the offense will be penalized with an illegal forward pass

### Dead Balls

- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
  - Official blows the whistle.
  - Ball carrier's flag is pulled or becomes illegal.  
**Note** - Illegal meaning the flag is in a position unable for the defense to pull i.e. falls off
  - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - Touchdown or safety is scored.
  - When any part of the ball carrier's body, other than a hand or foot, touches the ground.
- If the ball carriers flag falls off, the play will be whistled dead and the ball will be spotted at the spot where the flag fell off.
- Players are eligible to catch a pass if their flag has fallen off but will be ruled down upon making the catch.
- When the ball is fumbled  
**Note:** There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted where the ball carrier's feet were when the fumble was made. (i.e. a bad snap will not be ruled as a fumble in the 8/9 division). There is no stripping of the ball.

### Defensive Rushing

- Only players starting 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage (2yd outside the center's feet) can rush the passer
- A bean bag designates the 7 yards from the line of scrimmage
- Any number of players can rush the quarterback but only players lined up within two yards (side to side) of the ball are entitled to a clear path to the quarterback.
- **A rusher lined up within two yards** (side to side) of the 7-yard marker is entitled to a free rush at the quarterback – the rusher may not be interfered. If interfered, it will result in an offensive rusher interference penalty
- **A rusher lined up outside the two yards** (side to side) of the 7 yard maker is not entitled to a free rush to the quarterback and may be interfered (For example - a running back or receiver in motion or in a pattern who runs into the rusher)
- The rusher may not be interfered. If interfered, it will result in an offensive rusher interference penalty.
- A rusher may not hit the quarterbacks' arm or any other part of their body while the quarterback is throwing.
- A rusher may not hit any part of a punter's body while the attempting to punt the ball. If that does occur, it's a 15-yard unsportsmanlike penalty.
- A rusher can block any punt, however once the ball has been blocked, if it hits the ground the play is dead, ball turns over on downs. Similarly, if a rusher flags a punter before he punts the ball, the play is dead at the spot where the punter was flagged.

## Interceptions

- Interceptions change the possession of the ball.
- The defense can return interceptions.
- On interceptions that occur and remain in the end zone, the ball will become dead and will result in the ball belonging to the intercepting team at its 35-yard line. Should an interception occur in the end zone and the ball carrier leave the end zone, the ball will belong to the intercepting team at the spot the ball becomes dead. However, should the ball carrier return to the end zone and be flagged, or the ball be ruled dead the result would be a safety for the other team

**REMEMBER, FLAG FOOTBALL IS NON-CONTACT, BLOCKING AND TACKLING IS NOT PERMITTED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES**

## Sportsmanship/Roughing

- If the referee witnesses any acts of flagrant contact (tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act) the game will be stopped, and the player will be ejected from the game. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
- Trash talking and taunting is illegal. (Trash talk and taunting is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators.) Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If trash talking or taunting occurs, the team committing the foul will be penalized 15 yards for unsportsmanlike conduct. Officials have the right to determine offensive language
- Discriminatory statements/offensive language, such as comments of race, sex and upbringing by players, coaches or spectators will result in a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and an immediate ejection
- Deliberate questioning of officials' calls will be penalized upon the official's discretion
- Any physical or verbal abuse against an official by a player, coach or spectator will result in a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and an immediate ejection.
- In the case that parents are asked to leave the field of play, coaches are responsible to help officials enforce the decision if parents are unwilling to leave. If the parent does not leave, the team they are sided with will forfeit the game
- ***Once a flag is pulled, the defensive player should hold the flag above his/her head so that the referee can spot the location of the flag pull. The pulled flag should be handed to the player who lost the flag or to a teammate. Intentionally throwing the flag onto the ground is considered poor flag etiquette and will result in a 15yd unsportsmanlike penalty.***

## **PENALTIES**

- All penalties are 5 yards (except for Pass Interference & unsportsmanlike conduct - 15 yards).
- All penalties can be declined.
- Penalties will not exceed half the distance to the opposing team's goal line from the line of scrimmage.
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- Penalties can be assessed from the line of scrimmage or be a spot foul.
- Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines the penalty.
- If the offense and defense are both penalized with two penalties that are of the same distance (i.e. 5 yard and 5 yards), the down will be repeated
- If the offense and defense are both penalized, but one side is penalized with a 15-yard penalty, the difference between the penalties will be assessed, and the down will be repeated

## Offensive Penalties

### **5 yards and loss of down**

- No cadence by quarterback
- Illegal forward pass – pass received behind the line of scrimmage
- Offensive pass interference - receiver push offs
  - **Note** - If an offensive player pulls the flag of a defensive players just as the defender is about to make a catch, the offensive player will be penalized for pass interference

- Minor Roughing - it is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender. Good defensive position will be rewarded to the defense by the officials
- Blocking/Illegal pick play
  - **Note** – Offenses may not run plays where players are placed into a stalemated position to act as stand-still blockers downfield. If a pick play or wall is intentionally run it will result in a 5-yard penalty and a loss of down
- Illegal 4<sup>th</sup> Score – a player who has scored three offensive touchdowns, scores a 4<sup>th</sup> touchdown (or more) after being warned about scoring multiple offensive touchdowns in the current game.

### **5 yards, down repeated**

- Substitution fouls – i.e., eight players on the field, players enter field during the snap of the ball
- Delay of game – inability to snap the ball before the 30 second play clock expires
- Illegal Snap – snap must occur between the legs of the snapper to the quarterback
- Player out of bounds – if a player goes out of bounds, without interference, the player may not return to the field or catch the ball
- Rusher interference – It is illegal for a receiver, running back or center to run a pattern that interferes with a rusher who is at a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage and who is 2 yards (side to side) of the 7 yard rushing marker
- Offside – occurs when a player is passed the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball

### **5 yards from the point of foul and loss of down**

- Flag guarding – using hands, arms, or elbows to intentionally block the defender from pulling the flag.  
**Note** – Stiff arming a defender is a form of flag guarding and may also result in a roughing penalty

### **15 Yards and a loss of down**

- Unsportsmanlike Conduct – intentional physical conduct, verbal abuse
- Major Roughing
- Illegal 5<sup>th</sup> Score - Team that has a player score more than 3 offensive tds after being warned that player scored a 4<sup>th</sup> offensive td and now has scored a 5<sup>th</sup> offensive td.

### Defensive Penalties

#### **5 YARDS & AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN FOR THE OFFENCE**

- Offside – occurs when a player is passed the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball
- Illegal contact – holding, blocking, jamming at the line of scrimmage
- Roughing – unintentional tackling
- Illegal Flag Pull – occurs when a defensive player pulls an offensive players flag with intention to cause a dead ball or making the receiver ineligible for a catch
- Illegal Rush - occurs when a rusher is passed the minimum 7-yard rushing length before the ball is snapped when attempting to rush the quarterback
  - **Note** – The rusher must pass the line of scrimmage to be considered an illegal rush
- Quarterback release interference – Hitting the quarterbacks' arm when rushing the passer

### **5 yards and down repeated**

- Disconcerting signals – Signals to distract opponents or simulate offensive signals prior to the snap
- Interference with ball at the snap
- Substitution fouls – i.e. 8 players on the field, players entering the field during the snap of the ball

### **15 yards and automatic first down**

- Pass interference – illegally preventing a receiver from catching the ball

- Note – Along with the standard rules for pass interference, if a defensive player pulls the flag of an offensive receiver just as the receiver is about to make a catch, the defensive player will be penalized for pass interference.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct – intentional physical conduct, verbal abuse
- Major Roughing