

2008 ADULT FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES

Rules and Regulations

(Please distribute copies to your players.)

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“The “No Contact” flag football league is designed to provide recreational activity for adults. The safety of the participants is of primary importance. All actions that are potentially injurious to other players will be closely evaluated and offenders may lose their privilege to participate in the program. The penalty for “violent touching” is 10 yards plus automatic ejection from the game and a minimum additional one (1) game suspension.”

I. LEAGUE LEADERSHIP

A. The football league will be under the direction of Kennett Area Park and Recreation Board (“KAPRB”) that will consist of the Sport’s Coordinator and the manager of each team in the league.

The team manager shall receive all correspondence from the KAPRB.

B. The Sport’s Coordinator shall be responsible for the interpretation and enforcement of the rules via the game officials.

II. ELIGIBILITY

A. Players must have birthdates prior to September 1, 1972. Only 2 players on each team may have birthdates before September 1, 1979.

B. Roster limitation is as follows: 15 players.

C. Initial Rosters are due August 28th. All players on a roster MUST have a signed Waiver. Final Rosters due September 14th with no additions to teams allowed after this date. Players must participate in at least two regular season games to participate in playoffs.

D. Emergency roster addition forms are available from the Sport’s Coordinator after October 1 to assist team who have forfeited due to lack of players.

E. Short -Handed Rule

In lieu of forfeiting a game when a team(s) does not have the required number of players to start, the following procedure must be followed:

A team must have the following number of players present to start a game: 4. The team at full strength can decide to play 1 man-up or play at equal strength to their opponent. Players arriving late may enter the game immediately, in order to bring both teams back up to full strength. A team may also agree to play with less than the required number of players or the team with the required number of players may take a forfeit. Officials are to be paid as outlined in Rule IV D if a forfeit is taken by the team at full strength.

III. EQUIPMENT AND GENERAL TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Uniform Requirements

All teams must be equipped with full-length jerseys alike in color and style and having a minimum 6” number on the back. **PENALTY:** Whenever a player enters the game and is in violation of the uniform rule, that team’s next kick-off must be from its own twenty (20) yard line. This penalty will be repeated in each half that a uniform violation occurs.

B. Game day footballs, kicking tees, and flags will be provided by the KAPRB.

C. Players are permitted to wear sneakers or some type of all-purpose athletic shoe. **Exception:** the kicker may kick barefooted on field goal and point-after touchdown attempts.

D. The home team will be the official scorer and must report the game result to the Sport’s Coordinator prior to the Wednesday of the week in which the game was played

E. Each team must provide their own first-aid supplies. Each participant is advised to carry some form of medical coverage.

F. The home team will have the choice of sidelines for their team bench area. Only the players and coaches from the two competing teams are permitted to be on the sidelines within the 40-yard lines. Everyone else (spectators, other teams, etc.) must be five yards off of the sidelines (outside of the team bench area) and not intermixed between the players of the competing teams. **Teams must police-up trash on their respective sidelines at the conclusion of game.**

G. Team managers are asked to report to the Sport's Coordinator any major injuries that occur during a course of a game.

Please do not allow any players to be moved if they appear to have head, neck or back injuries. Call 911.

H. Blood Rule

A team member or official who is bleeding or who has an open wound is prohibited from participating further until the bleeding is stopped and the wound is covered.

1. Players must be replaced for at least one down until the bleeding is stopped and the wound is covered.

2. If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform or if the bandage becomes blood soaked, in referee's judgment, the bandage or uniform must be changed before the individual may continue to play (USFTL Rule 6-1-4). Teams will not incur a uniform penalty if the player is out of uniform due to the enforcement of the Blood Rule.

I. The winning team in the last game at a playing site is required to help collect field markers and goal post pads and return items to the field equipment box.

IV. REGISTRATION/FINANCES

A. Team admission policy for league play: Manager, from the previous season (or his/her designated successor) will be recognized as holder of a franchise spot. Replacement teams, if needed, will be accepted based upon order of receipt of registration materials within a designated registration period.

SPECIAL NOTE: (exception to the above policy) – The KAPRB reserves the right to utilize a first-come, first-served system of registration or a lottery system if there are insufficient facilities available to “house” all returning franchise teams.

B. Each team must submit the required league entry fee at the time of registration. Checks should be made payable to KAPRB. League fees cover the following: jerseys, game-day equipment, league awards, referee services, and other administration activities.

