

# RC INTRAMURAL SPORTS

## 2011 7 on 7 Flag Football Rules Book

All rules are taken directly from the NIRSA Flag and Touch Football Rules Book, modified for the RC Intramural Sports Program. All situations not specifically covered in this book shall be referred to the NIRSA.

### **RULE 1. THE GAME, PLAYING FIELD, AND EQUIPMENT**

#### **SECTION 1. THE GAME**

##### **1. The Game**

The game shall be played between 2 teams of 7 players each. Game time is defined as the scheduled start time. Five rostered players must be present to prevent a forfeit. A team with five or six rostered players present may select two players from other teams to fill out their team. A team with seven rostered players may take a single player from another team for the game.

##### **2. Team Captains**

Each team shall designate to the Referee the team captain or captains. If more than one player is designated, a speaking captain must be designated to make all decisions. The captain's first choice of any penalty shall be irrevocable.

##### **3. Persons Subject to the Rules**

Team representatives, including players, substitutes, replaced players, coaches, trainers, spectators and other persons affiliated with the team are subject to the rules of the game.

##### **4. Referee's Authority**

The Referee has authority to rule promptly, and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules.

#### **SECTION 2. THE PLAYING FIELD**

##### **1. The Team Area**

On one side of the field a team area is designated for the teams, coaches, and authorized team attendants. The area shall be located 3 yards from the sideline and between the 20-yard lines. Each team has the responsibility of keeping its players and spectators behind these restraining lines or be subject to an unsportsmanlike penalty for sideline infractions.

#### **SECTION 3. THE GAME AND PLAYER EQUIPMENT**

##### **■ The Ball**

The official ball shall be pebble-grained leather or rubber covered and meet the recommendations of size and shape for a regulation football. There are no requirements regarding ball pressure and markings. The Referee shall be the sole judge of any ball offered for play. Any ball used in a game must be available for both teams to use.

##### **2. Player Uniform**

###### **The Jersey**

###### **Jersey's must be:**

Long enough so they remain tucked in the pants/shorts during the entire down, or

### **Pants/ Shorts**

Each player must wear pants or shorts without any belt(s), belt loop(s), pocket(s) or exposed drawstrings. The pants or shorts must be a different color than the flags.

### **Flag Belts**

Each player must wear a one piece belt, which are provided by Intramural Sports. The belt must be worn at the waistline and have three flags permanently attached. Teams may not use their own flag belts. Alternatively, fixed belts with removable flags may be used by the league. In this case, replace wording regarding removal of the entire flag belt with removal of singular or multiple flags for rulings.

### **Footwear**

Athletic shoes or cleats may be worn. Metal cleats or studs are not permitted and players will be disqualified if found during a game. No open-toed shoes, sandals, open heels, or hard-sole shoes or boots are permitted.

### **Gloves**

Players may wear gloves which must consist of a soft, pliable, and nonabrasive material.

### **Headwear**

Players may wear a head band no wider than 2" and made of a non abrasive cloth, elastic, or rubber to control hair. Players may wear only rubber bands or soft elastic bands to control hair. Penalty flag colored headwear may not be worn.

### **Sunglasses**

Players may wear pliable and non-rigid sunglasses.

### **Mouth & Tooth Equipment**

It is highly recommended that a mouth piece be worn by all players.

## **3. Player Equipment - Illegal**

### **Illegal Equipment**

A player wearing illegal equipment shall not be permitted to play. This applies to equipment which, in the opinion of the referee, is dangerous or confusing. Illegal equipment includes:

- a. Jewelry of any kind (Exception: Medical Bracelets or religious medallions which must be taped directly to the person)
- b. Pads or braces worn above the waist.
- c. Leg or knee braces made of hard, unyielding material and not covered with a ½" padding made of rubber or material with similar properties.
- d. Shoes with metal cleats.
- e. A flagbelt secured in any other way except for the clip.
- f. Pants or shorts with any belt(s), belt loop(s), or exposed drawstring(s).
- g. Any slippery or sticky foreign substance on any equipment or exposed part of the body.
- h. Towels attached at the waist.
- i. Any jersey with knots or hoods.

**PLAY:** A-1 enters the field wearing illegal player equipment: **(a)** the Referee sees it prior to the snap or **(b)** the Referee sees it either during or after the down. **RULING.** In **(a)** the Referee will inform A-1 to return to the team box for repair or replacement of the illegal equipment. In **(b)** the Referee will enforce an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty against A-1.

## **4. Player Equipment- Missing or Illegal**

When any required player equipment is missing or when illegal equipment is found on any incoming substitute or player, correction must be made before participation. An official's time out shall be declared to permit prompt repair of equipment which becomes illegal or defective through use.

## **RULE 2. DEFINITIONS OF PLAYING TERMS**

### **1. Live Ball**

A live ball is a ball in play and a dead ball is a ball not in play. A pass or fumble which has not yet touched the ground is a live ball in flight and therefore can be caught or advanced by either team.

### **2. Loose Ball**

A loose ball is a live ball not in player possession, i.e., any pass, punt, or fumble.

### **3. In Possession**

A player is in possession of a live ball when he/she is holding or controlling the ball. A team is in possession:

- A. When one of its players is in possession
- B. While a punt is being attempted
- C. While a forward pass thrown by one of its players is in flight
- D. When it was last in possession during a loose ball

### **4. Batting**

Batting is intentionally striking or slapping the ball with the hand or arm

### **5. The Catch**

A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball which is in flight, and first contacting the ground inbounds or being contacted by an opponent in such a way that he/she is prevented from returning to the ground inbounds while maintaining possession of the ball.

- A. If one foot first lands inbounds and the receiver has possession and control of the ball, it is a catch or interception even though a subsequent step or fall takes the receiver out of bounds.
- B. A catch by any kneeling or prone inbounds player is a completion.
- C. A loss of the ball simultaneously with returning to the ground is not a catch or interception.

### **6. Simultaneous Catch**

A simultaneous catch or recovery is a catch in which there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing players who are inbounds.

