



9-25-19

## **Flag Football Rules**

### **1. Field of Play**

The field of play is forty yards in width by eighty yards in length, with a ten yard end zone and a safety zone of ten yards extending beyond each end zone. All fields must be marked with a goal line and ten yard markers.

All balls must be spotted in the middle of the field

### **2. Number of Players**

Each team will consist of nine players on the field. Offenses are allowed six specialists and three linemen. A game may be played if a team has only eight players, but only after both teams agree and the game will be played eight on nine. If a team cannot field a minimum of eight players, the game will be forfeited.

A player can play on only one team throughout the regular season and the playoffs. Players may not switch between teams. A player on an elementary team may move up to a middle school team, but a middle school player cannot move down to an elementary team.

### **3. Equipment and Uniforms**

Teams must have an identifiable jersey with a number. Shorts or sweat pants are acceptable, no attire with belt loops is allowed.

Rubber cleats are acceptable. No metal cleats.

Colored mouthpieces are required. A player without a mouthpiece will not be allowed to play.

No jewelry or watches of any kind are allowed.

#### 4. Flags

Home teams shall provide flags for both teams. Flags shall be the pull away belt with 3 flags on each belt, two on the side and one on the back. Flags must hang vertically from the waist at least 9 inches. Velcro flags, popper flags, flags that clip (like a clothes pin) or loop flags are not acceptable. Teams shall wear color flags that offset their uniform. The league will purchase flags for all host sites.

#### 5. Footballs

A junior size football will be used. The offensive team may switch to their football if desired.

#### 6. Down and Distance Markers

The home team is responsible for providing down markers and ten yard chain markers. Home teams are also responsible for providing adult volunteers to keep the down and distance.

#### 7. Length of the Game

Playing time shall be 40 minutes of running time, divided into two 20 minute halves. Half time shall be 5 minutes. Ball possession shall change at the beginning of the second half.

There is a 30 second play clock

During the last two minutes of the half and last two minutes of the game, the game clock will stop during dead balls or a play out of bounds. The game clock will be stopped on all measurements for first downs. If a team is not ready to play at scheduled game time, the game will be forfeited.

#### 8. Timeouts and Stopping Play

Each team is permitted two timeouts per half. One additional timeout is awarded for an overtime period. Timeouts are 1 minute in length. Timeouts will not carry over from the first half to the second half.

The clock will stop on the administration of penalties when there is any discussion by officials and coaches to administer the penalty.

The game clock will stop in the case of an injury. If a timeout is called for an injured player, the injured player must leave the game for at least one play.

## 9. Start of the Game

A pre-game coin toss will determine first half possession. There are no kickoffs. The offensive team will start with the ball on the 20 yard line.

## 10. Offensive Linemen

The offense must have 3 offensive linemen. They can line up at any distance apart. The center and players directly beside the center are ineligible. A two point stance, no hands on the ground, is required.

## 11. Blocking

Blocking is done with palms up and arms extended. All blocking must be above the waist and below the shoulders. No contact with the face or head is allowed.

Downfield blocking is allowed. No player may leave their feet when blocking and there is no chop blocking.

Clipping, or blocking in the back, is not allowed. If a defender spins while being blocked an offensive lineman may continue to block the defender.

Illegal blocking is a spot foul, 10 yards from the spot of the foul.

Officials will ensure that blockers are not overly aggressive.

## 12. Ball Carrier Actions

Offensive players may jump and spin to avoid a flag pull. They may not dive head first. Runners are to avoid a defender and not run through them. Both are spot fouls (unnecessary roughness), 10 yards from the spot of the foul.

Flag guarding is the specific use of the hands to push away or slap away a defender's hand to avoid being tackled. Pumping of arms in a natural running motion is allowed, along with spinning as long as the ball carrier does not run through a defender or pushes the defender's hands away. Flag guarding is a spot foul, 10 yards from the spot of the foul.

Straight arming or stiff arming is not allowed. The penalty shall be 10 yards from the spot of foul and a loss of down.

While carrying the ball, if any receiver or runner who loses his flag, the ball is dead at the spot where the flag is lost.

### 13. Defensive Actions

All defensive players must start 3 yards from the line of scrimmage. If the line of scrimmage is less than 3 yards from the goal line, the defense must be behind the goal line. 3 or 4 point stances are not allowed.

Defensive players are allowed to dive only in pursuit of a ball carrier.

The defense is not allowed to run through or bull rush a blocker. No contact with the face or head is allowed.

The defensive rush is allowed to block passes and make contact with the quarterback's arm. However, no unnecessary roughness will be tolerated.