SITUATION MINIMUM PENALTY

a. Team withdraws before registration deadline No Penalty (Full refund)

b. Team withdraws after registration deadline, before scheduling has started, and replacement team is found 5% of Full Entry Fee

c. Team withdraws after registration deadline, before scheduling has started, and no replacement team is found 15% of Full Entry Fee

d. Team withdraws after registration deadline, after scheduling has started, and replacement team is found 25% of Full Entry Fee

e. Team withdraws after registration deadline, after scheduling has started, and no replacement team is found 50% of Full Entry Fee

f. Team withdraws after start of season/and replacement team is found Min. 40% of Full Entry Fee 100% of Full Entry Fee if past mid-point

g. Team withdraws after start of season, and no replacement team is found 100% of Full Entry Fee

C. The manager of a team will be held accountable for the finances of his team.

V. OFFICIALS

A. Two certified Flag Football Officials will be assigned to each game.

B. All games will be conducted and ruled on by the referees and all persons ***must respect*** their authority. Unsportsmanlike conduct, rough play, profane language, or fighting of any nature will not be tolerated.

C. The referee's decision will be final on all matters of fact. Any discussion concerning the interpretation of the rules must involve the team manager only. A timeout is required (see Rule V.E.), but if the officials are in error it will not be charged to the team. Continuous debate after a final decision will constitute delay of game.

D. Team may designate only one individual (one offense and one defense) to act as a field captain. Only the captain shall speak for the team when decisions are required for the administration of penalties. Any player may request a team-charged timeout. (**Note:** See Rule IX-L – Third Party Interference).

E. Time Out Rule

1. A charged timeout will be granted by any official upon request only after all play has ceased and all penalties have been enforced.
2. When a timeout is granted, the coach has **three (3)** options:
 - a. the captain may go to the team box
 - b. the team may go to the team box
 - c. a coach may go to the huddle
3. Additional notes:
 - a. The coach must go directly to the huddle. He may not address an official out on the field except to ask the number of timeouts or amount of time remaining.
 - b. Should a coach wish to discuss something with an official or question an official, it shall be done in front of the team box. Players are not allowed in the discussion.
 - c. During a disturbance on the field the coach should remain on the sidelines to control the bench personnel.
 - d. A team captain may question an official on the field but it must be done in a proper manner.
 - e. See the individual league rules sections for the number of timeouts permitted per game.

VI. SCHEDULES AND LEAGUE SEASON

- A. Schedules will be drawn up by the Sport's Coordinator.
- B. Every attempt will be made to play games as scheduled, however, emphasis during the first half of the season will be on preserving the fields.
- C. If heavy rains prevent the use of fields, a cancellation email message will be forwarded to team managers as needed throughout the weekend. In the event of inclement weather occurring after the start of play, the Sport's Coordinator will be responsible for determining whether or not fields are playable.
- D. Any rescheduling will be done by the Sport's Coordinator and may require teams to play on unscheduled dates. Upon receiving written notification of make-up game, opposing managers are required to confirm the game with one another and the Sport's Coordinator. If a make-up game is not played due to improper notification, the game may be ruled a "no contest" and deleted from the schedule or rescheduled only if final league standings are affected. ***Special Note: It is the responsibility of the manager to obtain all necessary information regarding postponed games by viewing the KAPRB website on a regular basis throughout the season.***
- E. The season will consist of approximately nine/ten (9/10) league games followed by playoffs.
- F. An effort will be made to complete all play in the fall program by Thanksgiving weekend.
- G. Any suspended game will be rescheduled, if necessary, and will be resumed for the point of suspension.
Exception:
Forfeitures will be issued to the violating teams for fighting or persistent badgering of officials.

H. Championships:

1. The team with the highest team total win/tie points at the end of the regular season will be declared the league or division champion.

2. Tie Breaker Procedure

In case of a tie in the final league standings, the following tiebreaker procedure will be used:

- a. Head to head record among tied teams (without comparing game scores)
 - b. Least amount of points allowed during head to head competition among tied teams.
 - c. Average points allowed for all games (forfeits not included).
 - d. Best record among tied teams during last 5 games.
 - e. Coin flip (only if above procedures fail)
3. The general format for the playoffs will be a single elimination playoff among the top four teams with the first place versus 4th place and the 2nd place versus the 3rd place. The winners of these two games will meet for the playoff championship. Additional playoff berths may be granted if deemed necessary.

I. 20 yard Line Overtime Procedure for Regular Season and Playoff Games:

If at the end of the game the teams have identical scores, the tie will be resolved by the procedure outlined in the National Federation of High Schools Association Football Rules Book. All game rules will apply except:

- a. The line-to-line gain shall always be the goal line.
 - b. No try will be made if the winner of the game has been determined.
 - c. If Team B scores a safety or touchdown, the game is ended.
 - d. If a safety is scored by A, the succeeding spot will be the 20 yard line in possession of Team B provided they have already had their series.
 - e. If Team B gains possession, the down and series for A ends immediately
 - f. No free kick privileges are awarded following a fair catch or awarded fair catch.
 - g. Only non-player, unsportsmanlike, or dead ball fouls or defensive fouls during a down which results in a successful field goal, touchdown or try are penalized from the succeeding spot.
- When the score is tied at the end of the fourth quarter, the referee will instruct both teams to return to their respective team boxes.