### **7. Fumble**

A fumble is a loss of player possession other than by handing, passing, or kicking the ball.

### **8. Muff**

A muff is an unsuccessful attempt to catch a ball, the ball being touched in the attempt.

### **9. Touching**

Catching is always preceded by touching the ball; thus, if touching causes the ball to become dead, securing possession of the ball has no significance.

### **10. Down and Between Downs**

A down is a unit of the game which starts, after the ball is ready for play, with a legal snap or free kick and ends when the ball next becomes dead. Between downs is the interval during which the ball is dead.

### **11. Encroachment**

Encroachment is a term to indicate a player is illegally in the neutral zone.

### **12. Goal Lines**

Each goal line is a vertical plane separating the end zone from the field of play. The plane of the goal line extends beyond the sideline.

### **13. Handing the ball**

Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one teammate to another without throwing or kicking it.

### **14. Huddle**

A huddle is two or more offensive players grouped together after the ball is ready for play and before assuming scrimmage formation prior to snap.

### **15. Hurdling**

Hurdling is an attempt by a player to jump with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent who is contacting the ground with no part of his body, except one or both feet.

### **16. Kicker**

The kicker is any player who punts. The kicker is a runner until he/she actually kicks the ball. Players of his/her team are known as kickers (K) and any opponent is a receiver (R).

### **17. Punts**

A protected scrimmage kick is a kick made by Team A under restrictions which prohibits either team from advancing beyond their scrimmage lines until the ball is kicked. A protected scrimmage kick must be a punt. A punt is kicking the ball by the player who drops it and kicks it before it strikes the ground.

### **18. Neutral Zone**

The neutral zone is from the forward point of the football three yards to the team B scrimmage line and extended to each sideline. It is established when the ball is marked ready for play.

### **19. Passer**

The passer is the player who has thrown a legal forward pass. He/she remains the passer while the ball is in flight.

### **20. Passes.**

The initial direction determines whether a pass is forward or backward. A forward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction parallel with or toward the passer's end line. A pass continues to be a pass until it is caught or strikes the ground. A backward pass or fumble that hits the ground is ruled dead at that spot.

### **21. Flag Belt Removal**

When the flag belt is clearly taken from the runner in possession of the ball, the ball is declared dead and the down shall end. If a flag belt inadvertently falls to the ground, a one hand tag between the shoulders and knees constitutes capture. A player may leave his/her feet to remove the flag belt. In an attempt to remove the flag belt from a runner, defensive players may contact the body and shoulders, but not the face, neck or any part of the head of an opponent with their hands. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the runner down in an attempt to remove the flag belt.

### **22. Screen Blocking**

Screen Blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without using any part of the body to initiate contact.

### **23. Backfield line**

To be legally in the backfield of Team A player's head or foot must not break the plane of the line drawn through the waistline of the nearest team A player, except the snapper, on the scrimmage line.

### **24. Shift**

A shift is the action of one or more offensive players who, after a huddle or after taking set positions, move to a new set position before the ensuing snap.

## **RULE 3. PERIODS, TIME, SUBSTITUTIONS, LIVE/DEAD BALL**

### **1. The Coin Toss**

Three minutes before the start of the game the Referee shall designate which captain shall call the fall of the coin, then toss the coin in the presence of all officials and opposing captains.

The captain winning the toss shall have a choice of options for the first half. These are:

- a) choose whether his/her team will start on offense or defense
- b) choose the goal his/her team will defend.

The captain, not having first choice of options for the half, shall exercise the remaining option.

A meeting will be held of captains prior to the start of the second half where the captain who did not have the options in the first half will select.

### **2. Playing time and Intermissions**

Playing time shall be 40 minutes, divided into halves of 20 minutes each. The intermission between halves shall be a maximum of 5 minutes. When overtime is used, there shall be a 3 minute intermission.

### **3. Extension of Periods**

A half must be extended by an untimed down, except for unsportsmanlike or nonplayer fouls, if during the last timed down, one of the following occurred:

- a) There was a foul by either team and the penalty was accepted
- b) There was a double foul
- c) There was an inadvertent whistle
- d) If a touchdown was scored, the try is attempted unless it was scored on the last down of the second half and would have no bearing on the outcome of the game.

### **4. Game timer**

The playing time will be kept on a stopwatch operated by the back judge

### **5. First 38 Minutes**

The clock will start on the snap and will run continuously unless it is stopped for a team timeout or a referee's time out.

### **6. Two Minute warning**

Approximately 2 minutes before the end of each half the Referee shall stop the clock and inform both captains of the playing time remaining in that half. The clock starts on the snap.

The game timer will announce to the captains the remaining time and status of the clock after every play in the last two minutes of the second half.

### **7. Two Minutes**

During the final two minutes of second half, the clock will stop for a:	The clock will restart on:
A. Incomplete legal or illegal forward pass-	The snap
B. Out of bounds	The snap
C. Safety	The snap
D. Team time out	The snap

E. First Down	Dependent on previous play
F. Touchdown	The snap (after the try, does not run on the try)
G. Penalty and Administration	Dependent on previous play (Except Delay of Game, snap)
H. Referee's Time out	Referee's discretion
I. Touchback	The snap
J. Team A is awarded a new series	Dependent on previous play
K. Team B is awarded a new series	The snap
L. Either team is awarded a new series after a punt	The snap
M. Team attempting to conserve time illegally	Ready for play
N. Team attempting to consume time illegally	The snap
O. Inadvertent whistle	Ready for play

**PLAY.** Inside the final two minutes of the second half A-1: (a) advances the ball across the zone line to gain and is deflagged inbounds; or (b) advances the ball across the zone line to gain, runs five more yards and flag guards before going out of bounds. **RULING.** In (a), the clock stops for the first down and will start when the Referee marks the ball ready for play. In (b), the clock stops for the player going out of bounds and will start on the snap, regardless of whether or not the penalty is accepted.