Fumbles are dead when the ball hits the ground. If the ball does not hit the ground, it is a live ball.

### 14. Quarterback Sneaks and Offense Runs Up the Middle

Quarterback sneaks are not allowed. Quarterback sneaks is defined as the quarterback taking the ball from under center in a non shotgun formation and lunging forward immediately. Doing so is a ten yard penalty

Quarterbacks draws are allowed. Quarterbacks may run up the middle as long as a shotgun formation is used. When under center the quarterback must take one step back into the backfield first and then run forward.

Handoffs or runs up the middle are allowed.

### 15. Fumbles

All fumbles are a dead ball as soon as the ball hits the ground. Play will continue at the spot of the fumble.

### 16. Intentional Grounding

A player may not throw a pass out of bounds or into the ground to avoid being tackled. This will be a 5 yard penalty and a loss of down.

The quarterback may spike the ball to stop the clock during the final two minutes of the half. The quarterback should make no forward movement and raise the ball higher than his ear when spiking the ball to stop the clock.

## 17. Receptions and Interceptions

If a player is in the air attempting to catch a pass, the player must contact the ground with at least one foot in bounds with possession of the ball prior to going out of bounds.

If contact is made by the defense player that forces the offensive player to go out of bounds during the catch, it is a legal catch. If possession of the ball is lost simultaneously when the receiver hits the ground, it is not a catch.

If the receiver loses his flag before catching the ball, the ball is dead at the spot where the receiver's flags fell off.

If a defensive player intercepts a pass, they are allowed to advance the ball.

## 18. Pass Interference

It is pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged, shoved, jammed, or touched prior to touching the ball when receiving a pass past 3 yards of the line of scrimmage.

Pass interference should also be called if a defensive player removes the flag of an offensive player before the offensive player has caught the ball.

Pass interference that occurs past 10 yards, the penalty will occur at the spot of the foul. Pass interference not over 10 yards, a 10 yard penalty will occur from the line of scrimmage.

If the pass interference is intentional or unsportsmanlike, an additional 10 yards may be assessed.

## 19. Punts

Before any team punts, they must notify the officials. No fake punts are allowed.

No rushing the punter, the offensive team will have 10 seconds to punt the ball. The offensive and defensive team must not move until the ball is kicked.

The punter may receive the ball under center and walk back to punt the ball. If the punter fumbles the ball the play is dead once the ball hits the ground

All touchbacks will be placed on the 20 yard line

A punt is declared dead after the ball is touched by a player from the kicking team. The receiving team may pick the ball up and advance if it touches the ground. If a punt is muffed, it is to be ruled dead.

Blocking is allowed, the receiving team may set up in any way they see fit.

## 20. Safety

If an offensive player with the ball is tackled in their end zone, two points are awarded to the defensive team.

If a defensive player intercepts the ball in the endzone they must leave the endzone and then return to the endzone and be tackled for a safety to occur.

## 21. Scoring

Touchdowns = 6 points

Extra points:

From 5 yards = 1 point

From 10 yards = 2 points

Once an offensive team makes a decision on an extra point they cannot change their decision unless a timeout is called.

Should the defense stop the extra point with an interception, the play is dead.

## 22. Officials

Three refs will be used

Officials have the authority to banish any person(s) who is interfering with the game, displaying unsportsmanlike conduct, or is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Any person banished from the game must leave the property where they cannot be seen or heard within 60 seconds.

Flagrant violations such as fighting, profanity, or attempting to strike an official, player, or coach will be reported to the Red Rock Athletic Conference and may lead to suspension from participating in league events.

The official's decision during the game will be final.

After all games, officials are to sign an official scorecard, which the home team must report to the league president within twenty-four hours.

### 23. Overtime

Overtime will begin with a coin toss. Both teams will be given a chance to score from twenty yards away from the goal line. The offensive team will have four plays to score a touchdown or move 10 yards for a first down. Extra points will be attempted after a touchdown. If a winner can be determined after each team has had one offensive possession the game is over. If second overtime is necessary, each team must go for two if they score a touchdown. If a winner is not determined after the second overtime, teams will flip a coin for possession. Teams will begin play on their own 20 (the same as in regulation) and the winner will be determined by sudden death (the first team that scores, wins).

### 24. Tournament Seeding

In order to break a tie that cannot be broken by win/loss versus a common opponent, total points will be used. The team with the most points when the tied teams played will be used to determine seeding. If this method does not determine a winner, then team with the most points throughout the season will be used. The maximum number of points a team can earn is 21 points per game.