There will be a three-minute intermission during which both teams may confer with coaches. All officials will assemble at the 50 yard line, review the procedure and determine the number of second half timeouts remaining for each team.

The linesman will go to the team on the side of the field where the line-to-gain equipment is located, and the line judge to the other team, to inform the coaches of the number of timeouts each team has remaining and escort the respective team captains to the center of the field for the coin toss.

At the coin toss, the visiting team captain shall be given the privilege of calling the coin while it is in the air. The winner of the toss shall be given his choice of defense or offense, or of designating the end of the field at which the ball will be put in play. The referee will indicate the winner of the toss by placing a hand on his shoulder. To indicate which team will go offense first, the referee will place a ball on that team captain's chest area while he is facing the goal toward which his team will advance and give the first down sign. The other team captain will face the offensive captain with his back toward the goal which he will defend.

Each team shall be permitted one additional timeout for each extra period plus any unused second half regulation game timeouts. The team scoring the greater number of points in the overtime shall be declared the winner. The final score shall be determined by totaling all points scored by each team during the regulation game and overtime period(s).

To start the overtime, the offensive team shall put the ball in play, first and goal on B's 20 yard line anywhere between the in bounds lines. Team A shall have a series of four downs. The series shall be terminated by any score by A or if B has possession at the end of any down. Team A shall be awarded a new series when: 1) The penalty for defensive pass interference is accepted; or 2) Team A recovers a scrimmage kick (field-goal attempt) between the goal lines after it has been touched first by B beyond the neutral zone; 3) When B is guilty of roughing the kicker, place kick holder or passer. If Team A scores a touchdown, it is entitled to the opportunity to try for point, except when it is unnecessary to break the tie. A field goal attempt is permitted during any down. If the defensive team gains possession, the ball becomes dead immediately and A's series is ended.

After Team A has completed its series, Team B will become the offensive team with the ball in its possession at the 20 yard line anywhere between the in bounds lines. The same end of the field will be used for both possessions in order to insure equal game conditions and conserve time.

If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series, the game(s) during the regular season will remain tied. During the playoffs, the procedure shall be repeated with another period(s) until a winner is determined.

VII. FORFEITS/GRACE PERIOD

A. A team shall forfeit for failing to field enough rostered players at game time or anytime thereafter (See Rule II-E for Short-Handed Rule options). A five (5) minute grace period is permitted for all games. At the end of 5 minutes, the team at full strength can accept the forfeit or extend the grace period for an additional 5 or 10 minutes with clock running. The game will result in forfeiture if there are not enough players to play short-handed at the end of the extended grace period. If both teams are unable to field enough uniformed rostered players at game time or thereafter, a forfeit will be declared against each of them.

NOTE: See Rule II.E for short-handed rule options.

B. Players must be present and ready to play at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled starting time. If sufficient players are present for both teams, coordinators and referees may require teams to begin the game (up to five (5) minutes) before the scheduled starting time (Exception: If missing starting QB). This policy is intended to help keep prolonged games (high scoring, etc.) on schedule and to avoid any long

delays between fast moving games (low scoring, etc.). Should one or both teams refuse to start or continue the game at the referee's command, a forfeit will result.

C. A team may be caused to forfeit a game by the actions of its players, coaches, and spectators.

D. A team may be caused to forfeit for playing with an ineligible player.

E. A team that forfeits two games during the season for failing to field a team may be dropped from the league and their entry fee considered forfeited. In addition, the manager *will not* be permitted to enter a team into the league the following season.

F. See provisions for short-handed rule in section II-E.

VIII. PROTESTS

A. Protests can be filed on a question of player eligibility only. An official's judgment cannot be protested.

B. Procedure at Site of Game:

1. The contesting manager must make a formal protest with the coordinator, officials, and opposing team manager prior to start of game if possible.

2. The accused player's name and number must be recorded.

3. Teams must resume play in order to complete the game, and the protest along with a \$20 fee must be submitted to the KAPRB **within the next working day**. Faxed copy of check and protest are acceptable.

4. If upheld, a forfeit will be awarded to the offended team, and the ineligible player stands to be ejected from the league.

C. All managers have open access to league rosters. If an ineligible player is detected beyond the protest deadline, the contesting manager may still file a formal protest and, if upheld, one win will be deducted and one loss added to the overall record of the team in violation. Ineligible players will be ejected from the league.

D. All other disputes regarding player rules or league rules must be settled at the field of play.

E. Complaints regarding the quality of officiating or violations of procedures committed by officials or coordinators shall be placed in writing to the Sport's Coordinator.