**PLAY.** 4<sup>th</sup> and 15. Team A announces a protected scrimmage kick. There are 10 seconds remaining in the first half when the ball is snapped. A-3 snaps the ball to punter A-2 who holds the ball for 7 seconds, then punts it out of bounds. Time expires on the down. **RULING.** The Referee will enforce "attempting to consume time". Penalize Team A 5 yards for illegal procedure from the previous spot. Reset the game clock to 10 seconds and start the clock on the snap.

### 8. Correct Timing Errors

The referee shall have the authority to correct obvious timing errors if discovery is prior to the second live ball following the error unless the period has officially ended.

### 9. Ending of Half

Following delay to ensure:

- A. No foul has occurred
- B. No obvious timing error has occurred
- C. No other irregularity has occurred

### TIE GAME

In the regular season, only one overtime period will be played. If the game is tied at the end of the first overtime, the game is a tie. In the Tournament, overtimes will continue until a winner is determined.

#### 1. Coin Toss

Prior to the coin toss, officials will bring all interested parties from both teams to the center of the field to explain how overtime works. A coin will then be flipped to decide the choice of options. There is only one coin flip in overtime. If additional overtime periods are played, team captains will alternate choices. The winner of the toss will have the options of OFFENSE, DEFENSE, OR DIRECTION. **ALL OVERTIME PERIODS ARE PLAYED TOWARDS THE SAME GOAL.**

#### 2. Overtime

Unless moved by penalty, each team will start first and goal from the team B 10 yard line. The goal line shall be line to gain in overtime. The object will be to score a touchdown. An overtime period consists of a series of four downs by each team. If the team first awarded the ball scores, the other team will still have a chance to score. This will repeat until a winner is determined. If a defense intercepts a pass or fumble and

returns it for a touchdown, they win the game. If they do not return it for a touchdown, the series is over, the ball will be placed at the Team B 10 yard line and the original defense will begin their series of four downs, if available. Each team is entitled to one time-out for the entire overtime. Unused timeouts in regulation do NOT carry over.

### **3. Fouls and Penalties**

They are administered similar to the regular game. Team A shall be awarded a new series of downs when an automatic first down foul is accepted. Dead ball fouls following a touchdown are penalized on the try. Live ball fouls committed by either team after team B gains possession during a try or an overtime shall be enforced at the succeeding spot. Dead ball fouls following a successful try will be penalized from the succeeding spot.

## **TIMEOUTS AND OTHER TIMING SITUATIONS**

### **1. Time Outs**

Each team is entitled one sixty-second time out per half, which can be taken at any time. Time-outs not taken in the first half carry over to the second half. **(A team cannot take more than one time out in the first half, but if they took none in the first half, may take two in the second half).**

### **2. Referee Time outs**

The referee is entitled to declare an officials time out when an excess time-out is allowed for an injured player. The referee may also declare a time out for a contingency not specifically covered in the rules.

### **3. Injured Player**

An injured or apparently injured player who is discovered by a game official while the ball is dead and the clock is stopped, shall be replaced for at least one down, unless halftime intermission occurs. A player who is bleeding shall be considered to be injured, and must be removed.

### **4. Coach-Referee Conference**

When a team requests a charged time-out for a misapplication or misinterpretation of a rule, the referee will confer with the team captain or coach. The request must be made before the next live ball. If the referee changes the ruling, a time out will be charged to the official. If it is not changed, the team will be charged with a time-out. If the team has no time-outs remaining, it will be charged a delay of game.

### **5. Delay of Game**

The ball must be put in play promptly and legally and any action or infraction by either team which tends to prevent this is delay of game. The ball must be put into play 25 seconds after the ball is declared ready for play by the Referee. Also, it is delay of game to put the ball in play before the ready for play signal.

### **6. Authorized conferences**

There are two types of player-coach conferences that may take place during a time out.

A. One or more players and one or more coaches may meet directly in front of the team box within 5 yards of the sideline.

B. One coach may enter the field at their team's huddle on the inbounds hash mark to confer with the players.

### **7. Substitutions**

No substitute shall enter during a down. An incoming substitute must enter the field directly from his team area. A replaced player must leave the field at the sideline nearest his/her team area before the ball is snapped. During the same dead ball interval, no substitute shall become a player and then withdraw, and no player shall withdraw and then re-enter as a substitute.

## **RULE 4. BALL IN PLAY, DEAD BALL, OUT-OF-BOUNDS**

### **1. Dead ball**

A dead ball, after having been declared ready for play, becomes live when snapped or free kicked legally.

### **2. A live ball becomes dead**

A live ball becomes dead and an official shall sound the whistle when the runner goes out of bounds or any part of the runner other than the hands or feet touches the ground. A BALL IN HAND IS CONSIDERED PART OF THE HAND.

### **3. A live ball also becomes dead when**

- a) A touchdown, safety, touchback, or successful try is made.
- b) When the ball strikes the ground following first touching by K or R.
- c) When a forward pass strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opponents.
- e) When a backward pass or fumble, including a snap, hits the ground.
- f) When a flag belt is legally removed or a defensive player legally tags a player when there is no flag belt.
- g) When an inadvertent whistle is sounded.
- h) When a runner has their flag belt removed by an opponent, or is touched with one hand between the shoulders and knees if the flag belt is no longer attached.

### **4. Inadvertent Whistle**

When an official sounds his/her whistle inadvertently during a down when:

- a) The ball is in player possession- the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where declared dead or replay the down.
- b) The ball is loose from a fumble, backward pass, illegal kick, or illegal forward pass- the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down
- c) During a legal forward pass or free protected scrimmage kick- the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down replayed.

If a foul occurs during any of the above downs, an accepted penalty shall be administered as in any other play situation. When the foul is accepted, disregard the inadvertent whistle. **No time is added to the clock as a result of an inadvertent whistle tho in the case of the last play of the game, one untimed down may be awarded at the referee's discretion.**

## **RULE 5. SERIES OF DOWNS, NUMBER OF DOWN AND TEAM POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY**

### **1. A down is a unit**

A down is a unit of the game which starts with a legal snap and ends when the ball next becomes dead. Between downs is any period when the ball is dead.

### **2. Series of downs**

Team A shall have four consecutive downs to advance to the next zone. Any down may be repeated or lost if provided by the rules

### **3. Zone line to gain**

The zone line to gain in any series shall be the zone in advance of the ball, unless distance has been lost due to penalty or failure to gain. In such case, the original zone in advance of the ball at the beginning of the

series of downs is the zone line to gain. The most forward point of the ball, when declared dead between the goal lines, shall be the determining factor.

#### **4. Penalty resulting in first down**

After a penalty which leaves the ball in possession of a team beyond its zone line to gain, or when a penalty stipulates a first down, the down and distance established by that penalty shall be first down with the next zone line to gain. If a penalty stipulates a loss of down on fourth down, if A gains past the zone line to gain after penalty enforcement, it shall remain A's ball.

#### **5. Foul before change of team possession**

Following a distance penalty between the goal lines which occurs during a down and before any change of team possession during that down, the ball belongs to Team A. The down shall be repeated unless the penalty also involves loss of a down, or leaves the ball beyond the zone line to gain.

#### **6. Foul after change of team possession**

Following a distance penalty for a foul committed after team possession has changed during that down, the ball belongs to the team in possession when the foul occurred. The down and distance established by that penalty shall be first down with zone line to gain. This is the "clean hands" principle.

## **RULE 6. PUNTING THE BALL**

### **1. Legal Punt**

A legal punt is a kick made in accordance with the rules. Quick kicks are illegal.

### **2. Punt**

Prior to making the ball ready for play on 4<sup>th</sup> down, the Referee must ask the offensive captain if he/she wants to punt. The Referee must communicate this decision to the team B captain and the other officials. The Team A captain may request a punt on any down. After such announcement, the ball **MUST** be kicked. **EXCEPTION:** If time out is called, a team may change their decision. If a penalty occurs prior to or during this down after the team A captain's decision which results in the kicking team having the right to repeat the down again, the Referee must ask the Team A captain whether or not he/she wants a punt.

### **3. Formation and Snap**

Neither K or R may advance beyond their respective scrimmage line until the ball is kicked. All scrimmage line rules regarding the snap, minimum line players, motion and shift rules apply.

### **4. Punting the ball**

After receiving the snap, the kicker must kick the ball immediately and in a continuous motion.

### **5. After being punted**

Once the ball is punted, any R player may block the kick. If the blocked punt hits the ground, it is dead at that spot. If the punt is blocked by any R player and then caught by any K player behind the line of scrimmage, they may advance. A K player may not kick the ball to himself or any other K player (illegal kicking).

### **6. First Touching**

If any kicker touches a free kick before it crosses R's free kick line and before it is touched there by any R player, it is referred to as "first touching." R may take the ball at that spot or choose to have the ball put in play as determined by the action which follows the first touching. The right of R to take the ball at the spot of first touching by K is cancelled if R touches the kick and thereafter during the down commits a foul.

### **7. Eligible**

When a punt which has crossed K's scrimmage line touches a player from either team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead and belongs to R. If it hits an R player and then is caught in the air, it can be advanced by R. If caught by K, the ball is dead and belongs to K.

### **8. Punt behind the goal line**

When any punt touches anything while the punted ball is on or behind R's goal line, it can be downed by R and is a touchback. R may run the ball out of the endzone.

### **9. Kick catch interference**

It is illegal to interfere with R's right to catch a free or scrimmage kick

### **10. Signals**

Players shall ignore any signals given by the kickers or receivers, the ball remains live. There is no foul.

## **RULE 7. SNAPPING, HANDING, AND PASSING THE BALL**

### **SECTION 1. THE SCRIMMAGE AND PRIOR TO THE SNAP**

#### **■ The Start**

All plays from scrimmage must be started by a legal snap from a point on the inbounds line. The ball may be moved with approval by the Referee due to poor field conditions.

#### **2. Ball Responsibility**

Team A players are responsible for retrieving the ball after a scrimmage down. The snapper will bring it from the huddle to the scrimmage line. A towel may be placed under the ball, but not attached to the waist of a player.

#### **3. Encroachment**

Following the ready for play and until the snap, no player on defense may encroach, touch the ball, nor may any player contact opponents or in any other way interfere with them. Once the snapper has placed his hand on the ball, it is encroachment for any player to break the scrimmage line. When two or more encroachment fouls are committed during the same dead ball interval, the penalty will be 10 yards for subsequent fouls.

#### **4. False Start**

No offensive player shall make a false start. A false start includes simulating a charge or start of a play. An infraction of this rule may be penalized whether or not the ball is snapped and the penalty for any resultant encroachment shall be cancelled.

#### **5. Snap**

The snapper, after assuming position for the snap and adjusting the ball, may neither move nor change the position of the ball in a manner simulating the beginning of a play until it is snapped. When over the ball, the snapper shall have his/her feet behind the scrimmage line. The snapper shall pass the ball back from its position on the ground with a quick and continuous motion of the hand(s). The ball shall leave the hand(s) in this motion. Once the ball is snapped, the referee shall count to "2" (two seconds), the count may be silent. Upon reaching 2, the referee shall signal the defense they may legally cross the line of scrimmage. Crossing the line of scrimmage early shall be assessed as a live ball offsides penalty.

## **SECTION 2. POSITION AND ACTION DURING THE SNAP**

### **1. Legal Position**

Anytime on or after the ball is marked ready for play, each Team A player must momentarily be within 15 yards of the ball before the snap.

### **2. Minimum Line Players**

The offensive team must have at least 4 players on their scrimmage line before the snap. All players must be inbounds. A player in motion is not counted as one of the four on the scrimmage line.

### **3. Motion**

One offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion towards the opponent's goal line at the snap. Other offensive players must be stationary in their positions without movement of the head, feet, body, or arms.

### **4. No Direct Snap**

The player who receives the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the offensive scrimmage line.

### **5. Shift**

In a snap preceded by a huddle or shift, all offensive players must come to a complete stop and remain stationary in legal position without movement of feet, body, head, or arms for at least one full second before the snap.