NOTICE: By signing their team roster and player waiver forms, managers and players agree to abide by all policies and procedures for the Flag Football league. Individuals who are reported for violations of the policies described below will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action based upon the review of reports that are filed with the KAPRB. No hearings will be held. Suspension memos will be mailed to all teams.

IX. CONDUCT OF PLAYERS, COACHES, AND MANAGERS

A. No player, coach, or manager may participate in a league game while under the influence of intoxicants. This rule is to be strictly enforced by each team upon notification from the officials.

B. THE SALE, CONSUMPTION, OR POSSESSION OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR OR BEVERAGES AND DANGEROUS OR NARCOTIC DRUGS OR GAMBLING OF ANY KIND IS PROHIBITED in any facility being used by the KAPRB during the time of its use.

C. Any reports of a player guilty of misconduct shall be reviewed and decided upon by a representative of the KAPRB and an appropriate penalty will be imposed. Faxed reports are encouraged and no hearings are guaranteed.

D. All Board of Education and/or private agency property owners' rules governing the use of their facilities must be obeyed as part of these rules and regulations. Failure to adhere to this policy could cause the KAPRB forfeiture of the rights of utilizing these facilities.

E. All teams are to be held responsible for any actions by any player, coach, spectator, etc. toward an official. Each team must control and/or identify anyone so involved or the team will be disciplined.

F. The manager of each team must make an effort to control unruly players and spectators, or be penalized.

G. Any player who is ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct must leave the playing area (sight and sound) immediately, and in addition will receive a minimum one game automatic suspension to be served in the next game played. *Written notification is not required.* The manager is responsible for proper enforcement.

H. Suspensions issued at the end of the current season will be served during the playoffs, and may also be carried over into the next season of play if deemed necessary.

I. Suspended players are not permitted to attend their games while under suspension.

J. Players with a pattern of poor behavior in the past will be subject to more stringent penalties.

K. **Third party Interference:** Only one member of the coaching staff and/or the player involved may dispute a call with an official *in a respectful manner*. The third individual (or more) who enters a dispute will be ejected from the game and will receive an additional automatic one game suspension. **Players are advised not to leave their playing positions or the team bench area, or they will subject themselves to possible ejection as a result of “Third Party Interference”.**

L. Pre-game “Warning” to be read by referees and/or managers to players: “NO TRASH TALKING, NO TAUNTING, NO ARGUING, NO PROFANE LANGUAGE, ETC. The referees assigned to this contest have been instructed to strictly enforce the KAPRB policies against the list of unsportsmanlike acts listed above. There will be no additional warnings given to anyone during a game and the offending coach or player will be immediately assessed the requisite penalty. The KAPRB believes strongly that this game should be played in a spirit of respect for the opposing team, the contest officials, and the rules and traditions of the sport”.

M. Unfair acts: If a team refuses to play within two minutes after ordered by the referee, or if play is interfered with by an obviously unfair or unsportsmanlike act not specifically covered by the rules, or if a team repeatedly commits fouls which can be penalized only 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.

X. VIOLATIONS AND RECOMMENDED PENALTIES

The KAPRB will determine and assign the penalty(ies) associated with inappropriate conduct.

XI. ASSUMPTION OF RISK

The KAPRB and its employees assume no responsibility for injuries to the members of any team holding franchise in this league, no matter under what circumstances incurred, and adoption of these rules by the team managers shall be the equivalent of full and lawful release and discharge of any claims that any members may have or that may arise in the future against any of the above named for injury to their persons or property.

XII. SAVING CLAUSE

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, section, or portion of these rules and regulations for any reason shall be adjudged invalid by a court having jurisdiction, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder of these by-laws not directly involved in the controversy in which judgment is rendered.

XIII. APPENDIX A: “NO CONTACT” FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. Jurisdiction

Games in the flag football leagues shall be governed by the current edition of the United States Flag and Touch Football Rule Book, except as amended by these special playing rules as adopted by the KAPRB.

B. Purpose

The flag football leagues are designed to provide recreational activity for adults. The safety of the participants is of primary importance. All actions that are potentially injurious to other players will be closely evaluated and offenders may lose their privilege to participate in the program. **NOTE: Penalty for “Violent Touching” is 10 yards, plus automatic ejection from the game and a minimum additional one (1) game suspension.**

C. General Playing Rules

1. The designated team manager is the official representative of the team and is the only person who may question an official about the interpretation of a rule (See Rule V.C. for procedure).

2. The offensive team must have three players on the line of scrimmage at the snap. **NOTE: Penalty for “Illegal Formation” is 5 yards.** The snap must go through the snapper’s legs.