## **SECTION 3. BACKWARD PASS AND FUMBLE**

### **1. Anytime**

A runner may pass the ball backward or lose player possession by a fumble anytime except if intentionally thrown out of bounds to conserve time.

### **2. Caught or Intercepted**

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

### **3. Simultaneous Catching by Opposing Players**

If a backward pass or fumble in flight is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams, the ball becomes dead at the spot of the catch and belongs to the offensive team.

### **4. Out-of-Bounds**

A backward pass or fumble which goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines belongs to the team last in possession at the out of bounds spot. If out-of-bounds behind a goal line, it is a touchback or a safety.

### **5. Ball Dead When It Hits The Ground**

A backward pass or fumble which touches the ground between the goal lines is dead at the spot where it touches the ground and belongs to the team last in possession unless lost on downs.

## **SECTION 4. LEGAL AND ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS**

### **1. Legal Forward Pass**

All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass. During a scrimmage down and before team possession has changed a forward pass may be thrown provided the passer's feet are behind Team A's scrimmage line when the ball leaves the passer's hand. Only one forward pass can be thrown per down.

### **2. Illegal Forward Pass**

A forward pass is illegal:

- A. If the passer's foot is beyond Team A's scrimmage line when the ball is released

- B. If thrown after team possession has changed after the down
- C. If intentionally thrown out of bounds or to the ground to save a loss of yardage
- D. If a passer catches his/her untouched forward or backward pass
- E. If there is more than one forward pass per down

The Passer may throw the ball immediately to the ground after receiving the snap to stop the clock provided he/she is not trying to avoid a loss of yardage.

### **3. After Illegal Forward Pass**

When an illegal forward pass touches the ground or goes out-of-bounds the ball becomes dead and belongs to the passing team, at the spot from where the pass was thrown, unless a new series of downs has been created. In such a case the ball belongs to the passing team if, after enforcement of the penalty, the ball is left in advance of the zone line to gain, or belongs to the opponents if the ball, after the penalty, did not make the next zone line to gain and the foul occurred during fourth down. If a player catches an illegal forward pass, the ball continues in play until declared dead.

## **SECTION 5. COMPLETED OR INTERCEPTED PASS**

### **1. Pass caught or intercepted**

A forward pass is completed when caught by a member of the passing team inbounds. A forward pass is intercepted when caught by a member of the opposing team inbounds. It is counted as a completion or interception as long as the first part of the person to make contact with the ground after the catch, usually one foot, touches inbounds.

### **2. Simultaneous Catch By Opposing Players**

If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the team that snapped the ball at the spot of the catch.

### **3. Incomplete Pass**

When a forward pass touches the ground or anything out of bounds, it becomes dead.

## **SECTION 6. FORWARD PASS INTERFERENCE**

### **1. Contact**

During a down in which a legal forward pass crosses Team A's scrimmage line contact which interferes with an eligible receiver who is beyond Team A's scrimmage line is pass interference unless it occurs when 2 or more eligible receivers make a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, catch, or bat a pass. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged/tagged prior to touching the ball on a pass thrown beyond Team A's scrimmage line. If pass interference by either player is intentional or unsportsmanlike, his/her team shall be penalized an additional 10 yards. Face guarding is also interference.

## **SECTION 7. RUNNING THE FOOTBALL**

### **1. Running**

The offensive team may advance the football by running it over the line of scrimmage with the following rules:

- A) The first toucher after the snap is considered the quarterback for the play (hence forth QB).
- B) The QB may not directly advance across the line of scrimmage if the defense does not cross the line of scrimmage first. This is illegal advancement, 5 yards and loss of down.
- C) The QB may lateral the ball, forward or backwards to any other player, who may carry it across the line of scrimmage. Doing so immediately negates the "2"-count rush delay and the defense may immediately cross without penalty. If the offensive team "fakes" a lateral with the intent of deceiving the defense, a penalty may not be enforced if the defense encroaches but immediately returns to their side before continuing pursuit once the fake lateral is revealed.
- D) The QB may be the recipient of a second (or subsequent) lateral behind the line of scrimmage, and advance the ball regardless of the defensive team's movement relative to the line of scrimmage.

## **RULE 8. SCORING PLAYS AND PENALTIES**

### **1. Mercy Rule**

If a team is 17 or more points ahead when the Referee announces the 2-minute warning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half the game shall be over. If a team scores during after the 2-minute warning that creates a 17-point or more differential, the game shall be ended.

### **2. Touchdown**

All touchdowns are worth 6 points. It is a touchdown when a runner advances from the field of play so that the ball penetrates the vertical plane of the opponent's goal line. It is a touchdown when a loose ball is caught by a player while the ball is on or behind the opponent's goal line.

### **3. Try for 1or 2**

An opportunity to score 1 point from the 3 yard line or 2 points from the 10 yard line by running or passing only shall be granted the team scoring a touchdown. If a touchdown is scored on the last play of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, a try will not be attempted unless it affects the outcome of the game.

### **4. Referee's Responsibility**

The Referee must speak to the field captain only, asking him/her whether the Try shall be from the 3 or 10 yard line. Once the Team A captain makes the choice, the decision may only be changed by a charged time out to either team. A team's choice cannot be changed if a penalty occurs. Enforcement of yardage penalties does not change the value of the try. If team B intercepts a pass or fumble during the try and returns it for a touchdown, they score 3 points.

### **5. Fouls during a try Before Team B Possession**

If a double foul occurs during the down, the down shall be replayed. When a distance penalty is incurred by Team A during a successful try, the down will be repeated, if accepted. However, if a Team A penalty carries a loss of down, the try has ended and will not be repeated.

### **6. After a try**

After a try, the ball shall be snapped by the opponent at their own 5 yard line, unless moved by a penalty.

## **SECTION 1. MOMENTUM, SAFETY, AND TOUCHBACK**

### **1. Safety = 2 Points**

It is a safety when:

- A. A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across his/her own goal line, and it becomes dead there in that team's possession. EXCEPTION: When a team B player intercepts a forward pass, **fumble, backwards pass**, or catches a legal kick between his/her 5 yard line and the goal line, and his/her original momentum carries him/her into the endzone where the ball is declared dead in his/her team's possession behind the goal line, the ball belongs to team B at the spot where possession was gained.
- B. A player kicks, passes, fumbles, snaps, muffs, or bats a loose ball from the field of play to or across his goal line and the ball subsequently becomes dead there in his team's possession. This includes when the ball is declared dead on or behind their goal line. However, it does not apply to a legal forward pass which becomes incomplete.
- C. A player on offense commits any foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from a spot in his/her end zone and the penalty is decline in a situation which leaves him in possession at the spot of the illegal pass and with the ball having been forced into the end zone by the passing team.

**The entire ball has to be out of the field of play when taking it out of your own end zone.**

After a safety is scored, a free kick/punt will take place from the first down marker closest to where the safety was recorded with the scoring team receiving the kick.

### **2. Touchback**

It is a touchback when:

- A. R downs a scrimmage kick or free kick that touches anything while the ball is on or behind R's goal line.
- B. K downs a scrimmage kick or free kick that touches anything while the ball is on or behind R's goal line or if no one attempts to secure the ball.
- C. The ball is out of bounds behind a goal line (except from an incomplete forward pass), when the ball becomes dead in possession of a player on, above or behind the player's own goal line, or when the ball becomes dead not in possession on, above or behind the team's own goal line, and the attacking team is responsible.

## **SECTION 2. CONDUCT OF PLAYERS AND OTHERS**

### **■ Noncontact Player Acts**

No player shall commit noncontact acts during a period or intermission

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- A. Refusal to comply or abide by the request or decision of an official
- B. Using disconcerting acts or words prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with Team A's signals or movements
- C. Intentionally kicking the ball, other than during a legal kick
- D. Leaving the field between downs to gain an advantage unless replaced or with permission of the Referee
- E. Intentionally Kicking at any player
- F. Intentionally swinging an arm, hand, or fist at any opposing player
- G . Participate while wearing illegal player equipment

### **2. Dead Ball Player Fouls**

When the ball becomes dead in possession of a player, he/she shall not:

- A. Intentionally kick the ball
- B. Intentionally spike the ball
- C. Throw the ball high in the air

### **3. Prohibited Acts**

There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct by players, substitutes, coaches, or others subject to the rules.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- A. Attempting to influence a decision by an official
- B. Disrespectfully addressing an official
- C. Indicating objections to an official's decision
- D. Holding an unauthorized conference, or being on the field illegally
- E. Using profanity, taunting, insulting or vulgar language or gestures
- F. Intentionally contacting a game official physically during a game
- G. Fighting an opponent
- H. Leaving the team area and entering the playing field during a fight

Such conduct will result in a penalty or immediate ejection.

### **4. Second Unsportsmanlike Foul**

The second unsportsmanlike foul by the same player results in automatic ejection.

## **SECTION 3. UNFAIR ACTS**

### **1. Refusing to play or halving the distance**

If a team refuses to play within two minutes after being ordered by the Referee, or if a team repeatedly commits fouls which can be penalized by halving the distance to its goal line, the Referee may enforce any penalty he/she considers equitable, including the awarding of a score. For refusal to play, or for repeated fouls, the Referee shall, after one warning, forfeit the game to the opponents.

### **2. Unfair Acts**

No player, substitute, coach, or other subject to the rules shall use disconcerting words or phrases or commit any act not in accordance with the spirit of fair play for the purposes of confusing the opponent.

Example: Center shouts to Referee, "Wet Ball" in an attempt to have team B relax. Center then snaps the

ball.

Example: Center snaps the ball, but only one person leaves the scrimmage line. All other teammates stand up and yell that the count was on two. Team B relaxes, and A throws the ball to the player that left early.

## **SECTION 4. PERSONAL FOULS**

### **■ Player Restrictions**

No player shall commit a personal foul during a period or intermission. Any act prohibited hereunder or any act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul. No player shall:

- A. Punch, strike, strip, steal or attempt to steal the ball from a player possession.
- B. Trip an opponent
- C. Contact an opponent who is on the ground
- D. Throw the runner to the ground
- E. Hurdle any other player
- F. Make contact of any nature that is deemed unnecessary
- G. Deliberately dive or run into a defensive player
- H. Position himself on the shoulders or body of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage.
- I. Tackle the runner by encircling the hands or arms around an opponent.

### **2. Roughing the Passer**

Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear that the ball has been thrown forward legally. No defensive player shall contact the passer who is standing still or fading back as he/ she is considered out of the play after the pass. Roughing the passer restrictions do not apply if the forward pass is thrown from beyond Team A's scrimmage line. If the rusher contacts the passer's arm, whether or not he/she touches the pass, it is roughing the passer.

## **SECTION 5. BLOCKING**

### **■ Offensive Screen Blocking**

The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his hands and arms at his side or behind his back. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal.

### **2. Screen Blocking Fundamentals**

A player who screens shall not:

- A. Take a position closer than a normal step when behind a stationary opponent
- B. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that his or her opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction.
- C. Use interlocking arms with a teammate to screen an opponent
- D. After assuming legal screening position move to maintain it If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results, he/she has committed a personal foul.

Once the rush delay has been reached the blocker can not move until the rusher is past blocker.

### **3. Use of Hands or Arms by the Defense**

Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent.

## **SECTION 6. THE RUNNER**

### ■ Guarding the Flag Belt

Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Examples of flag guarding include, but are not limited to:

- A. Placing or Swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt
- B. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt
- C. Lowering the shoulder in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt
- D. Using a "stiff arm" to ward off an opponent attempting a flag pull.

### 2. Helping the Runner

The runner shall not grasp a teammate or be grasped, pulled, or pushed by a teammate.

### 3. Obstructing the Runner

The defensive player shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the flag belt or making a legal tag.