3. Free substitution is allowed as long as the player being substituted for is off the field at the next snap.

NOTE:

Penalty for “Illegal Substitution: is 5 yards; Penalty for “Illegal Participation” is 10 yards.

4. The ball becomes dead where it is muffed or fumbled and hits the ground (this rule also applies to a snapped ball and a backward pass).
5. Only one player, who is clearly off the line of scrimmage, may be in motion at a time; his movement must be parallel to and one yard away from the line of scrimmage and must be continuous at the time of the snap.
6. In the event of an inadvertent whistle during a running play, the offense shall have the choice of replaying the down or accepting the ball at the spot where it whistled dead (down and distance count). The down will be replayed if an inadvertent whistle occurs during a forward pass or kick in flight.
7. In violations of the neutral zone by the offensive team during a scrimmage down, the ball becomes dead immediately. **NOTE: Penalty for “Encroachment (Dead Ball)” is 5 yards.**
Situation: The team leading in the score, during the final two (2) minutes of timing in the second or fourth quarters, repeatedly encroaches to run out the clock prior to the seven (7) play period. **Ruling:** First offense – five yards penalty; second offense – ten yards and clock is stopped and not started until the snap (USFTL Rule 12-1-2a).
8. No defensive player may be less than five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. Exception: If the line of scrimmage is inside the defensive team’s 10 yard line, the restraining is half the distance to the goal line. There are no additional positional requirements for defensive team. **NOTE: Penalty for “Encroachment (Live Ball)” is 5 yards.**
Situation: 1st down and 2 yards on offense’s own 18 yard line. Defense encroaches, intentionally or unintentionally, thus if the penalty is administered, it would be 1st down and 17 yards on the 23 yard line.
Ruling: Offense has the right to decline the 5 yard penalty (USFTL Rule 13-1-1). If, however, if the defense encroaches on the next down, the penalty is 10 yards (unfair act) (USFTL Rule 12-1-2a) and a warning should then be given that repeated encroachment in the same series may result in a forfeit (USFTL Rule 12-2-1).
9. Any player receiving the ball from the center must be a minimum of five (5) yards behind the line of scrimmage at the time he/she receives the ball. **NOTE: Penalty for “Illegal Procedure (Dead Ball)” is 5 yards.**
10. Two, three or four-point stances are legal at anytime.
11. Offensive players cannot be within five (5) yards of the sidelines when the ball is snapped. Penalty = Illegal Procedure – 5 yards.

D. Equipment and Uniforms

1. **Jerseys** must be tucked into pants.
2. **Shoes** are required for all players except for kickers when kicking. They must be made of a soft, pliable upper material (canvas, leather or synthetic material) which covers the foot. All purpose athletic shoes are permitted. Boots are illegal as well as metal golf, baseball and softball cleats. Football shoes are permitted.
3. **Pads** are not permitted on upper body. Players may wear soft, pliable pads on the leg, knee, and/or ankle. Female players may wear a breast protector of soft, material. Hard casts, even if padded, are illegal.
4. **Jewelry** may not be worn if deemed by the officials to be dangerous to any player. (Exception: post earrings and wedding bands may be worn if covered with tape. Neck chains may be worn if they remain tucked in the jersey).
5. **Hats** with visors are permitted only if worn backwards. Headbands are permitted but may not contain derogatory or offensive symbols or sayings. Ski-type caps are permitted.
6. **Use of Flags:** The KAPRB will provide game-day flags.

a) Applicable Rules:

USFTL 4.2.1. The flags should be a minimum of two (2) inches wide and 14 inches long. The flags may not be altered in any way. The flags must be of contrasting color to the players’ pants or shorts (The KAPRB will inform the team managers on the flag color prior to the start of the season. Players wearing similar color shorts will not be permitted to play offense during the game). Tampering with the flag in any way to gain an advantage including tying, using foreign materials, or other such acts is illegal. PENALTY: Unsportsmanlike conduct, 10 yards from the previous spot, loss of down and player disqualification.

b) Procedures:

Pre-game: Officials will visually inspect all flag belts and require that each player pull his/her flags off of their belt.

E. Contact Rules

1. **Screen blocking** is the act of legally obstructing an opponent without contacting him/her with any part of the blocker's body. The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back. Any use of the arms, elbows, or legs to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his/her hand or arm to break a fall or to retain his/her balance. A player must be on his/her feet before, during and after screen blocking. **NOTE: Penalty for "Personal Foul" is 10 yards.**

Screen Blocking Fundamentals. A player who screens shall not:

1. When he/she is behind a stationary opponent, take a position closer than a normal step from him or her.
 2. When he/she assumes a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent, make contact with him/her.
 3. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that his/her opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take his/her stationary position. This position will vary and may be 1 or 2 normal steps or strides from the opponent.
 4. After assuming his/her legal screening position move to maintain it, unless he/she moves in the same direction and path as his/her opponent. If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results, he/she has committed a personal foul.
2. Contact is not allowed. Note: A touchdown may be awarded by the referee for any flagrant contact which in the official's opinion prevents a "clear / break-away" touchdown from being scored in the open field.
3. **Blocking and Interlocked Interference.** Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere for him/her by screen blocking, but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner. **NOTE: Penalty for "Personal Foul" is 10 yards.**
4. **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. The application of this rule depends entirely on the judgment of the official. A blocker may use his/her arms or hands to break a fall or retain his/her balance.

F. Deflagging

1. Deflagging is the legal removal of a flag from an opponent in possession of the ball. Pushing, striking, holding, slapping, or tripping when attempting to pull a flag is not permitted. Defensive players may leave their feet to pull a flag.
2. Guarding the Flag is illegal. **NOTE: Penalty for "Flag Guarding" carries no yardage, but the ball shall be blown dead at the spot of the infraction.**
3. Spinning is illegal if done to avoid having the flag removed. **NOTE: Penalty for "Spinning" carries no yardage, but the ball shall be blown dead at the spot of the infraction.** Spinning to change direction is legal.
4. Hurdling over a fallen or standing player(s) is not permitted. **NOTE: Penalty for "Hurdling" carries no yardage, but the ball shall be blown dead at the spot of the infraction.**
5. Grabbing or stripping the ball by the defense is illegal. **NOTE: Penalty for "Personal Foul" is 10 yards.**
6. If a flag inadvertently falls to the ground, a one-hand touch between the shoulder and waist constitutes capture.
7. The defense may not deflag a player who does not have the ball (e.g. after a passer has released the ball or before a receiver catches the ball). **NOTE: Penalty for "Personal Foul" is 10 yards.** A player who has been deflagged must be tagged with one hand or have a remaining flag pulled (USFTL Rule 12-7-1d). **NOTE: Flags pulled simultaneously with release of ball by passer or catch by receiver should not be penalized.** Officials should use their judgment based on the intent of the rule.
8. Diving to advance the ball is prohibited. **NOTE: Penalty for "Personal Foul" is 10 yards.**

G. Field and Timing

1. The game will be played on a regulation Football field.
2. The game shall be played in four (4), twelve (12) minute quarters with five (5) minutes between halves. The offensive team must put the ball into play within 25 seconds after the referee has blown the ready for play whistle.

NOTE: Penalty for "Delay of the Game" is 5 yards. The clock shall be stopped only for "official" and "team" time-outs, except during the last two (2) minutes of the 2nd and 4th quarters, in which a "7-play" period is used.

Exception: the clock will be stopped for thirty (30) seconds after field goal or point after touchdown attempts; the ball must be put into play within fifteen (15) seconds after the ready for play whistle has blown.

3. During the last play of the 1st and 3rd periods, an untimed down may result if any live ball penalty is accepted by either team unless a loss of down is included in the penalty.

4. **“7-play” Procedure** (replaces the last two (2) minutes of the 2nd and 4th quarters)

1) There are 7 total plays between the two teams.

2) The clock is *not* used.

3) Officials are responsible for counting the 7 plays.

4) If a penalty is accepted on a live ball foul, the down and play do not count unless a “loss of down” is included in the penalty.

5) Point after touchdown attempts and free kicks do *not* count in the 7 plays.

6) To retain possession, a team must continue to make first downs.

7) When the defense takes over, it may use any of the remaining 7 plays.

8) The game is over when all 7 plays are completed or the team behind in the score concedes the game.

5. Each team is allowed three charged timeouts per half. Unused timeouts in the first half may not be carried over to the second half. Timeouts shall be one minute.

6. A timeout for an injured or apparent injured player is charged to the officials; however the injured player must be replaced for at least one play.

7. Tie Game:

1) If the game is tied at the end of regulation during the regular season, each team will be given one (1) series of downs to settle the outcome of the game with the ball starting at the opponent’s 20 yard line. Each team will receive one (1) point in the weekly standings if the game remains as a tie.

2) During the playoffs, a twenty-yard line procedure similar to the high school and college rule will be used with each team receiving one additional time out (see overtime procedures in General Rules VI.I).

Beginning with the third overtime period in the playoffs, teams will be required to attempt a 2-point conversion following a touchdown.

8. Once the game begins, no on field warm-up type activities are permitted while the ball is dead (except during half-time).

9. Intentional delay of game: Referees may stop the clock and issue a 5 yard penalty for delay of game (5yds.) for any of the following reasons: 1) Team ahead in score intentionally delays getting back to offensive huddle late in game, 2) Team repeatedly kicks ball out of bounds on a kickoff to exhaust time off of clock.