### 4. Charge

A runner shall not charge into nor contact an opponent in his/her path nor attempt to run between two opponents or between an opponent and a sideline, unless the space is enough to provide a reasonable chance for him to go through without contact.

## **SECTION 7. BATTING AND KICKING**

### ■ Batting a Free Ball

Players shall not bat a loose ball other than a pass or fumble in flight. A backward pass in flight shall not be batted forward by the passing team. A ball in player possession shall not be batted forward by a player of the team in possession. EXCEPTION: The kicking team may bat a grounded protected scrimmage kick beyond the Team A scrimmage line toward their own goal line.

### 2. Illegal Kicking

No player shall intentionally kick a ball other than a punted ball. Illegally kicked balls shall be treated as a fumble.

## **SECTION 8. ILLEGAL PARTICIPATION**

### ■ Blocked or Pushed Out of Bounds

Prior to a change of possession, no player of A or K shall go out of bounds and return during the down unless blocked out of bounds by an opponent. If a player is blocked out of bounds by an opponent and returns inbounds during the down, he shall return at the first opportunity. During the down, no player shall go out of bounds intentionally and return.

### 2. Hinder an opponent

No replaced player or substitute shall hinder an opponent, touch the ball, influence the play, or otherwise participate.

### 3. It is Illegal Participation:

- A. To have 8 or more players participating at the snap or free kick.
- B. If an injured player is not replaced for at least one down, unless intermission occurs.
- C. To use a replaced player or substitute in a substitution or pretended substitution to deceive opponents at or immediately before the snap or free kick.
- D. For a player to be lying on the ground to deceive opponents at or immediately before the snap or free kick.

E. For a disqualified player to reenter the game.

## **SECTION 9. FLAG BELT REMOVAL**

### **Basic Tenets**

There are basic rules which are established for flag football because of illegal or legal removal of the flag belt.

- A. Players must have possession of the ball before they can legally be deflagged.
- B. When a runner loses his/her flag belt either accidentally, inadvertently (not removed by grabbing or pulling), or on purpose, play continues. The deflagging reverts to a one hand tag of the runner between the shoulders and knees.
- C. In circumstances where a flag belt is removed illegally, play should continue with the option of the penalty or the play.
- D. A defensive player intentionally pulling a flag belt from an offensive player is illegal and will be penalized with a 10 yard personal foul.
- E. Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain an advantage including tying, using foreign materials, or any such acts is illegal. The penalty is a personal foul and player disqualification. If by team A, it is a loss of down. If by team B, an automatic first down.
- F. If an attempt is made to remove a flag, at which time the flag does not fall immediately, the runner will be down at the point the flag falls off.

## **RULE 9. ENFORCEMENT OF PENALTIES**

### **SECTION 1. PROCEDURE AFTER A FOUL**

#### **Definitions:**

A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed. Types of fouls are:

- A. Dead Ball - A foul which occurs in the time interval after a down has ended and before the ball is next snapped or free kicked.
- B. Live Ball - A foul which occurs during a down
- C. Simultaneous with Snap- A act which becomes a foul when the ball is snapped or free

#### **2. Captain's Choice**

When a foul occurs during a live ball, the Referee shall, at the end of the down, notify both captains. He shall inform the captain of the offended team regarding the rights of penalty acceptance or declination and shall indicate to him the number of the ensuing down, distance to be gained, and status of the ball for each available choice. The distance penalty for any foul may be declined. If the penalty is declined or if there is a double, there is no loss of distance. A captain's choice of options may not be revoked.

#### **3. Dead Ball Foul.**

When a foul occurs during a dead ball either between downs or before a free kick or snap, the officials shall not permit the ball to become alive. The penalty for any foul between downs, any nonplayer foul, or any unsportsmanlike foul is enforced from the succeeding spot. If a dead ball foul occurs after time expires for any period, the penalty shall be measured from the succeeding spot. The succeeding spot is where the ball would next be snapped or free kick if a foul had not occurred.

#### **4. Live Ball/Dead Ball Foul**

When a live ball foul by one team is followed by a dead ball foul by the opponent, the penalties are

administered separately and in the order of occurrence. When the same team commits a live ball foul followed by one or more dead ball fouls, all fouls may be penalized.

**All offensive live ball fouls will be enforced from the line of scrimmage**

**5. Establishing the line to gain.**

- A. On a live ball foul mark off the penalty yardage first then establish the zone line to gain.
- B. Penalties for fouls with succeeding spot enforcement which occur prior to the ready for play signal shall be administered before setting the zone line to gain for a new series.
- C. Penalties for fouls with succeeding spot enforcement which occur after the ready for play shall be administered after setting the zone line to gain for a new series.

**SECTION 2. TYPES OF PLAY AND BASIC SPOTS**

**■ Live Ball Fouls**

Any live ball foul is penalized according to the all-but-one enforcement principle except:

- A. A foul which occurs simultaneously with the snap of free kick is penalized from the previous spot.
- B. A nonplayer foul, unsportsmanlike foul, or dead ball foul is penalized from the succeeding spot.

**2. All-But-One Enforcement Principle**

Enforcement philosophy is based on the fact that a team is given the advantage of the distance which is gained without assistance of a foul. It is assumed that the only foul which would give this aid is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot. Therefore, all fouls but this one, that is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot, are penalized from the basic spot. This one foul is penalized from the spot of the foul.

**3. Two types of plays**

Whenever the ball is live, 1 of 2 types of plays is in progress, either a loose ball play or a running play. The type of play has no significance unless a foul occurs. If a foul does occur, the officials must know whether it was during a loose ball play or a running play. This determines the basic spot enforcement.

**4. Loose Ball Plays**

A loose ball play is action during:

- A. A free kick or protected scrimmage kick
- B. A legal forward pass
- C. A backward pass, including the snap, or fumble made by A from on or behind his/her scrimmage line.
- D. The run or runs which precedes such legal pass, kick, or fumble.

**If a foul occurs during a loose ball play, the basic enforcement spot is the previous spot, either the spot of the snap or the free kick.**

EXCEPTION: The penalty for roughing the passer on a completed forward pass will be enforced from the end of the last run when the run ends beyond the neutral zone and no change of possession has occurred.