10. Time-out errors and rule applications:

1. Play: Team A calls a time-out which they are not entitled to and a) the referee informs the team that they are out of time-outs and they game continues without delay, or b) the referee stops the clock before realizing that team A is out of time-outs. *Ruling: a) no penalty, b) delay of game penalty (5 yards) and the clock is restarted on the ready. Note: since it is the responsibility of the referee to monitor time-outs and also suspend play, situation “b” should seldom, if ever, occur.*

2. Play: A team who has used all of its time-out requests a coach-referee conference to a) determine if the referee has made a mistake in monitoring the time-outs, or b) to review a playing rule interpretation. In both cases, the referee’s original ruling was unchanged. *Ruling: in both a) and b) the conference is granted and the team is charged with a 5-yard delay of game penalty.*

3. Play: Team A calls a time-out which they are not entitled to snaps the ball as soon as team B relaxes. *Ruling: unfair act – 10 yard penalty.*

H. Free Kick

1. The ball is kicked from the 40 yard line.

2. The receivers’ restraining line is ten (10) yards from the free kick line. Players must be at least seven (7) yards from the nearest sideline. Defenders are not required to be on the receiving line prior to the kick.

3. Any kick that crosses the goal line can be returned out at the end zone by any player. This applies to free kicks (kick offs) and scrimmage kicks (punts and missed field goals). It doesn’t matter if the kick is in flight or grounded. Exception: A missed extra point kick attempt is dead.

4. If a kickoff goes out of bounds untouched by the receiving team, the following options are given:

a. The receiving team may put the ball in play at the inbound spot where ball went out of bounds.

b. The receiving team may put the ball in play at the inbound spot 25 yards from kickoff line (own 35-yard line on normal kickoff).

- c. The receiving team may have a re-kick after a 5-yard penalty is administered.
- 5. On-side kicks are not permitted.
- 6. Any kick (including kickoffs, punts, and field goals) that is muffed by R is dead at the spot where the ball touches the ground.
- 7. The kicking team may not touch or be touched by a kick in the air. **NOTE: Penalty for “Fair Catch Interference” is 10 yards or awarded fair catch at the spot of the foul.**
- 8. If a kicked ball touches the ground and is then touched by the kicking team, it becomes dead where it touched the ground and is awarded to the receiving team.
- 9. A kickoff may be recovered by the kicking team if it is caught in the air after being touched by a member of the receiving team. This is an exception to the no on-sides kick rule. The kicking team is awarded the ball at the spot of the recovery.
- 10. A receiver may advance a kicked ball that has first touched the ground provided he picks it up cleanly.
- 11. Kickoffs may be kicked from the ground, a kicking tee (maximum 2” high) or from a player’s toes touching the ground. A kicking block may be used on PAT’s and field goals.

I. Punts, Field Goals, and PATs

- 1. All punts must be announced while the offensive team is in their huddle, allowing the defensive team to get ready.
- 2. There must be at least three players from each team on the line of scrimmage. The offensive team is not permitted down field until the ball is kicked.
- 3. The kicker must be at least 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage when receiving the snap. After receiving the snap, the kicker has 6 seconds to kick the ball from any point behind the line of scrimmage. The ball remains live if the snap is dropped or missed by the kicker or place kick holder as long as the kick is made within six (6) seconds from the snap. **NOTE: Penalty is 5 yards and loss of down.**
- 4. On a fourth down punt, the kicking team is permitted to walk the ball back to the punter immediately after executing a legal snap.
- 5. No specialized balls will be permitted to be brought into game during kicking downs.
- 6. The defense may not rush to block a kick and the offense may not leave the line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked.
- 7. Once announced, the kick must be made unless:
 - a. the offense is granted a timeout
 - b. A foul occurs
- 8. A missed field goal inside the 20 yard line will be brought back to the 20 yard line.

J. Passing

- 1. All players are eligible to receive a pass.
- 2. A double pass is permissible as long as the ball does not pass the line of scrimmage. Clarification: There can be only two exchanges of the football in the air (forward pass or lateral) which are initiated behind the line of scrimmage following the first exchange, the ball can be run or passed (2nd exchange) across the line of scrimmage. Following two exchanges behind the line of scrimmage, the ball may be only run once the ball has passed the line of scrimmage. A team may make as many backward passes as they wish once the ball has passed the line of scrimmage. Penalty: Play remains live and a 5 yard penalty plus a loss of down is applied at end of play from spot of the illegal pass / forward lateral.
- 3. Offensive players may step over LOS and return to catch pass in backfield and may re-pass the ball forward down field during the same play.
- 4. **Penalty for “Pass Interference (Defensive)” is an automatic first down at the spot of the foul. If foul occurs in end zone, ball is placed on goal line.**
- 5. **Penalty for Pass Interference (Offensive): is 10 yards and loss of down.**
- 6. Pass interference will not be ruled on any pass that, in the judgment of the officials, is not catchable.

K. Scoring

- 1. The following scoring system will be used:
 - Touchdown = six (6) points
 - Point After Touchdown (PAT)
 - One (1) point = kick, pass, or run from three (3) yard line
 - Two (2) points = pass or run from ten (10) yard line
 - Intercepted PAT by defense and returned successfully = 2 points for defense
- NOTE: The choice of one (1) point from the three (3) yard line or two (2) points from the ten (10) yard line cannot be changed even if a foul occurs.**

Field goal = three (3) points

Safety = two (2) points

2. Field goals and extra points may be kicked over soccer goals if no football goal posts are present on the field. The referees will gauge the success of the kick using imaginary uprights as a guide. Volunteers may also assist in the procedure if available.

3. **Mercy Rule** – A mercy rule shall be in effect when a team is at least 17 points ahead anytime during the 7 play period in the fourth quarter. The game is declared over.

4. One overtime period is permitted during regular season – game may end in a tie for both teams.

Consecutive overtime periods during playoffs until winner is determined (see rule VI – I).

L. Penalties and Enforcement

1. “All but One” enforcement principal is used; all penalties (but one) are enforced from the “Basic Spot”.

Explanation:

Whenever the ball is alive, one of two types of plays is in progress, a loose ball play or a running play. The official must know which type of play was in progress when the foul occurred. This immediately **determines the basic spot of enforcement.**

a. A loose ball play is action during:

1) A free kick or scrimmage kick

2) A legal forward pass

3) A backward pass (including the snap) or fumble made by the offensive team in or behind the neutral zone prior to a change of team possession.

4) Any run which precedes a legal pass, fumble or kick.

b. A running play is any action that is not a loose ball play.

1) In or behind the neutral zone in either of the following:

(a). It includes a run not followed by a loose ball.

(b). A run followed by an illegal forward pass.

(c). A run followed by an illegal kick.

2) Beyond the neutral zone:

(a). It includes a run.

(b). A run followed by a loose ball, including an illegal forward pass or illegal kick.

If a foul occurs during a **loose ball** play, the basic spot is the previous spot, either the spot of the snap or the free kick. If a foul occurs during a **running play**, the basic spot is where the run ended. A loose ball may be part of a running play and should not be confused with a loose ball play. **Exception to all of the above** (or the All-But-One principle): When the foul is by the offensive team and the spot of the foul is behind the basic spot, the penalty is from the spot of the foul.

2. All penalties are either five or ten yards (see below):

10 YARD PENALTIES 5 YARD PENALTIES

Delay start either half Illegal equipment

Fair catch interference Delay of game

Pass interference (**Offense – LOD**) Sub infractions

Unsportsmanlike conduct Encroachment

Illegal physical contact False start

Illegal screen blocks Illegal snap

Illegal kick/bat Infraction protected scrim kicks Intentional grounding (LOD)

Illegal participation Illegal forward handing (LOD) @ spot

Interlocked blocking Illegal forward pass (LOD) @ spot

Diving to advance ball Helping runner

Roughing passer (auto-1st down) Failure to kick within 6 seconds (LOD)

Roughing kicker (auto-1st down) Illegal formation

Deflagging player without ball Illegal procedure

Violent touching (plus ejection) Free kick out of bounds

Grabbing or stripping ball Three men not on LOS

ADDITIONAL PENALTIES

Pass interference (defense) = Automatic 1st down at spot of foul

Securing /Guarding the flag = Ball blown dead with no penalty

Hurdling = Ball blown dead with no penalty

Spinning = Ball blown dead with no penalty

Fair catch interference = 10 yard penalty from previous spot and repeat down *or* awarded fair catch at spot of interference (may kick a field goal).

3. Reminder: Referee must give choice of accepting or declining any penalty. If team accepts penalty, the down is replayed unless the penalty includes loss of down. If penalty that does not result in a loss of down is accepted during the 7-play period, the play and the down will be repeated (Exception: Play counts if foul occurs during dead ball).

4. Penalty Enforcement (for fouls committed on scoring plays)

FOUL OPTIONS

By "B" on a successful kick try Accept penalty and replay down or accept result of play and enforce on succeeding spot*

By opponents of scoring team on TD or 2 point PAT Decline penalty

By "A" on successful TD, PAT, or FG

(not unsportsmanlike)

Accept penalty and replay down

Any unsportsmanlike foul Enforce on succeeding spot*

• A = Offense at start of play. B = Defense at start of play

• Succeeding spot is defined as the spot where the ball is next snapped or free kicked if there is no foul.