**5. Running Play**

A running play is any action which is not a loose ball play

- A. Behind the line it includes a run which is not followed by a loose ball behind the line or a run which is followed by an illegal pass from behind the line.
- B. Beyond the line it includes any run. A run ends when a runner loses possession, but the related running play continues until the ball becomes dead or some player again gains possession.

**If a foul occurs during a running play, the basic enforcement spot is the spot where the related run ends:**

- A. Where the ball becomes dead if the runner does not lose possession.
- B. Where the player loses possession if his/her run is followed by his/her fumble or pass
- C. At the spot of the catch where the momentum rule is in effect.

### **SECTION 3. SPECIAL ENFORCEMENTS**

#### **1. Half the distance**

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 between the enforcement spot and the goal line.

#### **2. Safety/Goal Line**

If the offensive team throws an illegal forward pass from its end zone or commits any other foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from on or behind its goal line which is now the basic spot, it is a safety. For a defensive team foul, if the enforcement spot which is now the basic spot, is on or behind the offended team's goal line any measurement is from the succeeding spot.

#### **3. Disqualified Player**

A disqualified player must be removed for the current game and the next game.

#### **4. Kick Catch Interference**

R may choose a 10 yard penalty from the previous spot with K retaining the football and the down replayed, or they may accept an awarded catch at the spot of the foul.

#### **5. Foul on a score**

If there is a foul by the offensive team, other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer, during a down which results in a successful touchdown or try, the acceptance of the penalty nullifies the score. **On any foul by the defense during the down of a successful touchdown or try, the penalty will be enforced from the succeeding spot.**

#### **6. Foul Prior to a Try**

When a foul occurs after a touchdown and before the ball is ready for play for the Try, the enforcement is at the succeeding spot where the ball will be next snapped for the Try, usually the 3 or 10 yard line.

#### **7. Fouls During a Try or Overtime After Team B Possession**

Live ball fouls committed by either team A or team B after team B gains possession during a try or an overtime shall be enforced at the succeeding spot. If there are offsetting fouls whether one or both occur after team B possession, the down is not replayed. The fouls offset at the succeeding spot. Any scores are cancelled.

#### **8. Fouls During a Try or Overtime before Team B Possession**

Live ball fouls committed by team B during a try are enforced using All-But-One principle, Double Foul, or Multiple foul rules.

#### **9. Double Foul**

It is a double foul if both teams commit fouls, other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer, during the same live ball period in which:

- A. There is no change of team possession
- B. There is a change of team possession, and the team in possession at the end of the down fouls prior to the final change of possession.
- C. There is a change of possession and the team in final possession accepts the penalty for its opponent's foul.

In A, B, and C, the penalties cancel and the down is replayed.

EXCEPTION: If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change in possession, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball, provided its foul is not prior to the final change of possession and it declined the penalty for its opponents foul(s).

### **10. Multiple Live Ball Fouls**

When two or more live ball fouls are committed by the same team, only one penalty may be chosen except when foul(s) for unsportsmanlike or nonplayer conduct occurs. In such cases, the penalty/ penalties for the unsportsmanlike or nonplayer fouls are administered from the succeeding spot as a dead ball foul.

### **11. Multiple Dead Ball Fouls**

Penalties for dead ball fouls are administered separately and in the order of occurrence. Dead ball fouls are not coupled with live ball fouls or other dead ball fouls to create double or multiple fouls. Penalize all unsportsmanlike and nonplayer fouls separately.

### **12. Loss of Down Fouls**

Fouls by Team A which include loss of down are:

- A. Illegally Handing the Ball Forward
- B. Illegal Backward Pass
- C. Illegal Forward Pass
- D. Forward Pass Interference
- E. Illegally Secured Flag Belt

### **13. Automatic First Down Fouls**

- A. Forward Pass Interference
- B. Roughing the Passer who has thrown from behind the Team A scrimmage line
- C. Illegally Secured Flag Belt

## **SUMMARY OF FOULS AND PENALTIES**

**All live ball fouls will be enforced from the line of scrimmage with the exceptions of :**

- Illegal forward lateral**
- Unnecessary roughness (Tackling)**

**These will be spot fouls.**

### **Loss of 5 Yards**

- 1. Required Equipment worn illegally
- 2. Delay of Game (Dead Ball)
- 3. Unfair Tactics
- 4. Substitution Infractions
- 5. Free Kick Out of Bounds
- 6. Encroachment (Dead Ball)
- 7. False Start (Dead Ball)
- 8. Illegal Snap (Dead Ball)
- 9. Offensive Player not within 15 yards of ball
- 10. Player receiving snap within 2 yards of scrimmage line
- 11. Illegal Shift
- 12. Illegal Handing of Ball Forward (loss of down if by team A)
- 13. Intentionally throwing ball out of bounds (loss of down if by team A)

14. Illegal Forward Pass (Loss of down by team A)
15. Intentional Grounding (Loss of down)
16. Helping the runner

#### **Loss of 10 Yards**

1. Quick Kick
2. Kick Catch Interference
3. Two or more consecutive encroachments during the same interval
4. Forward Pass Interference- Offensive (Loss of Down)
5. Forward Pass Interference- Defensive (Automatic First Down)
6. Illegally Secured Flag Belt
7. Unsportsmanlike Conduct
8. Steal, Strike, or attempt to steal the ball
9. Contact with opponent on the ground
10. Throw runner to the ground
11. Unnecessary contact of any nature
12. Clipping
13. Tackling
14. Roughing the Passer (Automatic First Down)
15. Illegal Offensive Screen Blocking
16. Flag Guarding (Repeat the Down)
17. Holding
18. Illegal Kicking
19. Illegal Participation
20. Pretended/unfair Substitution
21. Illegal Flag Belt Removal

#### **SECTION 4. Standings**

Team standings will be determined using the following tie break procedures.

1. Division record
2. Points scored for minus points scored against
3. Head to Head
4. Coin toss